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VOLUME 41 NUMBER 2

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2015

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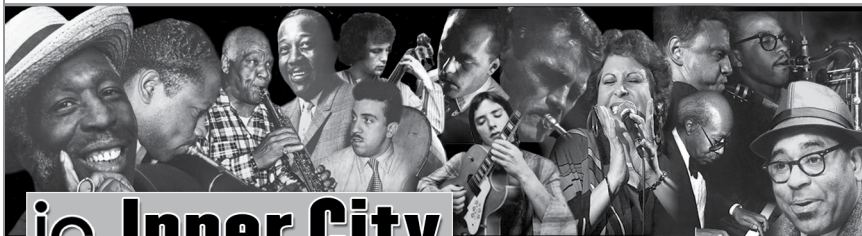
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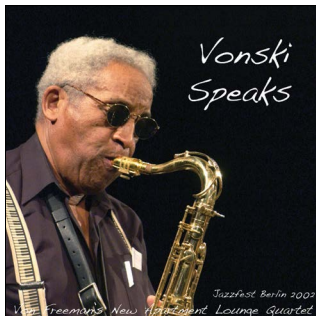
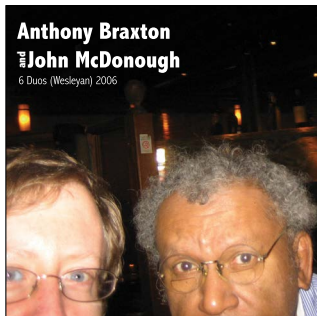
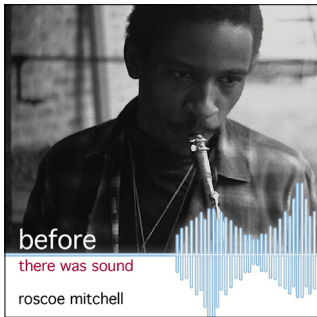
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CIMPfest 2009
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CIMPoL 5020-5024: **CIMPfest 2009: LIVE IN VILLACH, AUSTRIA**

Complete with Producer and Engineer notes recounting all the action. Completely live and featuring Avram Fefer (alto + tenor saxophones), Bill Gagliardi (tenor saxophone), David Hofstra (bass), Dominic Duval (bass), Jay Rosen (drums), John Carlson (trumpet), John O'Gallagher (alto saxophone), Ken Filiano (bass), Ken Wessel (guitar), Lou Grassi (drums), Michael Bisio (bass), Stephen Gauci (tenor + alto saxophone)

DISK 1: Michael Bisio 4tet **DISK 2:** William Gagliardi 5tet **DISK 3:** Stephen Gauci 4tet
DISK 4: Jimmy Halperin & Dominic Duval Duo / John O'Gallagher Trio
DISK 5: Avram Fefer 4tet / CIMP Orchestra

CIMPoL 5027-5030: **Trio-X - Live on Tour 2010**

Iowa City - Champaign - Waukee - Ann Arbor - Mount Rainier

Completely live and featuring Joe McPhee (pocket trumpet, flugelhorn, tenor + soprano sax) Dominic Duval (bass), Jay Rosen (drums)

DISK 1: Trio-X - Live - Iowa City, IA and Champaign, IL **DISK 2:** Trio-X - Live - Waukee, IA
DISK 3: Trio-X - Live - Ann Arbor, MI **DISK 4:** Trio-X - Live - Mt. Rainier, MD

New CIMPoL releases:

5026	Eric Plaks Quintet	Live at Bronx Community College
5041	Mat Marrucci Trio	Live at Jazz Central
5042	Teresa Carroll Quintet	Live at Dazzle

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
5025	Seth Meicht and the Big Sound Ensemble	Live in Philadelphia



Creative Improvised Music Projects

There are three distinct and symbiotic components to CIMP's philosophy: the Art, the Production, and the Listener.

Pursuing Art for art's sake is easier said than done, but we try. We do not expect to make money with the label, and we judge all of the releases on aesthetic criteria only. We work with musicians who have clear visions, originality, dedication, and passion for their purity of statement. The musicians must also be able to express these attributes in real time with no external fixes.

Far too many creative efforts are born from marketing concepts. Debates about the intersection of art and commerce will last forever, but it is clear that whenever the primary goal is marketing, art will be compromised. We strive to create an atmosphere that is as free from artificial forces as possible, an atmosphere that simply allows the art to emerge and exist.

Many musicians are accustomed to being relegated to the role of note creators, creating notes that someone else (engineer, producer, label) will use to create his own vision of what the artist was trying to express. We think musicians should be heard on their own terms. Before each recording session we try to make all the musicians aware that the only restrictions and limitations here are between their ears; that there is no arbitrary set of rules to please an establishment. We think people will enjoy the music that we record because it is great music, created by great artists, and allowed to exist on its own terms.

In order to present uncompromised art, we observe 2 objectives during Production. First and foremost, we do not compress the music signal. When you limit, or compress, the dynamics of an artist's expression, you squelch and change their art. Creative improvised music thrives on dynamic range, it is as much a part of the music as the notes that are created. Every note has several parts wrapped up in its package, and the degrees of loudness or softness are as crucial as the timbre or tone. With CIMP's natural dynamic sound, one can aurally ride with the music, gaining much greater insight into its creation and message, experiencing its power and passion just as the artist envisioned it.

The second issue concerns recording technique. In order to not invade the creative process of the music while recording it, we use minimalist mic techniques and only record in pure stereo. There are no headphone mixes, drum booths, bass rooms, baffles, or anything else to get in the way with the communication between members of a group. Successful engineering here means being as unobtrusive as possible. To further this cause we do not do any mixing, overdubbing, splicing, enhancing time, equalizing, or any other means of changing or fixing the signal. When you listen to a CIMP production, you hear how the artists themselves envisioned the music, *not* some engineer's concept of how the dynamics of expression should be represented.

For every release on this label, a cover is created that expresses another artist's vision of how this music speaks to them. Our covers are as real as the music inside, binding the label in a visual way, expressing a bigger purpose than immediate sales.

The integrity of every CIMP release is attended to by those involved: Artists put forth uncompromised expressions of their music and contribute a written statement in the booklet that accompanies each disc. In addition, every CIMP release is endorsed by the Producer and the Engineer, who contribute personal comments and insights about the recording. Recordings that can not stand up to these personal endorsements are not issued.

The third portion of this symbiotic relationship is the Listener. Even at its broadest level, improvised music has a niche audience. CIMP productions occupy a niche within that niche, reaching an audience interested in approaching art on its own terms. For these listeners, CIMP is becoming known as a label that will stand up over time, continually rewarding those who pay close attention to the music, though our techniques make it possible for even casual listeners to glimpse the strength and beauty of the playing. The greatest rewards come to those who take the time to be as uncompromising in their listening as the musicians were while creating the music.

We have set high standards across the board and hope that in the long run this approach will become appreciated by a growing audience. We work hard to ensure that CIMP recordings reward repeated and in-depth listening, presenting the Art in such a fashion so that—to have a front row private concert seat experience—one need only put the music on and listen.

"CIMP ... has almost instantly become the leading North American label of its kind. With clean, unprocessed live to two-track engineering and a uniform approach to cover art and booklet design, CIMP has developed an identity that will serve them well for the long haul. CIMP's catalog is already brimming with the type of personnel connections between releases common to great labels..." Bill Shoemaker, *JazzTimes*

"...up until now, nobody has structured an entire catalog around new/ avant-garde jazz with the emphasis on sonic excellence. CIMP aims to change all that. With minimalist, purist microphone techniques and honest, no-frills engineering, **CIMP offers an alternative to the often casually recorded avant-garde discography.** ... The overall flavor is of a homegrown product crafted with great care. ...the results are impressive. ... Musically, these discs are full of gems." Carl E. Baugher, *The Tracking Angle*

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The sessions are recorded live to digital two-track, with zero processing effects and no editing ... authentic performances with a vast dynamic range." Sam Prestianni, *Jazziz*

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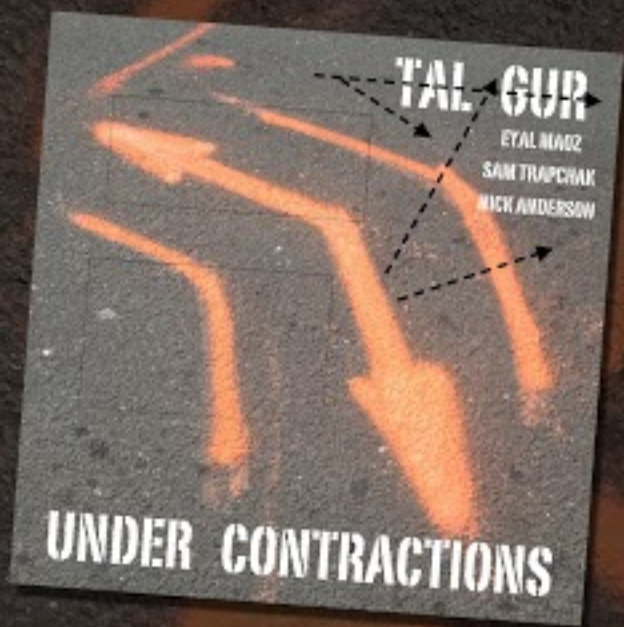
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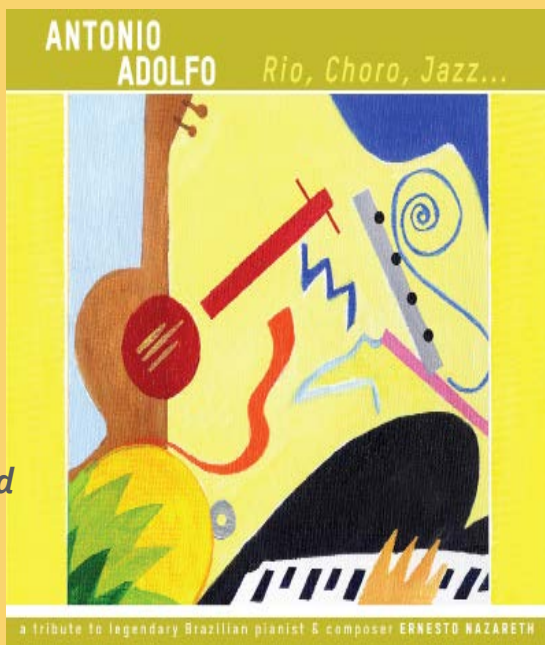
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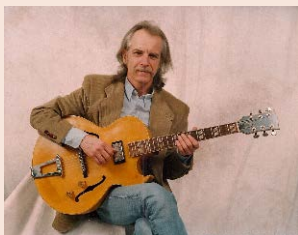
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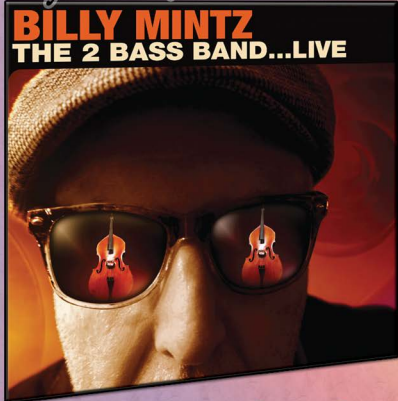
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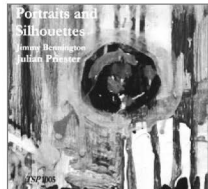
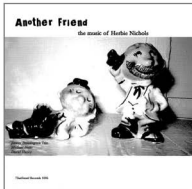
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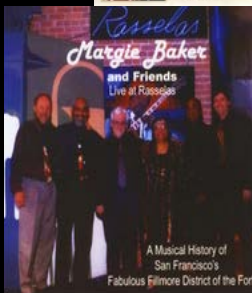
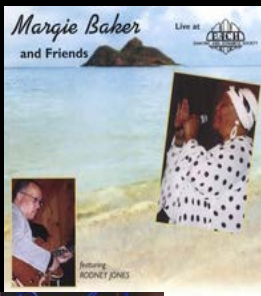
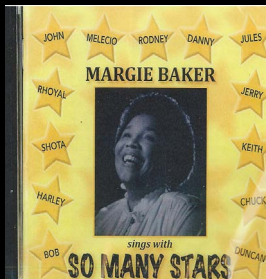
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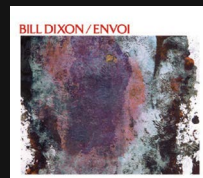
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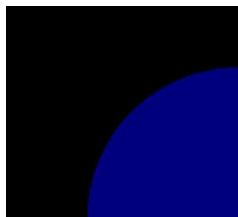
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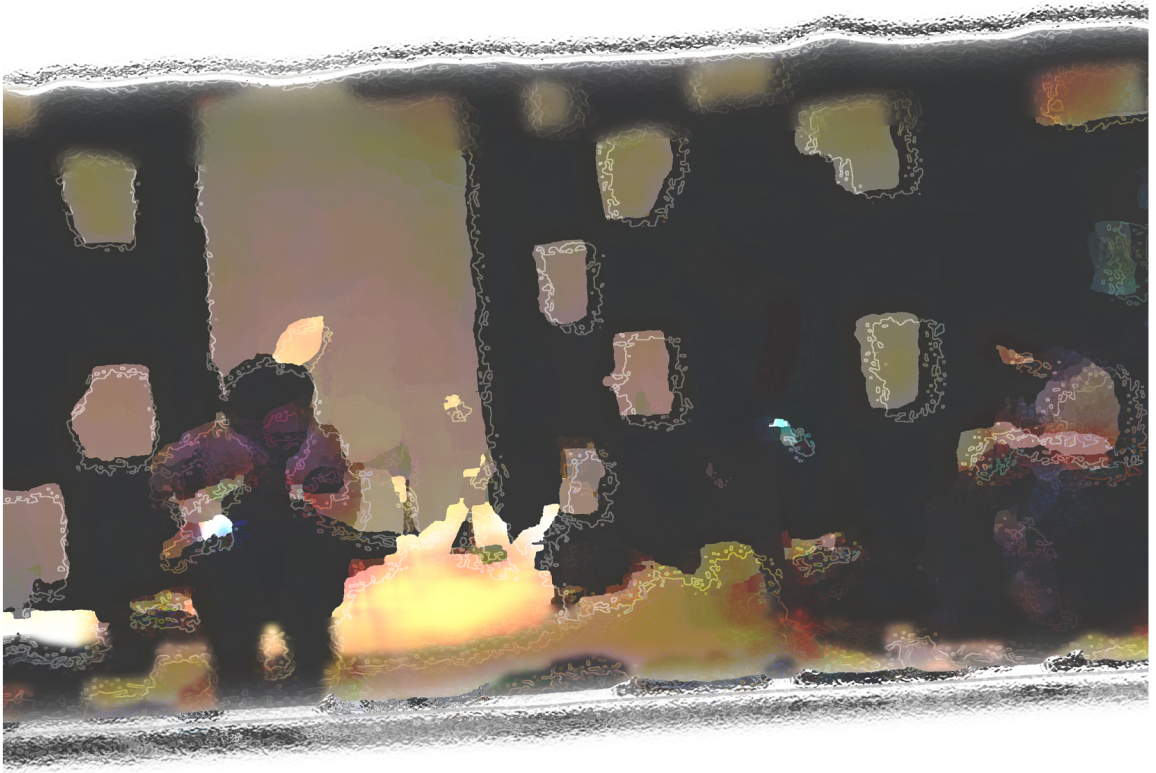
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acc: accordion
 as: alto sax
 bari s : baritone sax
 b: bass
 b cl: bass clarinet
 bs: bass sax
 bsn: bassoon
 cel: cello
 cl: clarinet
 cga: conga
 cnt: cornet
 d: drums
 el: electric
 elec: electronics
 Eng hn: English horn
 euph: euphonium
 flgh: flugelhorn
 flt: flute
 Fr hn: French horn
 g: guitar
 hca: harmonica
 kybd: keyboards
 ldr: leader
 ob: oboe
 org: organ
 perc: percussion
 p: piano
 pic: piccolo
 rds: reeds
 ss: soprano sax
 sop: 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



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Cadence Magazine Editorial Policy

Established in January 1976, Cadence Magazine was a monthly publication through its first 381 issues (until September 2007). Beginning with the October 2007 issue, Cadence increased in number of pages, changed to perfect binding, and became a quarterly publication. On January 1, 2012 Cadence Magazine was transferred to Cadence Media L.L.C. Cadence Magazine continues as an online publication and one print issue per year. Cadence Magazine, LLC, is proud to continue the policies that have distinguished Cadence as an important independent resource.

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

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

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International Jazz News

Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia, PA – Chris' Jazz Café opened the new year as once again the only fulltime Jazz club in the city with Jazz bands booked six nights weekly and nationally prominent artists most Fridays and Saturdays. It looks like they're investing even more in "big-name" artists who, if not for Chris', would have little opportunity to perform in town. When you combine the venues' exciting Jazz offerings set in such an intimate setting with outstanding food at a reasonable price, Chris' is no doubt the best night out value in Philadelphia. The club's first performance of the year came on 1/2 and was a homecoming of sorts for saxophonist **Darryl Yokley**. He lived in town for a couple years starting in 2007, learning from old heads such as Mickey Roker, Edgar Bateman, Tim Warfield and Orrin Evans. His Sound Reformation group has variable membership and this first time grouping of artists included pianist **Zaccai Curtis**, bassist **Rashaan Carter** and a pair of drummers – **Wayne Smith Jr.** and special guest **Nasheet Waits**. Yokley unveiled his background training in classical music and remarkable compositional skills in the form of two pieces from a suite he's been working on influenced by Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* as well as African American artwork. The difficult compositions challenged the players and although the music had plenty of kinks to be worked out, there was plenty of beauty and unexpected sounds to enjoy. The set of drummers added a lot to the music and between sets, Curtis gushed about how great it was to be fed such creative lines from them. Waits was especially masterful working with and against Smith and when the music ramped up to crescendo, the drummers amped it up to the delight of the audience. Curtis, who along with brother bassist Luques, is making a name for himself, said he listens to anything bebop, with his top pick being Bud Powell. Surprisingly, he doesn't have much Latin influence in his playing...Although the Holland-based **ICP Orchestra** no longer includes co-founder Misha Mengelberg, his dementia is too advanced for him to travel, the ensemble remains a must-see event and they are still managing to maintain a relatively frequent presence in the States. Their show at FringeArts on 1/11 (Ars Nova Workshop) was preceded by an impressive duo – **Nate Wooley** (tpt) and **Ken Vandermark** (cl, bs, ts) – both masters of extended technique who are equally comfortable inside and outside the tradition. Vandermark's "Deconstructed Folks," a tribute fittingly to Bobby Bradford and John Carter. Surprisingly, it opened in a very swinging way. Wooley explained that every time they play the tune it sounds different and they had never played it that way before. Prior to the performance, during soundcheck, Vandermark greeted **Tobias Delius** (ts) of the ICP, who had significant problems getting his work permit to get into this country and missed the first gig (Baltimore) of the tour, saying, "Oh, they let you into the States. I made some phone calls to keep you out!" Also of note during soundcheck was **Han Bennink** (d) questioning the sound crew – "Is there a way of hearing nothing and hearing something?" I believe that concept is still being debated. The ICP set was, as always, tight and fanciful, but without Mengelberg in the band, Bennink wasn't up to his old bags of tricks. He played and sounded great but he left out the shtick that we've come to expect from his ICP performances. Pianist **Uri Caine**, who had played with the band the night before in New York, was a late addition to the advertised band lineup (therefore requiring a piano rental for \$1000) but he was a natural fit for the chameleonic ensemble - easily dealing with shifts through classical, Jazz, circus and folk motifs. Rich covers of Monk's "Jackie-ing" and Herbie Nichols' "House Party," done in an incredibly lush fashion, highlighted by a beautiful **Michael Moore** alto sax solo, were a joy to hear, not to mention their own original tunes. "Bravo" was done by the string section – **Mary Oliver** on viola, **Tristan Honsinger** on cello and **Ernst Glerum** on bass – under the watchful gaze of Bennink who shouted "Bravo" at the conclusion. Honsinger was up to his old tricks, using his spindly body to lead a conduction. The night ended with an impromptu singing performance encore by Bennink on an empty stage. He sang Mengelberg's tune

"Psalm" as a heartfelt tribute to his fallen comrade (and frequent antagonist)...Bowerbird sponsored a free screening at The Rotunda on 1/16 of *Space is the Place* featuring Sun Ra and his Intergalactic Myth-Science Arkestra in celebration of the film's 40th Anniversary. The movie, a legit Hollywood release, has been digitally restored and will soon be released as a double DVD set featuring the 65-minute Sun Ra approved version, the one that was originally theatrically released, and the newer Director's Cut, a 85-minute version that includes (more) nudity, prostitutes, and violence against women. If you've never viewed the film, it's a real head spinner. The evening opened and closed with statements by Sun Ra biographer **John Szwed**. At one point before the airing, Szwed laughed after saying he didn't want to be a spoiler by talking about parts of the film before the audience watched it. "But how could I be a spoiler?," he said. "I don't understand the film!" Szwed also told a story relayed to him by writer Francis Davis who one day spied Sun Ra exiting the original *Star Wars* movie wearing his gold lame outfit. When he asked Ra what he thought of the movie, Ra said, "It's very real to life."...British singer/pianist **Jamie Cullum** is red-hot these days – appearing on the covers of *Down Beat* and *Jazz Times*. He's been playing the Keswick Theatre, just outside Philly in Glenside, for years and is still wowing the audience. His hit on 2/4 included a big band and his ADHD-ish energy. He was all over the stage, playing some drums and goading on the band and also into the audience. His singing voice is unique and he's got a bunch of original tunes that are very catchy and also great renditions of standards. He excels at making the listener feel like they are seeing him and the band doing something for the first time. About halfway through his set, he invited the back half of the crowd to come up to the front – "Like I always say, if you all come at once, they can't stop you!" Probably the biggest indication of his wild success was that afterwards, there was a very long line at the "merch" table and Cullum didn't even have to be sitting there signing stuff to draw them in...**Chris Potter** (ts, cl) returned to Chris' Jazz Café on 2/7 with his Underground band for two sets of intimidating and wonderful music. This visit replaced pianist Craig Taborn with bass guitarist **Fima Ephron**, whose collaborations with guitarist **Adam Rogers** led to some real hard rock sections that shook walls, but also times of very sensitive patterns. **Nate Smith's** bold strikes and rim shots added dimension but the real star, no doubt, was Potter who varied his playing from tune to tune but maintained a beautiful tone throughout. He even comped at the piano while sitting out a segment. I sat with a local pianist who had come early for the soundcheck and he had the opportunity to hear Potter impressively stretch out on the piano. "I wanted to cut off his right arm and attach it to me," he said ruefully...During a rendition of "Wade in the Water," **Gregory Porter** got the Montgomery County Community College audience involved with clapping, to which he acknowledged – "And you kept your rhythm too!" After talking a bit more, he said, "Shut up and play the music Brother Porter," and play he did. Wowing the attentive hall on 2/8 with song after song, many politically edged, in his deep voice and bold delivery. He did a fast paced "Work Song" and covered "Hit the Road Jack," in addition to many of his own tunes with his longtime quartet of **Chip Crawford** (p), **Yosuke Sato** (as, flt), **Aaron James** (b) and **Emanuel Harrold** (d). Porter encored with his romantic "Real Good Hands."...Intense freely improvised music defines much of what Danish saxophonist **Lotte Anker** does and she does it arguably best with Craig **Taborn** (p) and **Gerald Cleaver** (d) who make up her long time American trio. It was five years between performances in this town and Anker made up quickly for lost time on 2/19 at the Philadelphia Art Alliance (Ars Nova Workshop). Commencing on soprano, the leader bent over, the horn's bell facing the old wooden floor, and blew soft, rustling sounds and clicks before Cleaver eventually stood to scrape a cymbal and Taborn played episodic notes. The lengthy piece included a change to tenor sax and severe cluster runs on the piano before ending suddenly. Two other pieces followed, equally demanding and rewarding at the same time. When one player laid down a new

musical challenge, the interest was in how the others would respond to the challenge...One night later at the same venue (Ars Nova Workshop), Mostly Other People Do the Killing (MOPDTK) significantly lightened the mood with their zany rendition of leader **Moppa Elliot**'s original tunes, all of which were named in tribute to a town or towns found in his beloved home state of Pennsylvania. Original member, trumpeter Peter Evans, has been gone for about a year, replaced by pianist **Ron Stabinsky**, giving the renegade quartet the standard Jazz quartet formation and actually allows MOPDTK's off-beat humor to shine brighter and more obvious. Performing Elliot's originals, plenty of deconstructed standards and other recognizable musical bits were introduced, dealt with, and quickly thrown away. **Jon Irabagon** (sax) was masterful at leading the ever-changing charge, leaving poor Stabinsky to start flipping through his charts to find the right music. Elliot was all smiles with his family in the audience. Post-set, he said no worries, he's not going to run out of interesting names of Pennsylvania towns unless he becomes as prolific as John Zorn. Asked to talk about the controversial *Blue* recording, where the band reproduced the classic Miles Davis *Kind of Blue* recording, Elliot said that it would never be done live. He has been asked by a number of European festivals to do it but that, "It was absurd to think that we would do that live. The whole thing was about creating an artifact with exact sound representation, and that can't be done live!"...A lot of great things have happened for bassist **Christian McBride** since he left his hometown of Philadelphia in 1989, but until 2/27, he had never officially played Chris' Jazz Café (the "legendary club" as he referred to it). He hit for two nights with his trio – **Christian Sands** (p) and **Ulysses Owens** (d) – to the delight of his mom and other relatives in the audience. Of course, his bass skills were off the hook. He was so comfortable and impressive performing across genres – Jazz standards such as "Caravan," Stevie Wonder's "Send One Your Love," some Latin groove, and a hot Freddie Hubbard tune – but his gift of gab also captured the audience. Plugging his new release, he announced that, "You can take us home with you if you buy the CD," which drew some catcalls. He clarified by saying, "Well, you CAN take us home with you, but it's going to be a heck of a lot more than the price of a CD! I do like to be flexible!" (Note: his wife Melissa was home watching the kids.) The first set was marred by an alarm going off for a long time from an adjacent building. "What is that? A car alarm? I was trying to think of something to play along with that but we've got the wrong band here tonight to do that," McBride added. Between sets, in the backstage hallway, McBride held court, greeting friends and family. He pointed to his great uncle, bassist Howard Cooper, an important early Jazz influence for him, and said, "If it weren't for him, you might be seeing me on stage with Rhianna right now!"...The Painted Bride Art Center presented vocalist **Somi**, the Illinois-born singer born to immigrants from Rwanda and Uganda, on 3/8. Armed with **Liberty Ellman** (g), **Toru Dodo** (p), **Keith Witty** (el b) and **Otis Brown III** (d), who were positioned deeply back on stage, she sang politically-tinged songs, most of which were penned as a result of her recent 18 month stay in Lagos, Nigeria, a trip taken to seek inspiration. Performing barefoot, with brightly painted toenails that matched her African body dress, she sang with Nina Simone-esque conviction, and even redid a Simone original as "Four African Women." She also covered an Abbey Lincoln piece in tribute. The powerhouse singer used her rich voice to fit each song and never over sang. Her African-style of dance added authenticity to her singing and message. The band wasn't given much space but made the most of their solos. Especially impressive was Ellman, whose solo was tinged with African heartland tribalism...Hypercolor, the New York-based trio of **James Ilgenfritz** (el b), **Eyal Maoz** (el g) and **Lukas Ligeti** (perc), billed as a spastic Jazz-Rock hybrid with links to the '80s No-Wave movement, played a short set at First Banana (co-presented by Alabaster Tongue and Fire Museum Presents) on 3/8 due to the venue's unfortunate 11 PM ending time restriction. The collective was the final act of three this night and managed to get in 4-5 short songs, most of which are featured

on their new recording. Ilgenfritz announced that the band has been active for a few years and the music was recorded in 2013 but, “Sometimes getting your first CD of a project out can be a very profound process.” They were on a two week tour which fostered new music and reworking of old pieces. What they played was very heavy stuff – melodic but out – and all three musicians are well-schooled and well-matched. The recording is surprisingly more out than their live presentation was – at least on this night. Starting off the evening was local experimentalist **Bonnie Kane**, with pink pigtailed and a wild fashion sense, on electrified flute and tenor sax, using loops and distortion to create powerful sonic structures, along with Brooklyn-based drummer **Dave Miller**. The middle act was local electric guitar hero **Nick Millevoi**, who put down some crazy, endless licks on his axe at supersonic speed with the use of his forearm, wrist and elbow. Nothing was sacred as he shredded. He threw down with pummeling percussionist **Scott Verrastro**...**Joe McPhee** (ss, ts) and **Chris Corsano** (perc) have a long history together as improvisers and also share similarities in that they live way north in New York State along with an outsider reputation in the field of Jazz. Both have great interest in the exploration of sound and quicksilver maneuverings around melody. Their gig on 3/13 at the Phila. Art Alliance (Ars Nova Workshop) was a heady mix of control and investigation. McPhee began by saying, “I’d like to share a couple words with you – joy spring.” It turned out he wasn’t announcing the first tune, he was commenting on the “dreadful winter” we had shared. The duo performed six pieces, and even though it sure sounded like quotes from standards by Ellington and others, McPhee said it wasn’t so. It was all in the moment. He looked dapper with dark shades and a black glove with a smiley face on his right hand, and his playing was strong. He made good use of the room’s great acoustics by blowing through his horns and frequently just clicked his keys for a beat. Late set, he used circular breathing on his tenor, sighing or low chanting through his horn, while also blowing and popping the keys for a trifecta approach. Corsano was just as inventive, using cymbals on his toms that he clanged on and other effects that altered the traditional drum properties. They ended with a tune that was promised to be, “Something sweet and tender,” as per McPhee. Pausing for a minute, with eyes closed, they tackled “Naima” in their own way...Chile’s greatest export, **Melissa Aldana** (ts), the first female instrumentalist to ever win the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Award (2013), played Chris’ Jazz Café for the first time on 3/15 and sold out the first set. Before playing, drummer **Francisco Mela**, who along with bassist and fellow Chilean, **Pablo Menares**, make up Aldana’s Crash Trio, was all aglow about his love for the Billy Higgins and how he’s incorporated some of the late drummer’s styling’s into his own work, and indeed he has. Aldana is always referred to as an “old soul,” a fitting inference to her big tenor sound and gracious handling of the Jazz classics. Never flashy (or seemingly overly comfortable being in the spotlight at this point) she dazzles with her beautiful tone and a cooperative band. Mela was fabulous pushing the leader forward. The first set started with a swinging Mela tune called “Swing It” and ended with another swinging tune (by design for balance), Aldana’s “Back Home,” a deep reference to Sonny Rollins, her main influence...Incoming hits: Ars Nova Workshop (arsnovaworkshop.org) presents – 4/7 **Warriors of the Wonderful Sound + Rudresh Mahanthappa** @ Clef Club; 4/9 **Jonathan Finlayson & Sicilian Defense** @ Phila. Art Alliance; 4/13 **Rob Mazurek and Black Cube SP** @ The Rotunda; 4/24 **Tim Berne’s Snakeoil** @ Barnes Foundation; 5/5 **Warriors of the Wonderful Sound + Oliver Lake** @ Painted Bride Art Center; 5/9 **Tyshawn Sorey 3** @ Phila. Art Alliance; 5/14 **David Torn** @ Phila. Art Alliance; 5/23 **Spectral** @ Phila. Art Alliance; 6/2 **Warriors of the Wonderful Sound + Jaleel Shaw** @ Clef Club; 6/5 **Wadada Leo Smith’s Golden 4** @ TBD; 6/12 **Mike Reed, Tomeka Reid, Nicole Mitchell** @ Phila Art Alliance; 6/16 **Eric Revis 3** @ Phila Art Alliance...4/25 - The **Fourth Annual Center City Jazz Festival** (ccjazzfest.com) from 1 PM – 7 PM at four venues – Chris’ Jazz Café, Fergie’s Pub, Milkboy Philadelphia,

Time Restaurant. Many bands will play including **Tomas Fujiwara & The Hook-up, Luis Bonilla & 4 Swinging Bones; Matt Davis' Aerial Photograph, George Burton 3, John Swana, Ben Schachter & Re-Trio** and event organizer **Ernest Stuart**...Fire Museum Presents (museumfire.com) presents – 4/15 **Daniel Levin 4 w/ Nate Wooley-Matt Moran-Pedro Strom / Bobby Zankel Group @ Vox Populi Gallery;** 4/19 **Jalalu-Kalvert Nelson & the Transformational Music Ensemble w/ Keir Neuringer @ Vox Populi Gallery;** 4/30 **Bhob Rainey / Buck Hammerstein & Clear River Chapaukee @ Random Tea Room and Curiosity Shop;** 5/15 **Bhob Rainey Group / Lina Allemano @ First Banana...Uri Caine & Prism Quartet** at World Café Live on 4/7.

Ken Weiss

International Jazz News

Portland, OR - The Bridge's Burn

I moved to Portland less than three years ago knowing almost nothing about it. I had not yet heard about how cool it was because I was still coming to grips with the fact that I was probably never again going to live in my favorite city, New York City (NYC). I was like a toddler who had a toy taken away. It did not matter that I was being given a different toy. "I want THAT one. Hmmp!" I received my master's degree at the end of 2011 and my wife and I knew we were not going to live in NYC anymore. We wanted to be closer to family and live in a city that we could actually afford. Being a jazz musician/composer/educator/columnist/arts-administrator, I wanted to be in a city with a viable jazz scene. Since my wife is from the Pacific Northwest we decided on Portland because of its relative affordability when compared to Seattle.

The only person I knew when I moved to town was the tremendous pianist, Clay Giberson. I knew Giberson through a mutual friend back in NYC. I had barely heard of Jimmy Mak's before because I tried to book part of a tour through Portland when I released my first album, *Atroefy*. I also knew that George Colligan and Darrell Grant taught at Portland State (both musicians whom I admired long before living in Portland). Other than that, I knew next to nothing about Portland's scene, its players, or its venues.

It did not take long for me to figure out how lucky I was to stumble into this town. The people are insanely nice, the beauty of the city and its surrounding areas are overpowering, and it is a town with a strong *vibe*. I have been in cities twice the size of Portland that do not have half of its *vibe*. And then there are the players... One of the things I was most concerned about going from NYC to any place else was the depth of the talent pool. The thing I liked most about NYC was getting my musical butt kicked on a daily basis. The last thing I wanted to do was move to a town and not be challenged by my peers. Man... this town is rife with amazing players in a multitude of jazz subgenres. The list is really long, but you name a style of jazz you want to hear, or any artist that inspires you, and I will give you the name of a Portland-based jazz artist that you would love.

There is a particular aspect of that *vibe* I am talking about that resonates within the Portland jazz scene. Much like the punk rockers of the mid-1970's, Portlanders heartily embrace a strong DIY ethic. So you want to open an ice cream store that serves flavors like anchovies + dish soap; or Velcro + arugula? Great! Expect lines around the block. Your dream is to combine the warmth of leg warmers with the comfort of shorts? Ok, well, we call those pants but you can rent a place on NW 23rd to sell them as long as you have a ridiculous name for your leg-warming shorts. You can do whatever the heck you want here as long as you include the people around you. In a recent Slate article, Douglas Wolk commented on Portland's tight-knit community by saying, "The small businesses that thrive here are the ones that plan for the long term with their staff and the community."

Wolk's sentiment is contextualized in the jazz scene by drummer Christopher Brown, who says, "It's clear that anyone with any kind of real energy can get create something." Brown has become one of the Portland jazz scene's most prominent forces by capturing this spirit in his music and his pursuits. Brown was born and raised here in Portland, and is virtually Portland jazz royalty since his father is the godfather of Portland jazz, Mel Brown. But he does not ride the coattails of his father. Like me, he spent considerable time in NYC studying with those that inspired him and performing alongside his musical heroes. In the recent years since Brown's return to Portland he has fashioned one of the most recognizable identities in the city's soundscape, started one of its most exciting jam sessions, and served as a mentor to some of the city's most promising students. Brown has recognized an opportunity for developing the scene and pounced upon it.

When I spoke with the esteemed faceman of Jimmy Mak's, JD Stubenberg, he conveyed that this DIY thing goes back much farther than Brown. "It goes back to when Leroy Vinnegar first moved here... legendary jazz bassist... been there, done that... and he couldn't get a gig! So Leroy went out there and said, 'Well, I'll just go make my own gig.' The young cats here now are taking that same attitude. 'We gotta go make something happen.'"

I know that this is certainly the case with the budding Portland Jazz Workshop (PJW). Still in its infancy, the PJW started as a Facebook page under the name, Portland Jazz Co-Op. One of my favorite musicians in town, Tim Willcox, came home after a gig one night and sought to band together some of the Portland jazz community through a Facebook page. The page spread like wildfire through our community, and we were soon all convening in a local pub trying to figure out how we could all combine our resources to the betterment of the community as a whole. The PJW settled on summing up their mission at one of these meetings by saying, "The PJW aims to promote and expand audience awareness and appreciation for Portland's jazz scene through high-quality performances, educational outreach, and focused networking. We aim to propel the local jazz scene to the forefront of Portland's rich arts culture. Additionally, we hope to increase the economic feasibility of being a professional jazz artist in Portland by providing a physical location that seeks to cultivate and present the highest levels of artistry that Portland has to offer." It has been a slow, but steady journey for the PJW; but thanks to the collective efforts of its participants there has been progress in programming some performances at a heretofore untapped venue, Michelle's Pianos. There has also been development with educational outreach at local community colleges.

The DIY ethic is even prominent in Portland's jazz festivals. As I write this, the 2015 Portland Jazz Festival is coming to a close. By most accounts, this year was as strong a year as any festival in recent memory. The attendance was plentiful, the level of artistry was high, and enthusiasm was abundant throughout the city. The Portland Jazz Festival is by far the largest jazz festival that the city has to offer; but last year showed that jazz festivals do not just come once a year to Bridgetown. The Cathedral Park Jazz Festival in the St. Johns neighborhood continued its impressive run despite some administrative hiccups; and the Mt. Hood Jazz Festival resumed its programming after a dramatic pause in its scheduling.

One of the more surprising successes was the Montavilla Jazz Festival (MJF) in Southeast Portland in August, 2014. Seemingly out of nowhere, the MJF boasted an impressive amount of modern/creative jazz musicians in its programming. And for a brand-new, grassroots jazz festival it received more than a healthy share of audience members that flocked to hear challenging new music. The MJF shares a common aesthetic with the Portland Jazz Composers' Ensemble (PJCE), who played an integral role in the festival's unveiling. MJF Director, Fritz Hirsch, and PJCE Executive Director, Douglas Detrick recently got together to discuss how the two entities can continue their success this coming summer. It appears that the 2015 Montavilla Jazz Festival will be another weekend jam packed full of new, exciting music on August 15th and 16th in the Portland Metro Arts complex on Stark St. and SE 90th Ave.

Though I have been painting a rosy portrait of our fair city, we have certainly had some challenges in the past year. In my future columns we will likely explore some of those. But this is a town that has an internationally renowned jazz musician like George Colligan playing, teaching, and being a relevant part of the local scene. Colligan is among the most accessible artists here in Portland and that accessibility is typically rooted in his desire to cultivate jazz in Portland. That ethos... that spirit of protecting Portland's own... it is an inescapable part of the cultural fabric of PDX (and when I say 'the fabric of PDX' I do not mean the carpet at the airport). As long as Portland maintains its unique vibe I think the resiliency of its jazz community will continue to thrive.

Ryan Meagher

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International Jazz News

Vancouver, BC Canada

Cory Weed's Cellar Jazz Society continues into the new year with a series of concerts in partnership with Coastal Jazz & Blues Soc. The first was 1/16 at Blue Frog Studios in White Rock with the Tilden Webb 3 (Webb piano, Jodi Proznick bass, drummer Jesse Cahill) and Tim Tamashiro voice. On 1/31 Seamus Blake and Geoffrey Keezer played the music of Eddie Harris along with Jesse Cahill and bassist Andre LaChance at a new venue – the PAL theatre in Coal Harbour. Next was guitarist Russell Malone 4tet on 2/28 with Tony Foster piano, Jodi Proznick & drummer Joe Poole also at PAL theatre. On 3/28, the Nightcrawlers with Jesse Cahill, Chris Gestrin organ, Dave Sikula guitar, Cory Weeds alto, Steve Kaldestad tenor, Dawn Pemberton vocal, and Paul Pigat & Jim Byrnes voice and guitar are at the Fox Cabaret on Main Street. Champian Fulton returns to Vancouver 4/10 @ Blue Frog with Cory Weeds, tenor, Jodi Proznick & drummer Julian MacDonough. On 4/25 at Pyatt Hall, it's pianist/composer David Braid & The Borealis String Quartet. In May, a group from Smalls Jazz Club in NYC appears 5/1&2 at the Shadbolt Centre in Burnaby and consists of pianist Spike Wilner, Joe Magnarelli, Grant Stewart and Peter Bernstein along with local rhythm bassist Adam Thomas and drummer Julian MacDonough. On 5/17, the Cory Weeds 4tet (Weeds sax, Adam Thomas & Julian MacDonough and guest from NYC Harold Mabern) play at Sanctuary @ Brentwood. Coastal Jazz & Blues presents Malian desert blues guitarist Vieux Farka Toure at the Fortune Sound Club 4/18 and pianist David Braid with the Borealis String 4tet 8/25 at Pyatt Hall. On 5/25&26, CJBS presents an evening with Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga. The 30th annual TD International Jazz Festival is 6/18-7/1. Pink Martini appears at the Orpheum 6/25. The full festival schedule will appear on <http://www.coastaljazz.ca/> by May 1st. At the Blueshore Center for the Performing Arts at Cap. U, trumpeter Randy Brecker appears with the "A" Band and the NiteCap vocal group. Meanwhile, Diana Krall's Wallflower World Tour appears at the Orpheum 5/13. For local jazz info and links, go to www.vancouverjazz.com.

Ron Hearn

April, May, June 2015 issue, Cadence Magazine

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International Jazz News

Toronto and Southwestern Ontario – April 2015 Edition, Past events

REX HOTEL

December: Special concerts: Big band Mondays with N.O.J.O.; Michael Brooker's MB10; John Cheesman Jazz orchestra; Mike Malone with the Writers jazz Orchestra. Special guests from New York include Huntertones, Quinsin Nachoff with James Brown. Other concerts include the Annual Student Jazz Event, Will Fisher & The Woodhouse Cd release, Larnell Lewis Sextet and the annual Rex new Year's Eve Bash with Grooveyard. Regular performers include Richard Whiteman Group on Tuesdays, Jim Gelcer groups on Wednesdays, Laura Hubert Band on Thursdays, Hogtown Syncopators on Fridays, Danny marks on Saturdays and the Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band on Sundays.

January: Special concerts: From New York Jeremy Pelt with Johnny Griffith, from Germany and NY the Florian Hoefner Quartet, From Montreal the Olivier Babaz Trio. Other concerts include the Bob Rice Latin band, Bernie Senensky's Double Quartet, and the 2014 Juno award winners the Mike Downs Quartet. Regular performers include: On Mondays The University of Toronto Student Jazz Ensembles, Tuesdays it is the Nathan Hiltz Quartet, Wednesdays it is Melissa Lauren, Thursdays it is Kevin Quain. Fridays The Hogown Syncopators, Saturdays Danny marks and Sundays the Excelsior Dixieland Jazz band.

February: Special concerts: From New York; Matt Wilson Quartet; Danjam Orchestra; Dave Liebman with the Mike Murley Quartet, Tom Guarna Quintet; Fredrik Ljungvist & Havard Wiik from Sweden/Norway, The Annual Student Jazz Initiative featuring the Humber College Student Jazz Ensembles. Regular performers include; The Excelsior Dixieland Jazz band on Sundays, U of Toronto or Humber College student ensembles on Mondays, Trevor Giancola Trio on Tuesdays, Juhas Brothers on Wednesdays, Worst Pop Band Ever on Thursdays, Hogtown Syncopators on Fridays and Danny Marks on Saturdays.

Jazz Room In Waterloo

On Jan 2 the Tim Louis Sextet, and on the 3 it is the William Carn Quintet. Jan 9 sees the Olivier Babaz Trio and on the 10 it is the EMS Quintet. On Jan 16 Glenn Buhr & The Button Factory appears and on Jan 17 it is the Johnny Griffith Quintet. Jan 23 sees the Steve McDade Quartet and the 24 features the Hakness-Herriott Duo. On Jan 30 Michael Occhipinti leads a group performing jazzed up versions of Beatles tunes. The 31 sees the Wayne Cass/ Richard Underhill Quartet. Feb 6 is the Alfredo Caxaj Latin Jazz Ensemble and Feb 7 is the Robi Botos Trio. Feb 13 is Francois Jalbery from Montreal and the 14 is vocalist Vinx with the Julie Michaels Quartet. Feb 21 is the Tom Guarna Quartet from New York. Feb 27 is Rahel Therrien from Montreal and Feb 28 is the Turboprop Sextet..

Bernie Koenig

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CADENCE FEATURE

A Remembrance of Kenny Wheeler

by Patrick Hinely

Kenneth Vincent John Wheeler

born 14 January 1930, Toronto, died 18 September 2014, London

There is little that Kenny Wheeler did not do, seemingly even less he could not do.

He was of that generation of European-based jazz players who dared to find and then follow their own voices, in the process making not only something from nothing, but something of worth, while their work evolved within a historical context in which deference to American players, especially beboppers and assorted other acrobats, constituted its own sort of caste system.

Not that players like Wheeler - or Albert Mangelsdorff, to name another of those trailblazers - were grouching about an inequitable status quo, railing in opposition, or touting their music as newer, different and better: they were busy, going intently about their work, and, as it turned out, could grow in several directions at once, and excel in all. They were consistently creating music of high quality, in the process leveling the international playing field, producing music which would rise up to equal and, in the view of some, as the decades passed, surpass what was simultaneously evolving - or devolving - in the USA.

Wheeler was Canadian by birth but had voluntarily headquartered in London by age 22, and went about building a career, transcending any lingering feelings of provincial inadequacy by paying his dues, participating in a steadily-developing British scene, rising into the trumpet section of its foremost big band, that of John Dankworth. He spent several years in those ranks, at the same time cultivating what became ever-increasing studio calls. The session work did not always require playing commensurate with his talent and versatility, but it supported his family.

It would be Dankworth's very pragmatic commission, in 1967, meant to keep Wheeler in the stable while recovering from dental surgery which precluded his playing for a couple of months, that led to Wheeler's debut album *WINDMILL TILTER*. It was in the stores - in the UK only - for the proverbial 20 minutes. Anyone who listened to it heard an imaginative composer, able player and estimable arranger who, with this debut album at age 38, had arrived fully formed, and conjured a new way to piece the puzzle together, alternating powerful yet subtle quintet and big band features for his harmonically advanced charts with a poetic narrative flow. By the time it was finally reissued on CD in 2010, LP copies had long been changing hands for hundreds of dollars apiece. Fortunately, most of his dozens of more recent albums can be found for far more reasonable prices.

It is said we can look forward to a much-needed biography of Wheeler by Nick Smart, who was amongst the trumpeters for Wheeler's final big band recording, *THE LONG WAITING*, though no publication date has yet been announced. Smart is Head of Jazz at the Royal Academy of Music, the institution to which Wheeler left his collected papers.

More than once since the 1970s, I've written about Wheeler or his work, beginning with a review of *Deer Wan* for *JAZZ* (1978), and most recently - and comprehensively - for *CODA* (#339, May/June 2008). Both of those publications are now, sadly, defunct. Some themes, passages and photographs I originally published earlier and elsewhere there will be reprised and, where pertinent, updated here. I would also recommend Jerry D'Souza's interview with Wheeler in *CODA* (# 282, Nov/Dec 1998).

Much was written about Wheeler upon his death, leaving no need for me to pile on to all that earnestly-earned and well-meant praise, so my intent is rather to present some otherwise-unpublished words of tribute from a few of his colleagues, a few inscrutable words of wisdom from the man himself, relate a couple of stories about Wheeler which perhaps will eventually become part of his lore and legend and offer a brief but hopefully comprehensive selected discography.

Winnowing Wheeler's recorded oeuvre to ten albums is especially challenging, because each presents yet another distinctly unique facet of the many-sided gem his music is, so I've made it ten each for Wheeler as bandleader and ten as band member under the aegis of others, and also appended the Azimuth recordings as an entire category unto themselves, though there are only seven at most.

Admittedly, my selections tend to feature Wheeler the player as composer/leader and not as a participant in free music, for I am not nearly as familiar with recordings of the latter as of the former. It is important in any case to recognize Wheeler as a pioneering co-founder of the free scene, especially that particular/peculiar British variety of free jazz which, thanks to the likes of John Stevens, was already percolating in London when The Blue Notes arrived, those South African expats who promptly fomented a virtual explosion on several musical fronts.

Wheeler once told me he enjoyed free playing most when it followed more conventional gigs, providing a welcome opportunity to blow off steam at evening's end and to try out some new ideas in a less structured setting. Those late-night aerobic bloodbaths came to catch on in an even bigger way in Germany and the Netherlands, enough to lure Wheeler to the continent more and more frequently, where he also picked up less avant- though not necessarily less adventurous other gigs, the result being that for much of his career, he commuted from the UK to the continent for the bulk of his income-producing work. His membership in the Spontaneous Music Ensemble, the United Jazz + Rock Ensemble and bands led by Graham Collier, Mike Gibbs, Anthony Braxton, Alex Von Schlippenbach, George Gruntz and especially Dave Holland should also be mentioned, for he distinguished himself in each of those contexts as well. I won't even try to enumerate his one-off recordings beyond saying there are hundreds.

Selected Discography

As bandleader:

WINDMILL TILTER – (BGO CD reissue, 2010, UK) Addressed above. The core quintet for this 1968 debut comprised Wheeler, John McLaughlin, Dave Holland (pre-Miles for the both of 'em), Tony Coe and John Spooner. Cervantes would have marveled at this interpretation of his Don Quixote saga. The wistful nature of Wheeler's melodic proclivity is already clearly evident. God bless Sir John Dankworth for giving Wheeler something to do while recuperating.

SONG FOR SOMEONE – (Psi CD reissue, 2004, UK) A decidedly and distinctively different large-ensemble outing from its predecessor, this is where Wheeler really gets to start being Wheeler as a bandleader, peopling his ranks with the best players from across the spectrum, bringing together 20 of London's finest – including Evan Parker, Mike Osborne, Derek Bailey, Tony Oxley, John Taylor and Norma Winstone - and giving them plenty of opportunities to excel, as does the trumpet soloist too. This music has focus *and* energy, unusual for that time, when most such projects had one or the other, but not both.

GNU HIGH – (ECM, 1976) Seemingly noted as often for being Keith Jarrett's last appearance as a sideman (making Wheeler the only trumpeter/bandleader besides Miles Davis for whom the pianist filled that role) as for being Wheeler's first recording beyond the shores of Albion, there's much more to it than that, in the open-endedness of the extended tunes, well-explored by all involved. Featuring Holland and Jack DeJohnette in the rhythm section, it could have been billed as Wheeler with a Miles Davis alumni band. It has proven durable, and auspicious for what would follow.

DEER WAN – (ECM, 1978) When I reviewed this in 1978, I said listening to a Wheeler tune made me feel like I'd arrived, after having been somewhere. All I would add to that in hindsight is to say he traveled via the scenic route. The two guitarists, John Abercrombie and Ralph Towner, add to the conversation with their own textural vocabularies, as saxophonist Jan Garbarek sounds like himself, while Holland and DeJohnette again provide anchors.

AROUND SIX – (ECM, 1980) This is Wheeler in yet another prime element, bringing such outside players as Evan Parker and Edward Vesala to his inside music and demolishing the barriers between, by writing, as did Ellington, specifically for those who would play the music, but still composing very much in his own style, where the line between inside and outside was always blurry at best. Trombonist Eje Thelin, vibist Tom Van Der Geld and bassist J.-F. Jenny-Clark round out the sextet.

DOUBLE DOUBLE YOU – (ECM, 1984) The 14+ minute opener “Foxy Trot” is one of those rare musical Mobius Strips that goes on, deliciously, with a constant verve few can sustain with such gleeful triumph. This album showcases some of Michael Brecker's best work, with Holland and DeJohnette maintaining the foundation upon which pianist John Taylor and the horn players dance. Some of Wheeler's most traditional/conventional tunes provide plenty of stepping-off points for explorations much closer to the edge than the middle, yet never sound stretched, but rather, adventurous.

ANGEL SONG – (ECM, 1997) In the interest of full disclosure, I must acknowledge my good fortune to have been present at the creation of this music, which was a human drama already fascinating long before a note was played, as Wheeler, though titular leader and composer of all the music, respectfully deferred to the seniority of Lee Konitz, while Dave Holland served as de facto interlocutor between Wheeler and producer Manfred Eicher, who did his best to steer the ship without ever being seen at the helm. Once the tapes were rolling, everyone became part of a whole greater than the sum of its parts – and its parts were each pretty remarkable unto themselves, with guitarist Bill Frisell matter-of-factly summoning up whole galaxies of orchestrally supportive texture while Konitz and Wheeler conversed with more intensity than density as Holland paced the proceedings. Sweet stuff.

WHAT NOW? - (CAM Jazz, 2005) Wheeler's later drummerless quartet recording, featuring Chris Potter with Wheeler vets Taylor and Holland. Of the seven albums Wheeler recorded for CAM Jazz, (each with a different lineup), this is the one I go back to most often, possibly because it can be seen as Angel Song unto the next generation. Wayne Shorter is reported to have said, when asked what it felt like to be the best saxophonist in the world, that he didn't know – that you'd have to ask Chris Potter. Nor did Wheeler stop checking out the up-and-coming players – in his even later years, he shared a front line with Jon Irabagon...

THE LONG WAITING – (CAM Jazz, 2012) Wheeler's final big band recording, with the usual suspects: old hands and some of London's other finest players, many of whom appeared as volunteers among the 20 in the ranks. It's a summation of

sorts, featuring tunes old and new, with Wheeler and conductor Pete Churchill in more mutual league than the several big bands with whom Wheeler had recorded whole albums in several countries during the preceding decades. Those others were all hors d'oeuvres, while this is the entrée. Less varied in ensemble permutations than the more widely-acknowledged double-disc masterpiece MUSIC FOR LARGE AND SMALL ENSEMBLES (ECM, 1991), it may be the stronger presentation. In short: if you like this one, go for the two-fer next...

SONGS FOR QUINTET – (ECM, 2015) The wise old master convened long-time colleagues for what turned out to be his final album: Stan Sulzmann, guitarist John Parricelli, bassist Chris Laurence and drummer Martin France. Wheeler's and saxophonist Sulzmann's exchanges twirl gracefully, more like ballet dancers than dervishes. Though past the days of his customary blazing solos, the fire still glowed, with the coals banked in a way to let all the players bask in the warmth. Photos of Wheeler from the sessions show an older gentleman, who, if diminished by time, is yet undaunted, and determined to speak his unique truth. A vision that keeps coming to me as I listen to this music is of the band members joining hands to collectively lift Wheeler up as all play their hearts out, lovingly enveloping him. Little about this album sounds valedictory, but it is a fittingly high note for the man to go out on.

As a member of Azimuth:

Wheeler thought of this trio as John Taylor's band, since the pianist instigated its formation and, at least at the outset, wrote most of the music. He and Wheeler had already been playing in each other's bands for years, and both had worked extensively with vocalist Norma Winstone, Taylor's wife at the time, as well. Taylor's initial concept was a duo with Winstone, to which ECM hegemon Manfred Eicher suggested adding a third member. The choice was unanimous and the rest is history. Never did Wheeler shine brighter or more uniquely than as a member of this trio, a peak not only for British chamber jazz but arguably for the ECM label itself. They defy gravity with their ethereality, yet the substance is there, gracefully presented with overwhelming understatement... And so on. One can hardly go wrong with any of their recordings. AZIMUTH (ECM, 1977) – Few critics knew quite what to do with this album when it appeared, for there was nothing to compare it to, a quality which eventually came to be a trademark of this group.

THE TOUCHSTONE (ECM, 1978) – More of the same, and equally engaging.

DEPART (ECM, 1980) – The only album with a guest: guitarist Ralph Towner of the quartet Oregon, one of the few other ensembles on the planet possessing a similar sort of subtle intensity.

Those first three albums were reissued as a 3-CD set (ECM #1546 – 48, 1994)

AZIMUTH '85 (ECM, 1985) – A personal favorite, upon which they soar to their loftiest peaks. "Breathtaking" is exactly that. Winstone transcends being a lyricist and becomes a poet, at which she has excelled since, most recently with her own trio. This is the first album to include a Wheeler tune.

HOW IT WAS THEN... NEVER AGAIN (ECM, 1995) – The ensemble's swan song, with a couple of Wheeler tunes and one by Bobo Stenson, as well as a rare Wheeler solo feature, his multi-tracking of Irving Berlin's "How Deep Is The Ocean." Pretty fucking deep, from the sound of it...

SIREN'S SONG, Maritime Jazz Orchestra (Justin Time, Canada, 1997) – All three members of Azimuth – though not the band itself – are named on the cover and are billed as 'with' The Maritime Jazz Orchestra, director and reedman Greg Carter's 16-piece Halifax-based juggernaut assaying both Taylor's and Wheeler's repertoire with an orchestral palette which doth not obscure the trio's own sound. Glorious.

NOW AND NOW AGAIN, Maritime Jazz Orchestra (Justin Time, Canada, 2002) – This time the MJO billing on the front cover is 'featuring' the three, naming them, but, again, not naming Azimuth, presenting even more extended pieces than its predecessor, one by Taylor, three by Wheeler, including a 29+ minute "Sweet Ruby Suite". This project concluded the trio's trans-Atlantic adventures.

As a band member:

It will be an Olympian task for whoever finally compiles a thorough listing of Wheeler's work under the aegis of other bandleaders/colleagues. Some of the best has never appeared on CD, and my list barely touches the Italian labels, where he was prolific far beyond his two leader dates for Soul Note.

LIVE AT RONNIE SCOTT'S, Ronnie Scott and The Band (Columbia, 1968) – This octet set the stage afire, and no wonder, when one considers the roster: joining Scott on saxophones are John Surman and Ray Warleigh, while trombonist Chris Pyne and Wheeler comprise the brass, with Ron Mathewson, bass, Tony Oxley on drums, and Gordon Beck on piano and organ. The repertoire includes a couple of Wheeler tunes (one from WINDMILL TILTER) and a couple by Joe Henderson, and the former hold up every bit as sturdily as the latter. Surman and Wheeler are the two who most consistently play their asses off, in delightful ways. A nice slice of upbeat history from an essentially formative era in British jazz.

PAUSE AND THINK AGAIN, John Taylor – (FMR CD reissue 1995). Three of the eight players on pianist Taylor's 1971 debut would eventually coalesce as Azimuth, the seeds of which can be heard here, along with Surman's soaring soprano all driven by drummer Tony Levin, and latter-day cohorts Sulzmann and Laurence in the ranks. Seriously lyrical stuff. Wheeler is the only musician without a photo in the gatefold cover, perhaps exemplifying his seeming philosophy that modesty is the best policy.

SOUND SUGGESTIONS, George Adams – (ECM, 1979) Triangulating Wheeler with Adams and Heinz Sauer, respectively saxophonists-of-choice for Charles Mingus and Albert Mangelsdorff, was one of the more interesting limbs Manfred Eicher went out on back in the day. Holland and DeJohnette are joined by pianist Richie Beirach on the back line, and things get woolly both there and out front as sparks fly. The five pieces include both the opener “Baba” and closer “A Spire” by Wheeler.

LIFELINES, Arild Andersen – (ECM, 1981, LP only) This quartet recording is one of the most gaping holes in the ECM CD reissue program, not only for Wheeler's worthy contributions but also those of pianist Steve Dobrogosz, from whom not nearly as much has been heard since as should. Add to that the bassist-bandleader's consistently interesting compositions and his interplay with drummer Paul Motian and you have the makings of a significant musical meeting.

LIVE!, Third Eye - (View, Germany, 1982, LP only) Wheeler, in the company of saxophonists Alan Skidmore and Wilton Gaynair, takes the stage for pianist Rob Van den Broeck's sextet with his longtime mate Ali Haurand on bass and Tony Levin in the drum seat. Side two is nearly 24 minutes of Wheeler's “River Run,” and the joyous energy of this assemblage is infectious. Levin was a force of nature, a useful quality when one is trying to keep up with Skidmore, and Wheeler does.

CONJURATION, Pepper Adams – (Reservoir, 1990) Recorded live in 1983 in New York at Fat Tuesday's, Wheeler rises to the bopping occasion in good form and is in good company with the baritonist and pianist Hank Jones. Blowing sessions are always better when the familiar encounters the unfamiliar in an inviting setting, and having Cannonball's drummer of choice, Louis Hayes, to propel the lot definitely adds fuel to the fire. There's only one Wheeler tune, but plenty of great playing and interplay.

THE LOST TAPES, Rena Rama (Amigo, Sweden, 1998) These 1987 recordings put Wheeler and drummer Billy Hart among some of Scandinavia's finest: pianist Bobo Stenson, saxophonist Lennart Aberg and bassist Anders Jormin. Three of the six tunes are Wheeler's. Described by some as having a 'post-ECM' sound, call it what you like. To me it is the sound of unfettered camaraderie within a creative collective chemistry.

[TOUCHE], Kenny Wheeler and Paul Bley (Justin Time, Canada, 1996) This Canadian expatriates' duo – recorded in Montreal, pianist Bley's home town - is a summit meeting of sorts but really more of a relatively quiet – and deep – conversation. Both men let their unique individual evolved languages blend into something more universal, with both salty and sweet moments abounding. This is the sort of thing that can make even the usually-humble Canadians proud.

ORDESA, Stan Sulzmann, John Parricelli and Kenny Wheeler (Symbol, UK, 2002) It's an orgy of melody among these kindred spirits, comfortably intimate in their shared explorations. It could be considered a chamber-ish precursor to Wheeler's final quintet, though the repertoire is shared among the three, plus Strayhorn's “A Flower Is a Lovesome Thing,” a timelessly pretty vehicle delicately handled by these three.

FELLINI JAZZ, Enrico Pieranunzi (CAM Jazz, 2003) – There are no Wheeler tunes, but Nino Rota's music assayed by the likes of Wheeler, Potter, bassist Charlie Haden and Motian in the company of Rota's fellow Italian, pianist Pieranunzi, makes this one of the most memorable multinational European recording projects in the post-MPS period. Pieranunzi records prolifically, but seldom with so much august company or attaining such heights.

Anecdotally speaking...

Wheeler's humility was legendary. A possibly in-part apocryphal tale which touches on this arises from an Arts Council tour to the North of England some years ago, the most probable instigators being Mike Gibbs and/or Nick Purnell, likely during the late '80s or early '90s, in which the bus carrying a big band, including Tom Harrell – another man incapable of playing an insincere note - as well as Wheeler among the trumpets, stopped for teatime at a lay-by along the highway. It turned out that the canteen on that side was closed, so all were sent to the matching facility across the way, and it was from the window seats there, overlooking the highway, that some of the other band members, by now enjoying their tea and biscuits, recalled seeing Wheeler and Harrell, still on the far side of the road, establishing new heights in deference, repeatedly motioning to one another “Oh no – after you - I couldn't possibly...”

At the end of our first meeting, at Edmonton's Jazz City Festival in 1981, Wheeler and I exchanged addresses, and for the next 32 holiday seasons, his was the first Christmas card to arrive, usually around November's end, and always signed “Kenny and Doreen Wheeler”. In 2001, I thought I had finally got the jump on him when, rather than airmailing his card, I brought it with me to his early-December appearance, in Washington DC, and delivered it personally, for which he thanked me, his trademark poker face never flinching as he read the envelope and put it in his trumpet case, then went on about his tasks, preparing for the gig. Upon returning home the next day, I found in my mailbox the season's first card, from the Wheelers, postmarked in London a full week earlier...

And another, this one courtesy of Norma Winstone:

Kenny took some spectacles to the optician to be mended; they had screws missing, etc. (he was always dropping them). He told me that there was a nice young lady behind the counter and he asked “Can you do something with these?” She thanked him and said that they would send them to Ethiopia, as there was a great need for them there. He just left them with her, without saying why he had really brought them in. He told me that he didn't want to disappoint her! Such things can hardly be made up.

Postscript:

Early this year, an official Blue Plaque was unveiled at Wheeler's long-time home in the Leytonstone district of London. These markers emanate from the UK's National Jazz Archive, to recognize and celebrate "much loved jazz musicians who contributed greatly to the story of British jazz." The inscription describes Wheeler as "One of the most influential jazz musicians of the late 20th century." They got that right.

Words of tribute:

From trumpeter Tom Arthurs, British-born, now living in Berlin:

It's pretty much impossible to imagine how the musical lives of most of my generation would have turned out if it wasn't for Kenny Wheeler - such a sound, such a personal-yet-generous and big-hearted approach to music-making, such beauty - and always so clear who was speaking - from Spontaneous Music Ensemble and Globe Unity, through Azimuth and the small groups to his own big band scoring, Kenny Wheeler showed us it's all possible.

From long-time colleague and friend Norma Winstone:

Although Kenny's music has been a part of my life for over 40 years I don't think it ever lost its magic for me. Standing next to this unassuming man and having the chance to listen to him creating those lines in his improvisation, which always swept me along never able to anticipate where they would finish, was such a gift to me. Then to sing his written lines, always so satisfying to get right, and to try to match my sound with his, was a joy.

A quiet man who could seem distant at times, very shy, absolutely serious about music, whether listening or playing. He listened a great deal to all kinds of music (perhaps not pop!) and would always listen to new music sent him by young musicians and much to their surprise, would often respond with encouraging remarks.

His sound and playing were so original; two notes and you knew it was him. His writing was unusual in its form and use of harmony; again immediately recognisable. I think he was a musical giant and I hate the thought that there won't be any more new music from him. How wonderful though that we have so much of him still.

From another long-time colleague and friend, saxophonist Stan Sulzmann: Ken was one of those wonderful artists I have been privileged to work with who lift the spirit out of the ordinary. For me, he was like Messiaen or Coltrane. His compositions were instantly recognizable, with their own language of harmony and beautiful melodies. Standing alongside him on the bandstand, I heard solos that more than took my breath away - they made my hair stand on end: the phrasing, the full sound, and the passion. Over the years, rather than becoming more complex, he whittled things down to the pure essentials.

Words from Kenny:

I don't say much, but when I do, I don't say much.

When I'm writing a tune, what I think I'm looking for is something I'm not looking for.



Kenny Wheeler

portrait, August 1981

Four Seasons Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta, during Jazz City Festival

Shot during our first meeting, at which the first thing Wheeler said to me was that he wasn't much on smiling for photos, something he proceeded to prove true for the next 27 years.



Azimuth: Kenny Wheeler, Norma Winstone and John Taylor
band photo, August 1987
courtyard of Ethel's Place club, Baltimore MD

Shot during one of the trio's rare appearances in North America, after soundcheck late on a summer's afternoon, near the waterfront, hot and humid enough that we kept moving for fear that we'd mildew if we didn't.



Kenny Wheeler
rehearsal, January 1991
Blues Alley, Washington DC

Wheeler's quintet had an all-afternoon rehearsal at the venue, and here we see him going at it, next to the arm of John Abercrombie, behind which can be seen the arm of bassist Gary Peacock, subbing in for regular Dave Holland.



Kenny Wheeler and Dave Holland
ECM recording session, February 1996
Power Station, New York City

Shot early on during the ANGEL SONG sessions, this is the closest I ever saw either man come to mugging for a photo, and it wasn't really the photo they were mugging for, it was each other: while sorting charts, these two long-time if not frequent colleagues were reciting lines from Laurel and Hardy on that duo's famous theme of 'another fine mess.' The recording was anything but.



John Abercrombie and Kenny Wheeler
between sets, in upstairs green room, December 2001
Blues Alley, Washington DC

Not seen is the trio's other member, pianist Marc Copland, who was busy scribbling charts inches behind me in a room far too tiny for all of these huge musical personalities. Their music was a delightful orgy of melody, played for an audience far too small in the post-9/11 atmosphere of that city.



Luciana Souza, Kenny Wheeler and Andrew Rathbun
rehearsal with Andrew Rathbun big band, August 2002
Context Studios, Brooklyn NY

A fellow Torontonians expatriate, saxophonist Rathbun assembled a big band to present a program of Wheeler's and his own music at Birdland, including one of Wheeler's extended suites, which they are playing here, the only piece to feature vocalist Souza, who is one of a very few in the world capable of as gracious a reading of Wheeler's scores as Norma Winstone.



Kenny Wheeler

Sound checking in recording studio, November 2008
WDR Studio, Koeln, Germany As a guest with the WDR Big Band, arguably Germany's finest, Wheeler was given the soloist's booth, and is here seen there in splendid isolation.



Kenny Wheeler and Norma Winstone
after the recording session, November 2008
WDR Studio, Koeln, Germany

Wheeler photo captions:

All photographs are © by Patrick Hinely, Work/Play®

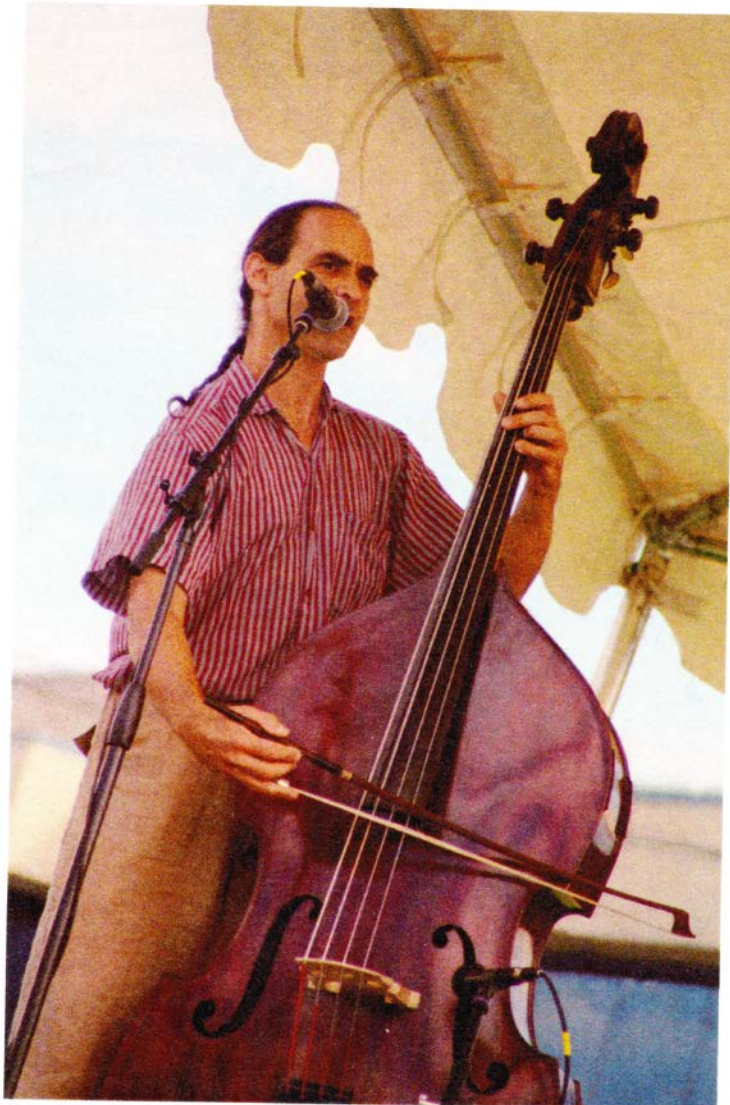
Perhaps it was because by now that I knew better than to expect, much less ask for a smile, that Kenny just up and looked as happy as I ever saw him look. Of course being in the company of the great vocalist, lyricist/poet and fellow human being Norma Winstone would be enough to make any thinking man happy. Little did I know this would be the last photo I would ever take of Kenny Wheeler, but I have come to think of it as a nice high note to go out on.

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Steve Luceno Interview

Taken and Transcribed
by James Bennington

I first met bassist/composer Steve Luceno while visiting a dear friend and wonderful mentor, the late Bert Wilson. There was a rare appearance by drummer James Zitro (ESP) and I had the good fortune to see Bert and James reunited once again. After all I had learned from Bert it was something special to not only meet Zitro, but to hang with these guys, who by the way, were all about the history and the continuing of this great art form at all costs. More and more, it is the artists who get so little light thrown their way, those who toil away from the spotlight, that not only pique my interest, but leave me with the feeling that their story needs to be told (thank God for Cadence!) and put into and among the stories of those more recognized and supported. Steve Luceno is one such artist and it is a pleasure, and a belated one (after an eight year interim between our first meeting in 2006!), to present this oral history.



Cadence: Steve, first off, where you born?

Steve Luceno: I am from the suburbs of New York City, Westchester County...a town called Mamaroneck. I'm sixty years old now, so I was born in '54.

CAD: What's your birthdate?

SL: The 25th of March (1954)

CAD: Do you play other instruments? I wondered if you played piano or...

SL: I only use the piano to learn songs and to compose sometimes, to write songs or to write arrangements. I enjoy playing piano but I don't play it well enough to perform on it. I play string bass and I used to play electric bass a little bit, but as the years went by I just devoted myself to string bass and never really learned much about the electric bass. But I do double on guitar.

CAD: How long have you been playing guitar? Which came 1st, guitar or the bass?

SL: You know they kind of came at the same time... as a team...I started playin' music kind of late...I was sixteen years old before I started playing. And I started playing electric bass and guitar at that point. And by the time I was about twenty...twenty-one I made the switch over to really wanting to play the string bass and from then on string bass really took over.

CAD: Now when you say guitar, are we talking about electric guitar or acoustic, or both?

SL: Well I love playing in the style of like...Barney Kessell and Kenny Burrell and Wes Montgomery, those guys just really, those guys are some of my heroes... musically.

CAD: So do you play guitar gigs?

SL: I do occasionally, I play guitar gigs, not as many as I would like to, and you know because of that I'm not as up on playing it because I don't the chance to play it quite too often...

CAD: Exactly.

SL:...but I practice a lot. And to, you know, to learn songs, actually, I prefer to learn songs on piano or guitar, and then take them to the bass. You can really kind of get into them deeper with the extra harmony I can get, playing the piano or guitar, and then take them to the bass and figure out how I can make it work on a bass for myself and or how am I going to play it with a group.

CAD: That's interesting because the bass is your main musical instrument for expression, and yet you don't compose on it, you compose on guitar and piano...

SL: Well yeah, sometimes I compose on the bass, some songs I'll write from the bass. But actually the main instrument I use for composition is vibes. I have a small vibes kit in the house thats a hand built kind of a kit that a friend of mine built and gave to me, nice guy to do that, and I like to just take one stick and write a melody. You know, just a simple melody that, and then work the harmony and everything...but I find working with the stick helps me really to get a melody that has more rhythmic aspects...and if I work with one stick, I don't get too complicated, I try to write something that isn't specific to an instrument, the problem is if I write something on bass a lot of times it's specific to the bass and it may not work when you spread it out across a whole band.

CAD: You want it to just be plain old music to be interpreted by any and all instruments

SL: Exactly! And I find workin' with the stick helps me to keep it in a nice rhythmic pocket, and I might stay a little simple on my melodies, but as long as they hold up and there's something that I feel can be developed by other musicians...then I'm happy with that.

CAD: OK so does this mean that you are also a drummer? Do you know drum rudiments and stuff?

SL: I only know simple conga patterns, bongo patterns, a little bit of shekere patternsand some of the Cuban and Caribbean and African basic, and I'm talking about basic, rudiments...I mean I can't do anything fancy on any of those instruments, but yes, I like to work in African classical rhythms. I

like to work in...if I have an idea for a melody, I'll quite often search for a way to make the melody work within a certain clave pattern, or a certain shekere pattern, you know what I mean? I really like those...I like those dance rhythms, I basically love...I do like dance rhythms.

CAD: And you're talking about, of course, World or Traditionally influenced things, not something you're going to hear in a discotheque

SL: Unless it's some really hip disco song that has some cool rudiments going on! (Laughing). Some of that stuff from...if you go into a disco in Brazil maybe you'll hear something different.

CAD: So let me ask you this, what do you feel are the similarities between the bass and the guitar? They almost seem as if they are in the same family...the wood with the strings over it.

SL: Yeah well when you think of it, the guitar is largely a bass clef instrument, that low E is the low E in a bass clef, and the bass is a double bass, it goes down an octave below that, but those low strings on the guitar are bass clef strings....you don't hit the treble clef until you get to the C on the B string, and then you get up into the middle C. And it's wonderful, when I write for guitar I actually write in Grand Staff? because it's easier for me to interpret, I have trouble reading the guitar music where it's all written in treble clef, I'll write it out in Grand Staff? and when you really map it out and take a look at what the guitar can do...it has all the very critical bass clef potential, and then you know you can easily tune your guitar down a little bit and it will retain good tone and you can morph almost into the double bass category....

CAD: Yeah I've heard some guitarists really get into the very low notes...

S: Uh huh, so I think that is why working with the guitar is a fun thing for me, and being able to take it easily to the bass, plus just playing the other instruments, playing a little bit on each of the instruments helps me to understand my place in the band. You know, how I can make the drum sound best, how to make the guitar sound the best, how I can be in there in the pocket, playin' and havin' fun, and makin' everybody feel comfortable with what they want to do....I'd like to play bass in a way that makes the other musicians in the band sound the best they can.

CAD: That's great....

SL: And when you...it doesn't hurt to have two people thinking' that way on the bandstand either....if you have drums and bass working that way together it can be very liberating for everything.

CAD: What is your reason for living in Olympia, Wa. For a guy born in New York, how did you end up there?

SL: I didn't get to Olympian until I was twenty-three. And I sort of wandered and had a nomadic life from the time I was sixteen...for a long...I really wandered around and when I landed in Olympia I met many people who I felt were really good musicians, who really loved playing and...they invited me to play with them, and that just made me feel great, so I stuck around to do that. And it turned out that a lot of them knew Bert Wilson, Bert was in New York at the time, and we played some of Bert's songs, because they had known Bert in San Francisco...and were friends of his.

CAD: And who were these artists?

SL: Michael Moore, pianist who studied with Ed Kelly, who was an underground famous piano player in the SF and Oakland area, he also studied with Smith Dobson, and those guys were playin' with Bert in the SF Oakland area and Michael Moore was good friends with all of them, and he's from Olympia and he was up here in a band, and so I got to be in a band with Michael and then, through Michael, several other people had met Bert, knew him, and enjoyed his music.... and when we found

a couple of years after I got to Olympia in 1977, maybe three years after I arrived I think, Bert was sort of *stranded*, basically, in a bad situation in upstate New York, and I went and visited him there...

CAD: Did you drive, or fly, or what?

SL: I road the rails! (laughing)

CAD: Cause I've been up there and it's a lot of country, and it's a lot of time....it takes eight to ten hours to get out of the State if you're comin' from the city.

SL: That's right. Well Bert was stranded in a bad situation up there, he did not have a lot of close friends nearby who could come by and help him with things, or even just visit him and play music with him much less. He couldn't get out of the place he was living, literally, because it was in the middle of winter and the place he was living there was like this whole valley, and the water would melt and run down into his front door and freeze him in! It was awful! And I had to chip the ice away to be able to get in the door and talk to him and visit with him. When I came back to Olympia I told those guys what kind of a situation he was in, and we sent him a plane ticket and said 'Do you want to come to Olympia? It's a little bit better situation.'

Then he got here and liked it...

CAD: So you were the catalyst for Bert Wilson moving to Olympia?

SL: No, I was one of the many people who helped to get him here.

CAD: Yeah, well, you were the messenger that went forth and checked him out.

SL: Right. yeah that's right. And then he came here and it was wonderful, we all began to study with him...and playing music with him at his house...of course his house was always the big jam session house...and the rest of it is, you know, we spent...he was here for living in Olympia until his death recently, and got married to the woman he loved, made a lot of music, wrote a lot of songs, what a guy.

CAD: Had you been playing with him regularly up until his death?

SL: I played in his band as the bass player... in his performance band, and his rehearsal band from about 1980 to '85, and I'd say I was the rehearsal bass player and then if Chuck Metcalf or, he (Bert) had several other bass players that he worked with, who were, admittedly, way more advanced than I was in those days and they would do the performances and do the albums with him, unless they weren't available and then I got to perform with him also, kind of a second string player and learned a lot by being able to do that and listen to the first string guys and how they did it and what a wonderful thing that was...just great.

CAD: Well when I met you (Bert's home, 2005), on one of my last visits there, you were playing with Bert, a fine pianist?, and ESP recording artist James ZITro...and I remembered Bert telling me, "Oh! Steve Luceno, you should know him...he's Great!" Talk about playing with drummer James Zitro...

SL: Well James came, James was one of those friends of Bert's from way back when and they lived together in that Oakland area,

and they moved to New York together and shared an apartment there in New York, they spent a lot of time developing their own particular way of playing together...they had an unusual connection to each other; they were always understanding where each other were going, and just the two of them playing in a duo was a magic thing, because of how well they could read each other and follow each other, and so when James came to visit a few times I did get to play a few gigs with him (Zitro), and Bert, and they worked with many other bassists and piano players too at the time also. Fred Raulston, and he's a vibes player...wonderful vibes player, was on this particular gig that we played when I first met Jim...I remember when I first met James Zitro, and we did a little tour, and again, it was a

great spot for me to be just learning from these people who had been doin' it for longer and had dedicated their lives to it in such a great way. I truly admire their ability to read each others minds, direction wise, in the music. That was what I particularly got from playing with both James and Bert, and there were certain people who could do that with Bert, James was one who could do that very well, they had this magic connection...that has followed, that kind of thing has happened several times, you just, you know, you meet two people who really connect together and then you come in to this conversation that they already have as a musician, as a third or fourth member in a band and I want to, in that situation, be there to enjoy their conversation, and in way, be sure that you're not in the way, you know what I mean? That is the beautiful thing that's happening, so you want to make that happen even on a more brilliant level, and try to connect with them yourself, of course, on your own conversational level, but you don't want to change things. So, everything is a learning experience, so when I first met James, I was learning his particular...way, his particular way of making the music come to life. That's always so interesting to me, because people are so different in their approaches, you really meet over the course of a lifetime playing music, so many musicians who do things quite differently from each other (laughing)... and as a bass player, a lot of times you're picked up to complete a band, complete a quartet, or a quintet, or whatever, and you need to really focus in and listen to where these people are comin' from...and how you can be there with them.

CAD: Right, even if they're not in the right place, it's still got to somehow work.

SL: Well that's it. It's more important that it works, than it's right! (laughing)

CAD: Talk about some of the people you were playing with before you met Bert Wilson, and others of note that you'd like to mention.

SL: There's a couple of people who probably nobody really knows about, one was a piano player with Harry James' band for twenty years, he played piano and did a lot of the arranging for Harry James' band, and he lived here in Olympia, and his name was Jack Perciful. Jack has passed away, and I miss him terribly...he taught me so much...I had so much fun playing with him. When I first got to Olympia, people told 'Hey there's this guy Jack Perciful...' and I was really kind of settling into being with my string bass rather than guitar or electric bass at that point, and I wanted to know the Standard repertoire of jazz, this is about 1977, and I wanted to know the Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, etc. repertoire that the quote 'Standard jazz players' would play, and Jack knew 1,000's of songs, and he had a solo job here in Olympia, and I asked him if I could just bring my bass up and sit in with him once in awhile, and he immediately said, 'Yeah baby! bring the bass' (Laughing)

And he taught me these...he was so patient with me, he didn't want to read out of a book, and he didn't want to bring an amplifier into the situation, it was just the bass and me, no music, no music stand, he would play through a song. He would play it almost rubato so I could hear the song and trace along with him, then he'd would say 'OK, and here it is with rhythm.' and we'd kick in. And I went and played with Jack Perciful at his solo job two or three times a week, for two years, and it was the best learning experience I ever had in my life, the best, he was a wonderful teacher and a fantastic swinging' piano player...for those people who do know and have heard of Jack Perciful, they know what I'm talkin' about. He was the real thing, a great guy and a true, gifted musician. That was one guy who I miss a lot, and he and I had many years of playing together. Another person is Joe Baque. And Joe made his career in NYC. He was born in 1922 and he started playin' his first professional gigs in NYC in 1934! So, do the math, and he was twelve years old when he was out there playin' the

same clubs that some of the great Harlem stride piano players were playing. And he stayed in NYC doing that, solo piano, and piano with all kinds of people. He also, in his career became a wonderful vibes player, and was asked to be the replacement for Marjorie Hines when she quit George Shearing's band in the '50's, but he couldn't do it because he had just gotten married and had too many commitments, but that's how good...how beautiful a vibes player he became. He has an extraordinary repertoire of nine or ten thousand songs and I'm not exaggerating.

CAD: Is he still living?

SL: He is now 92 years old...no 91, he'll be 92 in February of 2014, and I still do gigs with him and he still carries his electric piano and his electric amplifier to the gig and lights the place up...and he's 91.

CAD: Is this in Olympia?

SL: So that's another guy...and he lives in Olympia. He showed up...he had a job on a cruise ship when he was sixty-five and a woman from Olympia was on the ship and they fell in love and she brought him back here...he's been living here since 1985 or so.

CAD: Sounds like in another country this guy would be a national treasure.

SL: He may not be a national known name treasure, but here in Olympia he is a celebrity, I gotta tell ya, and it's wonderful, he deserves to be a celebrity. People love him, not only for his music, but for who he is, and as far as his music goes, he just...he has such a love affair going on with the piano and you can just feel it every time he touches it.

CAD: What was it like to play with James Zitro? What was your impression of that kind of drumming?

SL: Well first of all, I did not get to do too many gigs with him; it was a few rehearsals and a few gigs over the years, but every time the focus that he wanted was the exuberance and joy of playing, that was what really came out from him, he loved to keep those tempos true, and to really get into the exploration of the music and trying to expand it, he was very expansive person in his mindset and his drumming. And he was very supportive and educational too, he would help me out how to interpret, if there was something written down that I couldn't understand, he would explain that to me...but mostly... he liked the freedom of going where you could go together. So he was trying to encourage that same communication he had with Bert, he would like to have that with everybody in the band. He had a special communication with Bert that was obvious.

I'd love to mention John Stowell. If you know John, he's fantastic, one of my favorite guitar players...just fine, and so true to his own concept or his own development. He has always had that. I've known John since he was in early twenties and been listening to him for the whole time, and how he has developed and the things he's added and subtracted from his playing...but John has been for me a wonderful teacher, I did study guitar with him for quite awhile even though I was really focusing on string bass, I just liked the way John could teach me about music, using the guitar, and he's a great teacher but I think just musically, it's mostly about the freedom of interpreting a melody using not only theoretical knowledge, but John was a great for teaching me to use my ear. And to understand what I was hearing inside my head. to be able to take that, maybe a passage that you're hearing in order to develop a certain melody or to expand the harmony and take that thing that's in your head and be able to find it and understand it then and be able to use it in any key. He has been fantastic, and still continues to be fantastic. I love going to hear him play and I do get to play with him occasionally. He's got a great band that he's been working with over the years with Jeff Johnson on bass and John Bishop on drums. Absolutely fantastic! Wonderful. I did definitely want to mention John Stowell as a very inspirational person for me. As a matter of fact, when I first studied with John

in Dobbs Ferry, New York, he and David Freisen were sharing an apartment together and David used to play bass at my lessons, I would have my guitar, John would have his guitar, and Dave would come out and play bass during the lesson with us, and that was one of the reasons why I knew I was really going to focus on becoming a string bass player, but I wanted to continue my studies with John because he had such a great way of explaining and elaborating and expressing just musical concepts, even though I was studying on guitar, I could get all the musical information from him and then take it and try it out on my bass.

CAD: Did he ever play loud? Because he is an electric guitar player, but he always seemed to keep a softer approach...

SL: Yeah he always uses two speakers now, and spreads his sound in a stereo across a stage, and you can definitely hear him. And I do know what you mean, back in the '70's and when I first heard John and first was studying with him and first listening to him, it was a quieter approach and through the years he has changed his approach a little bit in that, yes, his sound is more present...volume, there's more volume to it, yeah.

CAD: Did John Stowell and Bert (Wilson) play together? Because, Bert could blow you right out of the room with his power and his approach...

SL: Yes they did play together. The connection goes all the way back to John's teacher who was Link Chamberlain in Connecticut. Now John was one of Link's main students. Link was the most sought after teacher, and an underground hero in the Connecticut Tri State, area... Jersey, Connecticut, New York in the late sixties, early seventies, he died young unfortunately...he was a very unusual guitar player...there are a couple of albums out, I don't know if they've been reissued on cd or not, they were on vinyl. But Bert and Link were buddies, Bert used to go and play with Link and Bob Meyer, the drummer, and he used to play with him in that area and was one of the drummers Link liked to use, and Link had a steady gig at a place called Rapson's in Connecticut and I guess what I'm trying to say is the connection between John and Bert was drawn almost before they met or knew about each other because Link used to send John Stowell as his sub on gigs that he could not make.

CAD: What years are we talking about?

SL: We're talking 1972 to about 1976...right around there, early to mid seventies. And so Bert and Link had this special connection and Link was you know a million notes, he did not play like John, but he used to send John as his sub and I almost used to think they were the antithesis to each other....Link would play just so many notes, and so fast, that you didn't think it was possible.

CAD: Is this a la' Charlie Parker?

SL: No, a la' ...you know, it was much more modern, he played a very modern style...you know it's almost like the guitar version of 'sheets of sound' that would be one way to describe it.

CAD: Did you ever get a chance to play or study with him?

SL: Oh I never got to play with Link, no I used to go listen to Link and was influenced by him. Link was John Stowell's teacher and I was studying with John...and Link's list was so tight, it was really tough to get a spot in on Link Chamberlain's list, he would send students to John.

CAD: So at that time what were the other musicians playing to accompany this 'sheets of sound'?

SL: A lot of them were playing sheets of sounds too (laughing). The drummers were Bob Meyer and Bob Leonard, and Bob Moses...all the Bob's, how do you like that (laughing)... and bass player was Lynn Christy quite often, there quite often never a keyboard player, but there would be different horn players, Dave Leibman was one...and I'm sorry...it'll come to me. I'm telling a long story here but, in answer to your question, yes, John Stowell and Bert Wilson have played together many times

here in Olympia at Bert's house concerts, they played other gigs in Portland together, recordings, and yes they did wind up playing together. When I was playing in Bert's band I was not the first call bass player I was available for rehearsals and glad to do them, and we did many gigs together where he hired me for the gigs. But, you know, when Chuck Metcalf was available or Jeff Johnson or Hein Van Der Gine...for God's sake he had Gary Peacock in, so I would be able to go...the advantage of being number two is getting to listen to number one. And also I think its taken me a long time in my life to learn not take that (rejection) personally, you know, hopefully the news is delivered the news in a way thats easy to accept...and its a big wide musical world out there and some moments are going to be learning experience...some you might not like yourself, you might wind up getting hired on a gig and find yourself saying 'I'm not really digging what's going on here, but you still have to bring your 'I'm gonna make this as good as I can make it' cap, you know, it's an obligation.

CAD: It is an obligation. So that leads me to the next few questions: Do you have an end goal with your instrument and what you've been striving for? What have been striving for or aspiring to?... and also what would you give to an aspiring person who sees you playing for instance, no matter the age, who expresses interest in your instrument even with wanting to take lessons and play themselves.

SL: It's a two part question, so what I'm aspiring for is, something you mentioned is a big part of it, and you're talking about power and being able to be present when there is volume going on, that is something that I want to have. I aspire to have a sound that will be present *and* sound like an acoustic instrument and that is a *very* challenging thing I've found over the years...to that end, I took apart a couple of string basses that were broken and rebuilt them in a special way that I thought would give them more *presence*, and I actually have a bass that I play right now, which is a very difficult instrument to play because of the way I have it set up, but it has a *presence*, it has a sound. And so I'm aspiring to be able to be in control of a really delicate sound that can be also be loud and very present, which will allow the band to play at their appropriate levels...I'd like to play in a band where the dynamics do go very soft sometimes so that I can play with an acoustic effect, but, when it does *kick*, I want to be able to kick with the band on the string bass, and that means understanding how to use the instrument electronically, and so that's my main goal: To be able to follow...to be able to participate in any dynamic level. To clarify: I want to retain and acoustic sound, and still be able to be heard and felt when the band the band is playing loud passages.

CAD: And when you say electronically, what do you mean exactly?

SL: Knowing how and when (to use the amp) and being in control of that...because I think the dynamics of bands that I play with nowadays, some of the bands don't have the pianissimo end of the dynamics, and some of the bands have dynamics, the better bands that I play with, have the dynamics that go from very quiet to extremely loud... and everywhere in between and that there's nothing to...so now, lately, in the last couple of years...I actually dissected a couple of instruments to find out what it is that can make the instrument more functional in that wide range of dynamics, because it's always been a problem because, like you said, you see the bass player working, but you don't hear him working, and so now I think I'm starting to crack that nut with my experimentation with pickup placement, and spreading the sound out across the stage using two speakers...and also sometimes sacrificing, I'll have to sacrifice something, you always have to give up something up to get something else, I have basses that are very easy to play, but they don't have a lot of guts, so they come out sounding... acoustic guts...so they come out sounding electric all the time, and in order to change that I actually have had to give up some of the ease of the setup of the bass and go back to

some of the really harder, like a steel string, which is like a bridge cable compared to a nickel string (laughing), a steel string with a little bit higher action, and I can get a very powerful sound; I can't play it as a fast and I can't play it as fancy, because it doesn't work, you know, it resists so much...

CAD: And we are talking about acoustic bass...

SL: String bass... but with steel strings, and high tension. And some people might think I'm crazy, but I sacrifice speed and the ease of playing in the high positions, for the sound of being able to play strong in the low positions, and by that I mean not play strong, but have a strong sound, because you can strong on some basses and still not have a strong sound because of the way the bass is set up. It's a very strange thing. That's the first part of the question and the second part, was what to tell somebody who might enjoy what I'm doing, what to do to get there...and I think that is kind of an easy question: that's to *Listen*, you gotta listen, you have to listen to everyone you're playing with, every record you have you have to listen deep, you have to listen hard, and in the moment...when you're playing in a Jazz band, if you aren't really listening to what everybody else is doing, you can't possibly be a part of it; you have to always be listening and able to interpret what you're hearing, knowing that when you're hearing something, you interpret it, and you know where to find the appropriate accompaniment on your bass...but that comes from listening.

CAD: So with all this work that you've done with all these various people, you say what you are striving for is what? What is this goal at the end of this career that you've chosen for yourself as a professional bass player?

SL: There are several goals I guess. My best answer is, some things are...I'll say musically, my goal is to have a good sound that the people who I'm playing with find supports them, supports them well, and makes them feel freer to be able to do what they do. And that means that I play with a lot of different players, young and old, you know, people who play more traditionally, people who play more avant-garde, and that means being able to be legitimately with them, enjoying what they're doing. And the big goal is that I would really like to have the music be a...to use the music in a way that allows people to *enjoy* a moment of life, because there's so many moments of life that aren't enjoyable... that are struggle, strife riven, and hard, and there a lot of hard things about life. There just are. And if the music can bring moments of beauty into the world, That's it! That's my goal.

CAD: And it sounds like advice too... 'if you want to bring some beauty and love into the world, get with an instrument and make some music'.

SL: That's it. Yeah.

CAD: Now are there recordings that you've been on that you would like to talk about?

SL: I've recorded three albums of my own originals. I've been writing music music all along and I've had the opportunity to record these three...and I'm working on a fourth one right now, and I'd love to know what you thought of them, that would be terrific to send them to you...

CAD: What is the label they're on?

SL: They're home grown products that I sell at gigs, and there is no label, it's just I did have them mass produced, the first two of them, so I still have quite a few of those, and the third album I didn't mass produce, I just have it where it exists in a master form and then as I need copies, I make my own copies, and I made my own cover for it. After the first two were, let's put it this way, it just was expensive to produce those first two albums and the return on it is minimal, because I mostly give them away or sell them at gigs, or use them for promo. So the third album I've gone more of a homegrown route, but it's actually my favorite of the three of them, and the fourth one we're doing the same thing... 'Luigi LaCross' will probably be out sometime next year (TBR May 2015). 'Luigi

LaCross' is a quartet I formed in the summer of 2012. Our main focus has been to work on original music. Our first release as a group, is being 'pressed' right now...there are nine tunes written by the players: John Croarkin, flute, bass flute, alto sax, soprano sax, Drew Gibbs, piano and drums, Phil Lawson, guitar, Steve Luceno, bass. We were lucky to have an exciting guest vocalist, Lizzy Boyer, who can be heard on two of the songs. The Cd has a very wide dynamic and emotional range, and I think it is a colorful set of music with peaks and valleys and some unexpected turns.

CAD: What's the instrumentation on these records?

SL: The first record is mostly trumpet and alto saxophone with an electric piano, string bass, and drums rhythm section. And the second album is expanded out a little bit with a trumpet alto sax ten sax and bari sax, so bigger horn section and then some of the guys doubled on flute also...'Get Up Blues' and 'Constant Conversation', which is a kind of double entendre, you'll see what it means when you open and read the poem that's entitled 'Constant Conversation', it's funny because being a bass player everybody says 'well you want to get a conversation going just a get get a bass solo rolling and the audience is bound to start talking' (laughs), and the third one is called 'Strawberry Kiss'...the fourth album is untitled and is called 'Luigi LaCross' and I'd love for you to hear them and to hear your thoughts.

CAD: And these are to be found on...where we can send people interested in your music?

SL: I have such a minimal presence, it might be a terrible thing, I don't have a website, I don't have a computer, I live off in the country, and I'm sort of 'off line' if you will...in order to buy a record from me you could call me and I'll mail a CD to you, or come to to one of my gigs, I always have CD's at my gigs...

CAD: Does Cadence have permission to print your address/ phone number then?

SL: That would be absolutely fantastic, I would love that.

CAD: Are these are all your own compositions?

SL: They are all my own compositions and arrangements yeah.

CAD: What has been up with you since Bert Wilson's passing?

SL: We're trying to keep the jam sessions going on at Bert's house, so that's one thing we've been doing...which is really nice...Bert used to have at least two sessions a week, usually one session geared more towards bebop and standard jazz playing and another session geared towards playing Bert's original music. And so those sessions are continuing, they've been a little hit and miss, but we're working' on keepin' em' up enough so that...first of all we still want to keep Bert's music in our ears...the band that Bert had together when he died is wonderful band and they're still hangin' together and they are still rehearsing and they are doing some shows out. Bert's parts have been played in concert with Rebirth by Dan Blunck and Jim Pribbenow, both fantastic saxophonists. So we're trying to keep that music alive and keep the spirit alive. And of course, Nancy, Bert's wife, is still living in the house where they lived together, and so she's there for the sessions playing flute and sometimes baritone saxophone. As for myself, it's a lot more of the same...I play a variety of gigs, I play some gigs that are very straight ahead, and I enjoy those, and I play some gigs where I'm playing solo, I play guitar and sing, and then other gigs where it's maybe one of my friends has a concert playing all his original music, and so we work real hard learning each others originals, that is still happening...the pursuit of the beauty is all still there...Bert helped us all to learn to pursue that beauty, it was what kept him alive for all those years...the physical challenges that seemed to be insurmountable, and he would get over those challenges and the big part of that was his love for music and playing music, so we're just keeping' that goin'.

CAD: Yeah, he always seemed to make me feel that I had no excuse...

SL: That's right! That's right! (Laughing)

CAD: I thought I had the Blues...

SL: There are others I would like to mention that I have had a chance to play with, over the last year to play with some traveling visiting Cuban musicians...Pablo Menedez band called 'LaMescla', an absolutely beautiful band featuring two horns, a trumpet and saxophone, a drummer, and a wonderful Santa Ria Priest (their percussionist), a master who knows all the Cuban musical traditions. Their bass player and drummer could not make the gig, so we played at Jazz Alley in Seattle for two nights. I had such a fantastic time, so I definitely wanted to mention Pablo Menendez.

CAD: And that's still one of the big places to play in America.

SL: Yeah, we talked about sound and this was wonderful because their sound guy, Fausto, he is a maestro and he made that gig so easy for me, he just dialed in a beautiful sound off my bass it made the gig totally enjoyable. But it was a very difficult gig because Cuban music is a study all unto itself, and I learned...a whole lot. And I think they were happy with me as a replacement player, I know I had the time of my life playing with them and it was a spiritual experience.

CAD: Speaking of traveling musicians...do you travel much?

SL: I try to stay pretty close to home these days. I did travel earlier in my career. I actually made trips to Canada and Mexico, and California. But I stay closer to home these days, and I like my gardening...and I live a little bit of a backward lifestyle because I don't have a lot of things like TV or DVD and computer and if I want to really get up on something I have to go seek it out at the library, or go out into the world and find it...and I don't travel around a lot, but I get plenty of opportunity to play, and there are so many good Olympia musicians...and the thing about being a rhythm section player that makes me feel very lucky, is leaders will hire me and each leader has their own idea of what they want to do and it can be very different from one gig to the next, so I get a nice variety right here within sixty miles from my home, between Portland and Seattle, there's plenty going on.

CAD: So you are going there and playing?

SL: Yeah, I mean that's not the kind of traveling a lot of guys do where they go to Europe and New York...

CAD: How is the financial situation for you...do you teach?

SL: I've always supplemented my income with day jobs...I've always some kind of day job....sometimes it's just menial labor, a grunt on a construction site, or driving a fork lift in a warehouse, climbin' up somebody's tree and taking it down for them, sweeping their roofs and cleaning the gutters, I supplement my income that way.

CAD: Have you ever taught?

SL: The odd thing is, I've learned....I ran into trouble with teaching...because I learned in a different way. I learned mostly by ear and by playing, rather than by reading music out of a book or anything. And so I am one of those players, I still don't read well, I never did learn to sight read. I learned to write music because it's at a different pace, so I could write anything out, but sight reading is a different thing, and a lot of the teaching nowadays seems to require the ability to teach sight reading. I've had a couple of good students...if I find a person who really wants to know what's going on with it, I'll start exchanging music with them, and talking about this and that, or we'll sit down and just listen to a few recordings together and then maybe play together...but I don't really do it for money, if I find somebody who's really interested in learning I will spend time with them, just to get them going in a certain way.

CAD: So a person sees you perform and says 'Man I want to do that!' What do you have to say to them?

SL: The music is available to you. There are people around you who do know music. Get together with those people. Play music. Listen. Keep listening and listening and listening. If you don't like a certain album and you can't understand it, listen to it ten times over (laughing) and tell me then, once you've listened to it and tried to absorb some of it...just keep listening...you have to keep expanding your ears and listening and giving everything a chance, even things you don't like at the first taste, you gotta give them a chance and try them. And also you have to seek out people to play music with. Unless you are a solo artist..a solo piano player, or a solo guitar player, you're a storyteller and you do your stuff alone and you feel very comfortable doing that, if that's not true, you need to seek out people to play music with, and they're there, they're out there all over the world, music is a universal human desire...everywhere in the world people desire and love music, it's there, it's there for you, you need to reach out and find it.

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CADENCE INTERVIEW

Brian Landrus

Saxophone

by Ludwig van Trikt



Cadence: I am interviewing you during a time when you have had a fair amount of jazz media coverage.

But you have conveyed to me that does not always translate into more gigs or higher wages.

Please detail some recent examples of this?

BL: I really think it's a long journey and we learn how to keep things moving and progressing artistically. It takes many years of continual strong music to carve out a space for ourselves in the evolving scene. I feel fortunate that I dedicated myself to some rarer instruments at a relatively early time in my career. I fell in love with alto flute, bass clarinet, bass saxophone, bass flute, and of course baritone saxophone as soon as I played them. I would buy a new instrument just to be able to try it and then usually end up finding the best horn made on the given voice. This was an important part of finding my voice and creating a unique arsenal of sounds. Some of the instruments like bass flute have such an open imagination about how they're supposed to sound and there aren't any expectations as to what the sound will be like. This has enabled me to work on a sound that is new to my ear. We all know how a great tenor sax sounds but as to how a bass flute is supposed to sound our minds are free of preconceptions. I view this as part of my journey. The reason I went into that is because it's a major part of my career in terms of what kinds of gigs I get. Last week I did a recording session on flute for a holiday Jewish CD and it was some challenging stuff! Reading down and recording 9 tracks that I gotta say we're pretty challenging. This week I'll be playing soprano for a well known producer. It's just all over the place. A difficult part is that when I've been on the road so much people assume you're always gone and the teaching gigs get lean because they need someone that's consistent.

The international coverage has certainly helped, and many more options are available to me now. I remember when I was 21 and recorded my first album. The day I finished it a dark and overwhelming force fell on me when I realized that I'd have to do it again :) My career has been a culmination of my whole life and it's been on a strong rise for the past five-ten years. I'm very lucky to be playing with such a diverse crowd of geniuses. It's an honor and keeps me practicing every day to try and keep up!

It's our job as artists to find ways to make money with what we do and this is extremely challenging, but I've been able to pay for 5 albums in seven years and that has been my focus entirely. I bought and sold many instruments to find the ones that fit best with me. I'd buy a rare instrument and if I didn't love it I'd sell it for a profit by fixing it up. I've done this for the past 10 years and it still helps supplementing my income but I do it much less. I still teach a couple days a week and travel quite a bit for gigs, and concerts / clinics at universities.

Media coverage is important, but it's only one aspect. The music community is who's hiring, not the magazines....

It definitely helps getting one's name out with continued press, but that alone won't do it. Word of mouth is how I've gotten most my gigs and that's how I started working with Esperanza. She called me one day out of the blue and told me that she'd been asking lots of people who to get for baritone and she kept hearing my name.

Cadence: Please talk in depth about all the factors that went into this recording (Mirage – BlueLand Records BLR-2013) from:

**How you came to write for such an extended ensemble?*

**The sheer logistics of working with so many artists?*

**The funds involved in doing this project.*

BL: I started composing when I was 16 and it became an important aspect of my musical life from then on. With this record it was more of a compositional portrait than anything about me

playing my horn. The horn came in later and was just an ingredient added at the end. I love the thickness and innumerable possibilities with large ensembles. The sonic possibilities are wide open and pretty much anything I can imagine is possible. I wanted to compose a large ensemble that was playing the music I was hearing. My first record as a leader called Forward, on Cadence Jazz Records, had some large ensemble tracks but the majority dropped to quintet. I went through many different instrumentation possibilities and spoke to several mentors about it. Some of the advice I got was to avoid strings because of they' worried that the music would turn out weak. I'd written for strings before and I heard it in my mind from the inception so I decided that regardless of all the risk I had to follow through. I didn't start writing until I had the session booked so it really put the heat on. Once I got deep into composing I knew that it'd be beautiful.

The musicians of the nonet are as professional as it gets so working with them was a piece of cake. The scary part was to see if the music worked, and that was all on me. We had one rehearsal, the day before the session, and two days in the studio. It was a lot to get done in a short amount of time, but it really felt peaceful. I've never before been on a session where everyone seemed so happy. My buddy Ryan Truesdell was there to co-produce the session and conduct, so the only pressure I had was to play my horns and check the takes in the room. We actually got done early on the second day. All the players had the charts a couple weeks before the session and everyone worked really hard to perfect their lines. Its such an honor to hear your music come to life by the highest level players in the world, it felt important at the time and still does.

Four years ago I started my own record label BLR because the music world is changing so fast and I wanted to have maneuverability with the masters years down the road. I feel very lucky to have options to release my music on other labels, but its been nice to be able to focus on exactly what I hear. But this freedom means that I pay for everything related to a release. Its a long term investment to build a catalog and I truly love it. I've played and taught music for the past six years and pretty much every dime has gone to this pursuit. This recording has cost much more than any other, but I think its the closest to what I originally imagined.

Cadence: In spite of your rough and tumble youth you have made a consistent message in your music about the environment and being a vegetarian.

What elements in your past shaped this message in your music?

BL: I've always loved animals. I stopped eating pigs when I was 4 because they were my favorite animal and I realized that it was unnecessary. My mom stopped eating red meat when I was 11 and when I was 12 I read some materials she had around the house from PETA. I was reading some info on it when I was at school lunch (coincidentally the same year I started sax) and when I looked at the hamburger I knew I never wanted to eat meat again. Once I put the connection of how unnecessary it is to eat meat, its been easy to stop. I love the taste of it! Its never been about not liking it, its just part of a whole industry that I want nothing to do with. Its been challenging to find food on the road, but absolutely possible and usually fairly easy. I grew to be 6'7" and 240lbs. If I lived in a time when it was necessary to eat meat to survive I would, but that isn't how it is today. It's a choice to participate in an extremely cruel industry with a vast amount of pollution because they are tasty and convenient. The health benefits of a vegetarian life has been clearly established in dietary/nutritional science. Okay sorry, you asked.... I'm passionate about trying to help people become aware of the true situation. Its more important to me than music. I wasn't sure if I'd pursue a career in the environmental world, or music. Animal welfare will always be a focal point in my life.

Cadence: You are part of the generation which as come of age during a time when there have been revolutionary changes in the way that jazz/music is recorded and sold. Please talk in depth about how that effects your artistic decisions? How does an artist make a profit on I-Tunes for instance?

BL: Everyone's still trying to figure out what the new way is. Many positives have come out of this transformation, but many negatives as well. On the recording side: I've recently spoken to a friend who runs a recording studio and he said that most studios in the industry are struggling because of the drastic increase of home studios and the availability of quality sound at a much lower cost than in the past. He said the studios that are doing well are the ones that have big rooms and can record more people live than we can at our homes. I have a very small pro-quality studio at my house. Great mic, great mic pre, and pro tools. That's all you need to be able to record and transport music. I record for people from around the world by adding to the files they made in protocols, and then send it digitally back to them where they can edit. That's pretty amazing, would've been impossible even five years ago. Things are changing quick. Because of this I've been able to collaborate with some people far away that don't want to pay to send me into a real studio or to their location. I'm working on a multi-track album right now featuring all the low woodwinds-all at my house. Once I'm done recording I'll have it mixed and mastered by pros.

The people that handle my digital distribution have told me that every week there are several new websites giving my music away for free. Just click and download numerous albums of mine. That's bullshit, and people need to act ethically for this industry to survive. We get them taken down, but another just pops up. Mostly all overseas. Many of them charge a subscription to be able to log into their system and steal whatever you'd like. Now that one really makes me upset...they're making money off of our work!?! Well, laws need to be changed and the public needs to think it's appropriate to buy music. I can't tell you how many times I ask a student to buy a recording and they download it somewhere, they just think it's totally acceptable. That needs to change.

Bob Rusch told me years ago the only way to make money (directly) from our music is from selling at the gig. That's the truth! Although I'm doing okay on iTunes and other digital sources, I make the most when people buy them at my concerts. Indirectly is another story. If you gain fans by them hearing your music (however they get it) that translates to more growth. I know that it's taken five records to start to get known, but now I'm able to travel worldwide and play many more concerts. Without the investment of my recordings that would've never happened. So, if I hadn't spent every dollar I had on my albums, I wouldn't have been able to build a name to get the gigs I now have. The process of writing and producing an album makes me a much better musician, every time. I always encourage musicians to record because the process alone makes us evaluate what needs to be improved upon. I'd never suggest to record a jazz album to make bread.

A major drawback of digital music (iTunes) for the listener is lack of liner notes. I learn so much about the players and composers from liner notes! That's where I got some insight into the big picture. That's a drag and I don't know why iTunes hasn't figured out how to at least include a PDF of the liner notes. I've seen some that do, but it's scarce.

As for the business changes and recording on labels: I'm always going to have the most success when I trust myself as an artist. Push out everything else, don't think about any other factor than what feels right. It was a challenging & unhappy environment when I didn't understand that. I was extremely competitive and wanted to be the best at everything. I didn't get that the only goal

should be the best at what I do. Now that's what I focus on, what can I do to be the best player possible that my potential holds. We all have different natural attributes, and have to be aware of this. I know that the changing marketplace has some role in this, but it feels good to record with who I want, when I want. The industry is tough, and I could've been very comfortable (financially) with playing my whole life on Broadway. But damn, that's really boring!! Playing the same mediocre music every night off life, hell no...I much prefer other ways of making a living in the music world than becoming a robot. I know that seems mean, and I don't intend to be, it's a personal thing. I don't have the personality for that. I rather die in an adventure. Same goes for recording "traditional" jazz albums. I've had many offers in recent years to record for more traditional labels, but I only go with what feels honest to me. That's why I record under my own label.

Cadence: You mentioned that you love to be in an environment where you take artistic risk; but in your own playing there does not seem to be an exploration of the extreme edges of the baritone? Please comment?

BL: That's a great question. For many years I've worked on multiphonics, and other advanced techniques, but I don't usually hear them in my improvisation. More than ever now, I try to play exactly what I hear. If I don't hear a multiphonic in the line I'm playing, I won't force it in. It all really depends on the situation. A major aspect of my baritone playing that has helped develop my own sound is the range I've developed. For a long time I've focused on developing an additional octave above the standard baritone range. I can comfortably play into the alto sax range. I use this in my writing and often have melodies that are way into the altissimo range and unplayable by most baritonists. This is the most extreme aspect of my playing on the horn, and by far the most usable. For example In the song Mirage, the chorus melody is a third above the standard baritone range. Beauty is everything to me, and I've been saying for a long time that I have no desire to be the guy who plays the weirdest shit. Now, if that's what I was hearing, I'd play it everyday. I hear a lot of musicians who force in strange and abrasive sounds, just because they can. That's the direction I've gone in, although I must say that I've been trying to add more sounds into my playing recently. This an endless journey, and I've only scratched the surface of my sonic possibilities. I'm working hard right now to improve and incorporate new harmonies and rhythms.

Cadence: I saw a print ad somewhere listing you as a curator for a Jazz & Soul concert. How did that come about ? Does this reflect a larger interest in your music going in a more commercial direction?

BL: Your talking about the 92Y Soul Jazz Festival March 14 & 15 in NYC. I'm honored to be artistic advisor for this event. This came together because I've taught the jazz ensembles at the 92Y for the past 6 years. They've been very supportive to me and what I've been doing. The 92Y has been around for over 100 yrs in NYC and has been a jazz supporter since the 1950s. They've had concerts with Sarah Vaughan, Thelonious Monk, Gerry Mulligan, Coltrane, and many others. They've had a traditional jazz series running for many years called "Jazz In July". They approached me about starting a new annual event featuring music that I feel is relevant and needs more attention. When I spoke to them about the world of soul jazz, groove jazz, acid jazz, world jazz, etc... they were very excited. I've always had a deep love for music with a foundation in groove, and this is an amazing opportunity for me to put together musicians who live in that world. I enjoy playing many types of jazz, but my heart is in melody and groove. This happens to be more commercial, but that's no business choice, that's my heart. This music attracts a large audience because people with no formal jazz education can relate to the melodies and grooves.

On March 14th we have DJ Logic and Friends, & The Joey DeFrancesco Allstars with George Garzone, Brian Lynch, Nir Felder, and Billy Hart. On March 15th it's my nine piece Landrus Kaleidoscope playing music from Mirage, and Esperanza Spalding's band.

Cadence: Many jazz artist as a rite of artistic passage record/play in the following context: strings, big band and a standards recording; are any of these settings in your future (of course with the exception of strings)?

BL: Yes, I'll be recording a big band album at some point in the next couple years..maybe sooner. I'm trying to follow exactly what I'm hearing. But right nows an interesting time because I have so much rolling around that I want to bring out. I really love writing for big band, when things hit right, man, nothing's stronger. I'm planning on trying out some new sounds for me, lots of doubling. I really have a pull towards that right now. But, the first thing I'm going to do is a bass sax, bass, and drums record.

I've recoded a few standards, and certainly grew up playing them everyday, and still do. There are a couple composers who I'd like to record a full album of their material. That can bring a beautiful cohesiveness. So many different ways to go....gotta go with what I'm hearing at the moment.

Right now I'm getting to play/record a lot of Gil Evans music that's never been heard or recorded with the Gil Evans Project lead by Ryan Truesdell. His music has such depth and precision, it's astounding. I love playing in large ensembles.

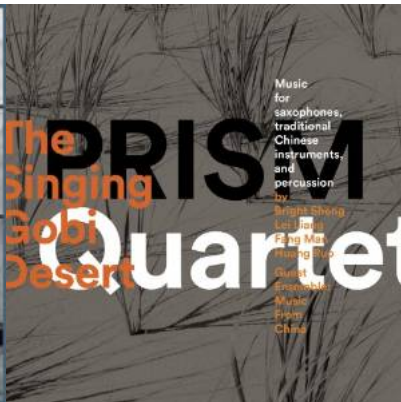
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CADENCE ALBUM REVIEWS

Papatamus: APRIL 2015



Triple Point Records in the past has done fine, carefully produced limited editions archival LPs of Cecil Taylor and Frank Lowe in such a loving, caring manner. It is a tribute to the music and an indication of the esteem Triple Point holds for this art form. Their latest production, a limited edition of 665, is CALL IT ART [TPR 161] by the NEW YORK ART QUARTET. These 5 LPs, along with a 156 page [11 1/2" X 11 1/2"] book are all housed in a 13" X 13" birch wood box. The whole lot weighs a shade under 10 pounds and costs \$340. Art costs. Since the 1960s, when independent creative improvising music and independent productions and labels began to take root, just the cost of record production was about \$3.00 or \$4.00 each on an edition of 1000 albums (the average pressing for this type of music), these records were then sold to a distributor somewhere between \$3.20 and \$4.20 and then sold to stores between \$5.00 and \$6.00 and then to the public around \$7.98 and \$8.98. These prices were set, so to speak, in order to be competitive with commercial records which were produced in mass and hopefully sold in mass, in quantities perhaps in the millions. Back then I was in the distribution business, later a producer of unpopular music, and it was my contention that the mind-set was such that there was tyranny in setting a loss leader price on records, of small circulation and relative high cost, so as to be price competitive with the mass producers. I thought that to be realistic these independents should be selling their productions to distributors at perhaps twice the price. But being an independent group, artists were willing to loose money in the chance people would listen to their work. For a while Blossom Dearie priced her label at \$15.00+ list and, having to put my money where my conviction was, I agreed to pay her price. About 6 months later she lowered her price, the moral being; fight the industry on pricing as an individual and you won't sell but a handful of records. CDs are not as bad and offer a better margin to the artist if they sell a thousand or more, which today with theft, burning and downloading is not that easy. Now there are labels that do magnificent work, have limited productions and hold their price, accordingly. Mosaic is a leading example and issue limited editions averaging about 2500. Add Triple Point to this list and figuring a pressing/printing of 665 their price is pretty much in the same area of Mosaic, so are their production values.

The New York Art Quartet had its heyday from 1964 through 1965. At the groups core were Roswell Rudd and John Tchicai and over that period, at one time or another, the group encompassed; Reggie Workman, Don Moore, Eddie Gomez, Bob Cunningham, Lewis Worrell [b], Milford Graves, J.C. Moses [drm], Alan Shorter [tpt] and on a few tracks [1/17/65] Amiri Baraka does readings. These recordings took place in the early years of, post Ornette Coleman, the New Music explosion that was centered in NYC. It was a heady time when expression was encouraged and sought. Free music and avant guard were de rigueur and while it opened up the field to a lot of pretenders, some eventually went on to be artists of substance. The openness of the Free music scene also encouraged artists and audience to expand and be involved in what music could be. It was the '60s, a time of great upheaval of the status-quo, a time of *try*, if not *yes* at the very least the door to possibilities was opened in place of the previous presumptive *no*. It's my memory that economics then were not any better than they are today, for foragers of noncommercial music. The NYAQ was first issued on ESP records then on (French) Fontana and more recently Cuneiform issued some recordings, made in Denmark, from October 1965. The Triple Point set collects the remaining recordings extant, including their first recordings from 10/31/64.

In the book co-producer Ben Young (Joe Lizzi is the other co-producer) gives an accurate and encompassing tutorial of the times and the artists. Duck Baker offers a short recollection of the group then and hearing them today. A complete itinerary of the group is included. The book ends with an extensive commentary of the records. The records are not programmed in chronological order but more or less go from last date to earliest date. The book is full of photos and published ephemera, of the time, along with notes and correspondence relevant to the presentation.

This is without doubt an artful box and it got me thinking— is the music perceived as art

because of its presentation or is it presented in a fashion befitting the art? I was well familiar with the NYAQ before I approached this work and I include the *collective them* to be art of high order. It is not the packaging, worthy though it may be, that decides artistic merit as I have seen elaborate presentation on what I would generously consider low art. This is an archival effort of a very important time, socially and artistically, in the United States, with ramifications throughout out much of the world and it is deserving of the loving attention it receives here.

One of the first things which will strike the listener is the independence and the unorthodox rhythmic patterns set by Milford Graves, the main drummer in the NYAQ, different from Sunny Murray who for all his challenge to standard (up to then) drumming still presented a rhythmic unity and propulsion. Graves, who often goes counter to the horn directions and intrudes on solos, though on duet sections with Rudd, when things are even more freeform, it is more traditional. Rudd, in composition and playing is familiar by his quick runs and blats, a style carried forth today by Steve Swell. The WBAI radio recordings [LP # 1] of 1/17/65 suffer some channel fuzziness. These are the sides with Baraka, who is in a subdued anger compared with his racist spew on a Sunny Murray date recorded just ten months later. Record #3 is made up of rehearsals from Michael Snow's loft, probably early 1965, and includes a fine take of Tchicai's "For Eric", which has remained unrecorded since then. Record #4 contains a nice, if brief, recording of the MOMA concert [7/15/65] and a long outing on Ornette's, "Oh-No" from 10/31/64. It's rambling and poorly recorded with a loft (Marzette Watts) ambiance. The book doesn't dodge the problems here but points out several facts that, even with its faults, make this recording not without interest. The Watts' gathering continues and fills record #5, but with greater fidelity and musical coordination. Rudd's especially in the mood and with careful editing the 75 minutes at Watts' loft would in itself make a strong CD—but that is not the point of this archival effort. And in that regard this is a masterful job and greater in its whole than the sum of its parts.

I think it has been about five years since ORNETTE COLEMAN [as] released a new recording. Now quite un-expectantly he appears on a newly issued recording called NEW VOCABULARY [System Dialing] LP [010] and CD [009]. This is a trio date with JORDAN McLEAN [tpt/electronics] and AMIR ZIV [dms]. On three tracks ADAM HOLZMAN [p] is added. This was recorded 7/18-20/09 and no credits on the 12 tracks are given, but I imagine the majority are Coleman's as they display Colemanesq playfulness. Music aside—why is this just coming out now and why 3 days in the studio? There are no liner notes and the accompanying hype sheet offers only effusive quotes ranging from Bill T. Jones to Maggie Gyllenhall. So Mr. Columnist what about the music? The music and compositions are wonderful. My perspective on Ornette is, he rarely plays with a piano yet Holzman's contributions work well and do not seem to inhibit Coleman, though Ornette is less featured on the Holzman tracks. It should be noted that Holzman plays only acoustic piano and not the usual electric keyboards. The electronics come from McLean and are used mostly for coloring and trumpet echoing. Ziv plays a rather traditional role, underpinning the group, shadowing Coleman. I probably played this recording a half dozen times and it holds up and unfolds very nicely and leaves me with the feeling this is Ornette's date as far as the lead voice is concerned and that voice is in top form, fresh and almost totally free of the Ornette clinches, lovely though they may be, that are often in his playing. It's not the classic quartet or the harmolodic format it is different but this format works and works refreshingly well. Is there more to come? Let's hope so. Co-produced by McLean and Ziv.

FORTUNE RECORDS is one of the many Eastern European companies which have sprung up, in the new millennium, that are dedicated to championing post bop music. For the most part these companies have developed catalogues that treat improvising music on an equal international basis representing improvised music from Europe and similar musics from North America with an equanimity rarely found in this country. Unlike the musical innovations presented

in the 1970s, by companies like FMP, BVHaast and Incus, these Eastern European labels are more exploring, and perhaps expanding, the post bop music of the past 40 years; a horizontal movement not so much a vertical movement. Fortune Records, out of Poland which I believe, started in 2011 by Jerek Polit, and since then has amassed almost 50 releases. I think the secret of continuing to maintain this substantial and growing catalogue may be that Fortune has enlisted various partners from the business world to sponsor individual releases. I am speculating here as questions directed to the company have gone unanswered. Packaging on the releases runs from fairly elaborate booklets full of photos and program notes to basic promotional slip cases publishing tunes and personals but often minus recording dates and publishing credits. Promotional or not the releases all have a unified outside look; titles over a black and white photo. If I were to characterize the musical imprint, from what I've heard of the label, overall I'd say it is hard as opposed to pointillistic or minimalistic. The releases tend to be sax focused. A look at what I consider some of the most outstanding and/or interesting of the Fortune releases follows, in no particular order.

BOOZER [Fortune 0003/003] is a live recording by the MAGNOLIA ACOUSTIC QUARTET [Kuba Sokołowski-p, Szymon Nidzworski-ss/ts, Patryk Dobosz-dms, Mateusz Dobosz-b] with guests [Maciej Obara-as, Tomasz Dabrowski-tpt] playing 7 constructs/compositions that display a series of free jazz improvisations from a backbeat format to more ethereal colorings, all of which is tight and well executed. These are emerging musicians, the only one I am remotely familiar with is Obara, and very impressive as there is little sense of purposeless playing in solos or ensemble. Sokołowski's piano work stands out, in contrast to the ensemble, and a solo recording might be suggested. Another strength here is drummer Dobosz, a powerhouse, whose work marks all aspects of this concert and includes a very impressive, almost 4 minute, solo. A very satisfying listen which will have you at times holding your breath.

CHES SMITH [dms] brings a familiar group together [Mary Halvorson-gtr, Andrea Parkins-acc, Tim Berne-as, Tony Malaby-ts] for a live recording from the Warsaw Festival of 1/13/12 called INTERNATIONAL HOOHAH [Fortune 0033/23]. The emphasis, on the six Smith originals here [40:31], is on form and composition, which for me often interrupts the flow of the music with voids and wandering. Anticipation unrewarded.

The NIKOLA KOŁODZIEJCZYK [kbds] Orchestra on CHORD NATION [Fortune 0042/30] is 25 strong on five originals [54:31] by the leader. One can feel the power of this crew and it offsets nicely solo outings from individuals. This music is tightly scored much like a stage band....on steroids. Much of the musical designs here are built of piano patterns from the leader, as it builds and layers and lumbers through the landscape. It's a rather exciting adventure and one gets the feeling of the sound track to a narrative. This is not a loose band, say in the manner of Basie, it's closer to Kenton, but perhaps even there—less swinging. There is some wordless vocalizing that fits in well as a background sound. For orchestration this is an impressive outing and a good listen.

TOMASZ DABROWSKI [tpt], KRIS DAVIS [p] and ANDREW DRURY [dms], calling their trio 3D, collaborate on VERMILION TREE [Fortune0030/021], a recording from New York City in 2012. The 14 tracks here [53:53], with few exceptions, are short forays into extemporaneous directions that rarely get a chance to develop past an initial exposition. For me it was tedious listening.

Recorded just 3 days earlier TOMASZ DABROWSKI is back in studio for a duo with TYSHAWN SOREY [dms] for STEPS [Fortune 0005/005]. Perhaps because this is a duo the music seems better and more closely integrated. Dabrowski's trumpet has a warm burnished sound and he and Sorey, over the course of the 10 originals, when not playing parallel to each other, take turns playing into each other, rather than always having the drums following the horn leads. A pleasant listening for a moment of moments.

TOMASZ DABROWSKI [tpt] also has a trio date titled RADICAL MOVES [Fortune 0045/032] with Nils Bo Davidsen [b] and Anders Mogensen [drm]. Dabrowski faces off the ten originals [42:17] with mid-range trumpet work which ventures little from that range and after a while becomes akin to noise pollution. Any one or two of these cuts is inviting but together the coloring is so consistent that it neither advances the whole program or makes much demand compositionally. These are three veteran musicians and this is not the first time they have played together and it's a shame they chose such tight parameters in which to play.

PULSARUS [Fortune 0023/015] is a group: Dominik Strycharski-flutes, Aleksander Papierz-as, Ray Dickaty-ts, Stefan Orins-el.p, Jacek Mazurkiewicz-b, Jakub Rutkowski-dms], which Tomasz Dabrowski-tpt is also a part of, for BEE ITCH [Fortune 0023/015]. This is densely loaded music, with the ensemble mostly lumbering as one, in unison, often offset by a repetitive back-beat-like rhythm. In that way it brings to mind some of Willem Breuker's writing but with less breaks for soloists. The power of this music and its various paths is engaging. A pity there is not more solo space for the little there is used effectively. My suggestion is listen to these eleven tracks [57:13] with breaks as it is dense, but do listen.

YELLS AT EELS is the name DENNIS GONZALES [tpt] has called his groups since the late 1990s. On IN QUIET WATERS [Fortune 0046/033] he is joined by his sons, Aaron Gonzales [b] and Stefan Gonzales [drm] for ten original compositions [64:38]. This is live, probably from the Dallas, Texas area, and seems less focused than previous releases. Everyone sounds in great form but the tales, woven out of the rather simple lines, do not a profound story make. It sounds to me that there is a great effort to light a fire, but it never really catches in a sustained manner. The audience is enthusiastic but for me this is a let down from an artist who has previously had a strong track record.

WACŁAW ZIMPEL [clt] heads a quartet [Krzysztof Dys-p, Christian Ramond-b, Klaus Kugel-dms] on STONE FOG [Fortune0009/009]. This recording has 2 personalities; 3 of the tracks are by Zimpel, and are for the most part sober affairs carried by the tension of the music line, the remaining 5 cuts are improvs credited to the entire quartet. Zimpel wields the clarinet with great authority be it on his rather sober compositions or the more tentative, albeit aggressive, group improvs. The group as a whole really listens and as a result builds some strong statements. Folks who are fans of the clarinet, among others, should check this issue out. For me this changed colors with each listen and seemed to offer a new listening path each time.

The INFANT JOY QUINTET [Ray Dickaty-ts/ss, Michał Kasperek-dms, Jan Małkowski-as, Dominik Mokrzewski-dms, Ksawery Wójciński-b/tp] has issued NEW GHOSTS [Fortune 0029/020]. Joining the quintet is Laura Waniek- harm, whistles, jew's harp- for 3 long [49:39] improvs, which while sounding nothing like Ayler, do evoke the spirit of him. The two, somewhat lyrical, saxes dominate the directions and at times offer a Bechet coloring as well. Even with 2 drummers this is not a drum heavy date but they buttress the developing climaxes with brushes and sticks and what at times sounds like hand drumming. This is dense, repetitive, organically developed, positive spiraling music and while the format is familiar the development is powerful. To my ears guest Waniek is unheard.

MARCO ENEIDI [as] brings his plaintive and compelling alto to PANTA REI [Fortune0047/034]. This quartet date [Marek Pospieszalski-ts, Ksawery Wójciński-b, Michał Trela-dms] is live and I believe the program of four cuts is all improvised with perhaps some guideposts. Eneidi is a driving sax player and has a good match in Pospieszalski as both seem to gulp air and spit out sinewy lines and emotive pleas. Eneidi, an ex-pat, is one of the more dynamic and passionate players around today. Unfortunately his recording are few and infrequent, this release meets the standard he has developed. Bass and drum do an excellent job of propelling this music

along and on the last track [Arco M] have their own features. A very strong outing.

RAFAŁ MAZUR [b.gtr] and KEIR NEURINGER [as] take a duo outing on THE KRAKÓW LETTERS [Fortune 0032/022] which presents 4 musical letters [letter #1-4 54:08]. Neuringer uses a combination of circular breathing and more conventional breathing as he attacks and struggles in to make his statements in a duo environment. Mazur ventures pulling and bowing but once Neuringer finds his footing/direction Mazur pretty much runs patterns. Small doses of this at a time offers rewards; one Letter over a period of time as opposed to four Letter(s) at one time.

IREK WOJTCZAK [ss/tsb.clt] brings his NY Connection [Michael Stevens-p, Herb Robertson-tpt, Joe Fonda-b, Harvey Sorgen-dms] together on FOLK FIVE [Fortune 0050/006]. The program here is eight polish folk songs [47:28] arranged by Wojtczak. It probably helps that I did not previously know the music here, so the material sounds fresh and remarkably full. This studio recording is tricky music well run through. The NY Connection is a formidable group both as a unit as well as individually as soloists. The material is varied and nicely programed from polka-ish based music to a lovely solo piano interlude near the middle of the program. The rhythm section is right on top of the music and offers a tight format for Robertson and Wojtczak to work off from. A wonderful effort, meaty and fun.

MACIEJ OBARA [as] and his quartet; Dominik Wania [p], Gard Nilssen [dms], Ole Morten Vågan [b], have issued LIVE AT MANGGHA [Fortune 0022/14]. Obara has a bit pinched, forlorned searching sound. He also leaves vast space for the rhythm trio to search out directions for themselves. The trio seems very fluent in the vocabulary of post bop, pre free but structured, playing. Vågan is a bull and he and Nilssen can create a power ambience all by themselves. Vågan got his start playing Mainstream and has made himself quite at home in this freer world. Wania's playing has a touch of McCoy Tyner and is wandering but remains logical and close to the music while advancing it. It occurs to me this quartet came to play and left their egos behind. A stimulating session.

ANTHONY BRAXTON [as/ts] along with Taylor Ho Bynum- cor, James Fei-as, and Erica Dicker-vln are all aboard for QUARTET [WARSAW] 2012 [Fortune 0020/005]. The program here is Composition 363b+, which runs the entire length of the CD [70:05]. There is a fifth "member" to the program here and that is interactive electronics to which the players respond. There are graphic notations also supplied by Braxton. I found the electronics a loathsome drone which too often stood between me and the acoustic ensemble. Furthermore, except to perhaps get the players in the zone, I didn't feel it added to the compositional whole. When the electronics turn off it is a welcome relief to hear the quartet clearly as they interact as a group. Most of the work is minimalistic and searches for sounds, if not from the air then placed there by the quartet. A must for fans of the arcane Anthony Braxton methodology.

It's all acoustic on MNEMOTAKSJA [Fortune 0028/019] by the PIOTR DAMASIEWICZ [tpt] quartet [Gerard Lebig-ts/contralto clarinet, Wojciech Romanowski- dms, Maciej Garbowski-b]. The ten originals [64:44] here are composed form, for the most part, followed by improvisation. Damasiewicz has a warm clear tone which he likes to extend to the listener on long tones. Lebig is a gritty reed player and when the two frontmen engage together, which was more often than not, it can be very effective. The rhythm section is utilitarian, and when featured are less than exciting. Reservations aside, I rather enjoyed the whole.

I also enjoyed FEDERICO BRITOS [vln] presents HOT CLUB OF THE AMERICAS [3 Knocks Entertainment 792278 008771]. The subtitle here is, *when Grappelli meets Latin America* which is both descriptive and misleading in that this is Latin-tinged music but Britos sounds little like Grappelli. There is a taste of Django here and yes, in the program of 12 standards, they do play "The Sheik", "Honeysuckle Rose", "Nuages", "Djangology" and other tunes associated with Hot

Clubs but it is Latinized. The Hot Club here is a sextet to which, depending on which cut, a variety of rhythm is added along with special guests that include, among others; Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Cecile McLorin Salvant and Hendrik Meurkens. Nothing heavy or pretentious here and a nice break from music that is.

Tony Purrone [g] brings a Django-est touch, at times, to HEADIN' OUT [Jazzeria Records Matt 2014] by MATT CRISCUOLO [as]. Purrone is a strong presence on this record whether soloing or playing in tandem with Criscuolo. The leader has a pinched sound, reminding me a bit of Ornette Coleman, and is fond of playing emotive long jamming lines. In fact the whole quartet [Preston Murphy-b, Ed Soph-dms] seems ready to jam and shows no hesitancy in attacking the music [Little Niles, Sippin' At Bells, A Flower Is A Lovable Thing and six originals] head on, breathlessly squeezing out any nuance lurking. Even on "A Flower...", where Criscuolo brings to mind Johnny Hodges, there is, at times, a sense of pushing the line. Jazz upfront and swinging.

ABDULLAH IBRAHIM [p] continues to be in reflective mood on THE SONG IS MY STORY [Sunnyside 1404]. Now in his 80th year he delivers a one two punch with this release as the CD is one in a wonderful series of reflective solo playing but there is also a DVD of playing, spoken reflections and storytelling. Less than 40 minutes long, the CD opens and closes with brief solo playing on sax by Ibrahim. It includes 17 originals (most previously unrecorded) and the CD program/concert, while short, is quite moving and attention holding and divides itself between Ibrahim compositions and improvs. The DVD, also recorded in June 2014, in Italy, has the pianist mostly sitting at the piano telling tales of history and his-story and playing to illustrate his narrative. This is beautifully filmed and recorded and runs close to an hour, ending, with a portion of a concert. As wonderful as the CD is get this for the DVD. Ibrahim has issued many fine records over the past 60 years, this is moving and essential.

Nemu Records is a small, new music, label, out of Berlin, who since about 2003 have released 15 CDs. Their latest is THE LOFT SESSIONS [Nemu 015] by FANTASM, a cooperative trio of, ALBRECHT MAURER [vln], MAT MANERI [viola] and LUCIAN BAN [p]. The nine original tracks [by trio members and one by Paul Motian] suggest a contemporary string trio. For the most part the music is dark, serious and reflects little humor. This trio has worked together in larger groups and Maurer has appeared on many previous Nemu recordings. They work well together, as there is little sense of hesitation or lack of direction. This is music, improvised perhaps, that shares qualities and overlaps with contemporary notated music.

ENCOUNTERS [Leo 716] is an unapologetic jump into free improvisation by LUC HOUTKAMP [sax], SIMON NABATOV [p] and MARTIN BLUME [dms]. This is the first encounter all 3 have had together as an improvising unit. Houtkamp's fluttering work is the main voice over the 8 improvs on this [2/23/14] date. As might be expected this is an improv free for all utilizing overblown sax, percussive piano and bowed (or something that sounds like that) cymbals. These are seasoned artists with, between them, over a 100 years experience and dozens and dozens of recordings and their sounds of surprise are with thought and logic. There is nothing here, in form, that is new, it is now a familiar strategy that is over 50 years old. This is a fine example of mature free improv.

Label Rives is a small (3 releases to date), French label notable for its odd packaging. Their CDs, so far, come sandwiched between 2 magnetic sheets [7" X 7"] silkscreened with artist names and label number. Inside is the CD and booklet. Their latest effort [label Rives 3] is GAËL MEVEL[p], MICHAËL ATTIAS[saxes]. Ten originals make up the, most deliberative, music on this set. According to the minimal notes Mevel asked Attias to hold back in order for each note, each step [to] fulfill its promise. The effect being a slow movement through the composition. Even where Attias takes the lead, or goes it solo, the tempo is running-through-water slow and labored. The effect for this listener was contemplative.

Also contemplative is PAOLO PORTA's [ts], BEGINNER'S STATE OF MIND [Slam 561]. Porta for the most part stays in the mid range and at a relaxed tempo playing in an understated manner on nine originals and Randy Newman's, "That'll do". The trio [Alessandro Maiorino-b, Alessandro Minetto-drm] works well together, bass and drum keep the themes buoyed and at the same time have their own conversation. There are times Porta reminds me of Frank Lowe, he is quite lyrical in his compositions, at times almost sounding like folk lullabies. A calming jazz postbop outing.

A recording of originals and not so calming is CHERRY PICKIN' [Slam 294] by PAUL DUNMALL [reeds], JIM DVORAK [tpt], MARK SANDERS [b] and CHRIS MAPP [dms]. This is a very well put together group who shows a mercurial form as they lay down music all composed by Dvorak with the exception of a 19:20 free excursion at the conclusion of the CD. Dunmall's sax work is the solo power of the group as his playing moves the music ahead with a sense of insistent searching. The rhythm section for the most part keeps things churning, while Dvorak contributes supporting jabs and statements. On two of the tracks Dvorak sing-talks including some prose from Lord Buckley's beat reinterpretation of the Gettysburg Address which now sounds dated. An uneven recording that unfortunately shares billing with the good and not-so-good.

The SEE THROUGH TRIO [Karen Ng-as, Pete Johnston-b, Tania Gill-p] has produced PARALLEL LIGHTS [Woods and Waters 008] a recording of nine Johnston originals. Johnston has a writing style similar to Monk, not in melody or harmonics but in its sense of randomness. Combine that randomness with Ng's wispy sax and the suggestion of Tristano looms large. The single note and counterpoint work of Gill's piano works well at drawing the listener into, what on the surface is, thin music, but not often stark or uninviting. Johnston's bass pretty much shadows the line or punches in line-less notes. There are moments here when it suggests the trio is tuning up against the piano. See Through *indeed*, with space sometimes big enough to drive an octet through.

GREG MURPHY [p], who worked for many years with Rashied Ali, has released BLUES FOR MILES [Jazzintensity Records 001]. Accompanying him, in various combinations, are; Kush Abadey [dms], Eric Wheeler [b], Tom DiCarlo [b], Josh Evans [tpt], Ben Solomon [ts] and Raphael Cruz [perc]. Musically the reference to Miles is lost on me, other than 2 of the 14 titles are "Blues for Miles" [two takes], in fact if there is anything suggested it's Ben Solomon's pleasurable Coltrane inspired playing. The program here ranges from, let's call it inside, on tunes like "Easy To Remember", "Brother, and Can You Spare A Dime" to some very effective free playing on "Free Ur Mind" and "Free Han Solo". Murphy is credible in all styles and moods but it is on the uptempos and later styles where he seems most mentally energized and inspired. A strong ensemble, a bit derivative, but believable when turned loose.

MICHAEL JEFREY STEVENS [p] came on the scene in the mid '80s and over the years has amassed a considerable discography as sideman but more often as leader or co-leader with a number of cooperative and reoccurring groups (see Fortune 0050/006 above). His range is considerable— seemingly at home in bop as well as free settings. He also appears rather industrious as he manages to keep new releases issued and books himself world wide as well as keeps himself up to date on social media. A look at some of his recent issues.

MICHAEL JEFREY STEVENS [p], JON HEMMERSAM [gtr], SZILÁRD MEZEI [viola] make up an international trio outing on UPCAST [Artist Recording Collective ARC 893682 002307] recorded on 10/20/09, in Budapest, and issued in 2011. This is all improvised (16 sections divided into 7 parts). For the most part this is minimalistic and may have been issued in the same order as recorded—though I doubt it was recorded in one sitting as the improvised encounters are much more decisive as the CD progresses. And as a result the music takes on a more composed, less tentative, feel. Mezei's mid range viola falls nicely between the piano and guitar range, though possibly cello might have been an even more comfortable fit- but comfort is not necessarily what is

aimed for here.

MICHAEL JEFRY STEVENS [p], JUHO LAITINEN [cello], and ESA PIETILA [reeds] call themselves the Brain Inventory Trio, on THE WALL [Konnex 5284]. This was recorded 9/29/10 in Helsinki, and features a mixture of improvs and compositions over eight tracks. Here the improvs are less in unison, or counterpoint, and dominated more by the sax. The compositions are seemingly so informal that perhaps they were only suggested guild lines. The entire date moves at a very deliberate slow speed that will either put one in the zone or make one impatient. After the applause and the last printed track on the CD, there is a lovely lyrical track [8:10], apparently meant as an encore, and held at the same deliberate speed as the whole recording and very effective.

MOUNTAIN SONG [Artist Recording Collective ARC 893682 002604] is a 4/20/2012 recording by MICHAEL JEFRY STEVENS [p/medodia] and ELIOT WADOPIAN [b]. The seven compositions are all by Stevens about which he writes in his informative liner notes. The music here is again slow, deliberant and suggests a hymn-like peace. Much of Wadopian's bass work is bowed and it adds a complimentary harmonic depth and soul to the music. A word about the melodica, which is listed prominently on the cover of the CD, it's only used once briefly for a coloring effect; be not afraid. A lovely, if short [43:14] recording.

20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR [Artist Recording Collective ARC 893662 0002536] presents the JOE FONDA [b]/MICHAEL JEFRY STEVENS [p] group [Herb Robertson-tp, Harvey Sorgen-dms] live from Speilboden, Austria. Eight tracks, evenly split between compositions of Fonda and Stevens make up this post bop program. I found this to be a very mixed program of some very powerful playing and some average and with Robertson being off mike at times things are further hurt. I had high expectations for this recording as in my mind this is an all star group but unfortunately only hints of how powerful this group can be are in evidence here. A better representation can be heard on Fortune 0050/006 [see above].

Michael Jefry Stevens [p] also plays a prominent part on WENDY JONES' [voc] PERFECT DREAM [Artist Recording Collective ARC 893682 005274] in that he wrote all but one of the 11 songs as well as headed the backing trio [Zack Page-b, Rick Dilling-d]. This is Ms. Jones' second recording, the first was made under Wendy Hayes [unheard by me]. She has a warm and sincere voice and occasional intonation lapses. She is not particularly a jazz singer, though she does some scatting. The trio provides fine backing and I am surprised how tuneful the music is and how the compositions stick. Stevens wrote almost half the lyrics here and he does it well. Liners give background and tune info. Reservations noted, this is a rather nice issue.

DIETER MANDERSCHIED [b] and SEBASTIAN STERNAL [p] go at it duo on FLUSSRAUCHEN [Jazzhaus JHM 228]. Manderscheid has been around, and heavily recorded over the decades, but I believe this is the first time he has led a recording. Sternal is much younger and I believe works in academia. Together these two are brilliant. The 16 tracks here [56:40] range from seven originals to a beautiful and deeply conveyed "Reincarnation Of A Lovebird". Actually there are many many deeply moving moments, "Prelude to a Kiss" (called "Prélude Dansé" here and credited to the duo) amongst them. There are times when the duo takes a classical bent (Vivaldi) but lose none of their credibility as improvising artists. Other composers here include Bill Evans, Kenny Wheeler, Jerome Kern, Webern and Thomas Heberer. This is a richly rewarding listen and fans particularly of the bass should seek it out.

Also duo is ENA/ONE [Klopotec IZKCD 026] by ZLATKO KAUČIČ [drm/voice] and MILKO LAZAR [p/ss]. This live concert is total improvisation, no words, rehearsals or expectations. The concert consists of 13 parts/tracks which move purposely along over more than 70 minutes. Kaučič's "voice" parts are minor and are sort of a conversation with his percussion work. Lazar, using a Steinway D, plays piano on all but one track, when he plays a prepared piano it

effects 95 percussion instruments. The duo works nicely parallel with each other, sometimes melodically sometimes not but always in unison; free perhaps but not a free-for-all.

ZLATKO KAUČIČ joins GIOVANNI MAIER-b and DANIELE D'AGARO-reeds on a freeform concert called DISORDER AT THE BORDER [Palomar records 50]. D'Agaro plays sax and clarinet on this program of 6 tracks [74:32] and shows a good touch of Evan Parker. Maier wields his bow with a solid soul development. As with the CD concert above the players listen closely and work in sync with each other. Music has come a long way to work in such an intuitive manner. Veterans at work.

ANDREAS LAMMEL [p], RENÉ BORNSTEIN [b] and FLORIAN LAUER [drm] team together on NOVEMBERLIEDER [Nabel 4722], an album whose eight originals are evenly divided between Lammel and Bornstein. In his liners, Ralf Dombrowski writes in this music, the interest resides in those empty spaces (to some extent a truism about all jazz/improvised music). It's accurate in that at times the piano can be ethereal and wandering but there is much more here than that. There are cluster parts, open parts, ebb and flow all of which makes for a most pleasant listening. I think this is the trio's debut and it is a good one.

ANDY LUMPP [p] has been around since the mid '70s and made a number of recordings mainly on Nabel. MUTATION [Nabel 4724] is his latest and he is joined by his regular trio [HEINRICH CHASTCA-b, STEFAN HOELKER-dms] on a recordings of six improv pieces. Here there is a greater sense of random than found on the Lammel recording. And as for those quiet times they are less in evidence. Actually I would have skipped over this album, which I felt would have been more effective as a solo piano session, as I felt the rhythm, especially the drums, was more distractive than complimentary to the piano lines. Except for the last track "No Return" which seemed powerful and instrumentally well placed. There was a different strategy in place on this cut. On previous cuts the piano takes the lead and bass and drums try to fit in. On the last cut bass and drums take the lead and later the piano plays into them. For me it made all the difference and so I bring it to your attention.

YOU ARE A CREATURE [Sunnyside 1389] is an album by NICK SANDERS [p] trio [Henry Fraser-b, Connor Baker-drm]. Sanders has a curious style in that he reminds me a bit (compositionally) of Ornette Coleman in that he writes and plays short phrases that hang out for a moment before he extemporizes under them. The rhythm plays with, or counter, to the piano lines while remaining supportive and complimentary to them, on one track the pianist goes solo. This trio has been together, I believe, for over two years and it shows in the integration of the group. Working with this pianist, in a sideman role, staying on top of it with this music, would take a knowing past the rudiments. All the 13 tracks here are Sanders originals with the exception of "The Blessing" by Ornette Coleman which is perhaps the most traditional of all the pieces. Produced by Fred Hersch, this is an interesting listen.

Another trio can be found on RUBY PROJECT [Double Moon 71150]. For this album DAVID FETTMANN [as] took liturgical Hebrew songs gave them arrangements, re-composed them, and added 4 compositions by Abraham Ellstein to make up this rather upbeat program. Joining the trio are Guillaume Naud [org] and Johnathan Blake [drm]. The organ is not a B3, which would have made a major difference in hipness. The organ often shadows Fettmann's lines and when standing by itself suggests a baritone electric piano. All of this is salvaged to a great extent by Blake's energized drumming which is a constant and gives support throughout, often canceling attention on the organ. Naud is usually a pianist and, had that been the case here, it would have been more effective to Fettmann's facile alto sax and program. An appealing, if mixed bag.

TILL MARTIN [ts] has written ten compositions that make up THE GARDENER [Unit 4555] that are distinguished by an unhurried, sometimes impressionistic, ambience that owes more

to chamber jazz than traditional modern jazz. The quintet [Andreas Höricht-viola, Christian Elsässer-p, Henning Sieverts-b/cello, Bastian Jütte-drm] creates a soft, light touch throughout, often punctuated by a reoccurring pulse, but not a jazz beat. An unpretentious date which will most probably get lost in the pile of releases that is issued every month. A composer's session.

Unit has also released JAZZ TALKS [Unit 4556] by VEIN [Michael Arbenz-p, Thomas Lähns-b, Florian Arbenz-dms, Dave Liebman-ss/ts/recorder]. This a wonderful free-wheedling and lyrical group. The program is a fine mix of four standards [All The Things You Are, Autumn Leaves, April In Paris, You And The Night And The Music] and nine originals from group members, some quite intriguing. Liebman, who, is not a regular member of the group but a feature, fits in with wonderful agility and feel. The rhythm has had about a dozen previous releases, including another with Liebman, and they are a very polished group, yet remain exciting and able to turn on a dime. Special note to the interplay and juxtaposition between the group and Liebman on "All The Things You Are". It is brilliant, it's the opening track and runs the risk of making the rest of the date a let down, but brilliance aside it really serves as an h'orderve for the rest of this fine release. Fans of the kind of interplay that Martial Solal and Lee Konitz could engage in might be advised to acquire this music if only for the opening track.

The Trio DAS LETZTE KANGURU [Christoph Beck-ts, Sebastian Schuster-b, Felix Schrack-dms] presents a nicely balanced album of nine original compositions on ABSPRUNG [JazzHaus JHM 222]. Post bop but pre-Brotzmann, this trio presents a comfortable confidence in interaction and examines jazz within a mid range both in tempo and dynamics. Not particularly identifiable as stylists; these are kangaroos content to feed by the road, rarely venturing into the outback.

ELMER BERNSTEIN, along with Henry Mancini, Neal Hefti and Quincy Jones were some of the most prolific soundtrack writers and the most hip of the last half of the 20th century. The 18 piece BIG BAND DE CANARIAS [Canary Islands] pays a tribute to some of Bernstein's jazz scores on THE WILD SIDE [Varèse Sarabande 302 067 3128]. This is not really much of a jazz recording, it comes across as a bit sterile reading of scores—albeit jazzy and well done. It is marked by solid solos that spill into jazz, done mainly by tenor man Kike Perdomo [he is also the founder and director of the BBDC]. Many of the compositions are so suggestive that one might be tempted to write a screen play from them. If you're a fan of music, jazz or not, this will satisfy. The program is: The Man With The Golden Arm/Saints And Sinners/The Rat Race/Jubilation/The Age Of Innocence/The Caretakers/The Silencers/Ghostbusters/Johnny Staccato/Devil In A Blue Dress/Sweet Smell Of Success/Walk On The Wild Side.

There must be more Monk tribute albums, topped only by Ellingtonia Tribute releases, than to any other creative improvising artist. One of the latest, is also 25 years old, CRISS CROSS-LIVE AT THE RED SEA [K2B2 4569], by the group THELONIOUS [Marty Krystall-ts, Hugh Schick-tpt, Bill Cunliffe-p, Billy Osborne-drm]. Thelonious is headed by Neidlinger and Krystall and beginning in the mid '80s have released a handful of Monk homages. This was recorded live, 2/17&18/90 in Santa Monica, California, and it is very live indeed. And the liveness is a part of the charm. The balance is uneven as the chomp-chomp-chomp of the drums is too upfront, voices of encouragement are in evidence but the spirit is wonderful. Krystall is a killer and reminds me of the spirit exhibited by Johnny Griffin on the *Monk at the 5 Spot* releases. Cunliffe, who had yet to make a featuring recording, sounds like he is having a ball and has the Monk filagrees down and, like other members of the quintet, is at times all over the place. This would be an excellent subject for a blind fold test. Ten Monk compositions given new life on an old date. Mark Weber has written liners about the whys and wherefores, a creative force writing on creative forces. I share the performers' enthusiasm.

Another refreshing tribute to Monk can be found on ALEX CONDE's [p], DESCARGA

FOR MONK [Zoho zm 201501]. Descarga, I believe, suggests a Cuban jam session and the latin influence is certainly present on this quartet's [Jeff Chambers-b, Jon Arkin-dms, John Santos-perc] interpretation of nine Monk originals. Conde manages to break loose of the Monkian structures that so define his compositions, while still relating to the now familiar themes. On some pieces, including one of Monk's most haunting compositions, "Ugly Beauty", the pianist incorporates Amparo Conde and Carmen Carrasco on hand claps and [Flamenco-esq] foot stomps in counterpoint to his ballad reading of the composition. It's very effective. A delightful effort.

Still more Monk can be found on MONK WORK [Ambiances Magnétiques 218] by a group calling itself EVIDENCE [Jean Derome-as/bs, Pierre Cartier-el.b, Pierre Tanguay-drm]. The main voice is Derome, heavily recorded in Quebec, Canada since the mid 1970s he remains almost unknown outside of the province. The saxman has had a long interest in Monk music. Here is Monk of a different color as the group runs down 11 Monk compositions in somewhat of a sing-song manner, it is almost Monk-lite. Part of this effect is the groups approach but it is also complimented by Cartier's choice of electric guitar, which lightens things. Tanguay's drumming is light and rolling for the most part. Even a heavy composition like "Brilliant Corners" remains march upbeat. Monk with a difference but still charming.

Another tribute album, this time to Stanley Turrentine, can be found on DAVE STRYKER'S [gtr]; MESSIN' WITH MISTER T [Strikezone 8812]. Stryker's quartet [Jared Gold-b3 org, McClenty Hunter-drm, Mayra Casales-perc] does a fine job of capturing the feel of a Turrentine date. Besides the fine use of the B3 by Gold and Stryker's Wes inspired guitar the catch here is the guesting of a different tenor man [Houston Person, Mike Lee, Don Braden, Jimmy Heath, Chris Potter, Bob Mintzer, Eric Alexander, Javon Jackson, Steve Slagle, Tivon Pennicott] for each tune [La Place Street, Pieces Of A Dream, Don't Mess With Mister T, In A Sentimental Mood, Impressions, Gibraltar, Salt Song, Side Steppin', Let It Go]. The various groups capture well the feel and mood of a Turrentine date and Stryker's group makes it all seamless. A 16-page booklet gives a good account of background and foreground.

Dave Stryker also plays on, and produced, RACHEL CASWELL's, ALL I KNOW [Turtle Ridge Records 002]. This is a series of duets with Stryker or Jeremy Allen [b]. Caswell's intimate (believable, in that she seems connected with the lyrics) singing has a somewhat vintage feel to it as she exhibits both her scat and vocalese chops. My only complaint is that on higher or emphasized notes the range tends to grate, distracting from the lyrics (it's possible what I'm hearing is audio overload). 12 cuts including: If I Should Love You, Agua De Beber, I've Never Been In Love Before, Sometimes I'm Happy, You Don't Know What Love Is, For All We Know, I Fall In Love To Easily.

Another guitarist, CLAUDIO LODATI, brings his guitar, loops and live electronics to ANIMAL SPIRIT [Setola Di Maiale no#]. Here he is a one-man-band on eight (non overdubed) originals. Lodati utilizes the loops heavily, often as the main voice as opposed to creating an underneath pattern. Lodati is playing and having fun with sound and it goes down easy. Fortunately this recording is free of the electronic screech and feedback that he has been known to utilize from time to time. Clocking in at 25:02 this hardly has time to overstay its welcome.

While on the subject of guitar, LARRY CORYELL has a new album out, HEAVY FEEL [Wide Hive 0325]. Coryell is associated with fusion, the difference between him and dozens of other fusion players, is he has musical sensibilities and usually brings intellectual interest to his music. This album in fact does have a heavy (as in profound) feel to it. The nine originals are contributed by the group [Matt Montgomery-b, Mike Hughes-drm, George Brooks-ss]. Coryell has been off my radar for some time and this recording makes me think I should reassess my opinion. Fusion for thinking people.

Daedalus records [001] has issued THREE OF A MIND by the ADAM BIRNBAUM trio

[Doug Weiss-b, Al Foster-drs]. This is, I believe, Birnbaum's forth release as a leader and he addresses the task with an assured ease and a clarity of sound. There is a touch of Bill Evans in his playing, a bit of introspection, though Birnbaum is a much more forward player, it is the hints of rubato in his lines that suggests this Evans touch. The trio works well over the nine pleasant originals by Birnbaum or Foster, and the aggressiveness of the drummer is a positive asset to the success of this mainstream, but not sleepy, date.

Smoke Records [1502] continues to build up a strong catalogue with STEVE TURRE's SPIRITMAN. This session is not recorded live at Smoke, as most of their releases, but in a NYC studio [6/1/14]. Joining Turre are: Bruce Williams [as/ss], Xavier Davis [p], Gerald Cannon [b], Willie Jones III [drms] and for one track, Chembo Corniel [congas]. Turre's dark toned (classic Jay Johnson) trombone is in good voice and the front line with Williams works well on this soulful and swinging release. The whole sounds like the group came ready to tell tales and play. The ten tracks here are half standards and half Turre originals, all missing the perfunctory reading that too often affects studio dates. Turre, as is his wont, briefly brings the conch shell into play and it fits well, less of a gimmick than on some of his previous work, here it affects a forlorn, shimmering, alto sound that effectively introduces "All Blues", a fine romp, which ends the recording. A solid Steve Turre recording and yet another, better than average, release from Smoke.

Also from Smoke Sessions comes HAROLD MABERN: AFRO BLUE [SSR 1503]. Here Mabern takes his trio [John Webber-b, Joe Farnsworth-drm] and augments it with various guests including Gregory Porter, Norah Jones, Jane Monheit, Kurt Elling, Alexis Cole, Peter Bernstein, Jeremy Pelt and Eric Alexander. This is really a wonderful release, a mixture of standards [Afro Blue/ Fools Rush In/I'll Take Romance/My One And Only Love/Billie's Bounce/Do It Again/Portrait Of Jennie/You Needed Me] and five originals by Mabern or Farnsworth. The big surprise to me is how poignant Norah Jones sounds, maybe I should pay more attention to her. Less than his best was Elling. Because of the changing personnel the album has aspects of a mixed tape, a most enjoyable one. This is the second studio session in a row from Smoke, when they started, last year, all but one release were live dates, and among some of the best releases of the year. I would hope that that predominance continues. As with previous releases the digi-pack has full liners in the form of an interview with the session leader and photography by Jimmy Katz. A nice production.

I also found SLANT SIGNATURE [Papaya Records 888295 195997] by BENNY SHARONI [ts] to be better than average. Joined by Jim Rotondi-tpt, Joe Barbato-p, Mike Mele-gtr, Todd Baker-b and Steve Langone-drm, on a program of five solid originals and three compositions out of the jazz repertoire [Freddie Hubbard's "Down Under", Lee Morgan's "Ceora" and Ray Bryant's "Tonk"]. This group breezes through with a bop familiarity that never ventures from that genre. My only wish is that the players were more individually distinctive. Reservations aside, this is a solid and very enjoyable listen.

Kichemak Records has released ON THE CROSSWALK [KR003] by YNGVIL VATN GUTTU [tpt]. Ms Guttu wrote the 11 tracks on the recording and is backed a quartet [Renato Diz-p, Joe Goehle-b, Mareike Wiening-drm], augmented on four tracks by various sax and trombone, but the story here is Guttu. Her compositions show an expansive ability to set out a broad musical plane and fill it with interesting searching solos. The tracks run from 1:26 to 9:02 in time and exhibit an attention to detail in the carefully worked lines and total construction which makes for very engaged listening. This is apparently her third recording but she is a new name to me (and with her name one surly would remember), but one whose name, for me, is as memorable as her music. Guttu, who claims homes in New York, Alaska and Oslo, really deserves a bigger stage, one which it seems she could successfully fill as composer, arranger and soloist. This is stark music but also warm and full of emotion and reflection. Worth your search.

Also worthy of your attention is SILVER CORNET [Nessa ncd-36] a live concert [3/30/14]

with the BOBBY BRADFORD [cnt] - FRODE GJERSTAD [as/clt] Quartet [Ingebrigt Håker Flaten-b, Frank Rosaly-drm]. Gjerstad is a totally free player and one of the best at making something out of nothing. Bradford, older, has a more notated background who put a foot into totally free jazz in the early '80s and by the mid '80s began his association with Gjerstad. Their conversations are unforced and more often than not inspiring, as they are here on three tracks [45:05]. While the leaders are laying out, Flaten and Rosaly do a fine job of sustaining the line and interest. Music which should exhilarate not exhaust listeners of the genre. And, yes, I have produced many recordings of Frode's and recorded him and Bobby together and rather than make my comments suspect it should add credibility.

It would be hard to pigeon hole trumpeter KIRK KNUFFKE, who has graced a number of recordings in a number of manners and genres. On ARMS AND HANDS [Royal Potato Family 020286 217749] he brings his considerable technique to the company of Bill Goodwin [drm] and Mark Helias [b] on 14 Knuffke originals and Eddie Miller's "Thanks A Lot". This is a jaunty session with lots of humor and kick-along feel. On some tracks Bill Drye [tbn], Daniel Carter [as] or Jeff Lederer guest and keep the mood flowing. Knuffke fun.

I've come to expect a degree of excellence from the North Texas State Jazz Bands over the past 4 decades. THE ONE O'CLOCK LAB BAND: LAB 2014 [NT] LA1401-sw] displays the expected flash and professionalism, from this 20 piece big band, but relative to previous issues I found the nine piece program here rather dull, full of gee wiz arranged climaxes and not terribly full of memorable soloists.

Not wishing to encourage an in house rivalry I'd point out that UNT TWO O'CLOCK LAB BAND's TWO MUSIC: IT DON'T MEAN A THING IF IT... [NT] LA1402-JS] is a much more satisfying listen than Lab 2014. This 21 piece unit, plus 2 vocalists, offers up a 2 CD program of 17 tracks which I find much better paced and programmed. Standards, like; I Didn't Know What Time It Was/Detour Ahead/Lament/Nardis/You must Believe In Spring/J&B/Inner Urge/Del Sasser, mix it up, for variety, with originals. Solid but with space and breath this band gives the suggestion of a small/combo within its framework. In addition to all this I find the pacing of the program works well. An enjoyable listen if a bit too generic.

JIM SNIDERO [as], who got his start at North Texas State, has released MAIN STREET [Savant 2142], a somewhat understated session, with his quartet [Fabian Almazan-p, Linda Oh-b, Rudy Royston-drm]. If one takes main street as the inspiration for the program of five originals plus "Autumn In New York", "Las Vegas Tango" and "The Streets Of Laredo", then this is a leisurely stroll. Even on up tempos Snidero's occasional Coltrane-styled lines ease into the mood while on ballads there is a noticeable Phil Woods influence. The program ends with a burning "Laredo" that will get you going, in case you got too relaxed, and ready to listen again. My only complaint is a faded ending on one cut— why?

FREE RANGE MUSIC [Jazzhaus JHM 224] by the COMPOSERS' ORCHESTRA BERLIN is a wonderful collection of original compositions by members of the orchestra. The C.O.B. is under the direction of Hazel Leach [flt], who for years worked with various large women's orchestras. In the liners, she writes, "... the music written for this band would have no exclusion zone.....to combine from all possible styles to create music which is truly 'free range'". The orchestra draws from a pool of almost 2 dozen musicians, pretty equally divided between men and woman, near half contributing to the 10 compositions. It's my thinking that it is in these composer's orchestras where individuality of statement is now most consistently found. Individual stylistic playing continues to be very limited to a handful of individuals past and present. It is still possible to hear fresh/new styles but it is rare, as the individual sound is more and more generic. In these composer's orchestras individual orchestrations can sprout fresh and give individual players a wonderful setting in which soloing can shine, all the while engaging listeners on many levels. The

C.O.B. is off to a wonderful start with Free Range Music.

TASCHEN DRACHE [Slam 298] is a duo recording with IRENE KEPL[vln] and MARK HOLUB [dms] on 12 improvs. Holub is best known for his work with his group Led Bib [Slam and Cuneiform] while Kepl is unknown to me and this may be her debut release. I mention this here not because it is a satisfying listen, it isn't, but because her's is an interesting voice. She seems to have a feel for free-ish improvising but the duo work here is so much num-fumbling that it suggests a need for seasoning and familiarity with her partner and genre. Time will tell.

VAMPYROTEUTHIS INFERNALLY [Slam 558] may also be LUIZ MORETTO's [vln/rabeca] first release. Here the group [Alipio C Neto-ts/ss, Francesco Lo Cascio-vbs/perc, Gianfranco Tedeschi-b, Marco Ariano-dms] is well tuned in to each other and solos dovetail nicely within their free constructs. The eight cuts here are all originals and the use of vibes here harkens back to the free music of the 60s and 70s as it gives a suspended sense while soloists set their ideas in motion. Neto is the outstanding soloist in the group but it is the contributions and coloring of all that makes this such a successful listen.

TOBIAS MEIER [sax], a player who seems more interested in the texture and composition as a whole as opposed to sax statement displays, has issued IM WALD [Wide Ear Records no number], a short [31:57] CDR of 3 tracks with his quintet [Matthias Spillmann-tpt, Frantz Lorient-viola, Nicola Romanò-cello, Raffaele Bossard-b]. The music here is often glacially slow with repeating riffs/patterns with emphasis on the ensemble. One could easily imagine this being the sound track to a surreal impressionistic film. Aside from compositional qualities there is little solo work except for Spillmann's occasional counter forays over the ensemble, something I would have welcomed more of. A fine work in need of soloists.

There is little solo development in CHRISTOPH GALLIO's [ts/ss], ROAD WORKS [Percaso 28/29]. Other than an existential effort I really don't know what to make of this. There is a CD and DVD. The CD runs 49:23 and is made up of 72 tracks, most running less than a minute in length, and having little connectedness. Gallio leads a sextet and the music is not hard to digest assuming you like snippets. The DVD is visuals by BEAT STREULI and consists of almost 50 minutes of brief shots of cars, bikes, people, color, form and texture. It is what it is, I could see or hear no further.

There is greater development on ARTISTS [Percaso 31/32] a 2 CD set by DAY & TAXI, a title heading for groups, led by CHRISTOPH GALLIO [ss/as/bari s/c-melody sax], since the mid 1980s. Joining Gallio, on this undated release, are Silvan Jeger [b] and David Meier [drm], both new to the grouping and to the scene in general. Jeger and Meier do a fine job but this is Gallio's show. Again these are relatively short forays, 30 cuts ranging from 22 seconds to 6:42, but there is a greater sense of fullness and unity in the whole. One gets the distinct feeling that these themes are as long as needed and any expansion on them by the participants would just be an indulgence. On repeated listening they become more endearing and the brevity is appreciated. On soprano the Lacy influence is notable, Gallio is a bit softer in tone but he obviously leans that way as opposed to the Coltrane school. Tasteful and engaging, Gallio deserves more attention than he gets in North America.

Also falling into the category default of "it is what it is" is Jacques Demierre's [p] THE THIRTY PIANOS ORCHESTRA [Flex Records 008]. Divided into 4 sections [49:04] this is, as advertised, 31 pianos playing Demierre compositions and conducted by the composer. Together they create a sort of ambient sound ranging from a swarm of bees to a percolating pot. Listed are 29 pianists with the following note— some who are not on the list did play some who are on the list did not play—so there you are make of it what you will. The last track has some individual random (?) playing accompanied by I guess 30 pianos, maybe—maybe not. My aim for this column was to cover material I felt deserving or interesting, consider this the latter.

Hard bop is now over 60 years old and has become the mainstream for those of an age too

young to remember mainstream, which was defined as jazz coming after swing and before bop. The majority of jazz records now issued (by the bucket full) are bop/hard bop with a couple of missing elements; passion and personality. Passion is what gives DIALECTICS [Cellar Live Records10115], by CURTIS NOWOSAD's [dms] quintet, its personality. I'm not familiar with Nowosad, but he leads this quintet [Jimmy Green-ts/ss, Derrick Garner-tpt, Steve Kirby-b, Will Bonness-p] on the mark. This was a working band, in various configurations, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, since 2009. If you're looking for ballads don't look here, as only one of the nine tracks is a ballad the rest lopes or blazes its way through the program, which opens with "Speak No Evil" and closes with "I Remember You", taken at a tempo worthy of the Jazz Messengers. In between are Nowosad originals and Monk's Bye-Ya. Everyone acquits themselves with strength and passion with trumpeter Gardner's Hubbard-inspired work particularly memorable. My only complaint is a couple of fade-out endings—come on guys, what don't you want us to hear or, don't you know how to end?

IAN SIMS [ts] leads a strong quintet [Alex Norris-tpt, Paul Bollenback-gtr, Ed Howard-b, EJ Strickland-dms] on CONUNDRUM [Ian K. Sims 889211 086849]. Sims, who contributes nine structured originals, has an authoritative delivery on a hard-ish bop date. The quintet sounds quite coordinated as a group so much so I expect that a good number of run throughs/takes preceded the recording, as there is little sense of surprise. The front line fits nicely, Norris seems full of ideas and seems eager to run with the lead while Bollenback's guitar is slightly left of center and often resets the direction or ambience of a piece while maintaining the integrity of the whole. While still a generic tenor stylist this is a strong debut for Mr. Sims.

It has been fashionable of late to take rock material and process it through the improvised music/jazz genre, a methodology which I have not found terribly successful from a jazz perspective. Recently LA LUCHA [John O'Leary-kbds, Alejandro Arenas-b, Mark Feinman-dms, Jun Bustamante-voc] have issued STANDARDS, NOT-STANDARDS [Blue Line Music 0814]. This recording presents 11 compositions [Lovefool/The Way You Look Tonight/Never Can Say Goodbye/My Little Suede Shoes/Everybody Wants To Rule The World/Love Me Or Love Me/Lucky/Have You Met Miss Jones?/The Warmth Of The Sun/Lullaby Medley/Can't Stand Losing You] drawn from the great American songbook, jazz and the contemporary music song books and approaches them in a fresh jazz manner, beyond genre identification. Of course this may not please those who are composition purists, but for those who like to listen to music for its challenge and mental stimulation this should prove a pleasant experience. The packaging leaves something to be desired and is a bit uninformative in its cuteness, so get this for the music. Special notice to Jun Bustamante whose flexible voice conveys feeling and respect for lyrics as she is greatly responsible for taking this music out of its usual genre and making it credible as jazz.

DONNA DEUSSEN [voc] and PAUL WEITZ [gtr] have teamed up with Mat VanBenschoten [b] and Gus Duffy [dms] for ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE [Eloise Records 4-14782]. Ms Deussen has a clean and pleasant voice, albeit gritless, as she sings, seemingly effortlessly, on ten tunes [California Dreamin'/Do Wrong Shoes/On The Street Where You Live/Both Sides Now/Black Coffee/A Night In Tunisia/Fly Me To The Moon/The Very Thought Of You/Sister Sadie/If I Only Had A Brain/Waltz For Debby]. The program is a nice mix of jazz and pop that would be comfortable on AM radio. What gives this recording its jazz edge is the credible jazz backing of the Weitz trio which is augmented by Geoff Nudell [clt/flt] or Wayne Wayne[sax] on nine of the ten tracks. Short [39:28] but pleasant.

Also pleasant, wish it were longer than 26:03, is ALYSSA ALLGOOD's [voc] LADY BIRD [no label 888295 215558]. Allgood is backed by a quartet of organ [Dan Chase], guitar [Tim Fitzgerald], drums [Matt Plaskota] and sax [Alex Beltran] which along with her vocals and choice of material gives a very pleasant vintage jazz sound to the work. The singer does a lot of scatting and it

goes down well, as do her lyrics to Dameron's "Lady Bird". She often has a slightly delayed delivery, giving an added resonance to her vocals. There is sufficient space given to the backup which gives them more than a perfunctory roll. Along with the title track the program is; Yardbird Suite, If You Never Come To Me, If I Should Lose You and one original, Jaded, sung wordless. Again, I wish it was longer.

LAINIE COOKE's [voc], THE MUSIC IS THE MAGIC [Onyx 005] is a full length CD and I'm glad it is. At 73 when she recorded this, she shows little sign of voice deterioration and her choice of material is refreshingly hip. Beside the title track, one of Abbey Lincoln's finest compositions, there is Ronnell Bright's "Sweet Pumpkin", Monk's "How I wish" [Ask Me Now], Peggy Lee's "Mañana", Frishberg's "Our Love Rolls On" and Kellaway's "I Have The Feeling I've Been Here Before". These titles are joined by "Lazy Afternoon", "Loving You", "When I Look Into Your Eyes", "Fascinating Rhythm", "Out Of this World" and "Them Their Eyes". Besides fine renderings of the program (the aging of this singer is only apparent on ballads like "When I Look Into Your Eyes" but with it comes an emotional punch youth could not bring) add to that fine jazz work from the rest of the group [Tedd Firth-p, Luques Curtis or Tabari Lake-b, Myron Walden-sax, Ralph Peterson-dms/tpt] and you get music well worth listening to.

It's possible you'll find BETTY LAVETTE [voc] on AM radio but perhaps WORTHY [Cherry Red Records MVD Audio 6872a] just may be too provocative to qualify. Ms LaVette is an R&B singer and has been singing the blues for almost 50 years. Her no nonsense delivery is full of aged vision and a dignified plea to make anyone believe her songs. She brings to mind a bit of Esther Phillips and Gladys Knight but would not be mistaken for either. Singing a program of 11 compositions, including songs penned by Dylan, Jagger & Richards, Lennon & McCarthy, she imbues these compositions with a soul for the most part missing on the originals: Lady Gaga, Rod Stewart and the lot please take notice. She is backed by a small rhythm combo, except on "Step Away" which adds a horn section. One of the best R&B efforts I've heard in some time. Believability.

RICHIE COLE has always played with passion, or, as he might call it madness. VOCAL MADNESS [Housekat Records 700261 415591] teams the UPTOWN VOCAL JAZZ QUARTET and Richie Cole on 12 cuts, most of them penned by Cole or Ginny Carr, part of the UVJQ [Robert McBride, Holly Shockey, André Enceneat]. The material here is lyric heavy, by that I mean, like Sheila Jordan, they form narratives with jazz music. As for style they are in some ways similar to the Singers Unlimited and in more ways to Manhattan Transfer. Richie Cole adds a definite zing and hipness to the material and after almost 25 years together UVJQ has its own style. Special note for the interpretation of Anthony Newley's, "Pure Imagination", built on a Cole solo, it and Cole have never sounded better. If by now you know what to expect from the UVJW and Richie Cole you won't be disappointed by this recording. No compromises on either side and nicely integrated.

LU OLUTOSIN [voc] is a fresh voice, assured and full, and he is backed by a fine quintet [Antonio Ciacca-p, Tivon Pennicott-sax/flt, Jeremy Pelt-tpt, Mike Karn-b, Jerome Jennings-dms] on SWEET LOU'S BLUES [Twins music 888295 205184]. The group sounds involved with the singer and suggests they were all in the same room and together. There are times the vocals could have had a bit more separation and a lyric printout would have been helpful in hearing the lyrics on some of this material. OLUTOSIN at times reminds me of Oscar Brown Jr., in his lyrics, and Eddie Jefferson in delivery. There are only two standards here, "Nancy With The Laughing Face", which he does an injustice to by changing Nancy to Kathy in tribute to Olutosin's wife, and "Every Day I Fall in Love". There are a number of tunes by other jazz artists [Malcolm's song, Blackjack, Driftin', Mamacita] plus 3 [Lagos Blues, Baron 5, Sweet Lou] by Ciacca, all of which have been retitled with lyrics by Olutosin. There is an unpolished sense to this recording, but the ambiance is real and hip and sticking and anyone with an interest in vocal jazz should seek this out. One complaint, the

packaging is professional but not reader friendly, fortunately this came with a hype sheet duplicating the liner in a more readable fashion. Rough and deserving of greater recognition by the press and public.

SUNSUM [BillCole 3] by BILL COLE's [didgeridoo, piri, shenai, nagaswarm, sona] UNTEMPERED ENSEMBLE [Joe Daley-euphonium,tuba, Ras Moche-ts, flt, Gerald Veasley-bass guitar, Lisette Santiago-hand drum, Warren Smith-dms] is not something you're going to find on AM radio in the United States. This, for lack of a better term, takes its lead from World music. This is music that to be accepted one must force fixed western definitions as to what music is. There are elements of jazz here but as important is the vibrations [literally] of the music and the communal propulsion of the music. The compositions here, all originals by Cole, are evolving, usually over a percussive weave from a variety of players from within the group. Solos project in a familiar manner, though except for the tenor sax the instruments for the most part are foreign to jazz listeners. Recorded live [7/7/14] at the San Clemente Soto Cultural Center in NYC, NY, the audience is silent until the final note; perhaps caught up in the wash of the music.

BILLY MINTZ [drm] has been inhabiting the back lots of jazz since the 1970s and has now issued his second leadership recording, THE 2 BASS BAND...LIVE [Thirteenth Note Records 008]. This recording [1/11/14] is made up of 11 Mintz originals with basses [Cameron Brown and Masa Kamaguchi] only featured on one track, the rest of the compositions feature various horns from this 11 piece, piano-less, band. Mintz' band has a unique sound, it is unsymmetrical in that it is a bit lopsided in that it does not have the familiar voicing or rhythm support of a more traditional band. There is a lot of room for soloing and it's made good use of as the band members take advantage of the freedom the charts offer. There is a great fresh approach here and while you might not guess who it is, it is hard to imagine it would be mistaken for anyone else. Others in the band are Dave Scott & Ron Horton-tpt, Brian Drye & Samuel Blaser-tbn, John O'Gallagher, Kenny Berger & Adam Kolker-reeds.

Also on Thirteenth note is a fine solo effort by ROBERTA PIKET [p] called EMANATION [TNR 007]. This is Piket's second solo release and it's a good one as she brings touches of Bud Powell and Art Tatum to a combination of originals and otherwise [Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise, Haunted Heart, Con Alma, Ba Lue Bolivar Ba Lues, All The Things You Are, Ambiance, Actual Proof]. Whether she is re-harmonizing standards or filling an original with dreamy ambient emotional developments, this recital will hold your attention. A recording full of warmth and personal soul and quirkiness.

A fresh approach is what marked Gil Evans' work 30 some years ago and anyone who remembers that original voicing fondly will embrace RYAN TRUESDELL's, LINES OF COLOR [Artist Share ASBN 0133]. This is part of Truesdell's ongoing Gil Evans project, and here he conducts a (cumulative) 25 piece band live [5/13-18/14] at the Jazz Standard. Among the 11 Evans arrangements and/or compositions presented here are some going back as far as 1942 and up to 1965, including, some previously unrecorded works. Okay what to listen for?; the sound is here, the band is seamless, the conducting flawless, there is a wealth of solos and they are fitting and a pleasure to hear. One thing that occurred to me was how music I used to view as modern now seemed a bit nostalgic to me. It's a warm nostalgia, not dated and the soloists see to that, and this is a very fine production. A 16-page booklet with a full rundown on the whys and wherefores of the recording's being (by Truesdell) is the final kiss of this effort. Soloists include: Marshall Gilkes, Ryan Keberle [tbn], Donny McCaslin, Scott Robinson, Dave Pietro [sax], Lewis Nash [drm], Mat Jodrell, Greg Gisbert, Augie Haas [tpt], Frank Kimbrough [p], Steve Wilson, Steve Kenyon [clt], James Chirillo [gtr], Lois Martin [viola], Jay Anderson [b] and Wendy Gilles [voc].

Most folks probably think of HOWARD ALDEN as a rhythm guitarist so I was surprised to come across SOLO GUITAR [K2B2 4469]. Recorded 6/22/13 this set is made up of 14 tunes

familiar to any jazz fan. It's a fine recital and I hear influences from Bucky Pizzarelli to Joe Pass. Alden plays a 7-string guitar. On the last two pieces on this album he is joined by Buell Neidlinger, [pizzicato] on cello, for a couple of Duke Ellington compositions. Enjoyable as the solo work is the expansiveness and humor the cello brings is lots of fun.

Hubro records has released pianist CHRISTIAN WALLUMRØD's first solo recording, PIANOKAMMER [Hubro 2542]. This brief [37:20] cd has Wallumrød manipulating the piano sound to create soundscapes that are lumbering ambient excursions that are offset at other times by traditional piano playing that's rolling and hymnal, at one moment, pointillistic the next. A sense of the ephemeral is the lasting impression on these ears.

Tum Records has issued a pretty impressive 2 CD set by MIKKO INNANEN [as/bs/clt], William Parker [b] and/or Andrew Cyrille [drm], called SONG FOR A NEW DECADE [Tum cd 042-2]. CD one is from 1/15/10 and is the trio side, CD two is from 6/2/12 and is a duo with Cyrille. The multi-instrumentalist plays with, seemingly, an unforced ease and reserve of ideas and there is little sense of purposelessness playing. On the trio side the program is seven Innanen originals and one group improv, while on the duo CD, six improvs are gathered under the title, *Songs For A New Decade*. On the trio sides the bass and drum, besides being well heard, are nicely offset as their solos are often unaccompanied. On the duo sides there is more tentativeness but it doesn't last long and Cyrille, full of his percussive tricks, keep a lively interest. During this set, Innanen has a second or two on a penny whistle on one track, effectively and sparsely used but on the last track it is over used, along with kazoo and duck call sounds, a gimmick which soon lost favor with this listener. However overall the track is saved by some passionate alto sax work. As is the usual case Tum does a first class production job in attractively packaging their releases with an illustrative liner booklet, photos, credits and a note about the artist and cover painting.

Before hard bop, bop, mainstream, swing, Chicago/dixie there was traditional jazz the music from which folks, like Armstrong, Bechet and Hines, gave to and got inspiration from and it is from where THE INTERNATIONAL TRIO draws its musical breath from. The trio was born in 1981 originally as The Art Hodes International Trio and made its first recordings under that name. In 1991 Hodes had a stroke and Ralph Sutton took over the piano chair, then Christian Azzi took over for Sutton around 2004. TREVOR RICHARDS [drms] and REIMER VON ESSEN [reeds], cofounders, have been the constant throughout the decades. GBH records and Jazz I Like Records have teamed to release 25 YEARS [JIL cd-01-03-06] a 3 CD set covering the trio over five years from 1999 to November 2004. JIL 06 is perhaps the purist of the three. Azzi's piano is almost N.O. formal, Von Essen's blues based clarinet has a nod to Bechet and a bit of Johnny Dodds in its lower registers. Meanwhile Richards, a student of Zutty Singleton's keeps things flexible and rolling with a nice, but not overt, touch of Zutty which is best heard on a lovely drum break on "Buddy's Habit", written in 1923. 14 traditional tracks, except for Azzi's solo outing on his own "Catalina Rag". On JIL 01 and JIL 03 Rene Franc [clt/as] and son [?] Olivier Franc [ss/clt] respectively are added on soprano sax and clarinet and Sutton is at the piano. With the two reed front line and the mutual respect for Sidney Bechet there inevitably is a similar Soprano Summit blend evident. Number 03 is a live recording and is perhaps the weakest of the discs due to muffled audio and the groups move at times from trad to dixie. What really shines is Ralph Sutton, he was such a mutha of a player be it his thundering stride work or his flowery ballads, it's all here and you gotta smile as he flowers through even on the occasional less than stellar performance. I'll admit to a bit of distress at the forgetfulness of the media and jazz fans of this genre. Few people who know Sutton also know Schlippenbach, Trevor Richards from Han Bennink or R. Von Essen from E. Von Essen. It's unfortunate as all these folks have rich histories and play music to be enjoyed, albeit different. This without doubt is enjoyable music.

SVEND ASMUSSEN [vln] made his first recording 79 years ago and he is now 99 and

remains that *other* European jazz violinist. He and Grappelli bring a melodic sweetness and bounce to the instrument and both have lived long lives but Asmussen is still alive and next year will be 100. I had heard fairly recently he was in good shape and playing, I hope it is still true. Storyville records has issued a wonderful recording, EMBRACEABLE [101 4296], a 9/4/85 Paris recording of 12 tracks (Singin' In The Rain, Sophisticated Lady, Hushabye, Trubbel, Prelude In C-Minor, Things Ain't What They Used To Be, Waltz For Sonny, Just A Gigolo, There Will Never Be Another You, Embraceable You, Pent-up House, June Night) with George Arvanitas-p, Charles Saudrais-drm and Patrice Caratini-b. This is not my favorite Asmussen recording (Asmussen claims it is his), as I'm not enamored by the workman like support, but it has its unmistakable charms and joys and while I might pine for others, I'll always have Paris.

REISSUES

THE COMPLETE DIAL MODERN JAZZ SESSIONS [Mosaic md 9-260] is the latest effort from Mosaic records. This brings together all of the sessions recorded or owned by the Dial record label of the 1940s. I write the 1940s as there were other Dials for a while in Argentina, France and later in the USA. I spent the better part of 3 hours going through discographies checking on items here for inclusions or omissions; time better spent listening to music. This material should be very familiar to readers not just for the prime Charlie Parker documented here but also because the recordings were licensed or bootlegged by dozens of labels. Many of these labels I call *drug store* labels due to the fact they were issued as cheap LPs, racked in drug stores, selling for a buck or two which appealed to folks (like myself) with limited funds. These recordings served as my introduction to people like Red Norvo, Slam Stewart, Dizzy Gillespie and such. The only title that I couldn't find included in this collection, was a third take of "Love is the Strangest Game" from an Erroll Garner Dial session, of 6/10/47, recorded but released on other labels so perhaps it was sold outright by Dial. No mention is made of this in the excellent 32-page program booklet, so I'll assume that was the case since Mosaic is pretty exacting about such things. Over the years Tony Williams' Spotlight label (UK) has reissued much, if not all of this material in a tidy fashion. The program notes here from Ross Russell [now dead] and Williams are from 1995 and, while illuminating, could have used an update. Dial was an important label, one of many post war independents, best and justifiably known, along with Savoy, for documenting Bird's earliest contracted studio works. Beside the Bird recordings there are seminal works by trumpeter Sonny Berman, Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray and Dodo Marmarosa and others who went on to be bop masters. As usual the nine CDs here come smartly packaged in a 12" X 12" box and along with the program notes are about three dozen photos, many of which, were new to me. There is no need to recommend what history rightfully has already declared essential.

Trevor Richards, who was referred to earlier regarding his work on The International Trio, has coordinated and produced, PAUL BARBARIN: RARE & UNISSUED RECORDINGS 1954-1962 [GHB Records 111/112]. This is a 2 CD set with the first CD issuing/reissuing material from four Southland Records [8/31/56, 2 dates from ?/?/62 and 12/?/54] while the second CD issues previously unissued takes from the same sessions. I prefer to have unissued takes played following the issued material—but that's an ongoing preferential debate. The music is pleasant enough, a cursory look at some of his work from the period covered. (He was no fly-by-nighter, he had a long tenure with King Oliver and later with Louis Armstrong, was a native of New Orleans, his lifetime home.) But what really gives this reissue its edge is the 24-page accompanying booklet which, besides giving discographical details, offers a history and brief assessment of both the leader and other players. The total time on these CDs is a bit brief—together they could accommodate at

least another 40 minutes of music, enough perhaps for some of the King Oliver sides which I believe are now public domain.

The G.H.B. Foundation has also acquired Harry Lim's Famous Door label and Gus Statiras' Progressive label and has begun an ambitious reissuing program by including extra material from those sessions. The previously unissued takes are included as "bonus tracks" at the end of the originally issued tracks. SCOTT HAMILTON: SWINGING YOUNG SCOTT [Progressive 7152], was originally issued on Famous Door Records. This 1977 recording features the leader still very much in his Ben Webster mode along with Warren Vaché [tpt], John Bunch [p], Michael Moore [b] and Butch Miles [dms]. Derivative though it may be this is a fine mainstream date and has held up very well after almost 40(!) years. The additional titles are; Blues For Mastertone/Scott's Idea/It's You Or No One/Liza. Scott Hamilton is quoted as saying, about this album, it's a little rough, but the spirit is there. Sometimes a little rough is good, as it is here.

The rough upfront tenor stylings are announced by ARNETT COBB on FUNKY BUTT [Progressive 7054], a reissue of a 1/22/80 session, here with three extra takes [Jumpin' at the Woodside/Funky Butt Blues/I Got Rhythm], from the original Progressive session. Cobb was the epitome of the Texas tenor, very much like Illinois Jacquet, who he replaced in Lionel Hampton's iconic band of the 1940's. Dan Morgenstern's lengthy liners nicely complement this release but are out of character when he incorrectly writes that Cobb's final recording was in 1982. The fact is Cobb recorded into the late '80s, a little less than a year before he died [3/24/89]. A minor point and not one that should discourage acquiring this reissue. Joining Cobb are Derek Smith [p], Ray Drummond [b] and Ronnie Bedford [dms].

Those who grew up with the muffled and hot tones of CLARK TERRY [tpt/flg] will find much joy in the original motion soundtrack of KEEP ON KEEPIN' ON [Varèse Sarabande 302 067 3158], the documentary on Terry, moved along by a conversation with pianist Justin Kauffin. Terry died, at 94 on 2/21/05 but in listening to this reissue of material from his career, one is struck by how joyful his playing is and can't help but be saddened for our loss. Terry did a lot of commercial work, which was unusual as his was not a bland/non-distinct trumpeter, the kind favored by studios and contractors. One of the most recorded trumpeters of the last half century he was more recognizable instantly, for his signature sound, than any other trumpeter. The 24 tracks here also include comments from both Kauffin and Quincy Jones along with some piano interludes from Kauffin and Dave Grusin. Sweet Nostalgia.

Acrobat records has issued SO MANY THINGS [ACQCD 7085] by the JOHN COLTRANE Quintet [Eric Dolphy, McCoy Tyner, Reggie Workman, Elvin Jones]. This is a 4-CDR set that pretty much reissues the European Tour [11/18, 11/20, 11/22, 11/23] of 1961, that has been issued on a number of labels over the years. The sound ranges from tinny and thin to professional and similarly listening ranges from tiring to inspired. Boxed with a 44-page booklet, a pretty classy packaging for CDRs.

Avid continues its reissue program, usually reissuing 4 LPs on 2 CD sets. Recently they issued HARRY JAMES; FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS [AMSC 1149]. The four albums are: *Today*, *The Spectacular*, *Plays Neal Hefti* and *His New Swingin' Band*. The plus is half of the album, *Requests On The Road*. Harry James was an identifiable trumpet stylist with solid jazz instincts. He also was gifted with *matinée* good looks, ran with the Hollywood crowd and attracted lots of press outside his music abilities. But, again, his jazz instincts were solid. This set goes down very smoothly and certainly anyone with a taste for Basic or big bands in general will find much to delight in here. There are a couple Mickey Mouse cuts but they are only moments. These bands included Ray Sims, Juan Tizol, Willie Smith, Jake Hanna and Ernie Wilkins was often the arranger. Harry James is often overlooked, as is Les Brown, by today's jazz audience. He shouldn't be.

Also from Avid comes EARL HINES: FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS [AMSC 1152].

Hines was rather taken for granted [1905-89] and now rather over looked in what has become a very crowded and diluted jazz field. In the last 30 years of his life he more and more played solo, where he could and did stretch out in breathtaking runs. Perhaps he recorded too frequently and like Oscar Peterson, made it sound too easy but the fact remains he was an important figure in the birth of jazz and was an important factor in mainstream, bop and right up until he died— one of its finest pianists. This reissue brings together; *Paris One Night Stand*, *The Incomparable*, *Earl's Pearls* and *Monday Date*. These dates are from 54 to 61 and are fairly short tracks emphasizing his New Orleans/Chicago part, pleasant enough but not at his greatest. Backup included Jimmy Archey, Darnell Howard, Pops Foster, Calvin Newborn, Earl Watkins, Dicky Wells and Jerome Richardson. Enjoyable but short of wow!

Bob Rusch

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: BAARS/KNEER/ELGART

TITLE: GIVE NO QUARTER

LABEL: EVIL RABBIT RECORDS 20

TUNES: ANACRUSIS/ EURUS/ GIVE NO QUARTER/ ZEPHYRUS/ LATE PREAMBLE/
SONG FOR PREDECESSORS/ SPECIFIC GRAVITY/ NOTUS/ LOGICAL
CONSISTENCY/ TALE OF THE BEWILDERED BEE/ COMPLEMENTARY PROGRESS/
FUNDAMENTAL AMBUSH/ BOREAS 63:22

PERSONNEL: Ab Baars, ts, cl, shakuhachi; Meinrad Kneer, b; Bill Elgart, d. October 9, 2011; Foxhol, Netherlands.

Dutch woodwind guru Ab Baars has again teamed up with bassist Meinrad Kneer for a collaboration that includes the coloring rhythms of drummer Bill Elgart. The album begins with an extreme amount of energy on "Anacrusis" and carries that vigor throughout the album to performances of "Give No Quarter" and "Specific Gravity." As with most piano-less or chord-less trios, there is a high expectation of the bassist. Kneer rises to the occasion with a combination of rhythmic precision and soaring countermelodies on cuts like "Eurus." He is just as apt with the bow as he is without and can often mix double-stops with wild effects, which he does on "Notus." It is a real treat to hear veteran Bill Elgart included with this duo. His resume includes work with Paul Bley, Gary Peacock, Sam Rivers, Karl Berger, Dave Holland, Lee Konitz, and a slew of other masters. His work on this album does not disappoint, and his musical rapport with Baars is undeniable. Together, this experimental trio creates many fascinating and intense soundscapes. For listeners unfamiliar with their work, take in "Logical Consistency;" it is a perfect display of the sheer power their group improvisations can have.

Dustin Mallory

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: BOB GLUCK/ANDREW STERMAN

TITLE: TROPELETS

LABEL: ICTUS 173

TUNES: JEREMIAH SPEAKS/ A FIRST LAMENTATION/ A SECOND LAMENTATION/ JEREMIAH SPEAKS AGAIN/ ESTHER'S STORY/ A THIRD LAMENTATION/ JEREMIAH SPEAKS FURTHER/ JEREMIAH SPEAKS YET AGAIN/ A FOURTH LAMENTATION/ A FIFTH LAMENTATION/ JEREMIAH CONTINUES TO SPEAK/ ESTHER'S STORY CONTINUES; 52:08.

PERSONNEL: Andrew Serman (ss), Bob Gluck (p, elec, sound collage), Elana Gordis, Hazzan Jack Kessler (voices); September 9, 2012, location not specified.

Composer/pianist Bob Gluck describes Tropelets as a “multi-layered, collaborative duet for piano, soprano saxophone and electronics.” Inspired by several sections of the Bible, and by Jewish cantorial singing, Gluck is interested in weaving together the worlds of modern jazz improvisation and what he describes as the “historical monophonic cantorial tradition.” Unfortunately, the largely graceless and inconclusive music that results commits the cardinal sin of being dull. Gluck and saxophonist Andrew Serman mostly seem to be playing past one another, and not in a meaningful way, without really connecting. Serman’s tone on soprano veers unpredictably from a nicely rounded sound to a more nasal and pinched approach that borders on the annoying. Gluck’s piano playing leans towards simple and mildly hypnotic riffs, often with plenty of space between them. Sometimes the style threatens to bring the music to a dead halt, as on the enervated “A second Lamentation.” The heavily processed and distorted voices of Elana Gordis and Hazzan Jack Kessler pop up now and again, but rather than illuminating the situation, the sheer mass of undifferentiated sound created by the massed vocal sounds almost erases everything else. There are brief flashes of what might have been, notably the rather muscular playing on “Jeremiah Continues to Speak.” For once, both players seem energized and they appear to be listening intently to one another to develop the performance with vitality and rigor. Too bad that it’s the one exception on this otherwise disappointing recording.

Stuart Kremsky

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Tineke Postma & Greg Osby

TITLE: Sonic Halo

LABEL: Challenge Records

TUNES: Sea Skies 6:40, Facets 7:17, Source Code 9"38, Where I'm From: 6:37, Nine Times a Night: 7:59, Bottom Forty 4:27, Melo 9:39, Body and Soul 4:17, Pleasant Affliction 9:52

Personnel: Tineke Postma: as/ss, Greg Osby:as-ss, Matt Mitchell-p-rhodes, Dan Weiss/dr, Linda Oh/b Recorded in Tedesco Studios New Yor Nov 7 and 8 2013

Saxist Greg Osby reminds me of a lot of single mid thirties women that I know. They're attractive, bright and have a lot to offer, and you wonder "Why hasn't anyone married them?" Same with Osby; he's got a great tone, puts out interesting material, but has never really broken the barrier to become a household name. Here's a perfect example, as he teams up to form a front line with Tineke Postma, who also plays the soprano and alto sax. Together they join along Matt Mitchell/key, Dan Weiss/dr and Linda Oh/b for music that, yes, can get a little cerebral and abstract, but still works and keeps your interest. The two reeds weave in and out of each other on moody material such as "Sea Skies" and "Nine Times a Night" and while there isn't a lot of swing, there is a palpable pulse that carries you along. Both Osby and Postma have a lithe sound, and differentiating them is a struggle. They do, however show some muscle during "Source Code" and "Pleasant Affliction" while the take of "Body and Soul" is a luscious dance. More cerebral than some, less abstract than others. Music for musing. Too late to catch the bouquet?

George W. Harris

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dee Alexander

TITLE: Songs My Mother Loves

LABEL: Blujazz Records. BJ3415

TUNES: As Long as You're Living 6:17, Now Or Never 6:42, Guess Who I Saw Today 4:53, Perdido 4:20, Lonesome Lover 7:20, Nature Boy 6:29, Letter From Home 6:01, What A Difference A Day Makes 4:49, Softly As In A Morning Sunrise 3:59, Soul Serenade 4:54, Perdido 3:54

PERSONNEL: Alexander/ vcl, Miguel Delacerna/p, Harrison Bankhead/b, Yussef Ernie Adams /dr-perc, Tomeka Reid/cel, Scott Hesse/g, Junius Paul/b, Ari Brown/ts, Oliver Lake/as, Corey Wilkes/tp Recorded at Tone Zone Recording

I get tons of releases from female vocalists every week; it takes A LOT for one of these to stand out. This one does. What makes Dee Alexander so special, as she's doing a bunch of standards with a team that has Harrison Bankhead/b, Miguel Delacerna/p and Yussef Ernie Adams/dr as the foundation and a rotation of guests artists? Well, she makes you feel the lyrics-she is singing to YOU when she brings together "Lonesome Love" with tenor saxist Ari Brown or a rich "Nature Boy" that includes Corey Wilkes on trumpet. She plays with each syllable, each accent as if she's given it a lot of thought before letting it pass from her rich lips, having fun with "Perdido" on a couple of takes and swinging like a gate on "Softly as a Morning Sunrise." She brings in a few obscurities to keep you on your toes as well, with a nice take of Junior Mance's "Letter From Home" and a nicely strutting "As Long As You're Living" by Julian Priester. This lady has more delivery styles than a closing reliever and makes it fit into a hot bop environment that is as fresh as spring water. Give this lady an ear-she'll fill it for you!

George W. Harris

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Danish Radio Big Band

TITLE: A Good Time Was Had By All

LABEL: Storyville Records

PERSONNEL: For complete personnel and tracks, go

to: <http://www.storyvillerecords.com/products/a-good-time-was-had-by-all-1088616>

Yeah, I know...you think of a big band from Denmark and say to yourself, "sterile, unswinging and stiff." Let me tell ya-Denmark is SVINGING! They are one of the top three readers of this website, right along Israel and the Bay Area. Besides, to stay together for 50 years, as this jazz orchestra has done, you've got to be doing something right, and this 5 disc set shows they've passed the test of time.

What Storyville has basically done here is take selected highlights from albums that the DRBB performed on since the 60s on various labels, mostly on Storyville itself as well as Stunt and Hep. They come across sort of like a European version of The Tonight Show Band-the best studio studs around with great tone, a great collection of charts and an ability to adapt to whomever the guest artist is that they are serving.

To mention every album would take forever, but some of the strengths of the band are evident in that they can work with a 1966 Stan Kenton with some wonderful solos by Rolf Billberg on "Stella By Starlight" while the whole band can rollick on "Malaguena." A local lingo-ed take of "Music Maestro Please" with Lise Reinau and Otto Brandenburg is a bopping hoot, while Ben Webster growls like a well fed lion on "Cry Me A River" and "Old Folks." That combo was a match made in Ducal heaven!

Thad Jones gets the band strutting in 1978 at the Montmartre International Jazz Fest with some hip charts, and Ernie Wilkins builds a sonic frame for Michael Hove's alto on "Day Dream." Even Georgie Fame gets int the act, and he's cooler than hot on "I Put A Spell On You" and "City Life." Some sophisticated sounds are created when Eliane Elias and Bob Brookmeyer come together on "So In Love" and Phil Woods bops with delight on a Jim McNeely chart called "Tripple Metamorphosis." The band can even do samba as Brazilian vocalist Silvana Malta sounds wonderfully steamy on "Suingando" and "Back to Brazil." Artsy pianist Martial Solal modernizes up on some 1999 McNeely charts like "DRJO No. 1, and Latin Lover Michel Camilo caresses the ivories on a passionate 12 minute "Why Not." Through it all, the music, like the best of referees, is never overly noticed; you only appreciate the sounds and grooves they create. Sometimes they feel like vintage Woody Herman, other times the saxes are reminiscent of 70s Basie, but through it all, they keep the toes tapping and the head bobbing...for 50 wonderful years. Consider this set an invitation to check out the individual albums, especially the Webster encounters.

George W. Harris

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: MICHAEL SCHIEFEL

TITLE: PLATYPUS TRIO

LABEL: BMC, 207

TUNES: LISTEN! / PLATYPUS DANCING / PLATYPUS ON THE BEACH / PLATYPUS MEDITATION / PLATYPUS SWIMMING / DREAMTIME PLATYPUS / PLATYPUS HAPPY / THE HOME OF THE PLATYPUS. 51:23.

PERSONNEL: Schiefel, vcl, electron; Jörg Brinkman, cel, electron; Miklòs Lukàcs, cimbalom. April 10-11, 2014. Budapest, Hungary.

Michael Schiefel delivers an organically trippy, labyrinthine soundscape with his 2014 release, Platypus Trio. The opening track, aptly named, Listen!, snags the ear early on with the cimbalom chiming on semi-tones and minor dissonance. Schiefel adds his metallic voice delicately, deliberately, seductively, as lubricant from the ear to the interstices of the brain stem, pulsing, delving, soaring smoothly, efficiently, excitingly. He achieves balance between the cascading musical composition, storytelling and improvisational singing. Complete with ear holding scats, blats and sa-doo-da-bloil-ba-da-hmmmm's, his voice weaves over and into the melodic themes held down by the cello, cimbalom and electronics. The story of the Platypus stems from an Aboriginal tale, emphasizing a message of acceptance of self and others. Our uniquenesses and similarities hold weight in the musical motifs that toggle between consonance and cacophony. With each listening I am surprised at the tug of the music on my ear. He draws attention to the story on the longest track, "Dreamtime Platypus," weaving together words and scat vocables. After more than six listenings, I am again drawn into the maze. I close my eyes and travel to places magical, open, cavernous, empty, like a Cirque Du Soleil planet with its funny, long, lively, colorfully strange characters. The last track, "The Home of the Platypus," ends energetically and abruptly. It urges the listener back to the first track with its mysteriously gentle, beautiful ping.

Marie Black

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: ROZINA PÁTKAI

TITLE: VOCÊ E EU

LABEL: No label.

TUNES: VOCÊ E EU / ISTO AQUI O QUE É / CHEGA DE SAUDADE / CAMINHOS CRUZADOS / GAROTA DE IPANEMA / SMILE / O BARQUINHO / DESAFINADO / AGUAS DE MARÇO / EL HOMBRE QUE YO AMÉ. Run time not stated.

PERSONNEL: Pátkai, vcl; Balázs Pecze, tpt, flgh; Mátyas Tóth, g; Márton Soós, double bass; Balázs Cseh, d, perc; Áron Tálás, Fender Rhodes (5); Tamás Mészáros, vcl (5, 6), The RTQ String Quartet (10) Balázs Bujtor, vln; Erika Kovács, vln; Zsófi Winkler, vla; Béla Gál, cel; feat. Norbert Mohácsi, double bass. 2012-2013. Budapest, Hungary.

Pátkai's relaxed vocal style and the smooth instrumentation of *Você E Eu* make this CD easy to listen to, until it becomes a drain beginning on track 5 with, "Garota de Ipanema." It seems perhaps that the singer toyed with the idea and subsequently opted out of doing a tribute album since half of the songs recorded were composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim. She whispers, slides and bounces proficiently on staccato and legato melody lines in an inoffensive and delicately passionate manner. I find her easy vibrato nice, and her almost lazy approach to many of the selections fitting and somewhat pleasant, yet unexciting and redundant. Perhaps a singer's most tedious task lies in finding those songs that hint at familiarity yet haven't been recorded so many hundreds of times that they become draining to the ear. Also to find those songs that one can sing unlike anyone before. She comes closest to this on the George and Ira Gershwin tune "El Hombre Que Yo Amé," ("The Man I Love") simply by singing the Spanish translation by Humberto Suárez.

This would be nice music to listen to live in a lounge over a dry martini, but as a recording I would prefer more risk in song choice, more variety in arrangement and a change in mood a time or two in the recording's length. Or, make it a true Jobim tribute, which would then become an interpretive artist's statement. As it is, I am simply not well adjusted enough to derive much pleasure from this CD.

Marie Black

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

A Tale of Two CDs

ARTIST: LYN STANLEY

TITLE: POTIONS FROM THE 50'S

LABEL: No label.

TUNES: LULLABY OF BIRDLAND / CRY ME A RIVER / FLY ME TO THE MOON / HEY THERE / I'M WALKIN / YOU DON'T KNOW ME / IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT / THE THRILL IS GONE / A SUMMER PLACE / LOVE POTION #9 / TEACH ME TONIGHT / AFTER THE LIGHTS GO DOWN LOW / MISTY / THE PARTY'S OVER / THE MAN I LOVE. No run time listed.

PERSONNEL: Stanley, vcl; Luis Conte, perc; Bill Cunliffe, p; Glenn Dewey, tpt; Ari Hoenig, d; Joe La Barbera, d; Mike Lang, p; Tom Rainier, cl; John Robinson, d; Thom Rotella, g; Mike Valerio, b; Johannes Weidermuller, b; Kenny Werner, p, org; Rickey Woodard, ts. No dates listed. Hollywood, CA; NYC, NY.

AND

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Chelsea Green

TITLE: The Green Room

LABEL: No label.

TUNES: Dr. Funk / Road Trip / Cheryl Ann / People Make the World Go 'Round / Autumn Leaves / Party Song / 1 am / My Favorite Things / Pizzicato Part III / My Tribute (to God be the Glory). No run time given.

PERSONNEL: Green, vln, vcl; Ignatius Perry, p, kybd; Lorenzo Johnson, org, kybd, sine pad; Kevin Powe Jr., el b, kybd b; Brian "Spyda" Wheatley, d; Matthew Chase, g; Monique Brooks-Roberts, vln; Darryl L.A. Hunt, p; Jashua Thomas, clavier; Theljon Allen, tpt; Marvin Thompson, tbn; Will Spence, as. No geographic location given. No recording dates given.

As I perused the stack of recordings I was assigned to review, it came to my attention that the initial reaction, sometimes a visceral upset, as in the case of these two CDs, is a very tangible animal that perhaps deserves a highlight. The package that holds a record delivers the very first impression. These two artists could learn from each other. One could present herself a bit more enticingly, and the other could tone it down quite a bit. The cover image should aim to reflect accurately the gist of the album and, as elusive as it may seem, the soul of the singer.

Stanley goes with a Jessica Rabbit, caricaturesque photograph on her super slick, well-financed CD, that screams “buy me, buy me” to those that would be so gullible as to succumb to such blatant propaganda. Green goes with a posterized, drab and unfriendly gangstery photo that wishes to keep the audience at arms length.

It might be easy to think that the CD that appears to have had the higher budget may be the better gamble to allow visitation rights into ones psyche. But alas, of course, that is not so. As her first track, Stanley delivers a confusing salsa version of “Lullaby of Birdland.” Her harsh onsets and jerky phrasings make it difficult to get through without becoming extremely angry. Her singing becomes smoother and a bit more believable further into the album, but nowhere does it really call to love or the demise thereof. Where lie the experience and the tears of the rejected lover that many of her song choices reflect? Passion must be earned; it cannot be organized into a thing.

Conversely, the CD cover that screams to be ignored holds a jewel. Green has produced a well crafted, if a little redundant CD that reminds me of the Denver Jazz fusion scene in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. But the gem of this record comes not from her prowess on the violin, of which she has plenty, but from her lush, gorgeous voice on Autumn Leaves that hides all the way into the middle of the CD on track 5. I am a bit saddened at the way in which Green hides her beauty in her choice of cover photo as well as in putting what I see as her best work in the middle of the CD. Perhaps it was there as a buried treasure to be discovered. I would love to hear more of that true soul voice of hers. Come out, come out, wherever you are. You are enough. You are beautiful.

Marie Black

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: CONNIE EVINGSON & the John Jorgenson Quintet

TITLE: ALL THE CATS JOIN IN

LABEL: MINNNEHAHA MUSIC 2010

TUNES: *Love Me Or Leave Me / I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me / Dream A Little Dream Of Me / Jardin D'hiver / (All The Cats Join In/ Tickle Toe) / Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea / Black Orpheus / I'll Follow The Sun / Solitude / The Jersey Bounce / You're Driving Me Crazy / Moonlight / World Without Love / The Lamp Is Low. 55:37.*

PERSONNEL: Connie Evingson, vcl; John Jorgenson, g, cl, background vcl; Doug Martin Rhythm g; Simon Planting, b; Rick Reed, d, perc; Jason Anick, vln. Jon Hendricks, guest vocal on "Cats Join In/Tickle Toe." No recording dates noted, - recorded in Minneapolis, MN, except for "CATS /TICKLE TOE recorded in New York, N.Y.

Perhaps it's best to view this release as an expression of Ms. E's continuing infatuation with what she chooses to think of as "gypsy" Jazz as explored in her "Gypsy In My Soul" release (12/05, p. 1126) a short while ago. Her notes for this new release explain that she first heard the Jorgenson Quintet at Djangofest Northwest and just knew she wanted to work with such a "fabulous band." It all came together at some later date when she and the Jorgensen troop concertized together and "had so much fun" they decided to make this CD which turns out to be no more than pleasantly inconsequential, owing primarily to the very eclectic choice of repertoire, with trifles like "Jersey Bounce" and "All The Cats" set against less-than-trifling Paul McCartney mistakes like "World" and "Sun." Two Walter Donaldson tunes (Love Me Or Leave Me, Driving Me Crazy) lend some substance to the program, along with a dip into Ellingtonia (Solitude) and three minutes of Harold Arlen/Ted Koehler cunningly trapped between the devil and the deep blue sea. Jon Hendricks' growl/mutters his contribution to his own lyrics for "Tickle Toe" but one can only be saddened to find him phoning it in at the tail end of an otherwise illustrious career. Connie sings as well as we have come to expect her to sing, but it would seem that she's running out of programatic ideas for new releases. If the Jorgensen Quintet doesn't exactly invoke Django, listeners may find violinist Anick a more than adequate reminder of Stephane Grappelli.

Alan Bargebuhr

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: SUZANNE CLOUD

TITLE: WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

LABEL: DREAMBOXMEDIA 1022

TUNES: Below The Beltway / With A Little Help From My Friends / Bolivia / I'm All Smiles / Hey Kenny, Gee / ...a Lullaby, dear Monk / Collagen Lips / Watch The Skies / Broadcast Snooze / All The Fine Young Men / Talk Radio / Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams. 57:27.

PERSONNEL: Suzanne Cloud, vcl; Jef Lee Johnson, g, b; E.J. Yellen, Ben Schachter, ss; Dave DePalma, Larry McKenna ts; Denis DiBlasio, bari s; Dave Buffington, tpt; Dale DeVoe, tbn, arr; Chico Huff, Gerald Veasley. Craig Thomas, Steve Varner, Tyrone Brown, Mike Boone, b; Jeff Bichaylo, synth; Jim Ridl, Marty Mellinger, p; Jim Miller, d, kybds ; Adam Guth, perc. Wash, D.C., Philadelphia, Pa, various dates between 1995 and 2006.

This is a reissue of Ms. Cloud's pedantically didactic 1995 release (8/96, p. 90) which contained more than a reasonable measure of moribund satire, and is now officially back in the bins with updates and/or adjustments. Anyone who owns that 1995 issue will be interested in comparing this newly minted version to see what's been added and/or subtracted. The new (?) cover finds Suzanne posing in front of warning sign posted on a green utility barrier - DANGER CONGRESS IN SESSION - DO NOT ENTER. On the far side of the barrier, the Capitol itself is in view and above the barrier hands are raised, reaching for folding money afloat in the political air. Hilarious, right? This is what passes for political humor these anoetic days, or, perhaps it's just fair warning of the sophomoric moping to come. But what of the music? Lyrics pretty much all credited to Suzanne Cloud except for the Lennon/McCartney title tune, I'M ALL SMILES (from a non-satirical 1965 Broadway disaster - "The Yearling) and the minor standard, WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS, which receives a lugubriously distended 10 plus minute reading, replete with "smooth" Larry McKenna tenor and an echoey touch of reverb which gives the impression it might have been recorded in the Capitol basement. One of the new tracks added to this reissued gallimaufry of sodden satire is Eric Bogle's hymn-like anti-war imitation folk song, ALL THE FINE YOUNG MEN, which doesn't really fit the program's over riding ethos of lame lampoonery. Still, Ms. C. applies her sepulchral alto inflected voice to its poetry with serious and sincere intent, and It's a track which, for some customers, might make the disc worth acquiring.

Alan Bargebuhr

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dom Minasi/Blaise Siwula

TITLE: The Sunshine Don't Mind My Singing

LABEL: Nacht Records

TUNES: Bird Mixology, Upstream Boogie, Ballad For Miss-Begotten, Polka For A Left Footed Frog, The Sunshine Don't Mind My Singing, Sign On The Dotted Line

PERSONNEL: Dom Minasi, Blaise Siwula 2014

Both of these players are frequently reviewed by me... Dom's guitar mastery is certainly well-known in experimental improv circles, and Blaise's reed work is recognized around the globe as challenging and stellar. They have worked and performed together for many years now, and that's totally evident in pieces like the 10:24 "Upstream Boogie"... this isn't like any boogie you've ever heard before, but the "boogie spirit" is there & if you listen with your headphones (and I would recommend that, especially for your first sitting), you'll find yourself tapping your mental toes right along with the intricate beats they step through. There are places, like on the intro to "Polka For A Left Footed Frog", where I'm reminded of my friend Davey Williams... smooth flow, but distinctly energetic and (in places) mind-shattering. A note of caution is in order, though... if you're of the "musically regular" persuasion, with a specified place for every note - move on along... this is for listeners who understand that creativity and inspiration flow when the rules are forsaken for "natural". My personal favorite of the six tracks offered up was "Ballad For Miss-Begotten"... the horn and the strings just shine on this one. I give Dom & Blaise a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98 for this great improvised excursion.

Dick Metcalf

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dom Minasi/Hans Tammen

TITLE: Alluvium Sun

LABEL: Straw2Gold Pictures

TUNES: Alluvium, Sand and Rain, Hurricane, Finger Dance, Broken Promises, Don't Look Back, Whispers from the Heart, Chasing Bulls, Slit, Fluvial, Nervous, Erosion, Clearwater Flow, Gemstones, Illuvium, Entrainment Velocity, Rapid Erosion

PERSONNEL: Dom Minasi, Hans Tammen

2014

Most of us have heard "Dueling Guitars", but have we heard them in "improv mode"? Dom and Hans ensure that every note flows cleanly and with total sonic purity, leaving the soil that is our mind full of new thoughts and inspirations... you can think of their work as sonic mining, making each and every little thought in your head become vibrant and full of life! Don't expect the tunes to have clear separations, either... the whole idea here is that every stone gets refreshed by the exuberant energy these two project... especially on pieces like "Finger Dance".. in fact, I would advise that (for your first listen, anyway) you do this with headphones on, from start to finish! If you're a veteran listener of improvised jazz, you'll hear the castanets on "Chasing Bulls" and revel in the dance with the players... I can guarantee that you'll (also) mark it on your playlists repeatedly. When it comes to improvised guitar, Dom is a true veteran, mining nuggets from each sound, and though this is my first listen to Hans, he's clearly in the same league. It was the little vocal snatches on the closer, "Rapid Erosion", that won my vote for personal favorite of the sixteen pieces offered up for your (long-term) aural enhancement, though... if your mind isn't enriched by the end of this 3:04 gem, it never will be. I give Dom and Hans a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.99.

Dick Metcalf

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Michael Jefry Stevens

TITLE: Angel's Dance

LABEL: Nacht Records

TUNES: Underwater Ballet, Rough-Housing, Ancient Quest, Follow the Leader, The Emerging Truth, Little Bitty Ballad, Corresponding Features, Entanglement, Angel's Dance, She's Gone, Autumn's Ballet, Autumn's Ballet, Sandstorm, Chimes For Justin, Sunrise On Pluto, Slanty Blues

PERSONNEL: Dom Minasi, Michael Jefry Stevens Early 2003

I've been a fan of Michael's piano/keyboard work for many years now, and have reviewed tuneage from Dom for close to 15 years now. This recording was from 2003, right when Michael was moving south from NYC to Memphis, TN, and gets right on into the improvised groove on the first track, "Underwater Ballet", with some tasty meandering interplay that will do nothing less than astound your ears... this piece aurally demonstrates just how fluid "fluid" can be, and listeners who are in love with freedom of movement will catch that vibe right away. The enchantment continues with the 2:41 "Follow The Leader"... perfect recording and flawless execution on every note as the tune magically segues into the energy-laden "The Emerging Truth". What you realize as you absorb the atmospheres created by these two improvisation masters is that creation is still in our hands... that it's not "all been done before" & that as long as there are musical mergers like Minasi and Stevens, you'll always have something new to look forward to. My personal favorite on the CD is "She's Gone"... improv, yet somehow with shades of melancholy and remembrance; of course, with a total of sixteen tunes, you may find your favorite in one of the other tracks. If you've never listened to piano/guitar improv before, this is a perfect place to start; and if you have, you'll find yourself spinning this one over & over (& over) again. It gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from me, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) rating of 4.98.

Dick Metcalf

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dario Chiazzolino

TITLE: Paint Your Life

TUNES: Precious Things, Awake, Far From Here, Nostalgia, Nel, Floating, There Is No Greater Love, Paint Your Life

PERSONNEL: Dario Chiazzolino – electric guitar / acoustic guitar, Taylor Eigsti – piano, Marco Panascia – double bass, Willie Jones III – drums

After listening to Dario's top-flight guitar work on an earlier CD, and the review I wrote for it, it's little wonder the promoter sent me this new release. All originals, except for "There Is No Greater Love", this one takes me back to the kind of enthusiasm I had for this kind of music when I first started listening to jazz (way back in the 1960's). Dario is (easily) able to wrap you right into his string spell... you won't go looking through the record racks any time soon, as you'll be so absorbed with his excellent and expressive playing that you won't be able to do anything else for a good long while. Eigsti's piano is superb, & in fact, all the players are sensitive to the mood(s)... you don't often get to hear such unity... I can say (without qualification) that this CD is already my favorite guitar jazz album (yet) for 2015. The track titled "Awake" gives you that feeling you get when you're just rising to a brand new brightness, and will keep you energized for the whole morning! Of the eight tunes offered up, it was the vibrant energy and pace on "Floating" that got my vote for personal favorite... if you don't purchase any other music in 2015 - GET this one! I give Dario a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) of a (perfect) 5.00... which means that it's also a "PICK" for "best guitar jazz"!

Dick Metcalf

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: SHERRI ROBERTS

TITLE: LOVELY DAYS

LABEL: No label.

TUNES: IT'S A LOVELY DAY - ISN'T IT A LOVELY DAY / WHAT'LL I DO / NICE 'N' EASY / SOON IT'S GONNA RAIN / HEART AND SOUL / WE KISS IN A SHADOW - I HAVE DREAMED / OUR LOVE ROLLS ON / I'M ALL SMILES / COME DANCE WITH ME / LIKE A LOVER / MOON RIVER / HIT THE ROAD TO DREAMLAND. Run time not stated.

PERSONNEL: Roberts, vcl; Bliss Rodriguez, p. October 20, 21, 2011, January 24, 25, 2012. Oakland, CA.

Bliss Rodriguez creates a rich, colorful and spacious piano canvas for Sherri Roberts. I found myself rooting for Roberts beginning with the second track, "What'll I Do," when I heard a warm earnestness in her voice. She has a silky voice and easy-listening singing style. She was able to collect a palette of songs that are off the beaten path and worthy of attentive listening. There may be a lyric or two that could use updating depending on one's tolerance for political incorrectness.

I detected some nasality in her tone throughout the CD where she could perhaps benefit from a more relaxed tongue. When the soft palate is blocked by tongue tension, the sound blasts through the nasal passages. While as singers, we want to stay resonant even on the dark vowels like the schwa (uh), spending some time noticing the different sensations in the mouth while enunciating the sounds "Ning" (highly nasal on the ng) and "Ah" (easy to fall into the back of the throat) can be a beneficial exercise for singers who struggle with a nasal tone. Enunciate "Ning-Ah" slowly. Then separate the sounds. Notice the sensations in the mouth between the nasal "Ning" and then drop the jaw deeply with a totally relaxed tongue resting on the back of the bottom teeth and create the "Ah" sound. The sensations of nasality and good placement that produces a pleasant tone will become clearer with practice.

Marie Black

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: JUDI SILVANO

TITLE: MY DANCE

LABEL: No label.

TUNES: DUST / MAKE IT A CLASSIC / IT'S SO AMAZING / MY DANCE / SAMBA 33 / BOUGAINVILLEA / F MINOR / KOKOPELLI'S DANCE / CALYPSO / OUR WORLD / ECHO CARDIO.

Run time not stated.

PERSONNEL: Judi Silvano, vcl; Michael Abene, p. No recording date mentioned. Kingston, NY.

Judi Silvano dives into compositions expertly played by Abene with gusto and excitement. While I appreciate her musicianship, it took several listens to be clear that she has a strong and unique talent. If I wrote strictly based on my first impression of the first song on the CD it would go something like this: "Why does a singer release a CD when clearly her vocal skill pales in comparison to the other instrumentalists on her record?" Ouch, right? Further listening softened that blow by a mile. We singers rely on musicians to help us sound our best and to achieve our best selves.

On the second listen, at the end of track 10, I began hearing beautiful clear and resonant tones. Our World and Echo Cardio (tracks 10 and 11) show off a clear, beautiful light second register. The pitchiness that happens in the first track, and the back-of-the-throat sound throughout most of the songs due to lack of forward focus in chest voice disappears as she scales higher and brighter in her upper register.

When a singer lacks forward focus not only does she run the risk of damaging her vocal folds by excessive bearing down, but the tone suffers as well. When using chest voice we need to keep the tone forward or we sound muffled, warbly and sometimes off key.

Often times a singer gets labeled or labels herself an alto when in reality she sings more beautifully as a soprano. The difference lies in the timbre of the higher tones, not in ones ability to sing lower notes. When we accept our soprano selves and cater more to the clear high tones than being big and beefy in our chest register or heavy mix, our voices are both enlivened and saved. Sometimes we need to raise a song's key by a whole step or more to really be able to access the voice in its best and truest form.

Song key should always be determined by the voice.

Marie Black

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: HERB GELLER & THE ROBERTO MAGRIS TRIO

TITLE: An EVENING WITH ... Live in Europe 2009

LABEL: JMOOD Records 012

TUNES: *After You / El Cajon / Lonely Woman / The Red Door / Orson / Upper Manhattan Medical Group / Celebrating Bird / 9:20 Special / If I Were A Bell / The Peacocks / Pretty Woman.* 56:38.

PERSONNEL: Herb Geller, as; Roberto Magris, p; Nikola Matosic, b; Enzo Carpentieri, d, - tracks 1 thru 9, recorded at Novi Sad Jazz Festival, Serbia, on 11/19/2009; trks 10-11, rec. in Vienna, on 12/6/09.

Here's the evidence that at age 81, "young" Herb Geller was still well in command of his jazz faculties, still able to find the Bop probity in lines like Zoot's "Red Door," as well as induce ample melodic warmth from liturgies ("Orson/ Upper Manhattan") found in the Billy Strayhorn book of common prayer.

Geller is well matched with Roberto Magris' resourceful trio with whom he's recorded before (3/07, pg. 36) to excellent effect. Magris, born in Trieste in 1959, is apparently a student of jazz literature and the history of modern jazz piano. Geller was, indeed, fortunate to have found him just as we are lucky enough to hear them together again on this latter recording.

At the NOVI Sad Festival in Serbia, Herb introduces Benny Carter's "Lonely Woman" to his audience and takes the opportunity to recall aloud that it was Benny Carter, composer, song writer and multi instrumentalist, who inspired him to come a musician when he (Geller) age 14, first heard him. Herb goes on to expound on the fact that both Ornette Coleman and Horace Silver have also written compositions titled "Lonely Woman," but that this one, Benny Carter's, is the "real Lonely Woman" In what turns out to be a rather expansive intro, Geller goes on to say that before he recorded the song (it appears on his CD dedicated to Carter and Johnny Hodges, viz: **TO BENNY & JOHNNY** - HEP 2084), he talked to Benny who asked him to include the verse because nobody had ever done it before.

Curiously, if Carter really thought that, he was not exactly correct. June Christy sang the verse when she recorded the song with the Stan Kenton band in 1947 and when she recorded the song in 1955, again with Stan Kenton, on their very spare **DUET** album (2/94, p. 30).

Herewith, then, a bracing and well balanced hour of jazz -a more than fitting finale to Herb Geller's illustrious career, recorded some four scant years before he died on 12/19/2013.

Alan Bargebuhr

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Bill Watrous/Pete Christlieb/ Carl Saunders & The Gary Urwin Jazz Orchestra

TITLE: A Beautiful Friendship

LABEL: Summit Records

TUNES: A Beautiful Friendship 5:17, Waltz For Debby 5:46, Emmanuel 4:57, Autumn Sojourn 5:40, Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry 5:26, It Could Happen To You 5:09, The Gentle Rain 5:54, Shaw 'Nuff 6:46, Look To The Sky 5:59, Dear Mr. Florence 5:11, Joy Spring 4:52, We'll Be Together Again 1:51

PERSONNEL: Saxes: Kim Richmond, Rusty Higgins, Pete Christlieb, Dan Higgins, John Mitchell, Trombones: Caharlie L oper, Alex Iles, Andy Martin, Rich Bullock, Craig Gosnell, Trumpets: Wayne Bergeron, Rick Baptist, Dan Fornero, Carl Saunders, Jeff Bunnell, Rhythm: Christian Jacob/p, Frank Browne/g, Trey Henry/b, Ralph Razzo/dr-perc, Chris Razzo/perc
Recorded at Entourag Studios, North Hollywood, CA

You've got some of the very best of LA's musicians here, as Gary Urwin checks on his iphone and calls up studio studs like Bobby Shew/tp, Kim Richmond/as, Andy Martin/tb, Wayne Bergeron/tp and Christian Jacob/p to join in this gentlemanly swinging session starring local icons Bill Watrous/tb, Pete Christlieb/ts and Carl Saunders/tp. Each of these gents have made illustrious careers performing for the likes of The Tonight Show and a gazillion movies and TV shows, and the reasons as evidenced here are easy to detect. There is a professionalism in terms of approach to standards like "It Could Happebn To You," "Waltz For Debby" and "The Gentle Rain" that make the tunes clear, crisp and polished. Christlieb fills the room on "It Could Happen To You" and "Dear Mr. Florence" while Saunders gives a workshop on chops on "Emmanuel" and Watrous slides like Rickey Henderson on "Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry."

The only hangup about this collection is that the sound is just a tad too clean and shiny, there's a plethora of professionalism that makes it lean towards the sterile side, with a minimum of earthy grit. Even the bopper "Shaw 'Nuff" and "Joy Spring" come off more glib that galloping. The arrangements are erudite, but the lack of any chances, sans the solo by Jacob on piano that closes the album with "We'll Be Together Again," make you wish for a bit more turmeric to spice things up.

George W. Harris

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Delfeayo Marsalis

TITLE: The Last Southern Gentleman

LABEL: Troubadour Jass Records

TUNES: The Secret Love Affair 5:35, Autumn Leaves 6:00, She's Funny That Way 3:10, Sesame Street 5:40, I'm Confessin 5:30, But Beautiful 7:00, Speak Low &:45, Nancy 5:50, The Man with Two Left Feet 4:20, That Old Feeling 5:15, My Romance 3:45, If I Were A Bell 4:45, I Cover The Waterfront 5:30

PERSONNEL: Delfeayo Marsalis/tb, Ellis Marsalis/p, John Clayton/b, Marvin "Smitty" Smith/dr Recorded at Cahuenga Pass Studios, Burbank, CA

A mixture of generations takes place here, as trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis teams up with his father and pianist Ellis Marsalis and the adroit John Clayton/b with Marvin "Smitty" Smith/dr for a collection of lyrical and personal readings of standards.

Marsalis lets the textures and sonorities of his horn do the convincing here. He's not out here to prove that he's got chops as much to show his taste. He's languid and sensuous with Clayton's reverberating bass on "The Secret Love Affair" and can glow on the easy striding "Autumn Leaves." He uses a plunger to wah wah with Clayton's bass as he takes you to another world and era on "That Old Feeling." He seems in no rush as he ambles with Clayton on "That Old Feeling" patiently waiting for Papa Ellis to join the team on piano until Smith finally joins in late on the conversation. Ellis' warm and knowing hands caress the keys on "She's Funny That Way" and leads the trio as he skips along on "If I Were A Bell." Still, it's a trombone show here, and Delfeayo lets it purr, coo, warble and sigh as on "Speak Low" or the lovingly slinky theme to "Sesame Street." As comfy as a coffee in the Latin Quarter

George W. Harris

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dee Daniels

TITLE: Intimate Conversations

LABEL: Origin Records

TUNES: Exactly Like You 3:44, All The Way 6:12, Come Try My Love 4:31, Get Here 6:31, Don't Touch Me 5:07, \$ AM 5:03, A Song For You 5:24, I Wish You Love 4:17, You'll Never Walk Alone 5:36

PERSONNEL: Ted Brancato/key, Cyrus Chestnut/p, Wycliffe Gordon/tb, Bob Kindred/ts, Russell Malone/g, Ken Peplowski/cl, Houston Person/ts, Martin Wind/b
Recorded March 18-20, July 30 and Aug 4 & 14, 2012 at Mahogany Studio, Springfield NJ

Do you want to hear what a vocalist is supposed to sound like? Give this lady a try! Daughter of a minister, Dee Daniels gives a Spirit filled album where she is teamed with (mostly) one other musician on a Decalogue of tunes, ranging from Depression era Tin Pan Alley to R&B with some Baby Boomer tunes thrown in for a complete megghilla of cozy conversations.

She pairs up with some of the best: Cyrus Chestnut/p, himself a worship leader at his church, teams up for a recitative take of "Come Try My Love," while Wycliffe Gordon, also an MK, brings his trombone down the aisle for an altar call of "All The Way." A cozy "Exactly Like You" with bassist Martin Wind is a complete joy, while Ben E Ling's "I Who Have Nothing" is given a sepia mood with Ken Peplowski's woody clarinet. She goes deep and dark with guitarist Russell Malone on "4AM" and glows like light through a stained glass window with breathy tenor saxist Houston Person on "A Song For You." Completely unpretentious, and alluring in its stripped down essentials of what makes jazz so rich, Daniels makes jazz a verb again, breathing fresh air into dry bones.

George W. Harris

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: The Dave Liebman Group

TITLE: Samsara: Expansions

LABEL: Whaling City Sound

TUNES: Simply 6:33, Ugly Beauty 5:41, Endive 3:38, Liberian Hummingbird 4:17, Rhythm Thing 6:48, Searcher 2 5:26, Level One 3:40, Embers 5:59, Sivad 5:05, Child Refugee 10:37, Samsara 5:56

PERSONNEL: Dave Liebman/ss, wfl, Bobby Avey/p-ep, Matt Vashlishan/as-fl-cl, Tony Marino/b-eb, Alex Ritz/dr

Dave Liebman has been one of the most prodigious artists this year. This has got to be at least his 6th or 7th release in the past 12 months, and each one has been in a different situation and context. This group is a brand new one, forming after being with guitarist Vic Juris for a score of years, and has two woodwinds to go with the piano/bass/drum rhythm that is usually anything but, as they play around with electronics and percussions to keep you on your toes.

As Liebman admits in the liner notes, the sounds and songs are fairly eclectic, which means that either 1) they are still looking for a unifying voice or 2) they are just having a wail of a time together. They re-harmonize a few jazz standards here, with Monk's "Ugly Beauty" plodding along with a delicate $\frac{3}{4}$ step for Liebman's soprano, while "Sivad" glides with beautiful keyboard work underneath the pair of floating reeds. Some boppish moments on "Endive" with Ritz's brush work make you feel like you're in a Soprano Summit meeting with Wilbur and Davern, while a fragile yet forboding mood is created by the pair along with eerie tom toms by Ritz. A mystical trip is lead by Libman's wooden flute as he guides you through exotica on "Child Refugee" while playful sounds bounce around on the Spherical "Searcher 2." You're never cheated out of creative ideas from Liebman, and this latest band of his shows lots of promise. Ready for the tour!

George W. Harris

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Shelley Neill

TITLE: The Currency Is Heat

LABEL: Cobalt Blue Music

TUNES: Old Love 8:19, I Fall To Pieces 4:34, La La La Means I Love You 5:50, Up The Roof 4:26, Hit The Road, Jack 4:17, Crazy 5:08, Half Moon 2:53, At Last 4:18

PERSONNEL: Shelley Neill/voc, Laszlo Gardony/p, Ron Mahdi/b, Yoron Israel/dr

Recorded at PBS Studios 6/7 2014

Vocalist Shelley Neill reaches into the 50s era of R&B, soul and country and gives them all a dash of late night jazz on this understated yet alluring collection. The team of Laszlo Gardony/p, Ron Mahdi/b and Yoron Israel keeps the mood bluesy and casual as Neill's earthy yet clear voice sounds sly and witty on "Old Love" and "Half Moon." There's a dash of Patsy Cline that brings a dash of twangful regret on her take of "Crazy" while "I Fall To Pieces" has her meld with Gardony's thoughtful ivories to evoke more of a rueful memory than a desperate disposition. She does a cute read of "La La La Means I Love You" by turning it into a torch song, while "Hit the Road, Jack" opens with Neil humorously throwing the bum out of the house. She's got an understated moxie that makes this a good listen, and her pick of tunes is quite astute.

George W. Harris

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: THE INTUITION ORCHESTRA

TITLE: TO THE INSIDE

LABEL: FORTUNE 0025-016

TUNES: CZAS BYŁO RUSZAĆ/ TRANSURANOWCE/ OSZALAMIAJĄCE WYSOKOSCI SIERRA MADRE/ KOLONIZACJA UWALANYCH SMAREM/ ZERIBA, ZERIBA/ STOLON/ KOSZMARINE SIĘ UPIJAŁ/ DZIWACTWO I ZABOBON/ CAŁA PODRÓŻ/ TRANSYLVANIA/ DO WEWNĄTRZ/ ASPERGILLUS

52:22

PERSONNEL: Ryszard Wojciul, ss, as, cl, vcl, EWI; Bolesław Błaszczuk, kybd, p; Jacek Alka, d; Marcin Olak, g, vcl; Monika Szulińska, perc; Maciej Szczycińska, b; Jacek Malicki, g; Wojciech Szewko, el b. 2014; Poland.

To The Inside is a bold new release of conceptual material that shoots for the outer limits of the galaxy. The core trio of Wojciul, Błaszczuk, and Alka have augmented their sound palette with an additional set of musicians on this release. The album grooves, has great melodies, and elements of the blues. It also has a very investigational feel with its ethereal use of electronic instruments and world percussion. The music oscillates between orchestral, flamenco, rock, jazz, and electronic musical elements. Taken as a whole, it can be reminiscent of some early Pink Floyd, Mr. Bungle, or more experimental Radiohead, but it also shares a sibling-styled relationship with Dave Douglas's Freak In album. Despite these comparisons, the album stands on its own sound. The guitar work on "Oszalamiające" and "Stolon" is quite exceptional and the use of percussion covers the music in a very specific sheet of timbres. The EWI and keyboards have a 1980s electronica feel at times but the music can sometimes sound very new. This strange combination of traditional and contemporary elements requires repeated plays of each track just to catch everything. The composite sound is new and very relevant to today's listener. I definitely recommend giving this album multiple listens.

Dustin Mallory

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: OBARA INTERNATIONAL

TITLE: LIVE AT MANGGHA

LABEL: FORTUNE

TUNES: CONVERSATION WITH.../ BALLAD/ 7UP/ UNLOVED/ VARIATION/ MANGGHA
61:04

PERSONNEL: Maciej Obara, as; Dominik Wania, p; Gard Nilssen, d; Ole Morten Vågen, b.
2013; Poland.

Led by Polish saxophonist Maciej Obara, Obara International is quartet of musicians from Poland and Norway who have combined to create a renewed, yet mature take on the traditional acoustic format. The combination of beautiful melodies from the Polish musicians with adventurous pulsations from the Norwegian rhythm section make this album a "must-own." The album was recorded live in Manggha, Poland's Museum of Japanese Art and Technology. The live concert hall gives a special presence to the album that is accompanied by the clear reverb of the concert hall. Not only is the sound quality especially notable, but each musician brought their "A-game" on this night. Obara's command of his instrument is apparent immediately in "Conversation With...", the opening track on the album. Obara moves seamlessly between slow melodies, faster technical lines, and the occasional moment of outside exploration. His amazing solo in the middle of "Variation" is just one fine example. Wania is the understated gem of the group. His incredible solo piano on "Ballad" (which ends up being a barn-burner by the time the band comes in) shows his prowess in a much more nuanced light than his stormy accompaniments on tracks like "7up." Wania's versatility is the glue that makes this group so cohesive. Vågan, on the other hand, is the most audacious member of the group. His free playing on the introductions to "Conversation With" and "Variation" are very bellicose and embody the aggressive elements of the Norwegian bass tradition (a much needed element in this writer's opinion), but his work on "Ballad" shows that he has a sensitive approach as well. Nilssen brings a contemporary drumming style to the table. His accompaniments act as a sort of Brian Blade-meets-Mark Guiliana method to drumming. However, the solo he provides on "7up" shows that he is well-aware of drumming history and of masters like Joe Morello and 'Philly' Joe Jones. The band as a whole works very hard to keep the music interesting. They don't often beleaguer ideas and don't over-develop worn out licks. The music is fresh, interesting, and is definitely in my top 10 albums for the year.

Dustin Mallory

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: PETER HAND BIG BAND,

TITLE: OUT OF HAND,

LABEL: SAVANT 2141.

TUNES: Sunny* / Blues In The Night* / Listen To Your Heart / Out Of Print Blues / Barbara Rose / The Elevator / Night Echo / My Dream* / Summertime. 65:12.

PERSONNEL: Hand, g; Houston Person, ts*; Jay Brandford, Bruce Williams, Don Braden,, Ralph Lalama, Kenny Berger, sax, rds; Kevin Bryan, Eddie Allen, Valery Ponomarev, John Bailey, tpt, flgh; John Mosca, Vincent Gardner, tb; Jack Jeffers, btb; James Weidman, p; Harvie S, b; Steve Johns, d. 12/12-13/13, Brooklyn, NY.

Led by guitarist Peter Hand and features punchy Basie-like ensemble work and smart writing and arranging by the leader. The Basie resemblance shows best on "Out Of Print Blues", a frisky blues that has Hand, alto player Bruce Williams and trombonist Vincent Gardner all doing greasy, eloquent solos. "The Elevator" is a fire-breathing original featuring an ebullient solo by Ralph Lalama, "Night Echo" is a brisk samba and "Barbara Rose" is a pretty floating ballad with Hand's guitar weaving through dreamy group passages and John Bailey and Don Braden contributing rich solos.

Then there are the standards. "Summertime" is done in a fresh, whirling arrangement that gives Eddie Allen and James Weidman chances to shine while the other three old tunes feature the old school tenor sound of guest Houston Person, haunting on a textured version of Ellington's "Day Dream" and wailing the blues with authority on "Blues In The Night".

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: DARRELL KATZ AND THE JCA ORCHESTRA,

TITLE: WHY DO YOU RIDE?,

LABEL: LEO 711.

TUNES: Why Do You Ride?* / Wheelworks: Any Intelligent Fool - What Did Albert Einstein Say? - Riding a Bicycle - Under the Cloak of War - Sticks and Stones - The Mysterious - We Are The Dancers - A Better Teacher / SamiBadGal / Monk's Mood**. 72:33.

PERSONNEL: Katz, g*; Rebecca Shrimpton, vcl; Hiro Honshuke, fl, EWI; Allan Chase, Jim Hobbs, as; Phil Scarff, ts, ss, sop, cl; Dan Zupan, bari s, bcl; Mike Peipman, Gary Bohan, Forbes Ghram, tpt, Bob Pilkington, David Harris, tb; Jim Mosher, fr hn; Bill Lowe, tba; Luther Gray, d; Norm Zocher, g; John Funkhauser, b; Joe Doubleday, vib; Mina Cho, p, Ryan Edwards, perc. 6/18-19/13, Allston, MA. **JCA Sax Quartet: Jeff Hudgins, Daniel Ian Smith, as; Phil Scarff, ts; Dan Bosshardt, bari s. 6/99, Westwood, MA

Most of these compositions concern bicycles and philosophy. "Why Do You Ride?" is a Zen parable about bicycling that Rebecca Shrimpton sings in a hip, jazzy manner as the orchestra swings heavily over a chugging, rockish beat, Hiro Honshuke, Dan Zupan and Mike Peipman all adding appropriately frisky solos. The major work of the set is "Wheelworks", a 40 minute-plus suite that contains a compendium of quotes that are attributed to Albert Einstein whether he actually said them or not. (The CD booklet details which ones he did and did not say.)

Shrimpton again sings the words with imagination, spirit and seductive swing over music that ranges from the slinky and exotic to the mechanical and atonal. Her performance is reminiscent of the work the great British singer Norma Winstone has done over the years with large ensembles. The orchestra, meanwhile, heavily lurches from to jazz to rock to whatever with room for a lot of fine soloing by, among others, pianist Mina Cho, trombonist David Harris and alto player Jim Hobbs. There are also a couple of lumbering, spacey trio sections included both anchored by tuba player Bill Lowe.

In addition to all that, the CD also features' Katz's "SamiBadGirl" which seems to be an elegy for a deceased pet cat, a piece with a creeping, slithering edge that features pouncing piano by Cho and raw rock guitar by Norm Zocher, and ends with a sensual sax quartet rendition of "Monk's Mood". Altogether this is a CD of disparate and imaginatively assembled parts as fresh as the more celebrated orchestral work of Darcy James Argue.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: FREDDY COLE,

TITLE: SINGING THE BLUES,

LABEL: HIGHNOTE 7267.

TUNES: Muddy Water Blues / This Time I'm Gone For Good / Another Way To Feel / Goin' Down Slow / Meet Me At No Special Place (And I'll Be There At No Particular Time) / All We Need Is A Place* / My Mother Told Me / Singing The Blues / The Ballad Of The Sad Young Men / Pretending* / An Old Piano Plays The Blues. 43:53.

PERSONNEL: Cole, Theresa Hightower*, vcl; Harry Allen, ts; John DiMartino, p; Randy Napoleon, g; Elias Bailey, b; Curtis Boyd, d. 6/8-9/14, Astoria, NY.

Freddy Cole is not normally thought of as a blues singer but his warm, sandpapery voice adapts well to the form on this CD. Actually this is not strictly a blues album. There are also sophisticated ballads like "Another Way To Feel" and "Ballad Of The Sad Young Men" that Cole sings with his usual buttery assurance and a couple of slices of classy uptown funk in "Pretending" and "All We Need Is A Place" with Theresa Hightower providing sassy vocal counterpoint to Cole.

The real blues tunes also sound great. "My Mother Told Me", "Gone For Good", "Meet Me At No Special Place" and "Goin' Down Slow" all hit solid, greasy grooves with Cole's singing suggesting Percy Mayfield and Bobby Blue Bland. The mood is also helped along by Harry Allen's cranky tenor and John DiMartino's slippery guitar work. Freddy Cole sounds as cool as he ever has here.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: HOUSTON PERSON,
TITLE: THE MELODY LINGERS ON
LABEL: HIGHNOTE 7269

TUNES: My Funny Valentine / Gone Again / You're Nearer / Minton's / Bewitched / Only Trust Your Heart / They All Laughed / Try A Little Tenderness / The Song Is Ended / You Can't Lose With The Blues. 57:31.

PERSONNEL: Person, ts; Steve Nelson, vib; Lafayette Harris, p; Ray Drummond, b; Lewis Nash, d. 6/30/14, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Houston Person seems to do a lot of sideman work these days so it's nice to see him actually leading a session as he does on this disc. He is as good an exponent of the old-fashioned Hawkins-Webster school of tenor sax playing as there is today and he shows that here playing a little bit of everything. There is bouncing bebop cool on "Minton's", bright swinging on "The Song Is Ended" and "My Funny Valentine", big, creamy blues on "Try A Little Tenderness" and gorgeous slow balladry on "You're Nearer" and "Gone Again".

The other musicians, including both Lafayette Harris on piano and Steve Nelson on vibes, give Person plenty to work with and Nelson even gets his own dreamy feature on "Bewitched". With Ray Drummond and Lewis Nash providing bedrock rhythmic support, this is as fine a set of classic jazz as you're going to hear in the present day.

Jerome Wilson
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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: STEVE HECKMAN QUINTET,

TITLE: SEARCH FOR PEACE,

LABEL: JAZZED MEDIA 1069.

TUNES: Fungii Mama / Grantstand / Search For Peace / Pannonica / Hi-Fly / Hangin' At Slug's / Melody for C / Autumn In New York / Spiral. 60:36.

PERSONNEL: Heckman, ts, bari s; Howard Alden, g; Matt Clark, org; Marcus Shelby, b; Akira Tana. d. 3/9-10/09, Berkeley, CA.

Steve Heckman's set is mostly jazz standards and his playing is nimble throughout. Blue Mitchell's "Fungii Mama" is treated as a simmering calypso, Monk's "Pannonica" is navigated at a loping pace with Howard Alden and Matt Clark both contributing tricky solos and Randy Weston's "Hi-Fly" is done as a fast samba with Heckman motoring along on baritone. Clark's organ adds a gritty texture to the overall sound throughout the disc while the rest of the band blasts away confidently. A lot of this is low-key jazz repertory work but it is enjoyable.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: THE FRANK WALTON/YORON ISRAEL SEXTET

TITLE: LIVE IN CHICAGO

LABEL: HAN-WAL PRODUCTIONS 9002

TUNES: Hipsippi Blues / Consequence / Ichi-ban / Dorothy / Blues Nova / Untitled / One Mint Julip. 78:00.

PERSONNEL: Walton, tpt; Israel, d; Allen Chase, as; Lance Bryant, ts; Kevin Harris, p; Avery Sharpe, b; Tony "Toca" Carpenter, perc. 1/24/14, Chicago, IL.

This CD deals in familiar jazz territory, specifically the whipcrack stomp of Art Blakey's Messengers. Co-leader Yoron Israel has the Blakey shuffle rhythm down and the entire band preaches the hard bop gospel well. Kevin Harris' jangling piano and Avery Sharpe's popping bass on Hank Mobley's "Hipsissippi Blues" are highlights as is Frank Walton's trumpet evoking Miles Davis heartache on Donald Brown's "Dorothy". Walton and sax players Allen Chase and Lance Bryant run through Jackie McLean's "Consequence" at breakneck speed and "Untitled" has the entire band taking fast solo shots with Israel's dancing cymbals and Bryant's Trane-ish braying standing out. Ronnie Matthews' "Ichi-Ban" spotlights the rhythm section with the horns punching in on the melody line while all the horn players get to do their thing on Lee Morgan's funky "Blues Nova" before Sharpe and percussionist Tony Carpenter duel. This one is swinging and heated all the way through.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: EUGENE MARLOW'S HERITAGE ENSEMBLE,

TITLE: MOSAICA,

LABEL: MEII ENTERPRISES (No #).

TUNES: Hava Nagila / Lahadam / Zikkaron - Kristallnacht / Eliyaha Hanavi / Mah Nishtanah Halaylan Haze / Erev Shel Shoshanim / Halicha L'kesariya / Ani Ma'amin / Zikkaron - Kristallnacht (Special Edition). 53:16.

PERSONNEL: Marlow, p, arr; Bobby Sanabria, d, perc; Michael Hashim, ss, as; Frank Wagner, el b, ac b, Mathew Gonzalez, perc; Shira Lissek, vcl. 7/10/14, New York, NY.

Jazz has been combined with Hebrew melodies at least since the days of Benny Goodman and on this disc, Eugene Marlow's Heritage Ensemble give its take on the concept. There's a brooding, solemn mood to most of the tracks led by Marlow's deliberate piano and Shira Lissek's yearning voice with a jazz feeling seeping in slowly. "Eliyana Hanavi" is full of bluesy melancholy while "Erev Shel Shoshanim" begins with the "So What" introduction on piano and leads soulful, slow alto by Michael Hashim.

The main exceptions to this template are "Hava Negila" and "Ana Ma'amin" which state their themes faithfully then switch gears into full-blown stomping jazz workouts with the percussion of Bobby Sanabria and Matthew Gonzalez leading the way. Hashim, Marlow and bassist Frank Wagner get to stretch out on "Ani Ma'amin" while Sanabria and Gonzalez have an extended drum battle on "Hava Nagila".

Then in a far different vein, there are the two versions of "Kristallnacht", an original piece by Marlow in remembrance of the infamous "Night of Broken Glass" anti-Jewish rioting in Germany in 1938. The first version evokes the event with martial drum cadences that lead to stabbing shards of piano and shrieking saxophone. The second version makes the concept more explicit by adding the spoken reminiscences of Marlow's Aunt Ruth who lived through that horror as a child. Marlow's group does strong work in the Hebrew – Jazz realm.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: AKUA DIXON,

TITLE: AKUA DIXON

LABEL: AKUA'S MUSIC (No #).

TUNES: Haitian Fight Song / Alone Together / Freedom / It Never Entered My Mind* / A Gozar Con Mi Combo / Moon River / Libertango / Lush Life+ / Besame Mucho / Poinciana. 51:29.

PERSONNEL: Dixon, cel, vcl*; John Blake Jr., Regina Carter, Patrisa Tomassini, Gwen Laster, Chala Yancey, vln; Kenny Davis, b; Ina Paris, vla; Orion Turre, d; Andromeda Turre, vcl+.

Cellist Akua Dixon applies the string quartet format to jazz pieces on (2), adding occasional help from voice, bass, drums and solo violin. She kicks off with a vigorous workout on Charles Mingus' "Haitian Fight Song" with the quartet's swinging helped along by bass, drums and a furious violin solo from the late John Blake. Elsewhere the spotlight violinist is Regina Carter who gets into a gutbucket hoedown groove on Duke Ellington's "Freedom" and turns seductive on Astor Piazzolla's "Libertango" while the unadorned quartet turns "Besame Mucho" into a sensual tango.

A slowly whirling version of "It Never Entered My Mind" features Dixon's hovering, wordless vocals and her daughter, Andromeda Turre, adds her big voice to a dramatic, hard-swinging "Lush Life". The real highlight, though, is "A Gozar Con Mi Combo" by the great bassist Cachao Lopez, a murderously swinging Cuban descarga in which Blake, Carter, Ina Paris and bassist Kenny Davis take a delirious round of contrasting bowed or plucked solos. This is the finest moment of a very strong set.

Jerome Wilson

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: BOB MAMET

TITLE: LONDON HOUSE BLUES

LABEL: BLUJAZZ 3416

TUNES: London House Blues / Someday My Prince Will Come / Take the A Train / Over the Rainbow / Nardis / How My Heart Sings / Blue Bossa / Solstice. 40:05.

PERSONNEL: Mamet, p; Larry Gray, b; Paul Wertico, d. Evanston, IL.

Bob Mamet is a Chicago-based pianist who displays a free and easy melodic sense in the tradition of Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans. His playing is constantly swinging and bright and supported well by the emphatic rhythmic bounce of Larry Gray and Paul Wertico. Mamet takes Evans' perennials like "Someday My Prince Will Come" and "Nardis" at faster-than-usual tempos that trail off into abstraction, adding a Spanish tinge to "Nardis". "London House Blues" is a Peterson-like blues that gets faster with each chorus and "Blue Bossa" is played with a light and nimble touch. The tempo slows down only on the closing piece, "Solstice", a waltz that Mamet struts through with melodic swagger.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: HAL GALPER TRIO

TITLE: O'S TIME

LABEL: ORIGIN 82670

TUNES: Like Sonny / Wildflower / O's Time / Moonglazed / Smile / Our Waltz. 50:03.

PERSONNEL: Galper, p; Jeff Johnson, b; John Bishop, d. 3/13/14, Seattle, WA.

Veteran pianist Hal Galper has a more measured, intricate approach on (2). On John Coltrane's "Like Sonny" he takes his time working up classical-sounding turbulence with different tempos in each hand while his rhythm mates, Jeff Johnson and Jeff Bishop swirl alongside him. The trio moves through Wayne Shorter's "Wildflower" and Charlie Chaplin's "Smile" in surging, delirious clouds while the ballad "Moonglazed" is played in a lurching, off-center manner that suggests a cross between Thelonious Monk and Keith Jarrett. Furthering the Monk connection, the melody of Galper's own "O's Time" sounds like a kissing cousin to "Well You Needn't" as it's stabbed out by the piano over Bishop's furious drumming. Galper is a master at combining energy and atonal beauty and has an iron control of tempo. This set really shows him to advantage.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: KEITH JARRETT/CHARLIE HADEN/PAUL MOTIAN

TITLE: HAMBURG '72

LABEL: ECM 2422

TUNES: Rainbow / Everything That Lives Laments / Piece For Ornette / Take Me Back / Life, Dance / Song For Che. 55:22.

PERSONNEL: Jarrett, p, fl, perc, ss; Haden, b; Motian, d, perc. 6/14/72, Hamburg, Germany.

And then we turn to Keith Jarrett himself, as he was in 1972. This is a newly unearthed concert performance from a time when his long association with ECM was just beginning. On this set he is playing in Germany in a trio with Charlie Haden and Paul Motian, before Dewey Redman would join them to form Jarrett's American Quartet.

The Keith Jarrett heard here is a far friskier player than the one known today. After a romantic solo piano introduction, he rolls ecstatically all over "Rainbow" alongside Motian's broken accents and Haden's deep bass groove. "Take Me Back" is a real revelation, Haden and Motian bouncing out deep gospel funk while Jarrett beats a tambourine and plays hustling r'n'b piano like Les McCann. Jarrett's forgotten abilities on wind instruments come to the fore on "Everything That Lives" and "Piece For Ornette". He plays wood flute on "Everything" in a devotional, ritualistic manner as Haden plucks carefully and Motian rattles his cymbals while on "Ornette" he blows soprano sax ferociously over Haden's intense throbbing.

The most potent number of the set is a 15 minute version of Haden's "Song For Che", a piece I don't think Jarrett ever recorded. It starts with a gorgeous theme statement from Haden accented by piano and drums which opens up and turns free with Jarrett playing searing soprano, Motian clattering and shaking and Haden masterful in both arco and pizzicato modes. It's a marvelous daredevil performance and a stunning reminder of how well these three masters worked together.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: CARSTEN DAHL TRIO

TITLE: A GOOD TIME

LABEL: STORYVILLE 101 4291

TUNES: Love For Sale / When You Wish Upon A Star / Take Five / Easy Living / What Is This Thing Called Love / Someone To Watch Over Me / Down With It / Night And Day. 68:48.

PERSONNEL: Dahl, p; Lennart Ginman, b; Frands Rifbjerg, d. 2/4/07, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Danish pianist Carsten Dahl has a fun stroll through mostly familiar tunes, prancing through his set with a feline impishness. He plays "When You Wish Upon a Star" with big, expansive chords, flies along on "Love For Sale" and takes on "What Is This Thing Called Love" with a fast Cuban beat. He uses the Ahmad Jamal method of repeating phrases to create effective grooves on "Night And Day" and "Take Five" before spiraling out into wild soloing. His ballad play on "Someone To Watch Over Me" and "Easy Living" is very deliberate with a tendency towards ornamentation while "Down With It" is a Bud Powell bebop piece that he plays briskly in a dazzling stride-based fashion. Bassist Lennart Ginman and drummer Frands Rifbjerg mix it up well with Dahl giving him a solid rhythm platform to bounce off and adding their own forceful solo statements.

Jerome Wilson

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: THOMAS HASS TRIO'S & BEYOND

TITLE: LOTUS ENERGY

LABEL: STORYVILLE 101 4294

TUNES: Angel Park / Gimbo / Short Free / Anti-Freeze / Lotus Energy / Bibo No Aozora / False Waltz / Clark's Heavenly Blues / Come Rain Or Come Shine. 48:00.

PERSONNEL: Hass, ts, ss; Nikolaj Hess, p; Lennart Ginman, b; Frands Rifbjerg, d.
8/11/13, 11/25/13, 3/6/14.

This session is led by Thomas Hass whose laidback saxophone works gently over loping semi-classical and blues themes. "Angel Park" is played with an attractive, measured gravity and "Anti-Freeze" is a slow romantic melody with gentle soprano sax woven in alongside somber piano and resonant bass.

Those pieces use a full quartet but several others just have a sax-led trio setup. "Short Free" is a brief, frisky blow and "Lotus Energy" has Hass playing eloquently against a stomping rhythm. "False Waltz" is a lovely, off-kilter waltz with gliding, deep tenor, "Bibo No Aozora" is a mournful classical progression that develops into a striking ballad and "Clark's Heavenly Blues" is a fat slice of blues walking over hip rhythmic accents. Thomas Hass is a strong player who knows what he's doing.

Jerome Wilson

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TITLE: NOW'S THE TIME III: THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY JAZZ FROM FRANCE AND LUXEMBOURG,

LABEL: BABEL 12113.

TUNES: 1. Tongs Of Joy / 2. Hopalong / 3. t.b.b.m. / 4. Yompa / 5. Palabre / 6. Blues Nippon / 7. 3+2+3 / 8. Sujet A Changement / 9. Wavin' / 10. Here We Gong / 11. Nem Um Talvez / 12. Karter / 13. Danca da Solidao. 52:42.

PERSONNEL: 1. Orchestre National De Jazz: Daniel Yvinec, con; Eve Risser, Vincent Lafont, p, kybd; Antonin-Tri Hoang, as, cl, b cl; Matthieu Metzger, as, ss, trombone; Remi Dumoulin, ts, cl, b cl; Joce Mienniel, pic, fl, b fl, elec; Guillaume Poncet, tpt, flgh, kybd; Pierre Perchaud, g; Sylvain Daniel, b; Yoann Serra, d. 2. Benjamin Moussay, el p; Arnault Cuisinier, b; Eric Echampard, d. 3. Alban Darche, ts; Frederic Chiffolleau, b; Emmanuel Birault, d. 4. Benoit Delbecq Unit: Delbecq, p; Mark Turner, ts; Oene Van Geel, vla; Mark Helias, b; Emile Biayenda, d. 5. Stephane Kerecki, b; Matthieu Donarier, Tony Malaby, ts, ss; Thomas Grimmonprez, d. 6. Donkey Monkey: Yuko Oshima, d; Eve Risser, p. 7. Lionel Belmondo Hymne Au Soleil: Belmondo, ts, ss, a fl; Philippe Gauthier, fl; Bernard Burgun, cor anglais; Cecile Hardouin, bsn; Jerome Voisin, cl, b cl; Francois Christin, cor; Bastien Stil, tba; Sylvain Roman, b; Laurent Fickelson, p; Dre Pallamaerts, d, perc. 8. Denis Colin & La Societe des Arpenteurs: Colin, b cl; **PERSONNEL:** Benjamin Moussay, p; Arnault Cuisinier, b; Julien Ome, g; Sylvain Helary, fl; Tony Rabeson, d. 9. Unit: Sebastien Boisseau, b; Mika Kallio, d; Matthieu Donarier, sax, cl, vcl; Laurent Blondiau, tpt, flgh; Veli Kujala, acc. 10. Pascal Schumacher, vib; Franz Von Chossy, p; Christophe Devisscher, b; Jens Duppe, d. 11. Mederic Collignon, pocket tpt, el p, perc; Frank Woeste, el p, effects, vcl; Frederic Chiffolleau, b, effects; Philippe Geizes, d, vcl. 12. Metal-o-phone: Benjamin Flament, vib; Joachim Florent, b; Elie Duris, d. 13. Sofia Riberio, vcl; Marc Demuth, b.

As the title states this is a compilation of newer jazz and improvised music from France and Luxembourg and it gives you the feeling they've been passing around a lot of copies of *In A Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew* over there. There's a lot of rock rhythms and early 70's jazz-rock ambience at play in these tracks. Mederic Collignon actually covers Miles Davis' eerie, electric piece "Nem Um Talvez" but several of the other works have similar electric Miles sensibilities. Lionel Belmondo's "3+2+3" is a large group piece where various horns cry over a plush but funky ambient rhythm while Denis Colin's "Sujet A Changement" has the same kind of electric flow under a more subdued Mediterranean melody and Benjamin Moussay's trio piece blends electric piano and rock rhythms.

Minimalism raises its head in the Orchestre National De Jazz's treatment of John Hollenbeck's "Tongs Of Joy" that has woodwinds and electric piano percolating in a Steve Reich-ian stew of repetition. In the same fashion, a group simply called Unit has horns and accordion playing whirling minimalist figures setting up a swift drum solo from Mika Kallio.

There's plenty of heavier work on display as well. Bassist Stephanie Kerecki's piece has the twin sopranos of Tony Malaby and Matthieu Donarier wailing over a big funky beat, Alban Darche blows a stormy tenor sax calypso over hammering percussion, the duo Donkey Monkey does a mixture of agitated piano, furious drumming and keening Japanese voices and Benoit Delbecq even puts his usual prepared piano stylings in the service of a rockish groove as tenor sax and viola delivering fiery statements over him. There's not a lot here for traditionalists but these tracks show that the scenes in France and Luxembourg have a lot of fascinating cross-genre experimenting going on.

Jerome Wilson

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: MARLENE VERPLANCK

TITLE: I GIVE UP, I'M IN LOVE

LABEL: AUDIOPHILE 347.

TUNES: I Give Up, I'm In Love** / Good Thing Going+ / How Little We Know* / The Way You Look Tonight** / I Love The Way You Dance* / So Long My Love+ / Sleigh Ride In July+ / My Little Brown Book* / Where Can I Go Without You* / I Didn't Know What Time It Was** / You're Really Someone To Write Home About+ / So Many People*.

PERSONNEL: VerPlanck, vcl; Harry Allen, ts; Warren Vache, cnt; with:

*Mike Renzi, p; David Finck, b; Ron Vincent, d. Teaneck, NJ.

+Tedd Firth, p; Jay Leonhart, b; Ron Vincent, d. Paramus, NJ.

**Glenn Franke's Big Band: Matt Hong, Brian Cornish, Anton Duner, John Martin, Dave Riekenburg, sax; Dave Roger, Chris Jaudes, Vincent Borcelli, Gary Guzio, tpt; Glenn Franke, Brian Bonvisutto, Brad Madsen, Steve Carr, tb; Bob Rodriguez, p; Noriko Uedo, b; Gary Seligson, d.

Marlene VerPlanck has been singing professionally for a long time and shows that she's still in excellent voice. She sings over varied settings on this CD using a big band on three tracks and two different small groups on the rest. There are a couple of familiar songs here but the majority of her set is lesser known work by name songwriters like Stephen Sondheim and Sammy Cahn. The big band pieces are highlighted by a slinky version of Billy Strayhorn's "My Little Brown Book" and the bluesy strut of the title track with VerPlanck coming off knowing and seductive on both. "Where Can I Go" has the soft, dark glow of a Shirley Horn ballad performance and "I Love The Way You Dance" is a cheery performance helped along by excellent insinuating piano from Mike Renzi. Harry Allen and Warren Vache show up at various points to add warm tenor sax and cornet solos, Allen excelling on "Little Brown Book" and Vache really putting over "Where Can I Go". VerPlanck's assurance and charm is the key ingredient here, though. This is timeless vocal jazz.

Jerome Wilson

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: MARGIE BAKER AND FRIENDS

TITLE: LIVE AT BACH

LABEL: CONSOLIDATED ARTISTS PRODUCTIONS 994.

TUNES: CD 1: Let The Good Times Roll / Midnight Sun / "Gimme" A Pigfoot / Close Your Eyes / Miss Otis Regrets / They Long To Be Close To You / Goin' To Chicago / Cry Me A River / It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing / Favela / Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby / One For The Road. CD 2: Baby "Whatcha" Want Me To Do? / Don't Get Around Much Anymore / Medley: Baby Won't You Please Come Home - I'm Drinkin' Again / Alright, OK You Win / Parker's Mood / Real Gone Guy / Ain't It Funny How Time Slips Away / Oh Happy Day.

PERSONNEL: Baker, vcl; Alan Steger, Shota Osabe, p, synth; Harley White, b; Omar Clay, d; Fred Berry, tpt; Michael O'Neill, sax; Rodney Jones, g. Half Moon Bay, CA.

I've reviewed Margie Baker before. She is a woman who's sung at festivals and clubs for decades while also having a long and distinguished career as an educator. I had some reservations about a previous studio release but this live set from a California nightclub sounds great. Baker has one of those big, earthy voices like Ruth Brown or Etta James and she brings it to full bore on everything here be it stomping blues, Brazilian sambas or torch songs. Her band is tight and sharp and even the synthesized string parts, something I couldn't stand before, work out fine.

Some of the many highlights here are a dramatic and soulful "Miss Otis Regrets" with Rodney Jones' elegant guitar in support, an intense "Cry Me A River" over piano and strings and a fast and slick "It Don't Mean A Thing" with hard-charging alto by Michael McNeil. Everything on these two discs is fine though. Margie Baker is a powerful, roof-raising singer and she is in top form on this set.

Jerome Wilson

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Dario Chiazzolino

TITLE: Paint Your Life

TUNES: Precious Things, Awake, Far From Here, Nostalgia, Nel, Floating, There Is No Greater Love, Paint Your Life

PERSONNEL: Dario Chiazzolino – electric guitar / acoustic guitar, Taylor Eigsti – piano, Marco Panascia – double bass, Willie Jones III – drums

After listening to Dario's top-flight guitar work on an earlier CD, and the review I wrote for it, it's little wonder the promoter sent me this new release. All originals, except for "There Is No Greater Love", this one takes me back to the kind of enthusiasm I had for this kind of music when I first started listening to jazz (way back in the 1960's). Dario is (easily) able to wrap you right into his string spell... you won't go looking through the record racks any time soon, as you'll be so absorbed with his excellent and expressive playing that you won't be able to do anything else for a good long while. Eigsti's piano is superb, & in fact, all the players are sensitive to the mood(s)... you don't often get to hear such unity... I can say (without qualification) that this CD is already my favorite guitar jazz album (yet) for 2015. The track titled "Awake" gives you that feeling you get when you're just rising to a brand new brightness, and will keep you energized for the whole morning! Of the eight tunes offered up, it was the vibrant energy and pace on "Floating" that got my vote for personal favorite... if you don't purchase any other music in 2015 - GET this one! I give Dario a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, with an "EQ" (energy quotient) of a (perfect) 5.00... which means that it's also a "PICK" for "best guitar jazz"!

Dick Metcalf

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: D.M. VISOTZKY

TITLE: SCHIZZI DI ORLANDO FURIOSO

LABEL: NEOS 11306

TUNES: Schizzo I - Schizzo XXVI. 66:27.

PERSONNEL: D.M. Visotzky - as; Beatrice Zawodnik - oboe, eng hn; Barry Guy - b; Bruce Pauset - hpschd; Leonardo Garcia Alarcon - wind-dynamic organ. 2/14/2012, 8/14-15/2012, Berne, Switzerland.

The musical career of Swiss-based saxophonist D. M. Visotzky has been a curious one. He first emerged in a duo with vibraphonist Francois Volpe, issuing two albums of informed, intimate duets back in the late 1980s. He issued a solo saxophone recording. Then in the mid-1990s, he released two fine albums of free improvisation on the For 4 Ears label, one with percussionist Gunter Muller and cellist David Gattiker, the other a duet with drummer Jacques Widmer. Then....nothing. It wasn't until 2011 he emerged again. This time with a duet album (Pictures Of New York) with Beatrice Zawodnik, his wife and a player of the oboe and english horn. Zawodnik studied with the double reed master Heinz Hollinger and her proficiency on these difficult instruments was apparent. Visotzky's alto saxophone (still his preferred instrument) took on a new, keening sound, sleek and expressive. He seemed less enamored of his jazz heroes (most notably Eric Dolphy) but there was still an improviser's sensibility to his playing. His most recent release is this very unique quintet recording Schizzi Di Orlando Furioso (Sketches Of Orlando Furioso). Orlando Furioso is a 16th century Italian epic poem by Ludovico Ariosto telling the story of Orlando, one of Charlamagne's knights (aka Roland) who neglects his knightly duties when he falls in love and the resulting chaos that ensues. The poem has been the inspiration for many musical works including Verdi, Handel and Lully. I have to say that it's difficult to ferret out the story lines from these improvisations but it doesn't really matter. This is an album of remarkable music. Visotzky assembled a quintet of remarkable players including Zawodnik, British bassist Barry Guy, harpsichordist and composer Brice Pauset and Argentinian Leonardo Garcia Alarcon on (quarter-tonal) organ. It's a remarkable assemblage of players and they all bring their nous to this music. Visotzky arranges them in various combinations from solo to quartet. The sketches are generally in the one to three minute range. It was initially disappointing that he didn't have any movements featuring the quintet as a whole. But I suspect the reason is the slippery tonality of the organ would clash with the harpsichord too much. But the unique combinations of instruments on offer are remarkable. It's difficult to single out one sketch but just to enumerate some effective solos and combinations: Barry Guy's opening and closing solos that frame the piece are a further indication that he is one of the premiere bassists in improvised music. The blend of Zawodnik's oboe and Alarcon's organ on "Schizzo XIII is beautiful and other-worldly. Visotzky's duet with Guy on "Schizzo XX" shows his control of the upper register of his instrument and his and Guy's interplay is spot-on, all in less than two minutes.

But singling out the moments downplays the effectiveness of the piece as a whole. The disc plays beautifully from beginning to end as a complete work and should be heard as such.

Robert Iannapolo

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: RON ENYARD TRIO & GUESTS

TITLE: LIVE AT KALDI'S AGAIN

LABEL: Cadence Jazz Records

TUNES: IF I SHOULD LOSE YOU / GIVING / I CAN DREAM, CAN'T I / ALMOST LIKE BEING IN LOVE / DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE FROM ME / YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS / THIS I DIG OF YOU. 62:42.

PERSONNEL: Ron Enyard, d; Jim Connerley, p; Bob Bowen, p/b/d; David Young, ts (2); Paula Owen, vcl (3, 4, 5); Sandy Suskind, flt (6); Jamey Aebersold, saxophone (7). No date, Cincinnati, OH.

Drummer Ron Enyard, whose trio brought live jazz to Kaldi's in Cincinnati for an impressive eight-year run, presents some of the music his groups recorded at the storied Cincinnati establishment over this period. The veteran Enyard, who has performed with such varied jazz artists as King Pleasure, Herb Ellis, Charlie Rouse, Woody Shaw and others, is joined on this recording by pianist Jim Connerley and bassist Bob Bowen, with guest performers added on most selections. "If I Should Lose You" features the core trio, who thoughtfully delve into the 14-minute opener. Instrumental guests David Young (on tenor sax on "Giving"), Sandy Suskind (flute on "You Don't Know What Love Is") and Jamey Aebersold (alto on "This I Dig of You") each provide strong and well-developed solos in their respective appearances, again on cuts of generous length (10 or more minutes each). The middle three shorter selections feature vocalist Paula Owen, who brings a stylized, Nancy Wilson-like quality to standards "I Can Dream, Can't I," "Almost Like Being in Love," and "Don't Take Your Love from Me." Live club sounds convey an informal atmosphere to the recording, allowing listeners to imagine the music in a live jazz setting. Enyard adds in the CD notes that these Kaldi performances represent "one of the great gigs to ever have played," which through the years have included such musicians as Chuck Carter, Kenny Poole, Al Kiger, Josh Breakstone, Bob Bodley, Ed Felson, Steve Schmidt, and Gordon Brisker.

Don Lerman

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: PAMELA HINES TRIO

TITLE: THRIVE!

LABEL: SPICE RACK RECORDS SR 101-33

TUNES: ELLA'S ROOM / WHILE WE CAN / ARMORY / GOOD CHANGE / ACROSS THE ROOM / ALTERATION / PHILIPPE / THERE'S MORE / ACROSS THE ROOM / GROOVE TRIP.
52:06

PERSONNEL: Hines, p; Dave Clark, b; Les Harris, Jr., d; Suzanne Cabot, vcl (9). No date, Westwood, MA.

Pianist Pamela Hines leads her trio in a well-recorded and well-performed set of acoustic jazz on this disc. Her all-original program is innovative while also containing many traditional harmonic and rhythmic elements. A subtle Monkian quality seems present on "Alteration" as well as on "Ella's Room," which makes novel use of repeated eighth note patterns from the piano and bass. Also notable are the odd-metered "Philippe" and the upbeat Latin "Armory."

Don Lerman

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: NOCA & IVA BITTOVA

TITLE: NOCA & IVA BITTOVA

LABEL: HEVHETIA

TUNES: AFTER / ARABICA / SAUVIGNON / PIOUS / DAN DAKA / BIO - BIO / J. DOCK / FIRST FLOOR / SPOLU / ELEPHANT SONG / XXX - YYY / BERLIN QUARTET 2 / SONNENALLEE / STAVGNAGER SUITE 1. 58:53.

PERSONNEL: Bittova, vln, voc; Didrik Ingvaldsen, tpt, el. tpt; Radim Hanousek; ss, bari; Marion Friedl, b; Vaclav Palka, d, perc. No location or date.

Trumpeter Didrik Ingvaldsen wrote 11 of the 14 original pieces for this quintet of two horns, violin, bass, and drums, with vocals supplied by Iva Bittova, the violinist. Many listeners would do well to start with "Bio-Bio," "J. Dock," "First Floor," "Elephant Song," and "Berlin Quartet 2," each of which offers creative horn lines and/or melodies and musical structures with some traditional elements. Most of the other selections are of a provocatively creative nature, with unusual vocals and vocal sounds generating a disturbing quality. Beyond one's tastes for these two modes, the music is well-performed with imaginative solos featuring Ingvaldsen and saxophonist Radim Hanousek, and strong rhythmic playing from bassist Marion Friedl and drummer/percussionist Vaclav Palka.

Don Lerman

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: YOM

TITLE: LE SILENCE DE L'EXODE

LABEL: GILLES FRUCHAUX FOR BUDA MUSIQUE 860255

TUNES: RAMSES / ROUGE / REVELATION / ERRANCE (WANDERING) / CHAOS / SARAB / L'EAU JAILLE DU ROCHER (WATER SPRINGING FROM THE ROCK) / SINAI / IVRESSE (INEBRIATION) / SOLITUDE 1 / MEMOIRES (MEMORIES) / SILENCE / SOLITUDE 2 / MOISE (MOSES). 57:16.

PERSONNEL: Yom, clar, comp; Claude Tchamitchian, b; Farid D, cel; Bijan Chemirani, zarb, daf, bendir. Location and date: see review.

Yom, a masterful French clarinetist known among other things for his album of klezmer music in 2008, first performed this concert in September 2012 for the Festival d'Ile de France near Paris. Using the same musicians, stage layout, and music (all his own compositions), Yom re-performed this concert in a studio, likely in 2014 in Paris (this date and location is based on sketchy liner notes and internet sources). The hour-long program is a musical portrayal of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt some 3300 years ago. The music ebbs and flows, possessing enormous musical and emotional range in depicting for Yom according to his album notes "the exodus that speaks to me, the one I feel distantly related to my history [and] my ancestors' history..." An important inherent quality of the music is its "acoustic starkness," which was created and maintained during the recording process. Yom also mentions that the fourteen selection titles listed above (beginning with "Ramses") were not intended to indicate independent pieces (in fact there are no standard pauses between cuts), but rather to serve as signposts to aid in listening and re-listening to segments of the performance.

The piece begins with a long low pedal tone from the bass followed by the clarinet of Yom in an evocative and rhythmically free-form mode. Throughout the work Yom plays frequently on single chords as well as on some chordal progressions, in a manner that seems to be partly written and partly improvised. Changing and complex harmonies are reflected in Yom's repeated rapid phrases, brief technically demanding runs up and down the clarinet performed forcefully and with great facility. Percussionist Bijan Chemirani performs on the zarb, daf, and bendir, various drums native to Persia and North Africa, contributing much to the strong ethnic character of the music.

Don Lerman

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: KALLE KALIMA & K-18

TITLE: BUNUEL DE JOUR

LABEL: TUM

TUNES: The Phantom Of Liberty / The Milky Way / El Padre / Los Olvidados / Belle De Jour / Diary Of A Chambermaid / The Discreet Charm Of The Bourgeoisie / Tristana / Simon Of The Desert / That Obscure Object Of Desire / An Andalusian Dog / Viridiana. 70:34.

PERSONNEL: Kalle Kalima - g; Miko Innanen - as, xaphoon, hornpipe; Veli Kujala - quarter-tone accordion; Teppo Hauta-aho - b. 11/30 - 12/1/2013. Berlin, Germany.

Another album, another filmic concept. This is the third album by Finnish guitarist Kalle Kallima and his band K-18. With this band, Kalima has been exploring concepts of filmmakers that inspire him and their relation to his music. The music is not that which was composed for the film but compositions by Kalima that spring from his viewing of the movies. His first two discs dealt with American filmmakers Stanley Kubrick and David Lynch. As its name suggests, Bunuel Du Jour takes its inspiration from the great Spanish filmmaker Luis Bunuel, the title being a play on the title of one of Bunuel's most famous movies, Belle Du Jour. And it's the best Kalima has come up with thus far.

Part of the reason for this is the band Kalima has assembled, K-18. It's one of the most unique sounding groups working in the jazz/improvised music arena today. Mikko Innanen plays alto saxophone and doubles on the Maui xaphoon (a small pocket "saxophone"). It sounds a bit like a cross between a clarinet and a dudek. Innanen not above altering the sound by affixing contact mikes to his instrument. Veli Kujala plays a quarter-tone accordion and it really gives the ensemble its unique sound. Ace in the hole for this band is the bass chair which is held by Finnish veteran bassist Teppo Hauta-aho. At 70 and with a host of classical and improvised music recordings behind him, (with Edward Vesala, Evan Parker and Philip Wachsmann, to name a few), he is still going strong. His mighty bass is the glue that holds this music together. Finally there's Kalima's guitar. The sound is wide ranging, he uses effects but they're never for effects in and of themselves. All of these players work together to bring this music to full and vibrant intensity.

Kalima's compositions are complex with sub sections and sub-sub sections featuring the various players in solos, duets etc. "The Milky Way" starts out with a gentle, languid flow, Innanen's xaphoon and Kalima's crystalline guitar to the fore. Gradually the music becomes misshapen, becoming more dissonant and rhythmically staggered. The music gradually evolves into a group collective before a second part emerges that brings the music to a pounding rhythmic conclusion. Kalima knows how to feature his players. In "El Padre" Kujala solos on his alien-sounding accordion while Hauta-aho's bass walks sturdily behind him and Kalima's guitar executes slashing dissonant chords. Every track has something a little different to offer. If the reader is looking for something off the beaten track, check out this disc. There's nothing quite like it.

Robert Iannapolo

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: LED BIB

TITLE: THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

LABEL: CUNEIFORM 378

TUNES: New Teles / Giant Bean / Angry Waters (Lost To Sea) / This Roofus / Recycling Saga / Plastic Lighthouse / Tastes So Central / Imperial Green / urly Kale / At The Ant Farm / Orphan Elephants. 72:28.

Led Bib is a British group led by American drummer Mark Holub. If Kalle Kalima's group operates in an indefinable area, they lean towards jazz. Led Bib operates in a similar indefinable area but their music is definitely skewed more toward the rock end of the spectrum. The People In Your Neighbourhood is the group's sixth album since 2005.

Holub has assembled an interesting group. Most surprising is the presence of two alto saxophonists, Pete Grogan and Chris Williams. But these two work well together and some of the best moments are when they are operating in tandem (I.e, the intro to This Roofus and at the wind down of "Recycling Saga"). Tony McLaren is an aggressive keyboardist and there's great variety to what he does. At times he functions as a guitarist in the group but it's his textural work that is a major asset to the group. Bassist (both electric and acoustic) Liran Donin is a mobile player, and he, too, at times assumes the role of a guitarist (check out the middle section of "Plastic Lighthouse".) Holub is an in-your-face drummer (very much up front in the mix) giving the music its strong drive with inventive and unpredictable rhythms.

Unpredictability seems to be a hallmark of this band. But having been a band with the same personnel for nearly a dozen years has its perks. If one can avoid the pitfalls of avoiding cliché, the dividends can be great. And Led Bib seems to have been easily able to do that with this disc.

Robert Iannapolo

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: CONNIE CROTHERS

TITLE: CONCERT IN PARIS

LABEL: NEW ARTISTS

TUNES: Deuxieme Naissance / Dans Mes Reves / "Every Emotion Is An Art" - Anna / Homage Aux Communards / Espoir. 57:05.

PERSONNEL: Crothers - p. 10/30/2011, Paris, France.

Pianist Connie Crothers latest Concert In Paris, (her third solo album) has been a long time coming. Her last solo album was released in 2002. The last time she had been in Paris was in 1959 as a college student studying architectural history and her stay there was a formative experience in her life. A lot of personal history transpired between her first visit and her first solo piano concert in that fair city in 2011. So this concert had a special meaning to Crothers.

Crothers' creativity is clearly to the fore. The opener "Deuxieme Naissance" sets the tone beginning with a splattering of dissonant chords. These turn into dense clusters that are relieved with bluesy turns of the phrase. The music comes at the listener in waves of sound. The tracks are long (the shortest being ca 9:30) and following her lines is a sheer delight. What's impressive is how physical Crothers' piano playing is. The series of dense tone clusters that occur ten minutes into "Homage Aux Communards" is worthy of Cecil Taylor or Don Pullen and a brilliant climax to the piece. The way she leads the listener out of this sequence is masterful. During "Espoir" one can hear almost dream-like references to "How Deep Is The Ocean" filtering in and out. Crothers was clearly inspired and clearly at a peak level of performance for this set.

But more than mere virtuosity, one gets a real sense of intimacy with this music. I suspect the people who attended this concert knew they heard something really special on this night. Glad it was recorded for those of us who couldn't be there. For those who have never heard Crothers before, this is an excellent place to start to hear one of the best pianists playing today.

Robert Iannapallo

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: DAVID HANEY

TITLE: SOLO

LABEL: CIMP 402

TUNES: Prancing Pretty Hang-up / Khartoum / House Party Starting / Hat Minus Beard / Conflagration / Freedom #35 / Old 52nd Street Rag / Rutless Rutless / Very Special / Broken Weasel / Freedom Improv Suite / Ba Boo Be Ba / Catfish Blues / Gone Away. 69:23.

PERSONNEL: Haney - p. 7/27/2011, Canton, NY.

Pianist David Haney is another player whose playing evokes a lot of history. As a player he's firmly rooted in the piano tradition that started with Duke Ellington (and follows a lineage through Monk, Herbie Nichols, Cecil Taylor and beyond). So the program presented on Solo draws on that tradition, focusing on works of Ellington, Nichols and Haney's own compositions. Haney's playing seems to have opened up and become more spacious with time. He still will build dense, knotty patterns with dark harmonic depths full of gravitas ("Khartoum", an older song of his, is a case in point). But when he approaches Nichols' "House Party Starting" or Ellington's "Very Special", there's a lightness of touch and an almost playful approach to the material. Haney's rhythmic sense has tightened up somewhat as well. Most surprising is the appearance of the blues standard "Catfish Blues" that seems to play between the more literal rhythmic approach and his more free flowing style. "Conflagration" does this as well and is one of the best pieces on the disc. The best thing about Solo is hearing Haney's extemporization on these pieces without any outside interference.

Robert Iannapollo

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

FOUR NEW CDS WITH DEMIAN RICHARDSON

1) DEMIAN RICHARDSON QUARTET - ALL'S WELL - CIMP401

Slowly Rising / Question It All! / Dissonant Beauty / Blu-bop / Season Of Change / Moor / Hidden Blues / Transitional High-way. 61:36

Richardson - tpt; Daniel Carter - as, ts, ss; Ed Schuller - b; Federico Ughi - d. 2/4/2010, Rossie, NY.

2) DEMIAN RICHARDSON / DOMINIC DUVAL - A MOMENT IN TIME - CIMP 405

Nostalgia In Times Square / For Heaven's Sake / Matzo Balls / Turnaround And Rearound / Broken Shadows / The Old Country (take 1) / The Old Country (take 2) / Blackbird Flight / Moonbeams / Well You Needn't - Mr. Personality / Improvisation 2 / Footprints. 67:07.

Richardson - tpt; Duval - b. 6/7/2010, Rossie, NY

3) JIMMY BENNINGTON / DEMIAN RICHARDSON TRIO - EXOTIC CODA - CIMP 403

Know More Blues / Tough Lick / Three Note Tune For Nippon / Happy House - Here's That Rainy Day / Biggs' Tune / Moonbeams / Crumbs In My Mouth / Otha And Out / Exotic Coda. 69:00

Richardson - tpt; Bennington - d; Ken Filiano - b. 8/11-12/2011, Rossie, NY

4) JAY ROSEN - DOMINIC DUVAL - DEMIAN RICHARDSON - JON IRABAGON - NO PRISONERS - CIMP 404

Demian's Hat / Moonbeams / Nostalgia In Times Square / Yes And No / Here's That Rainy Day / I Mean You / S.O.S. / Blues For Bop. 68:41

Richardson - tpt; Irabagon - as, soprano sax; Duval - b; Rosen - d. 9/13-14/2011, Rossie, NY.

It's been a good time for cutting edge trumpet players: Nate Wooley, Taylor Ho Bynum, Natsuki Tamura and Peter Evans to name a few, are flourishing. Demian Richardson is clearly a member of this group. Although still not too well-known he has two previous albums to his credit (The Gowanus Recordings on 577 Records and Wake Up For Those Who Care To Listen on CIMP). His trumpet can be lithe, lean, graceful as well as strong and undeniable. He's capable of creating a variety of moods. His choice of material is adventurous with interesting covers and originals. CIMP recorded Richardson in four different contexts and this affords the listener the chance to hear him adapt his approach in light of the playing situation. Taken chronologically...

All's Well is a spontaneous session recorded the day after his first CIMP date, with a quartet featuring Daniel Carter (as, ss), Ed Schuller (b) and Federico Ughi (d). Whereas that first set focused on compositions by Richardson, All's Well is more oriented toward free improvisation, although there are some compositions involved as well. This unit had been playing together for four years and it shows. There's group interplay amongst these four that can only arise from four players attuned to each other. Carter and Richardson play well off each other, especially when Carter is playing soprano. The most surprising of the songs is a cover of Gary Peacock's "Moor" (also a Paul Bley favorite). Although he doesn't play on the theme, it provides Carter with one of his most galvanic solos (on tenor) of the set. The rhythm section is wonderfully free and open. Ughi has a good way of providing drive and color. Schuller

frequently locks in with Ughi for intricate interplay. (One wishes he were a little louder in the mix.) Taken with the first album from this session, *All's Well* rounds out a picture of where this quartet was at this point in time.

A Moment In Time finds Richardson teamed with protean bassist Dominic Duval. Duval can be an ideal duet partner providing his playing partner is strong enough. And clearly Richardson is. This disc is an excellent feature for his trumpet and the broad scope it encompasses. It's hard to hear any one major influence in his playing style but Don Cherry is a point of reference. Kenny Dorham as well. Richardson seems to share a similar penchant for power underlined with lyrical understatement and Richardson's lyrical side is to the fore on many of these tracks. But one can also hear the influence of Don Cherry in his soaring flights on tracks like Ornette Coleman's "Turnaround". He can blow clean, stentorian lines then shade it with a subtle burr. Check out the second take of Nat Adderley's "Old Country" for a nice demonstration. Richardson shares an enjoyment with Duval in refashioning older material as well as in free improvisation. And that's a reason this duet succeeds.

The session that produced *Exotic Coda*, originally started out as a date for Chicago-based drummer Jimmy Bennington. He invited Richardson after playing with him at a session with Daniel Carter. Bassist Ken Filiano was recruited and the Jimmy Bennington / Damien Richardson trio was born. It's a nice mix of players. These musicians are capable creating mighty and lively music but they seem to prefer to operate in more subtle areas. Some of the best music on this disc occurs when Richardson is playing with a subtle nuance, Filiano providing countermelodies and Bennington covering everything with a textural coating of cymbal washes and subtle snare rolls. There's a nice looseness to this session. Bennington's almost casual but still swinging tempo gives the opener an amiable groove and allows Richardson to expound at length. It's also there when, at the end of a version of Ornette Coleman's "Happy House", Richardson suddenly and unexpectedly segues into "Here's The Rainy Day" and Filiano and Bennington lock right in. It's nice to hear an alternate version of Richardson's "Moonbeams" (also found on the duets with Duval). And Bennington's "Otha And Out" finds him mining the territory of his mentor Elvin Jones. The track starts as a trio, and evolves into a trumpet/drums duet that's one of the disc's highlights.

No Prisoners finds Richardson in a quartet with Jon Irabagon on soprano and alto saxes, Dominic Duval returning on bass and Jay Rosen on drums. It's a great front line backed by the incomparable Trio X rhythm section. The contrast between Richardson's shaded tones and Irabagon's bright alto is one of the focal points of the disc. Both are nimble players and when they engage in dialogue, it works. There's yet another version of "Moonbeams". This time the languid melody has an accompanying line played by Irabagon that gives a fuller picture of the tune. On Wayne Shorter's "Yes And No", the rhythm section drives the band mightily and Richardson and Irabagon sound energized. But highlight of the disc is a spirited rendition of Monk's "I Mean You" where everyone shines in a series of traded fours. *No Prisoners* is the sound of four musicians firing on all cylinders.

Robert Iannapolo

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Andreas Schaerer, Lucas Niggi

TITLE: Arcanum

LABEL: Intakt

TUNES: Pipe Tomahawk/ Ancient Glow/ How to Shoot a Medieval Longbow/
Arcanum/ Adansonia Digita/ Chasing the Frog/ Marblecore/ Hallucigenia 43:44

PERSONNEL: Andreas Schaerer , voice, electron; Lucas Niggi, d, perc Cologne,
September 11, 12, 2013

This is my kind of record! I love what they are doing here. Maybe it is because I have done something similar, but these guys cook! Schaerer has a great voice which he uses in different ways, from great held notes to making noises to something like droning. His use of electronics is interesting in how he uses it to complement his voice. This is really apparent in "Marblecore" where the electronics are used to create harmonies with his voice. Niggi is both a very energetic player and a great, tasteful accompanist, whether on drums or on all forms of percussion.

Given their great interaction I would love to see this duo live to see how they watch and work off each other.

The CD starts in high gear with Shaerer making vocal noises accompanied by electronics with great support from Niggi. About Midway, Niggi moves to the front with support from Shaerer, thus creating a great give and take conversation.

Other highlights include the soft melodic singing of Shaerer on "Glow", the almost Medieval sounding title track, the Luciano Berio sounding uses of voice and electronic and drumming on "Longbow," and the general all around great playing on the entire CD.

Maybe not for everyone, but a truly great CD.

Bernie Koenig

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Christoph Irniger Pilgrim

TITLE: Italian Circus Story

LABEL: Intakt

TUNES: Jake the Snake/ Man like/ Italian Circus Story/ Back in the Game/ Entering the Concert hall/ Mondays/ Body Dope 55:32

PERSONNEL: Christoph Irniger, ts; Dave Gisler, g; Stefan Aeby, p; Raffaele Bossard, bass; Michi Stulz, d March 6,17 2014 Lisbon

Another interesting record from Intakt. Here we have a quintet moving between boppish and free playing. All tracks are composed by Irniger and all five play extremely well together, at times giving the impression that the pieces are collectively improvised, though at the beginnings and endings, the tunes can be heard.

The CD opens with a highly amped reverb bass, then goes into a nice line with the others entering. Irniger's sax has a light tone and floats over the others. Nice solos from Irniger, Gisler and Aeby, with nice accompaniment from Stulz.

The title track opens with a boppish feel again with solos from the three with excellent playing by Stulz. And then develops into a free performance with very quiet sections, and, finally, back to the tune.

These descriptions can apply to most of the CD. Great soloing from Irniger, Aeby, Gisler, and Bossard, with great support from Stulz. I would like to have heard a solo from him as well. The CD is also nicely balanced, with a mix of tempos and textures.

Irniger has a nice light tone. Gisler has both a great attack which reminded me of Pierre Dorge, but also uses his pedals well and creates some great distortions. Aeby plays a very nice piano moving from short phrases to nice long lines. Bossard only gets a few solos but comes through as a very strong player, And Stulz holds it all down beautifully.

Highly recommended.

Bernie Koenig

CD review from Volume 41, No. 2, 2015

www.cadencemagazine.com

CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Claudio Fasoli Four

TITLE: London Tube

LABEL: Abeat

TUNES: Fulham Broadway/ Holborn/ Kew Gardens/ Knightsbridge/ Parsons Green/ Covent garden/ Leytonstone/ Chancery Lane/ Finchley Road/ London Tube/ Bow Church 56:07

PERSONNEL: Claudio Fasoli ts, ss; Michele Calgaro, el g; Lorenzo Calgaro bass; Gianni Bertoncini d, electron; Michael Glassman tpt June-November 2013, Cavalicco Italy

This is an interesting record, featuring a range of styles from fusion to bop to approaching experimental, yet it has a 1960s sound, given the styles of the players and Fasoli's compositions which are all based on arpeggio patterns. As I recall, I made a similar comment to other CDs on this label.

Fasoli's tenor at times sounds big and breathy almost like Ben Webster with nice melodic lines, but then come Coltraneish flurries. It is a combination I quite like. Michele Calgaro's guitar is very fluid and I love how he provides chords behind Fasoli. Lorenzo Calgaro provides a great anchor and turns in a nice solo on "London Tube." Bertoncini most of the time provides good accompaniment but at times overplays a bit, especially on the ballads. He has obviously been influenced by Elvin Jones. He demonstrates good brushwork on "Parsons Green" and I think he should have used brushes on a couple of the other ballads. But his use of electronics is interesting, especially on "Kew Gardens" and "Bow Church." Guest trumpeter Glassman appears on three tracks and plays some very nice Miles inspired solos.

The CD opens with a drum bang and goes into a real fusion rhythm. I am not a big fan of that style and was worried that the whole CD would be like that, but the next track completely changed direction and perked up my ears. Fasoli's compositions, while not much more than vehicles for improvisation, try to capture different moods and textures. Sometimes they work and sometimes they don't.

In short an interesting but uneven record.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: David Haney

TITLE: Jamaica Suite

LABEL: Cadence Media Promo

TUNES: Jamaica Suite: genesis/ Roswell Rudd's Notes About the Tune/ Jamaica Story One: Playing with Herbie/ Variation One: Jamaica / Jamaica Story Two: Turkish Cruise Ship, The Bandmembers / Variation Two: Jamaica, Twelve Bars/ Jamaica Story Three: Unwelcome Guests/ Variation Three: Twelve Bars/ Jamaica Story four: Lambchops and Icecream Everynight/ Beneath The Pale/ Jamaica Story Part Five: A Loud Clunk followed by a Weird Silence/ Variation Four: Twelve Bars unhinged/ Jamaica Story Six: Ferried to Shore/ Further Unhinged/ Jamaica Story Seven: A Few Days in Limbo then return to New York/ Swept Ashore/ Ostinato of Fate/ Jamaica Story Eight: He Played Beautifully/ Jamaica. **Herbie's Lunchbox:** Cambio de Musica/ House Party/ Twelve Bars/ Another Friend 61:07

PERSONNEL: David Haney p with mallets, glass bottle and elbows; narration; David Haney,p; Diego Chamy, d; Jorge Hernaez, bass November 22, 2002, Valpariaso, Chile

My first comment is about the notes. For us aging reviewers such small type on such a dark background makes then unreadable. But the pieces of narration in the CD set up the story of Herbie Nichols on a trip to Jamaica.

Now on to the music, which is great. Haney does what a proper tribute record should be: Start with the person whose music is being tribute, and then develop your own music reflecting the influence of the person being tribute. I am somewhat familiar with Haney's playing: I own a couple of his earlier CDs. On this CD, since it is a tribute to Nichols, Haney adapts his style to reflect this. I love what he does with the piano strings, getting different kinds of sounds with the bottle, mallets and elbows. Many contemporary classical pianists would like much of this record. Some of the playing here reminded me a bit of John Cage's prepared piano.

But this is a jazz piano record with some great original pieces and improvisations reflecting Nichols's influence. In this regard, Haney does an excellent job. I think Variations Four is my favorite track since Haney uses many of these methods of producing sounds.

The last four tracks feature the trio, and it is trio in the full sense of the term with all three players interacting beautifully. I especially like the short conversation between Haney and Hernaez on "Cambio." And I love the noises behind Haney "House." I think it is Chamy.

A very interesting record.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Irene Schweizwer, Jurg Wickihalder

TITLE: Spring

LABEL: Intakt

TUNES: Red Light Crossing Friends/ Rag/ Koln/ Green/ Last Jump/ The Road/ White/ Ugly Beauty/ 6234D/ Trinkle Tinkle/ Blue/ Just a Gigolo 52:26

PERSONNEL: Irene Schweizer, p; Jurg Wickihalder ss, ts February 6, 7 2014 Koln

As readers of my reviews know I am a big fan of Ms. Schweizer. I own a lot of her records, many of which are duets. Here she is in duo with a saxophonist.

The opening chords lead in to a Monkish tune, which is a good thing. The solos go a bit further out than Monk, but stay true to the tune. And, of course, the interplay between the two is excellent. This feeling is continued through much of the CD. I think is largely because Wickihalder's soprano playing reminds me a bit of Steve Lacey, and he uses short phrases which are reminiscent of Monk. On tenor he has a nice bit of vibrato but can also get up in the higher register with a bit of a scream. But he can also be very lyrical, especially on "Jump." And Schweizer is with him all the way.

But for me the CD is about Schweizer and how she performs with such different people in duo format. And, as expected, she performs extremely well. She carries "Road" with some wonderful single not accompaniment by Wickihalder. Her playing is two handed but melodic, and she is always harmonically inventive.

And all of this leads up the all too short version of Trinkle Tinkle. They capture Monk's feel while being completely original. Wickihalder really reminds me of Lacy here and Schweizer captures Monk's feel while still maintaining her flowing style.

I am not sure what else to say except that this is another excellent CD by Schweizer. I look forward to hearing her in other duo formats.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Ivo Perelman/ Karl Berger

TITLE: Reverie

LABEL: Leo

TUNES: Transcendence/ Contemplation/ Pensiveness/ Pursuance/ Flacidity/ Reverie 54:08

PERSONNEL: Ivo Perelman, ts; Karl Berger, p Brooklyn NY March 2014

This must be the fourth of fifth Perelman CD I have reviewed in the past little while. And while he is a good player, after a while I find his screeching a bit tiring.

The CD opens with his tenor playing melodically with a nice vibrato. But after a couple of minutes his screeching starts, though through most of the first tune he keeps in somewhat in check. Berger proves to be an excellent accompanist, and his solo section on "Transcendence" is very open and melodic and provides great contrast to Perelman's playing. In the last section Perelman responds to Berger's playing and stays primarily, but not entirely, in the lower registers.

The playing on "Contemplation" accurately reflects the title. Here Perelman utilizes his big vibrato sound in a slow tempo, with excellent, very open accompanying from Berger.

Probably the whole CD could be summed up as every tune starting in a way that reflects the title, but then Perelman goes off and does his thing, regardless of where the tune started. Berger tries to be a good accompanist and, to his credit, as I hear him, while he tries to stay with Perelman, he does so in a way that tries to maintain the beginning mood of each piece.

Perelman fans will like this CD. But my recommendation is for people who want to be accompanists, listen to Berger here. He is excellent.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Plasmic

TITLE: Live at Chilli Jazz festival 2013

LABEL: Leo

TUNES: Intrada/ La parola Nova/ Salita/ Apertura/ Thi ga/ Slow Fireworks/ Laburnum 61:12

PERSONNEL: Agnes Heginger, vcl; Elisabeth Harnik, p; Uli Winter cel; Fredi Proll d,

28/09/2013

This is the kind of record I really like. As with so many recordings on Leo, it sounds to me as if the players have all had classical training and are quite aware of the classical avant-garde. The record is comprised of Heginger using her excellent voice for sounds and effects. In some places she reminded me of the great Cathy Berberian. I especially love her moodiness on "Salita." And her whispers, accompanied by interesting fragmented noises on "Apertura," is very sexy.

"Fireworks" which is the longest track on the CD perhaps encapsules the whole CD, as all the players get to show their stuff. I would have liked Winter's cello to be a bit more forward in the mix. Heginger uses her voice in a range of ways, but mainly she gets very subtle sounds. Harnik is an excellent accompanist, listening very carefully to Heginger, but also turns in some excellent solo work. Winter and Proll provide excellent, tasteful, support throughout.

As soon as the CD was finished, I played it through again. Highly recommended.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Stefano Leonardi, Stefano Pastor, Fridolin Blumer, Heinz Geisser

TITLE: Conversations About Thomas Chapin

LABEL: Leo

TUNES: Conversations About Thomas Chapin/ Let The Creative Force Take Over/ The Way Everything Works/ Transcendental Journey (a Clean Slate Every Night)/ Music Exists Because We Love It/ Anima/ The Melody Remains 60:41

PERSONNEL: Stefano Leonardi, flts; Stefano Pastor, vln; Fridolin Blumer, bass; Heinz Geisser, perc Milano, March 9, 2013

I am not familiar with the music of Chapin, but no matter. This music must stand on its own.

The title piece is the longest on the CD and the most complex. It features some great ensemble playing, great solos and great small conversations. I especially liked the interchange between Pastor and Geisser.

Leonardi plays different flutes and uses them effectively, especially the bass flute. He gets a big sound from it. Pastor plays a mean violin, providing a nice counterpoint to Leonardi. And Blumer and Geisser provide excellent support. I really liked Geisser's solo on the opening track. It was as if he was having a conversation with himself while maintaining the abstract aspect of the piece.

The tunes vary in texture and tempo making for interesting listening. The last four tunes are the most abstract with the moody "transcendental" my favorite. "Music" is bright. And the final piece, which is also fairly long brings about the best in all players in a similar manner to the opener, with a nice slow coda at the end with Leonardi and Pastor playing in unison, with some lovely brush work by Geisser.

Some great playing with the flutes and violin providing a nice combination.

Another winner for Leo.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Vlady Bystrov, Anto Pett, Anne-Liis Poll

TITLE: The Enchanted Three

LABEL: Leo

TUNES: The Unexpected/ Icing/ Keen/ Music box/ Strife/ Fair/ Shadows/ Enchanted 50:56

PERSONNEL: Vlady Bystrov, as, ss, alto Bd, cl; Anne –Liis Poll, Voc, perc, live electron; Anto Pett, p, prep p Estonia, October 29, 2012

From the first note I knew this is a record for me. Great improvisations with that avant-garde classical influence. Poll reminds me a little bit of Cathy Berberian, the use of the prepared piano reflects a John Cage influence, and Bystov's horns complement everything. The trio works beautifully together. While I am assuming the music is primarily improvised there are sections sound as if they either were composed or well rehearsed in terms of how the players interact and start or stop. Or, of course, since they probably have been playing together for some time, they know how to read each other's playing. This especially the case on "Keen."

The trio really shines on "Strife" where Poll uses electronics and percussion, Pett on piano and Bystov really soars on clarinet. "Fair uses Poll's voice in an interesting way sing syllables that almost sound like words, with great accompaniment by her colleagues.

While I have been talking about the classical influences on these players, I should also point out that there is a good jazz feel to most of the pieces. All three have great rhythm and the pieces flow. Indeed, they almost swing, given the context of how they are playing. This is especially the case with Bystrov, whose phrasing is fluid, especially on clarinet.

The last tune is the most complex and the loudest with Poll almost screaming and Bystrov and Pell keep up with great support. In some of the shorter instrumental sections of this piece, Pell and Bystrov really cook.

In short, a really great record. I was truly enchanted.

Bernie Koenig

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CD REVIEW: NEW RELEASE

ARTIST: Bradford/Gjerstad Quartet

TITLE: Silver Cornet

LABEL: Nessa 36

TUNES: Silver Cornet tells/ a story about you/ and me, me and you 45:05

PERSONNEL: Bobby Bradford, cnt; Frode Gjerstad as, cl; Ingebrigt Haker Flaten, bass, Frank Rosaly, d March 30, 2014 Baltimore MD.

I am quite familiar with Bradford but the others are new to me. In any case they all play extremely well together. Bradford and Gjerstad have great conversations very ably supported by Flaten and Rosaly.

The CD opens with Bradford and Flaten, and soon the others join in. Bradford creates some very nice melodic lines, which is not always easy to do in a free improvise context. But the other players give him the room he needs. At one point he gets going on a bluesy riff that is almost reminiscent of an old blues tune. Gjerstad's shorter bursts work in great contrast to Bradford's longer lines. And his clarinet playing sounded very birdlike—as in real birds. The solo by Flaten reminded a bit of Mingus, both in terms of some of the phrases and the power of his attack. And Rosaly's brush work here is really great. The tune ends with Bradford and Gjerstad playing the same note.

The second tune is a bit slower but busier, with all four people busily interacting. Rosaly here is using sticks and turns in a very nice solo, playing on patterns. Bradford gets into a growling mode which he contrasts with short clean notes, accompanied by shorter bursts by Gjerstad. Flaten and Rosaly work well together keeping things going. The more I listen to this CD the more I like the playing of Flaten and Rosaly.

The last, short piece I find very reminiscent of an Ornette Coleman Quartet, with the trumpet and sax working together with what I call an in-and-out phrase. And while Flaten and Rosaly are not Haden and Blackwell, they do an admirable job moving things along.

Bernie Koenig

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Obituaries

George Clifford Bean, trumpet, died in 2015. We have no further information on him.

Keith Copeland, drummer, died on February 14, 2015. He was 68.

Ellenie Ash-Godwin, vocals, died on March 12, 2015. She was 65.

Orrin Keepnews, record producer, died on March 1, 2015. He was 92.

Neil Levang, guitar, died on January 26, 2015. He was 83.

Rose Mary McCoy, died on January 20, 2015. She was 92.

Howard McDonald, pianist, died on January 23, 2015. He was 86.

Thomas Mckinley died on February 3, 2015. He was 76.

Mary Mardirosian, jazz radio personality, died on March 15, 2015. She was 93

David Maxwell, pianist, died on February 13, 2015. He was 71.

Bob Parlocha, tenor sax, died on March 14, 2015. He was 77.

Larry Judd Pierce, kybds, vcls., died on March 6, 2015. He was 70.

George Arthur Probert, Jr., clarinet, died on January 10, 2015. He was 87.

Greg Sergo, drums, died on November 14, 2014. He was 72. 10/10/14 in Chicago area he was 72

Paul Serrano, trumpet, died on January 15, 2015. He was 83.

Jack Six, bass, died in 2015. He was 84.

Lew Soloff died in NYC of a heart attack on March 7, 2015. He was 71.

Ward Swingel, vocals, died on January 19, 2015. He was 87.

Clark Terry, trumpet, died on February 21, 2015. He was 94.

Bobby Watley, jazz organist, died on January 19, 2015. He was 71.

Ronald Verner Williams, pianist, died on March 16, 2015. He was 79.