

improvisation



Joe Bonner
Rhys Chatham
Bob Dorough
Dominic Duval
David Friesen
Bruce Forman
Eddie Gale
Henry Grimes
Barry Guy
Rich Halley
David Haney
Tristan Honsinger
Rashaad Kagee
Gordon Lee
Urs Leimgruber
Roberto Magris
Rudesh Mahanthappa
Byron Morris
Glen Moore
Buell Neidlinger
Joe Rosenberg
Brian Smith
John Tchicai
Frank Walton
Matt Wilson



Dreambox Media
Jazz in South Africa
Top Ten Critics Picks of 2016
International Jazz News
CD Reviews
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Obituaries

HANS LÜDEMANN

DAS REALE KLAVIER

Hans Lüdemann – piano & virtual piano



new solo album

on BMC records/MVD
nominated for „Deutscher
Schallplattenpreis 2016“
CD of the month –
piano news 3/4 -2016

„There are musicians that are more real than others, real in the sense that they carry more truth in them as others... because the musician devotes himself without doubt completely to the music, lets himself be reached by the origin of what he wants to say without anything coming from elsewhere, neither an outer world or another source. This is what pianist Hans Lüdemann does on a CD entitled „das reale Klavier“ – in an incredible way, never heard and rarely with such intensity“.

notes des jazz/ France,
Michel Arcens, 2015



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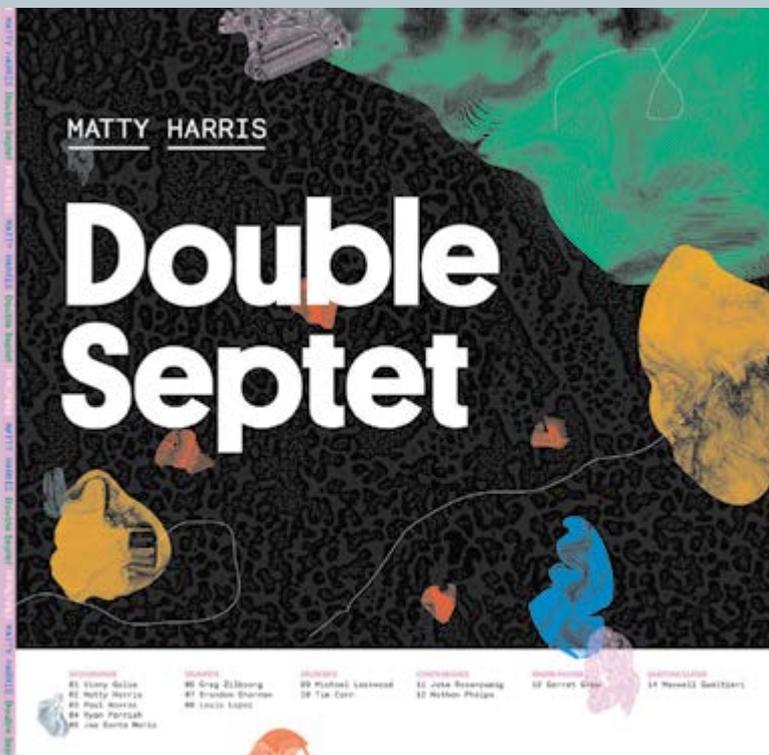
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2016 TOP TEN CRITICS PICKS, Cadence Magazine

Jailhouse Doc With Holes In her Socks

Darrell Katz and OddSong

OddSong

1. **Prayer** 2:23
2. **Jailhouse Doc With Holes In her Socks** 6:00
Hobbs, Scarff, Stone
3. **Tell Time** text by Paula Tatarunis 3:47
Sherrah-Davies
4. **Lemmings** text by Paula Tatarunis 4:17
5. **Like A Wind** text by Sherwood Anderson 6:11
6. **LLAP Libertango** arr. Helen Sherrah-Davies 8:29
[Original - **Libertango** 1974, composed by Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)]
Scarff, Sherrah-Davies, Hobbs
7. **Squirrel** text by Paula Tatarunis 3:51
8. **Gerbils** 4:21
Stone, Scarff, Hobbs
9. **Gone Now** text by Paula Tatarunis 9:28
Scarff, Hobbs, Howell Brooks

Darrell Katz & Oddsong

Jailhouse Doc With Holes In her Socks, (JCA Recordings)

darrellkatz.com

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Wadada Leo Smith
[Top 10 of 2016
- Cadence]



Thumbscrew
[Michael Formanek/Mary
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1603
GEORGE COLEMAN
A Master Speaks



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1604
PETER BERNSTEIN
Let Loose



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The Third Decade

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Colors for the Masters

1606
STEVE TURRE
Colors for the Masters



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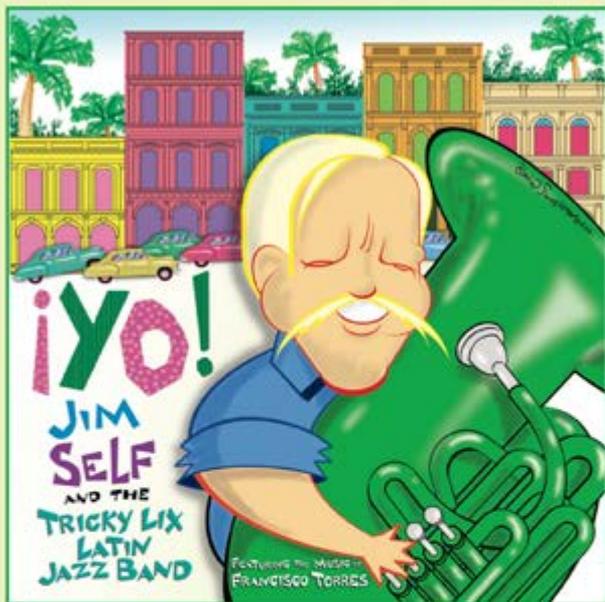
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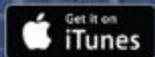
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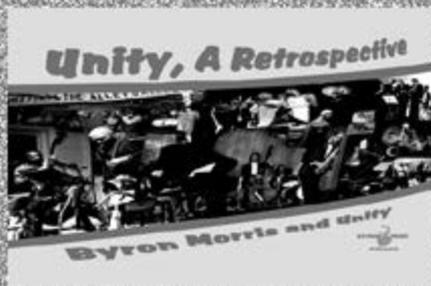
Steve Sheppard, One World Music Radio

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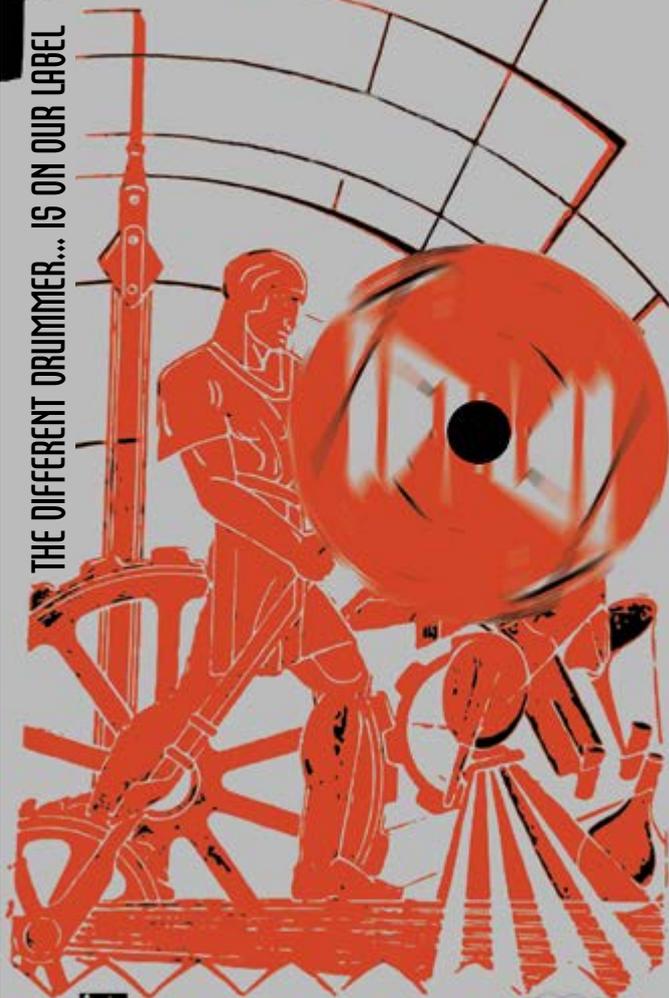
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- 167 Ethnic Heritage Ensemble
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- 170 Pucci Amadio Jhonas
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- 289 Paul Dummal - Paul Rogers - Kevin Norton
- 290 Charles Eubanks
- 291 William Gagliardi 5tet
- 292 Steve Swell 5tet
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- 314 Mary Anne Driscoll - Paul Murphy
- 315 Gebhard Ullmann - Steve Swell 4tet
- 316 Burton Greene & Roy Campbell 4tet
- 317 Marc Pompe 4tet
- 318 Ken Wessel - Ken Filiano - Lou Grassi
- 319 John Gunther Trio
- 320 Trio-X: Joe McPhee - Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
- 321 Dave Taylor-Steve Swell 5tet
- 322 Khan Jamal 5tet
- 323 Mike Bisio 4tet
- 324 Avram Feler - Mike Bisio
- 325 Adam Lane Trio
- 326 Stephen Gauci Trio
- 327 Jay Rosen
- 328 Trio-X: Joe McPhee/ Dominic Duval/Jay Rosen
- 329 Chris Kelsey Trio
- 330 Prince Lasha & Odean Pope Trio
- 331 Byard Lancaster 4tet
- 332 William Gagliardi 5tet
- 333 Bobby Few & Avram Feler
- 334 Ernie Krivda 5tet
- 335 Adam Lane Trio
- 336 Carl Grubbs Quartet
- 337 Lucian Ban-Alex Harding
- 338 David Haney Trio
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- 340 Byard Lancaster 4tet
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- 342 William Gagliardi 5tet
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- 352 Steve Swell - David Taylor 4tet
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- 357 David Haney & Julian Prester
- 358 Chris Kelsey 4tet
- 359 Stephen Gauci Trio
- 360 Michael Bisio
- 361 Stephen Gauci 4tet
- 362 Kalaparush McIntyre 4tet
- 363 David Schitter - Dominic Duval - Newman T.Baker
- 364 Khan Jamal & Dylan Taylor
- 365 Bobby Zankel Trio
- 366 Ernie Krivda Trio
- 367 David Haney & Andrew Cynille
- 368 Chris Kelsey 4tet
- 369 David Haney & Fredrick Cyrille-Dominic Duval
- 370 Bill Gagliardi-KenFiliano-LouGrassi: ESA Trio
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- 372 Michael Bisio 4tet
- 373 Ernie Krivda
- 374 David Amerer Trio
- 375 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
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- 377 David Amerer Trio
- 378 Odean Pope 4tet
- 379 Jimmy Bennington Trio
- 380 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
- 381 Tom Siciliano Trio
- 382 Brian Landro & Doug Webb
- 383 Andrew Lamb Trio
- 384 Nate Woley + Taylor Ho Bynum 4tet
- 385 Tomas Ulrich's Cargo Cult
- 386 David Haney 4tet Avenue of the Americas
- 387 Diane Moser - Mark Dresser duo
- 388 Frode Grjotvold - Paul Nilssen-Love
- 389 Andrew Lamb Trio
- 390 Jimmy Halperin - Dominic Duval
- 391 Jon Hazilla - Ran Blake
- 392 Adam Lane 4tet
- 393 Bob Rodriguez Trio w/Dominic Duval + Jay Rosen
- 394 Odean Pope Trio w/Marshall Allen
- 395 Kalaparush McIntyre 4tet

A man with short dark hair and a light beard, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt and a patterned tie, stands in a rustic, wood-paneled room. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background features wooden shelves with various items, including a basket and a framed picture.

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JOE LANO, guitar (arranger)

DAVE LOEB, piano

JEFF DAVIS, bass

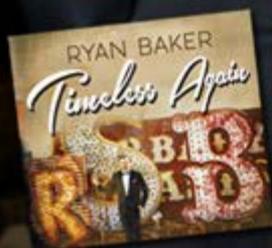
JESS GOPEN, drums

ERIC TEWALT, sax/flute

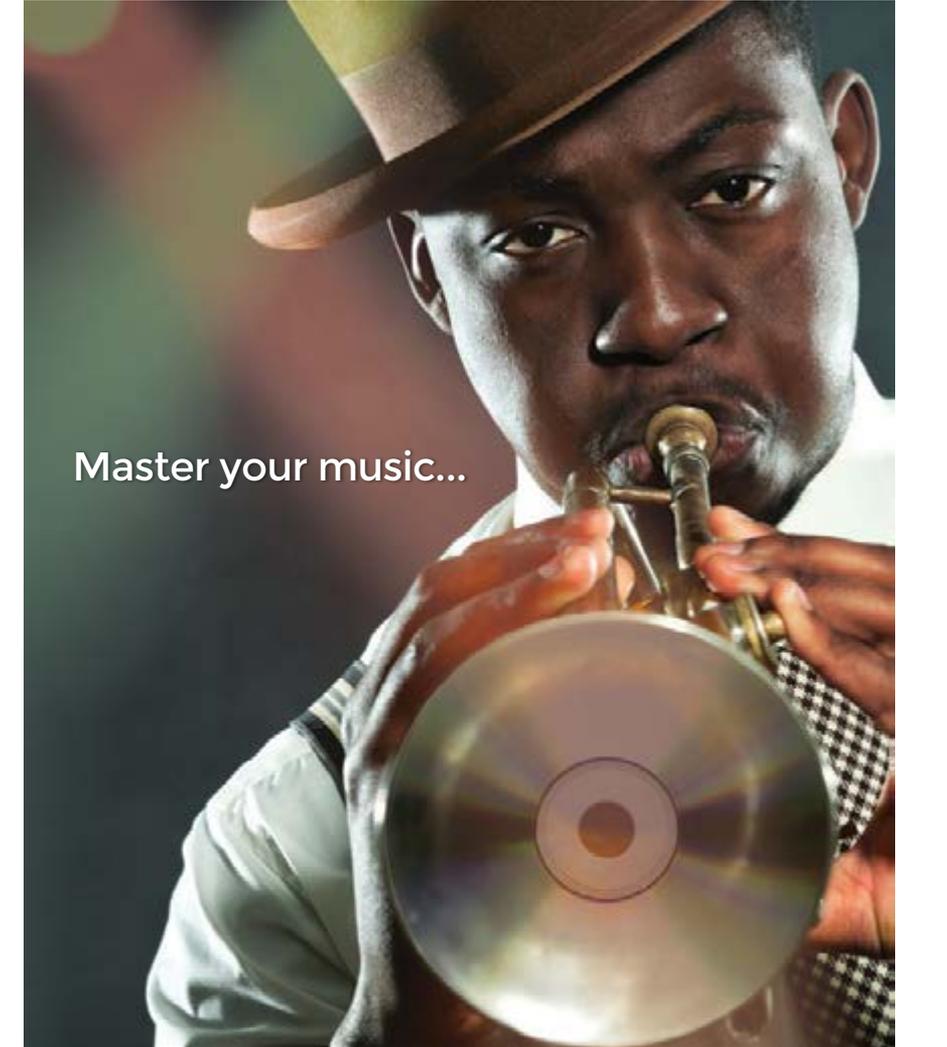
ROCKY LOMBARDO, trumpet

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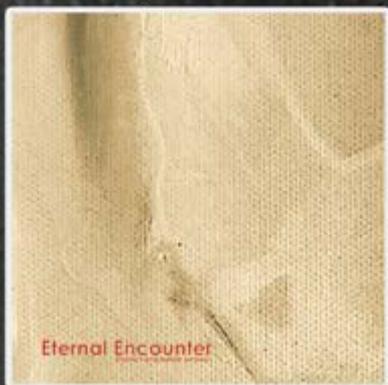
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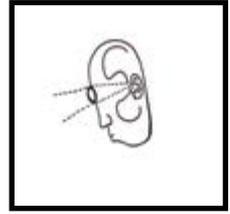
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Mark Streeter, *Now Magazine*

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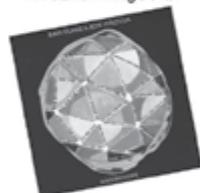
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5 New Releases

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Bob Rodriguez Trio
w/Dominic Duval - Jay Rosen
So In Love

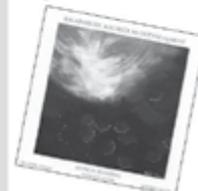
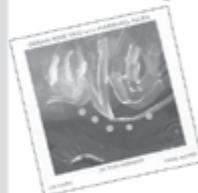
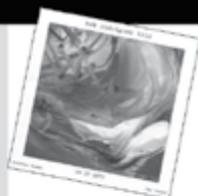
394

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w/Lee Smith - Craig McIver
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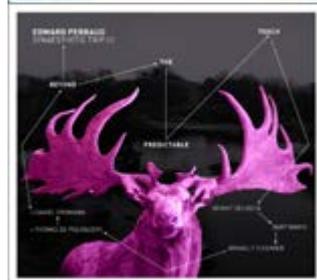
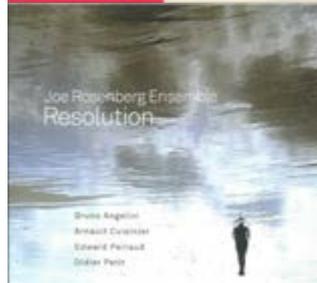
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Creative Improvised Music Projects

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*

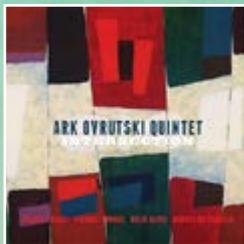
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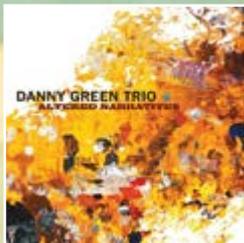
"CIMP packages bear a clear mission statement: **'What you hear is exactly what was played.'** The label means it. The sessions are recorded live to digital two-track, with zero processing effects and no editing ... authentic performances with a vast dynamic range." Sam Prestianni, *Jazziz*

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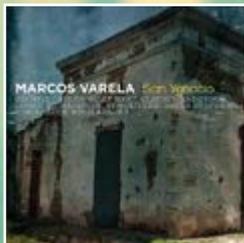
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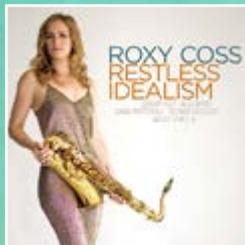


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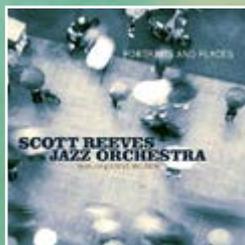
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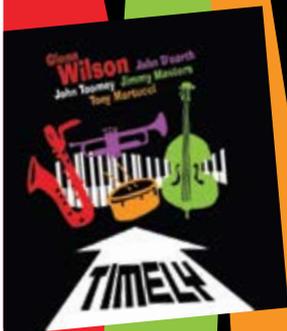
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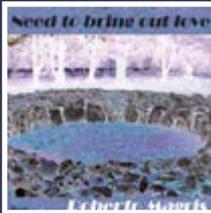
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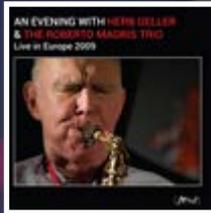


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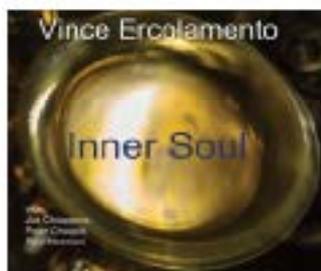
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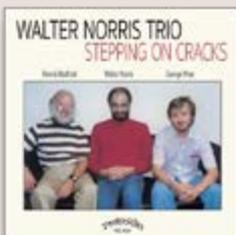
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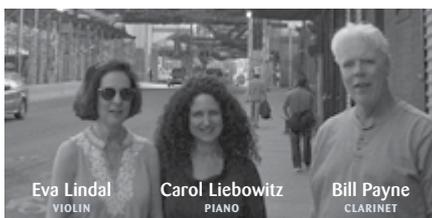
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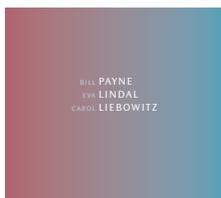
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Marc Medwin, *Cadence Magazine* OCT/NOV 2015



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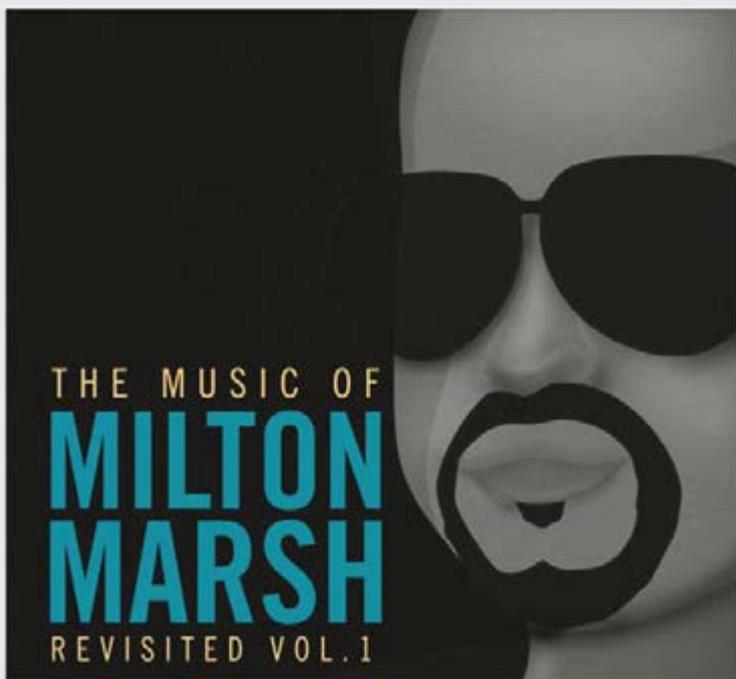
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Grant Stewart Trio / Spike Wilner Trio**

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This page is a symbolic break, what precedes is advertising, (free of editorial influence), what follows is editorial (free of advertising influence).

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN CADENCE

acc: accordion
 as: alto sax
 bari s : baritone sax
 b: bass
 b cl: bass clarinet
 bs: bass sax
 bsn: bassoon
 cel: cello
 cl: clarinet
 cga: conga
 cnt: cornet
 d: drums
 el: electric
 elec: electronics
 Eng hn: English horn
 euph: euphonium
 fgh: 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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Inside This Issue

CADENCE MAGAZINE EDITORIAL POLICY

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

Cadence Magazine continues as an online publication and one print issue per year.

Cadence Magazine, LLC, is proud to continue the policies that have distinguished Cadence as an important independent resource.

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

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

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Contributors

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

T. Watts, (Interviews) Music Journalist T. Watts has written features for Glide Magazine, Blues Blast Magazine and many others. He is a radio producer at KPFB 88.1 fm in Lakeport, CA as well as road manager for the legendary Sugar Pie DeSanto.

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Top Ten Releases 2016

NELS CLINE, LOVERS (BLUE NOTE)
THE FRED HERSCH TRIO, SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE VANGUARD - PALMETTO
MARK DRESSER SEVEN, SEDIMENTAL YOU, (CLEAN FEED)
DARRELL KATZ & ODDSONG, JAILHOUSE DOC WITH HOLES IN HER SOCKS, (JCA RECORDINGS)
JEFF LEDERER, BROOKLYN BLOWHARDS, (LITTLE (I) MUSIC)
JANE IRA BLOOM, EARLY AMERICANS (OUTLINE)
HENRY THREADGILL ENSEMBLE DOUBLE UP, OLD LOCKS + IRREGULAR VERBS (PI)
SATOKO FUJII – JOE FONDA, DUET (LONG SONG)
MICHAEL FORMANEK ENSEMBLE KOLOSSUS, THE DISTANCE (ECM)
NANCY HARMS, ELLINGTON BY NIGHT (GAZELLE)

Jerome Wilson

LOUIS HERIVEAUX-TRIADIC EPISODE-HOT SHOE
JERRY BERGONZI-SPOTLIGHT ON STANDARDS-SAVANT
BLACK ART JAZZ COLLECTIVE-SIDEDOOR JAZZ CLUB PRESENTS- SUNNYSIDE
LUIS PERDOMO-SPIRITS AND WARRIORS-CRISS CROSS
GEORGE COLEMAN-A MASTER SPEAKS-SMOKE SESSIONS
EHUD ASHERIE-SHUFFLE ALONG-BLUE HERON
DAVE STRYKER-EIGHT TRACK II-STRIKE ZONE
FERIT ODMAN-DAMERONIA WITH STRINGS-EQUINOX
JD ALLEN-AMERICANA-SAVANT
THE COOKERS-CALL OF THE WILD & PEACEFUL HEART-SMOKE SESSIONS

Larry Hollis

TOP TEN REISSUES/HISTORICAL

CHARLIE PARKER-UNHEARD BIRD-VERVE
LARRY YOUNG-IN PARIS-RESONANCE
ERROLL GARNER-READY TAKE ONE-SONY LEGACY
WOODY SHAW/LOUIS HAYRES-THE TOUR VOL.1-HIGH NOTE
DON MENZA SEXTET-LIVE AT CARMELO'S-FRESH SOUND
THAD JONES/MEL LEWIS-ALL MY YESTERDAYS-RESONANCE
PHIL WOODS QUINTET-LIVE AT THE DEER HEAD INN-DEER HEAD
COUNT BASIE & HIS ATOMIC BAND-COMPLETE LIVE AT CRESCENDO - PHONO
RICHARD "GROOVE" HOLMES-GROOVE-HALLMARK

Larry Hollis

CRAIG HARTLEY- BOOKS ON TAPE - VOLUME 2
ANDREW CYRILLE, THE DECLARATION OF MUSICAL INDEPENDENCE - ECM
ANTHONY BRAXTON QUARTET (WARSAW) 2012 FORTUNE
TRIO X LIVE IN TERRYTOWN - CIMPOL
NEIL ROLNICK EX MACHINA - INNOVA
STEVE SWELL KANREKI: REFLECTION AND RENEWAL - NOT TWO
KENNY WERNER - THE MELODY - PIROUET
WADADA LEO SMITH/VIJAY IYER - A COSMIC RHYTHM WITH EACH STROKE - ECM
MARILYN CRISPELL / GERRY HEMINGWAY - TABLE OF CONTENTS - INTAKT
SAMUEL BLAIS - DAVID LIEBMAN - CYCLING

David Haney

BEST MALE VOCAL RECORDING: NICOLAS BEARDE, "INVITATION" (RIGHT GROOVE RECORDS 3660)

BEST DEBUT: VICTOR GOULD, "CLOCKWORK" (FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT 502)

Lugwig Van Trikt

Top Ten Releases 2016

KEN ALDCROFT, MISTER MISTER TRIO RECORDS 5503
JOSEPH DALEY, WARREN SMITH, SCOTT ROBINSON THE TUBA CHRONICLES CD
BABY JADA MUSIC 004
UWE OBERG TWICE, AT LEAST LEO 733
SWQ RAMBLE LEO 738
GOAT'S NOTES COSMIC CIRCUS LEO 736
GRANULARITIES SCENES FROM A TRIALOGUE AMIRANI RECORDS 045
DON CHERRY, JOHN TCHICAI, IRENE SCHWEIZER, LEON FRANDIOLI, PIERRE FAVRE
MUSICAL MONSTERS INTAKT 269
IRENE ARANDA, GERMAN DIAZ, LUCIA MARTINEZ, TRIBUS NUBE 1013
GUNTER HAMPEL MUSIC AND DANCE IMPROVISATION COMPANY LIVE BIRTH
150831 (DVD)

Bernie Koenig

AZIZA (POTTER/LOUEKE/HOLLAND/HARLAND) – (DARE2)
JIM BLACK TRIO – THE CONSTANT (INTAKT)
JANE IRA BLOOM – EARLY AMERICANS (OUTLINE)
BARRY GUY – MARILYN CRISPELL - PAUL LYTTON – DEEP MEMORY (INTAKT)
MARY HALVORSON OCTET – AWAY WITH YOU (FIREHOUSE 12)
WADADA LEO SMITH – AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS (CUNEIFORM)
HENRY THREADGILL ENSEMBLE DOUBLE UP – OLD LOCKS AND IRREGULAR VERBS
(PI)
MARCOS VARELA – SAN YGNACIO (ORIGIN)
DAN WEISS – SIXTEEN: DRUMMER'S SUITE (PI)
MATT WILSON'S BIG HAPPY FAMILY - BEGINNING OF A MEMORY (PALMETTO)

Ken Weiss

DENNY ZEITLIN, "EARLY WAYNE" (SUNNYSIDE 1456)
DAVID MURRAY, GERI ALLEN, TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON, GERI ALLEN - POWER TRIO,
"PERFECTION" (MOTEMA MTA-CD-193)
JEREMY PELT, "#JIVE CULTURE" (HIGH NOTE HCD 7285)
JAIMEO BROWN, "TRANSCENDENCE WORK SONGS" (MOTEMA CD-191)
I AM THREE, "MINGUS MINGUS MINGUS" (LEO RECORDS CD LR 752)
MATT PARKER, "PRESENT TIME" (BYNK 002)
TOM HARRELL, "SOMETHING GOLD, SOMETHING BLUE" (HIGH NOTE HCD 7289)
WOODY SHAW & LOUIS HAYES, "THE TOUR - VOLUME ONE" (HIGH NOTE 7291)
PETER EVANS/ALFRED VOGEL, "II PICCOLO INCIDENTE" (BOOMSLANG RECORDS)
CORTEX, "LIVE IN NEW YORK" (CLEAN FEED 381)

Lugwig Van Trikt

TAYLOR HO BYNUM - ENTER THE PLUSTET (FIREHOUSE 12)
COURVOISIER / FELDMAN / MORI / PARKER - MILLER'S TALE (INTAKT)
ANDREW CYRILLE - DECLARATION OF MUSICAL INDEPENDENCE (ECM)
MARK DRESSER - SEDIMENTAL YOU (CLEAN FEED)
MICHAEL FORMANEK ENSEMBLE KOLOSSUS - THE DISTANCE (ECM)
GENERATIONS QUARTET - FLOW (NOT TWO)
MARY HALVORSON - AWAY WITH YOU (FIREHOUSE 12)
JON LUNDBOM & BIG FIVE CHORD - 2016: EPS (HOT CUP)
WADADA LEO SMITH - AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS (CUNEIFORM)
TIERRA MESTIZA (ANGELICA SANCHEZ / OMAR TAMEZ) - FLORESTA (NONJAZZ)

Robert Iannapallo

TOP TEN CONCERTS

Top Ten Concerts in Philadelphia by Ken Weiss

12/19/15 – Rez Abbasi's *Invocation* at Painted Bride Art Center – A groundbreaking night and the world premiere of new music by the Pakistani American guitarist exploring his Indian influences by drawing on South Indian Carnatic music along with fellow heavy hitters – Vijay Iyer (p), Rudresh Mahanthappa (sax), Johannes Weidenmueller (b), Elizabeth Means (cel) and Dan Weiss (d).

1/15/16 – Nels Cline/Larry Ochs/Gerald Cleaver Trio at Boot & Saddle (Ars Nova Workshop) – Cline was a blur of activity working his elaborate assortment of electronic controls which enabled him to spit a wide array of sounds and beats that Ochs and Cleaver responded to with immediate accuracy. The Nick Mazzarella Trio opened the night featuring Frank Rosaly's layered percussion.

2/27/16 – *Rooms* at Swarthmore College – German pianist Hans Ludemann's trio with French bassist Sebastien Boisseau and German drummer Dejan Terzic dealt (mainly) with Ludemann's compositions that were heavily layered with textures and tempo changes. Carla Bley's "Ida Lupino" was a highlight and a fitting tribute to Ludemann's friend and mentor, the late Paul Bley.



TOP TEN CONCERTS

4/9/16 – Amir ElSaffar’s Rivers of Sound Large Ensemble at Kimmel Center – This was the concert premier of this 17-piece ensemble that expanded the leader’s unique distillation of contemporary Jazz through Iraqi maqam music. The musicians represented numerous countries and presented a united front while crafting music filled with spacious beauty. A truly triumphant performance.



4/16/16 – Bill Charlap Trio at Chris’ Jazz Café – Charlap’s debut at Chris’ was a rousing success as he devoured The Great American Songbook with spacious lyricism and a feisty approach, along with David Wong (b) and Kenny Washington (d).



4/30/16 – The Outsiders Improvised & Creative Music Festival at The Philadelphia Clef Club – Jamaaladeen Tacuma’s sophomore festival production effort bore major fruit and included significant funding from outside sources which allowed him to feature John Zorn with Odean Pope, Elliott Sharp with Bobby Zankel, and finally wrapping it all up past 2 AM by performing with Henry Grimes, James Brandon Lewis, and Justin Faulkner.



TOP TEN CONCERTS

6/22/16 – Jason Moran and the Bandwagon at South Jazz Parlor – Moran’s high flying trio has perfected their art over their 18-year history. The opportunity to hear them in such an intimate setting was a rare treat.

8/30/16 – Tipple [Frode Gjerstad, David Watson, Kevin Norton]; Bhub Rainey/Ben Bennett; Daniel Levin at Da Vinci Art Alliance (Fire Museum Presents) – Although the number of performers present may have equaled the paying audience, these three sets offered very different angles on the state of today’s improvisatory music by artists playing their asses off.

9/23/16 – Coltrane at 90 – Solo Saxophone Tribute & Marathon (Philadelphia Jazz Project) – A 6-hour excess of riches laying tribute to the legend, who would have turned 90 this day, done at the historic Church of the Advocate, a site where Coltrane played and practiced. Kudos to James Carter for his monstrous solo, as well as the finale of Odean Pope and Azar Lawrence squaring off as a bonus duet. Other performers included Douglas Ewart, Willie Williams, Bobby Zankel, Ole Mathisen, Mark Allen, Darius Jones, Billy Harper, James Brandon Lewis, Sonny Fortune, Carl Grubbs, Rudresh Mahanthappa, George Barron and Greg Osby.

Also, not featured in photo
5/13/16 – Allison Miller’s Boom Tic Boom at Philadelphia Art Alliance (Ars Nova Workshop) - The penultimate performance of a draining tour found Myra Melford (p), Jenny Scheinman (vin), Kirk Knuffke (cnt), Ben Goldberg (cl, contra alto), Todd Sicksafoose (b) and Allison Miller (d) admittedly exhausted but they still fired up a rambunctious set featuring unexpected sounds from contra alto and violin.



This really is the year of music in Calgary. The mayor has proclaimed it so. And along with the grand opening of the spectacular Studio Bell-National Music Centre, the staging of the 2016 JUNO national music awards, and the inauguration of the Calgary Music Awards, the city's jazz collaborative JazzYYC has successfully presented its second annual summer festival. The June 12 - 20 event was a thoroughly Canadian jazz affair that drew on artists of international renown, such as opening night (at the Ironwood Stage & Grill) performers trumpeter Jens Lindemann and pianist Tommy Banks. Both are not only veterans of the music business, but also recipients of the country's highest civilian honour, the Order of Canada. Lindemann tours the world just about any time he isn't teaching at UCLA and performs at major concert venues as an orchestral soloist, with chamber groups and jazz bands, and as a recitalist and clinician. Banks has done just about everything anyone could in music, even hosted his own national TV series and composed the music for the 1988 Winter Olympics. The night was a homecoming for each of them.

It was also a homecoming for former Calgarian Brent Mah, who, with fellow saxophonist and Vancouverite Ben Henriques, played a knock-down, drag-'em-out John Coltrane tribute at Lolita's Lounge, a couple of blocks down the street the same night.

Having started with the bar raised, the next four days met the challenge of a high standard of performances by globally celebrated jazz-pop vocalist and pianist Laila Biali, to whom no one can be compared, the passionate French-Canadian avant pianist-composer Marianne Trudel in a high-energy trio with bassist Rémi-Jean Leblanc and drummer Rich Irwin, and a ripping young quintet from Quebec led by trumpeter Rachel Therrien, winner of the 2015 Montreal International Jazz Festival TD Grand Jazz Award. Amidst all the hub-bub, JUNO winning composer/guitarist/vocalist Mike Rud presented an intimate one-man show of music and reminiscences of his jazz career that started in Edmonton and now is based in Montreal.

Throughout the festival, trombonist/pianist/bandleader and prolific composer Hugh Fraser and the hard-bop VEJI Big Band (Vancouver Ensemble of Jazz Improvisation founded by Fraser in 1980) served as a kind of centre of gravity--although Fraser, as buoyant as a beach ball on a breezy day, seemed to have anything but gravity about him. He was enthusiasm incarnate and it was catching. Whether leading the VEJIs, workshoping with the JazzYYC Youth Lab Band, or playing in his trio, nobody could have been having more fun, while making sure everyone else did. He is a strong proponent for indie festivals, he said, and added that it may be a new paradigm for the future. Fraser has spent a great deal of his time abroad, both as a performer and teacher (including the Royal Academy of Music in London and the University of Ulster) as well as in Canada. For the band, it was a reunion of most of the original members, and the party took place on stage. It was also a welcome reminder of the VEJI's first appearance in Calgary at a jazz festival in the early '80s, when they sold out two nights in a row even though they were virtually unknown outside of Vancouver.

In the days leading up to the festival and during the festival itself, locally

Short Takes Calgary, Canada

based jazz musicians played free outdoor shows downtown. Saturday included the regular jam session at Kawa Espresso Bar with the bar-raising component of the visiting artists jamming with local players, plus the guest appearance of multi-award-winning saxophonist and VEJI band member Campbell Ryga with the Prime Time Big Band for their regular Saturday afternoon gig at the Ironwood Stage & Grill. The festival hosted its second listening party, which brought together Rud, trumpeter Al Muirhead and bassist Simon Fisk to discuss and play recordings of music that influenced their careers, then perform a short concert. On the Sunday, jazz broke out all over the neighbourhood of Inglewood, a stone's throw from downtown, in a "jazz walk" that saw live jazz music performed in cafes, restaurants, nightclubs, art galleries—even a knife store—from noon until 6 pm. This is the third walk JazzYYC has included in its festivals and its popularity has expanded each time.

The Calgary summer festival is growing cautiously, and it is hard to say how long its indie aspect will be maintained, but the producing organization is determined to keep it on the rails with a tight rein on governance and a watchful eye on budgets. What I especially liked about it is that it was all jazz. It also placed an emphasis on new music and its audience-building strategy more on physical accessibility than on providing music that might be more familiar to uninitiated jazz ears.

Three hours east along the Trans-Canada Highway, the 20th annual Medicine Hat JazzFest (June 19 - 26) was in full swing. A bigger lineup in a much smaller centre, this jewel of a festival shared artists with the Calgary event, and added returns of the distinguished U.S. pianist and composer Ryan Cohan, jazz and boogie-woogie pianoman Michael Kaeshammer, the Cuban dance band leader Wil Campa (and his band), and expat Japanese and current New York resident guitarist Nobuki Takamen. Events were scattered across town, with the main shows taking place at the city's arts centre The Esplanade, in its theatre, and across the lobby in the cabaret-style Studio Club for such performers as Amanda Tosoff, André Leroux, and Trudel with Ingrid Jensen.

JazzFest producer and one of its founders Lyle Rebbeck says the festival continues to focus on jazz music, programming shows to meet the audience where they are, rather than to push an agenda. They have worked at building a trust with their audience so they know it will be great music whether or not the performers are known to them. It is all about community building, he told me. And then he said this: "Jazz has the power to put people in touch with their human side, putting something very positive out into the world." Judging from what I saw among audiences and performers at both of these festivals, I would have to agree.

Sheila Thistlethwaite

Short Takes Vancouver, Canada

This year's Vancouver International Jazz festival ended on July 3rd. Major artists appearing at the festival include Joe Lovano, Gregory Porter, Oliver Jones, Jacky Terrasson, Evan Parker, Renee Rosnes, Terell Stafford, and others. Reviews of groups that I heard will be in the next issue... Things keep cooking after the festival at Frankie's Jazz Club starting 7/7 with Cannery Row followed 7/8 by blues with Alita Dupray & Rob Montgomery. Next up Brickhouse is in 7/10 and then Steve Kozak and West Coast All-stars. Singer Heather Keizur & pianist/vocalist Steve Cristofferson appear 7/14. Trumpeter Gabriel Hasselbach appears 7/15 along with Brian Monroney guitar, Miles Black piano, bassist Lawrence Mollerup & drummer Joel Fountain followed by the Bradley/McGillivray Blues Band on 7/16. Bassist Paul Rushka's sextet with Jon Bentley & James Danderfer reeds, guitarist Dave Skula, pianist Jillian Lebeck & drummer Joe Poole appear 7/17. Tenor saxist Cory Weeds appears with the Jeff Hamilton 3 7/21. On 7/22&23, it's Trumpet Summit with Ray Vega and Thomas Marriot with Chris Gestrin piano, Paul Rushka bass & drummer Craig Scott. Singer Helen Hansen appears 7/24 with Bill Coon guitar, Miles Black keys and bassist Jodi Proznick focusing on the music of Peggy Lee. Bassist Proznick also appears 7/28 along with the VSO School of Music faculty. Vocalist Siobhan Walsh's group appears 7/29 with James De Couto keys, guitarist Adam Rohrlich, bassist Cameron Hood and drummer Jamie Fraser. Latin jazz group Zapato Negro close out July 7/30. August starts off at Frankie's 8/4 with pianist Dan Tepfer's 3. 8/5&6 has Steve Kaldestad's 4tet with Miles Black piano, bassist Russ Botten & drummer Julian MacDonough, followed 8/7 with Carman J. Price singing Tony Bennett. Chicago-based Nigel Mack and The Blues Attack appear 8/12 followed 8/13&14 by B3 For Bunny: NYC organist Brian Charette's 4tet with Cory Weeds tenor, guitarist Dave Sikula and Julian MacDonough. There's more blues 8/18 with Harpdog Brown & The Travelin' Blues Show and 8/19 with Rob Montgomery & Friends with Murray Porter. 8/20 clarinetist James Danderfer evokes the 50s west-coast pianoless 4tets (Mulligan, Baker, Brookmeyer et al) with Mike Allen saxes, bassist Jeff Gammon & drummer Joe Poole. Pianist Jillian Lebeck & guitarist Tristan Paxton appear 8/21. Miles Black's 3 (with bassist Andre Lachance & drummer Joel Fountain) and Cory Weeds play Gene Ammons along with Maya Rae 8/25. August ends with Coco Jafro 8/26. Sarah Kennedy & Friends 8/27 and Nancy Harms 8/28. September starts off with guitarist/vocalist Barry Greenfield's band with guitarist David Sinclair, bassist Rene Worst and Elliot Polsky percussion & vocals. Recent visitors include Chick Corea & Bela Fleck, Cecile McLorin Salvant and tenor player Harry Allen teaming up with Cory Weeds, pianist Tony Foster, bassist Russ Botten & Joe Poole drums. I caught Allen & Woods 4/1 and they did some serious smoking on Sweet Georgia Brown, which featured a swinging walking solo by Botten. Other tunes included Getzville by Foster and June Song, a lilting waltz by Allen. Allen and Weeds were channeling Al and Zoot on Dizzy Atmosphere as at other times during the night. Other tunes included Lockjaw Davis' Hey Lock, Benny Golson's Park Avenue Petite and Allen's Great Scott, a dedication to Scott Hamilton. Love to hear more 2-tenor blow-outs... For Frankie's and Coastal Jazz info, go to www.coastaljazz.ca

Ron Hearn

Concert Review



Photo Credit: Patrick Hinely

**Matt Wilson
Quartet**
Jefferson Center,
Roanoke,
Virginia
March 21, 2015

text and photographs
by Patrick Hinely, Work/
Play®

In fact, it was the Matt Wilson quintet, with guest pianist John Medeski, the drummer/bandleader's cohort from days of yore in Boston's Either/Orchestra, who also appears on Wilson's latest album *Gathering Call* (Palmetto) with this same ensemble. Said album informed the repertoire offered during their two sets, comprising Wilson originals as well as tunes by Monk, Charlie Rouse, Butch Warren, Hugh Lawson and Duke Ellington. Wilson's own tunes can seem deceptively simple, even innocent, when in fact they are deeply complex, fiendishly sly and rooted in a broad familiarity and profound understanding of the history of the music, always respectful of it if sometimes irreverently so.

Their group groove can sound as comfortably loose one moment as intricately intertwined the next, moving easily back and forth along a continuum from Cannonball to Ornette, with Wilson's charming humor putting the audience either at enough ease - or off-guard - to enjoy more 'out' stuff than they might if it was presented to them in a less user-friendly fashion. Therein lies one way of enabling an audience to pleurably grow its ears, a gift not many substantive bands today possess. Besides most anything Wilson is involved in - and he has created other ensemble contexts of and on his own besides this one - only *Mostly Other People Do the Killing* comes to mind. In these times of a seemingly ever-shrinking market, jazz cannot possibly have too many such ambassadors whose music is so inviting as well as challenging, while at the same time, dare I say it: entertaining.

Everyone in Wilson's group also leads at least one band of their own, some with overlapping personnel, which may speak to their comfort level in shifting back and forth between supporting roles and the soloist spotlight. There is much

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personality to this music, but no ego, rather, a lot of heavy collective lifting, pushing one another to surprise each other, and in the process, themselves as well, and none more so than Wilson himself. Since 1996, he's assembled this group of like-minded players, all of whom can roam as freely as he can, without wandering. They've been at it plenty long enough now to have plenty to share and nothing to prove. Even while 'out' – and they got out there, collectively and individually – savoring the process, without getting lost in the moment, rather, discovering: they were exploring, taking us along on the scenic route...

Saxophonist and clarinetist Jeff Lederer is Wilson's longest-standing cohort in this group, and can converse with equal eloquence be it grits and gravy or Albert Ayler. Cornetist Kirk Knuffke has impeccable creds, from Butch Morris inward, and good sense of humor, as do they all. Bassist Chris Lightcap studied with Cameron Brown and Milt Hinton, so he can – and does - cover a lot of waterfront. And then there was special guest Medeski on grand piano. He is versatile in the same sense that the ocean is big. As a group, they have a collective sense of proportion that allows them to move fluidly between or beyond structure and freedom, from Louis Armstrong to Sun Ra, which is plenty of spectrum. And they did.

Wilson himself is possessed of a wholesome Midwestern demeanor, one with impish but good-natured overtones, or, as my esteemed colleague Nate Chinen has put it, "mischievous but sentimental, pushing through brambles with exuberance and a rummaging sense of invention". This puts him in the catbird seat with audience and colleagues alike. He is also one hell of a drummer, a man for all seasonings, one of the most able around, as was recognized much earlier on in his career by the likes of Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden* and Mario Pavone, as well as Denny Zeitlin, Jane Ira Bloom and a host of others, equally adept playing inside or out, which few can do so well; Higgins, Blackwell and Motian come to mind. Wilson, like all of those guys, knows the history of jazz is the foundation to a big structure, one which need be neither museum or prison.

Most of the 100+ folks at the Jefferson Center's Rehearsal Hall had the look of regulars. Many were; this venue has been presenting a high-quality, varied series of concerts for enough years now to have a legion of willing recidivists, which is not the sort of support system that can be generated overnight, and is essential for creating something long sorely needed in this country: a nationwide infrastructure for jazz performance. Gigs like this

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prove it can be done, even in places like Roanoke, thanks to wide-minded presenters like Dylan Locke. Chances are they found each other: Wilson is more activist in beating the bushes off the beaten path than a lot of jazz artists, who leave it to managers with too many clients and, through this, has succeeded in upping his bookings. It was a short tour, but Roanoke put them in their fourth state in four days.

Wilson's stage banter between tunes was engaging in its brevity and wit, including his recitation of Carl Sandburg's "Bubbles," which he also recorded earlier with his Arts & Crafts band on *An Attitude for Gratitude* (Palmetto). He gave a salute to the late local native pianist Don Pullen, mentioning an affection for the quartet Pullen played in with George Adams, Cameron Brown and Dannie Richmond, which I recall as always being muscular and exuberant, two adjectives which are equally a propos for Wilson's band. I could imagine Pullen smiling down on Wilson and company, just as Mingus must have smiled down upon Pullen and company...

At the end of the later set, the feeling was more celebratory than triumphant, that good news had been shared, and everyone came out ahead. This is as it should be. It was a totally satisfying experience. That basic optimism which underpins Wilson's entire operation makes him as close as I have yet seen to a musician without limits, just the sort of Energizer Bunny who makes me feel reassured about the future of the music.

* Looking ahead: Wilson mentioned during dinner that he'd played for the Town Hall tribute to Haden a couple of months earlier, and that the Liberation Music Orchestra recorded three tunes the next day (with Steve Swallow on bass) which will be heard, alongside Haden's own final recordings with the group, on a forthcoming album on Impulse.

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The band mug shot: (l-r) Jeff Lederer, Chris Lightcap, Matt Wilson, Kirk Knuffke and John Medeski. Photo Credit: Patrick Hinely



The band action shot: (l-r) John Medeski, Kirk Knuffke, Chris Lightcap, Jeff Lederer and Matt Wilson. Photo Credit: Patrick Hinely

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Kirk Knuffke in performance Photo Credit: Patrick Hinely



John Medeski, after the gig – a fine evening's last shot... Photo Credit: Patrick Hinely

**HENRY GRIMES's LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NIGHT
AT THE 21st VISION FESTIVAL, JUDSON MEMORIAL CHURCH, NYC,
JUNE 7th, 2016**

By Marc Medwin, Sept. 2016

It's all so vivid, even months later. I remember my excitement at being at Judson Memorial Church again, that historically significant environment, the home of so many events pivotal to what Bill Dixon, in his most resonant basso profundo, used to call "THIS music." I remember the companionship, I remember the open, vibrant acoustics of Judson Church (sometimes muddled by the sound crew), I remember the flurry of conversations, often heated with the tension of creative difference. I remember the soundchecks, alive with the discovery of maneuver, the constantly changing soundstage as sound crew and musicians struggled to make it all work, the breakdown, the setup, the buzz and crackle of amp and cable in electric communion, the slow influx of people. And of course, I remember the music.

We were there to celebrate the career, achievements and, thankfully, the continued presence of Henry Grimes. If it were possible to sample, hold and project back a journey of some sixty years, to render concise but absolutely palpable the accomplishments pioneered and nourished by this great genius of the acoustic bass, violin and poetic text, this was the venue; this was the audience, hundreds of Henry's people calling and responding like a Harlem congregation; and these were the artists, gathered from Henry's past and present, to make the unified vision real. I remember the anticipation, the moments awaiting the first notes from Henry's bass, that would invoke whatever was to come.

The first group's soundcheck (Andrew Cyrille, Graham Haynes, Geri Allen, and Henry): deep swing in build, exultation and slow fade, harmonies whose density Geri Allen only implied until the moment of performance dictated a fuller sonority, opaque melodies rich with motivic fragments so tantalizing that each neo-Monkian aphorism spoke the volumes I sat there wishing I could write in words. Interplay was paramount, and so achingly simple, so exuberantly natural, that I, usually unwilling to display, only wishing to absorb, actually clapped and bobbed along in that torrent of excitement. Then... a different kind of telepathy based in intuitive excursion, something secret, luminous and meditatively edgy, something at once more intimate and more elusive, something threatening to unravel but never reaching melting point, something like the quietly backlit nether regions I imagine under the volcano.

If the first group represented the "free jazz" component of Henry's contribution, of his multifarious contributions undefinable because so vast and beautiful and subtle, like an orchestra at its multivalent best and open to change and closed to the artificial because so completely his own, the second group brought to the foreground another part of Henry's musicality: his deep, deep groove. Lisa Sokolov, who set Henry's poetry, already teeming with music, to music, perceived, harnessed and then unleashed that groove as no one else I've ever heard. Her vision was one of abiding and flowing rhythm, of repetition in constantly protean rotation, enfolding all in the song circle, in the roundabouts history is and becomes on each voyage around the wheel. But it was so much more than that. Her open harmonies were the tough and sure ground over which those wheels traveled, the bedrock on which music rests, a place beyond what harmony can teach, beyond what word and symbol can tell. And really, who better to break down the barriers of speech and song

than Dwight Trible, Karma Mayet Johnson, and Lee Mixashawn Rozie? All are teachers and masters, each voice filling that church and spilling over into the hot streets, each a cry against evil and injustice reaching back beyond cognition to the foundation, where the myths are born. To describe Henry's playing, his foundational role as the words reverberated, resonated and resounded, would be akin to describing the voice of a hidden deity, or Paul Robeson's "Oh yes, Lord." Connie Crothers was seated to my left; it would be our last encounter in this world. "Do you hear that quarter line? That's Henry's quarter line. Hear it? Nothing like it!" Of course, that was it, and it was to be felt as much as heard, as the solo voices converged and diverged along the trails it blazed. There are those performances where electricity saturates the air, bursting forth like a thunderstorm only after it's all over. Those in its presence enter a place beyond reason and judgment, surveying the landscape for change only later, during the necessary come-down and meditation. The evening's concluding septet shattered all expectation. With Melanie Dyer, Henry Grimes, Nicole Mitchell, Tomeka Reid, Marc Ribot, Lee Mixashawn Rozie, and Chad Taylor filling one stage, the only casualty was going to be predictability. It would be superficial merely to point out that all phases of Henry's career were serialized and unified in the huge melodic, rhythmic and timbral parentheses the best creators place around blocks of time. Closer to the truth would be to offer verbiage on the many genres each player passed through, those "levels and degrees of light" (pace Muhai) emanating from each solo or ensemble passage. I remember Melanie Dyer, Tomeka Reid, and Henry emerging from slow waves of drone, pulse and sweep, piled high with blues, into a glassy universe of the most intimate chamber music, the most exquisite string trio never to be put to paper; I remember flute and voice in felicitous tandem as only Nicole Mitchell can make them happen, funky, rich and vibrant, urging us all on to higher exultation. I can still hear Mixashawn's saxophone adding layers of historical flavor to those moments of space-travel that Marc, Henry, and Chad allow us to witness. Then, after the ebb and flow, the groove and wash of meterless time, we were on our feet, screaming, pounding the floor, again, as I've witnessed on so many evenings where Henry leads those he taught, and who are daily teaching him. I remember it all, but above all, I remember thinking, as I rode the train back to Maryland later that evening, of how I'd never really known what a hero Henry was, and is, how I'd never really understood how glorious teaching without speaking could be, how much music each moment or lifetime could really contain, and how one man could be the focus of, and conduit for, so much unadulterated joy, joy from the survival and transcendence of every experience, the quiet but never silent treasures of achievement.

Jazz Stories Adam Lane remembers John Tchicai



Adam Lane,
photo credit: Rodrigo Amado



John Tchicai (Münster Jazz
Festival 1987)

John and I used to play quite a bit at a local art gallery in Davis California. We would play wonderful duos that I looked forward more than just about any playing I was doing elsewhere. We would improvise; play his music, some of mine, and some fantastic standards of his choosing. I was always so fascinated by his choices. He loved Charlie Parker's "Little Suede Shoes," also "Equinox" and "Body And Soul." Such clear references to saxophone legends!

One night we were performing for a very nice crowd during a really cool opening night show at the gallery. His young son Yolo was at the show. Yolo was only a few months old at the time. John and I played a great set of duos and then took a break to chill and chat and eat (John was ALWAYS, whether a local gig or on the road, ALWAYS interested in eating!) During our break the gallery owner put on some groovy soul music: it was a very positive vibe, great art, great people, great food, great music. I remember moving my stuff around, changing up my music for the second set, getting things settled, and then looking up to see an extraordinary sight. John was dancing with Yolo! He held that tiny baby close to his chest and danced around the whole gallery with him. Him and Yolo together. No one else was dancing, wasn't really a dance type of situation. But John was. And what an incredible sight. This enormous man, he was 6 foot 6inches I think, with this tiny little baby. And a HUGE grin on his face It was really such an extraordinary moment. Such a brilliant sight.

Of the many time I've played with John, whether in Europe, New York, Davis, wherever I always learned something that helped me grow tenfold as a musician. Quite often these musical growth-spurts were somewhat extra-musical. Not necessarily about playing music as much as living through the music, being in the music, and, even more so, in the moment. That one moment with Yolo, that vision of this enormous saxophone giant holding this tiny child so delicately was for me a lesson about love and about joy. John had a tremendous amount of both. An absolutely tremendous amount.. And he expressed both to the absolute fullest whether he was playing music or being a dad, or sharing a great meal with friends. The moment of relevance for me was wrapped in that expression of joy and love. It was a moment I realized the importance of bringing the intangible emotional essence of being human into the music. The importance of capturing joy and love and converting that into sound. As much and as often as possible. It's one of those Tchicai moments I cherish and has guided me creatively to profoundly positive results.

Jazz Stories Bob Dorough

Bob Dorough
vocalist,
pianist, born
December 12,
1923, Cherry
Hill, Arkansas.
USA



HOW DID SO
MANY MUSICIANS
GET THERE START
IN THE ARMY ?

WHAT WAS THE
ARMY LIFE LIKE
FOR YOU ?

A lot of them got in the official navy or army band where they went to school and learned music. But I got it from my peers, I mean there I was in this camp in Texas, suffering, crawling in the mud and all that, until they found out I was of limited service. Then one day I heard this announcement, "Private Dorough, report to headquarters, bring all your gear." "Bring all my gear?" So I packed everything up. I had a clarinet in my duffel bag but I wouldn't get it out because I was afraid the other guys would kid me, you know.

They were fighting the civil war, the Northerners and the Southerners playing baseball and fighting about the North and the South, and I was staying on the sidelines as much as I could, haha. Anyway, he says, "Get in that jeep, you're going to the band." My college, I did three semesters at Texas Tech, majoring in band music. The bandmaster happened to know my warrant officer in that camp, and he said "You've got a good clarinet player in the artillery." I was in the coastal artillery unit, or anti-aircraft artillery unit, I've forgotten it all, haha???. So when I went to the band it was like being released. All the cats in the band were living kind of a loose life. I mean, they'd come out in their pajamas and answer roll call. It was a row of huts with a parade ground in the middle, you'd come out, then back to bed, six men in each bunk house. You know, some of them had record players, some of them had hotplates, cookin' their own breakfast. So that was great.

Jazz Stories Gordon Lee



Gordon Lee, pianist, composer, born in 1953 in New York City.

Gordon remembers an experience with teacher and composer Tomas Svoboda.

So, I'm in the classroom at Portland State, and there's a few minutes left before the class begins. I had a piano transcription of Wagner's Prelude to Tristan und Isolde, which I think is one of the most beautiful pieces of music ever written, even though I detest Wagner as a human being. He was a racist, and I really cannot stand racism in any way. So it's a dilemma, but let's face it, there are many, many musicians who weren't great people, but were great artists. They were brilliant at communicating in their medium. Anyway, so I'm there playing on the piano, and it was actually part of, I think, a theory assignment from another class to analyze this piece: how the appoggiaturas and, you know, echappée, escape tones, and all this stuff, how it all works. So I was working on it, I was playing through the piece, and Svoboda heard me, so I said "What is this? What is he doing here with this chord?" you know, "What do you call this?" He said "Here, let me play it." So he sat down and he started playing. And he didn't even play through the whole thing, but many measures, I don't know, thirty or forty measures of the piece. And at one point he sort of gets to a point and just stops. And I could feel that both he and I, coming from very different places - he's Czech, I'm American, he's fifteen or twenty years older than me, so we have different perspectives - but we're both very moved by the music. At the same time, both he and I are very well aware who Wagner was, and he just sort of stops, looks down and sighs, and then looks at me sideways, and says, "You know, Wagner was a very egotistical man."

Jazz Stories Bruce Forman



BRUCE FORMAN,
GUITAR, BORN
MAY 14, 1956 IN
SPRINGFIELD MA,
USA

BRUCE TALKS
ABOUT
WORKING
WITH FILM
DIRECTOR CLINT
EASTWOOD

I've known Clint for a long time, and I was at his eightieth birthday party. And we're just hanging out and talking, Clint was there, I played the gig. We're talking for a while, and he kind of just out of nowhere said "That's right! Guitar!" And I'm going, well, I think Clint has lost it here, you know? He was thinking about something else, obviously. The next morning, he called me up and said "Bruce, I've got this problem with this movie, I've got a bunch of music that I'm really just not happy with. Do you want to come in and try and help me out?" And I said "Sure." So I went in the studio, and I realized halfway into the studio, I'd just brought my jazz guitar, because everything I'd ever done for Clint was jazz, and then I go "Man this movie could be about a bullfighter, or something!" You know what I mean? I called a friend of mine and borrowed a classical guitar, and a steel-string guitar, just in case. Turned out, he gave me what he called "Ozark Melancholy Searching Music," is what he wanted. Which says steel-string acoustic guitar to me. He also said back porch, and didn't even mention...so I pulled out this acoustic guitar. He played a theme on the piano that he'd written, that was the theme of the movie, and I just extemporaneously??? created an hour of variations on his theme. I mean he didn't even give me the harmony, he just played the melody on piano that he'd written, and I just harmonized it, and turned it around, and made it major, made it minor, you know, brought it into various time signatures, various textures, just sort of a suite of improvised variations of the theme. He took it, and that was the last I heard from him until the screening of *Million Dollar Baby*, in which, it turned out, what I played was half of the movie's music. Then I got a screen credit for it, and ever since then that's what we do. He calls me in, he's got a theme, he plays it, and I create these variations. It's a very jazz approach. And of course with digital stuff, he can cut it all up and use it to his heart's content. I've done three or four other movies with him like that. It's quite challenging, but it's really fun: to walk in to a melody and have someone tell you what they want it to feel like, what the story's about, and have you just sit down...It's jazz, you know. I just make it up. I just try to come up with stuff that serves that purpose.

Jazz Stories Kirk Knuffke remembers Joe Bonner



Kirk Knuffke
Photo credit: Ken Weiss

Here's a quick story about Joe Bonner, the great but underrated pianist.

I want to make special mention of Joe Bonner because there are still other "Joe's" out there - unsung cats in places that might not be considered big Jazz meccas but people that make their environment a special one for everyone, especially aspiring people like I was when I knew Joe. If it weren't for him, and just a handful of others, I would not have seen any window into what it was to be a real musician, the kind of talent involved. Before my first gig with Joe, we had a rehearsal. We were going to play as a quartet and then be the band for a few singers. The singers brought their music, one just brought a recording. Joe listened to it and wrote out a lead sheet in real time with all the chord changes for us to follow. This still astonishes me, and when I was 19, it was downright spooky! He then told me a bunch of tunes we would play as a quartet and I died trying to hunt down charts for them before the gig. Understand this was way before the internet!

When it came time for the gig, we didn't do any of those tunes I hunted down. What we did do was super fast rhythm changes and Blues in several keys among some other things. He waited until the gig was over, three sets later, to say anything to me. He slapped me on the back and said, "My man sounds good! You know I was with Freddie for three years right?!"

He was with Freddie Hubbard, Max Roach, Pharoah Sanders and a ton of others, and we need people like that in places like Denver.

Kirk Knuffke

My Jazz Epiphany



Rhys Chatham
photo credit. Ken Weiss
Story Taken by Ken Weiss on
May 24, 2016

So I started out as a Classical player and my instrument was flute. I became interested in contemporary music and played the music of Edgard Varese, Pierre Boulez, Mario Davidovsky, and the entire literature for contemporary flute in the late '60s. And then I met up with a nice lady who was a Jazz pianist and she invited me to go see a concert in a place on Bond Street that I had never been to. I suppose this was in 1972, and I didn't have much exposure to what we call Jazz. I had listened to John Coltrane albums, especially *Giant Steps*, but I literally didn't know ANYTHING about it at all. So my girlfriend took me to this loft kind of building, and it turned out to be Studio Rivbea, Sam Rivers and his wife's place where they put concerts on. We went downstairs to the basement and it was very comfortable with very interesting people. There was incense lit to cover other kinds of "incense" that was prevailing down there. It was the beginning of the '70s, everyone was smoking pot. So we were all very comfortable, listening to this music. I heard a group play, I think it was a quintet, and I was absolutely amazed because, for me, to my ears, the music that they played sounded SO precise. It sounded like "Stimmung" by Karlheinz Stockhausen, with that kind of precision, which is a piece that Stockhausen wrote in the '50s for woodwind quartet. This was a quintet with a person playing soprano saxophone along with a bass player and a drummer and probably a trumpet player. The leader was Steve Lacy. I didn't even know who Steve Lacy was at that point, but for want of a better word, it blew my mind! It was through that experience that I decided it was time to take a new look at Jazz. Eventually a friend gave me a tenor saxophone that he wasn't using. The thing about tenor saxophone, or really any saxophone, is that the fingering is very similar to flute. It's better if you had started out on clarinet to play saxophone but it didn't matter. I hooked up with a tenor player named Keshavan Maslak who was in from the West Coast and he knew everything about how to play tenor. Back then the emphasis wasn't on technical playing, the emphasis was on free playing. I learned my scales with Keshavan but soon he said, "Rhys, you just have to follow your heart and follow your nose so now we're gonna forget about the scales and we're just gonna jam." And that's how I got my start in the Jazz tradition. It was Steve Lacy, it's all his fault! I later met Steve when I moved to Paris in 1988. I had married someone in New York City who was French, a dancer studying with Merce Cunningham, and after five years of living in New York she decided she wanted to go back to France and said if I wanted, I could come with her. [Laughs] So I decided to go and Steve Lacy was in Paris. By then, I knew a lot more about him and I had gotten much more deeply into Jazz.

Rashaad Kagee talks about Cape Town



Rashaad Kagee, is a Cape Town based jazz and classical guitarist. Rashaad has performed in and around South Africa including The Palace of The Lost City, and Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town.

My first ten years were in Distinct Six and when I talk to you about myself I'm talking about the average person that plays music in this little town probably started in their late teens or early twenties because it wasn't an affordable thing to do. It wasn't a normal thing for a person to go to music school, because it was a very poor area there. Cape Town was a place where you worked and you bring back the money so you can eat and you see that you go to work the next day. The music was for weekends, and for the evening, and when you listen to the radio. There was lot's of involved music; there were little stage shows in the cinemas, that was great. I grew up with groups like the Great Pretenders. The Great Pretenders was like, there was a big meaning to that. We didn't have much exposure to international artists at the time when I was young. So when you hear music, maybe the Commodores, then you emulate, and you have groups that, to the tee, will emulate that group with the voice and everything. There are a few groups like The Great Pretenders, that are pretenders and they actually pretend to be that group. And that was the culture of most of our music and the background of our music. So in other words, when you go into a jazz hall now to play, you find a guy with a trumpet that plays like Dizzy Gillespie and you close your eyes and you hear like, this is Dizzy Gillespie and you couldn't understand why this guy is playing in this small hall but that is the type of culture that I grew up in, because you listen to that and you don't really go further except for imitating that particular person to the tee. I'm sure a lot of artists like George Benson, he played like Wes Montgomery but to a point where he could express himself and use it for getting his own sound, his own identity, his own voice. In our place, it sort of almost stops because now you play like Wes Montgomery and everybody comes to see you and now we got food on our table. And the day you don't sound like Wes Montgomery you find the theater empty.

Feature: CAPE TOWN, THE TOWNSHIPS AND THE MUSIC SCENE



DISTRICT SIX, CAPE TOWN



I can go on as far as the history of Cape Town music but that is basically the core of Cape Town music. But then, the African side. That is the rich side! Now you get all the language, the Bocongo, that's a tribal name but it's got a richness of the township, mixed with tribal township and mainstream jazz. It happened about ten years ago and that to me exceeds the Pretenders type era, because those people can express themselves and they were interested in expressing themselves. DOLLAR BRAND (ABDULLAH IBRAHIM). We grew up in the same area. So he somehow met Duke Ellington and they went on tour. Now he came back and he sort of established a new mind set in Cape Town after the Great Pretender mind set. He said listen, this is something special. So the first ten years people don't understand it. But fortunately you get people like me (laughs) that are sort of out of that box of pretending and into self expression and you get more innovation in the jazz circle. People now think this man is awesome and what he's doing is great for music in Cape Town. So for the last 10 to 15 years, things have been happening. Ibrahim played a concert last night, and he had a full house. I think he and some other cats, they sort of broke the culture, they sort of educated the people through that great phase of ignorance.

Cadence: It's like a culture develops just like a human does, you have an infancy stage, you have a stage of learning, a stage of mastering.

Rashaad: Yes, Now we have groups, we have little discos, and in the discos in the evenings, there are bands, you get bands like CONSCIENCE BOULEVARD and PACIFIC EXPRESS. Jonathan Butler came out of that group. And they were creators, and there I think you could see that because they were creating their own sound. It was sustainable and you would still hear it from 50 years later. Jonathan Butler grew from strength to strength. He is back in Cape Town once a month and performs.

Feature: CAPE TOWN, THE TOWNSHIPS AND THE MUSIC SCENE

But the thing is that it was almost like a period in which time stood still for Cape Town musicians and music in Cape Town. For the last 10-15 years, it started to grow again and now we have such a richness of musicians that want to express themselves and want to create the sound. And now, in my humble opinion, they are trying too hard. I had a debate about that with another musician. I respect what he was saying which was that he doesn't want to play other people's music anymore. I've got my own repertoire but I play oldies, I play jazz standards, I've got my collection of my own compositions which I sneak in too. You know in a hotel, you've got to play what the people want to hear. I would even argue to the point where even if you're not compelled to play those standards, I would say that you have to play them because if Joe Pass created a magnificent piece of work, I would love to do it - for myself. I would say "this is my interpretation of it." Not because you told me. Why wouldn't I play it? I say to myself, no, I'm going to play the nice evergreen oldies, but I'm going to choose the nice ones that I love and that I can play from my heart. Here is the ironic part, after every six or seven songs, I play one of my own compositions and I get a slightly louder (laughs) audience appreciation. They come up and ask me, what was that? You played it so much from your heart. It's not technical, it has to bounce off of somebody. And we are there now, at the stage where there's a compromise between playing the good old oldies and playing your own stuff. And it's working quite well. Yet above all that, musicians have such a hard time in Cape Town, because they can't sustain themselves.

A lot of the jazz cats from all over, they come here, year after year, and they take those nice rich African jazz tunes overseas and they modernize them. Well that's what we've been doing with their music so why can't they do it with our music. I think it is perfect.

So when I think about music on the whole in Cape Town, I think you will find it is about any opportunity to have a party. Now people come down, they sleep in these little hubs, well, people don't sleep. Like people don't sleep for three or four days. They stay awake in little hubs, and the rest of Cape Town is dead. But bands will pop up, little reggae bands, little djembe contra bands, little African groups, Mrimba bands. People from the outskirts, if they hear about these, they will flock to it and they can make massive road blocks, and it takes you two hours to get there and two hours to get back. But if you want to be in an angry mob it's great. I said to myself, "No, I don't feel like road rage and stuff like that," you know.

Three weeks ago there was a festival. The city of Cape Town decided they wanted to have a festival like Brazil, that was three weeks ago. So they booked people to make these floats for them, and a few bands. Because basically, people here feel a need for a party, and for music.

Feature: RASHAAD KAGRIS

RASHAAD KAGEE, is a Cape Town based jazz and classical guitarist. Rashaad has performed in and around South Africa including The Palace of The Lost City, and Table Bay Hotel in Cape Town.

I was born in 1962, in District Six which was a very rich multicultural little town, that was segregated. I was introduced to music, by listening, by going to shows, local shows, in my first ten years. I think that sort of started the fundamentals of my love for music. Only when I finished the diploma in Electronics and I started a career, I thought now is my time, I have money, I can start something that I love. I was about 24 years old when I said "Okay, now I'm going to start playing." So I took up the guitar. I loved the jazz sound and the richness of jazz, like when you listen to the oldies like Charlie Parker and Duke Ellington. But I've got a great love for the classical guitar on the whole as well, basically for the guitar. It's such a rich instrument, you can sit and play for little kids, or a turn to a big audience, you know, it ranges from that. A guy at the hotel where I'm playing, said "Guitar is one of the few instruments that makes all levels of playing almost acceptable." And I thought "That was my lesson to take home."

So now I play in one of the best hotels in Cape Town and I sort of molded my sound into a kind of a EARL KLUGH sound because he plays jazz on a nylon string guitar. I listen to him and others because they take jazz pieces and contemporize them and they play them on a nylon string.

I am a contemporary guitarist. When I play with a quartet, I play a more Brazilian sound, because of my nylon string guitar. And I play like the sort of cross between the gypsy jazz type of stuff. But when I'm in the hotel here, I sit and I play "Fly Me To the Moon" and "The Shadow of Your Smile" - which I love. I play an old Bach piece, for guitar, I think it was for two guitars, it's called "Bouree". The old rock group Jethro Tull played it. I listened to Ian Anderson. He played and I think now, that is something that I'm going to play. There's a bass and a treble. You play, and one goes down and one goes up at the same time. Now I make it part of my repertoire, I sneak it in, because it's something. The second movement, the second part, has such nice guitar intervals. You're on a high when you play it. It does something to you. You know what it is, when you play it, it transports your mind away from here, maybe not to another planet. And if you play it, you find yourself in it, without a choice, because when you are in the middle of the piece it forces you to wipe away anything around you. J.S. Bach was brilliant and now I sort of put this piece into my soul and I have to play it because I'm scared I'm going to lose it. I can't play it at every gig because I've got a lot of contemporary gigs where that's not on. So especially in the hotels where I play.

But I think that every muso, whether you're a jazz muso or you're a rock muso, there's a little bit of Bach that will help you.

Feature: Way Out West

WAY OUT WEST

In Oregon and
Washington,
September 23
– 30, 2015

Reportage,
Recollections
and Reflections
on visits with
David Friesen,
Glen Moore,
David Haney
and Buell
Neidlinger

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photographs
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As I write, at the outset of spring, that first week of last fall doesn't seem nearly six months past. That week I spent in and around Portland and Seattle was the first time I'd been on the ground between Vancouver and Malibu. I was able to visit with 2 of my favorite genre-hopping, -bending and, ultimately, -transcending bassists, as well as with the editor of this publication, himself an adventurous musician in his own right.

Though most of what is in the texts was known before the photographs were made, the conversations in the process of making the photographs rendered much into a new perspective, connecting many dots, and hopefully revealing some previously unseen facets of these wonderfully creative beings. Since the photographs came before the writing, the texts could be seen as responses to the images, though I like to think of them as starting points for describing the depicted. Ultimately, it is all inextricably bound together and – I hope – of a piece.

The primary inspiration for making this trip was to catch up with Glen Moore, a friend of long standing, who earlier in the year had shaken my firmament by stepping away, after 40+ years, from the band Oregon, of which he was a founding member. The ripples in my jazz pond began where Oregon's pebble hit the water back when Nixon was still president, and continue to emanate ever further today. All through those years when I could get to 4 or 5 Oregon gigs, or those times when I went 4 or 5 years between gigs, my conversation with Glen always picked up again, as though we'd just been hanging out the week before.

Over those decades, I also noticed that Glen's compositions were the ones which intrigued me the most: gnarly and eccentric, if not as often pretty as much of Oregon's repertoire, each one was challenging, always filled with a wit and sinew evincing deep knowledge of the history of music and, even more, an appreciation and love of it all, yielding a sound rewarding for anyone paying attention. Other than the late Collin Walcott, no one more relished the free improvisations Oregon always included in every performance. With time, I also came to notice how often it was Glen's thread that held the ensemble's weave together.

Following more than three decades of faithful

Feature: Way Out West

service to the group after Walcott's death, during which time Moore passed up or put on hold much substantial pursuance of non-Oregon musical activities, he finally decided, early in 2015, that everything else added up to a higher priority than staying in that long-standing context which had gradually but continually evolved further away from what drew him to it in the first place. In the early 70s, he'd also been the first eventual Oregonian to leave the Winter Consort. Oddly, now a full year now after Moore's departure, Oregon's website still lists him as the go-to contact for North American bookings. Go figure.

One of Moore's longest-standing involvements, predating even Oregon's late-60s genesis in Paul Winter's Consort, is with fellow bassist David Friesen, long a resident of Portland. My visit came at an opportune time to catch up with the both of them together, as their third duo album in 40 years, recorded during a European tour earlier in 2015, was about to hit the streets. They were working up to working on some new material for future projects, such as their tour of Arizona and engagement at Edmonton's famed Yardbird Suite earlier this year, and they already have another European tour slated for 2017.

In the interest of full disclosure, let me acknowledge that I wrote the liner notes for that new album, BACTRIAN, on Origin, a Seattle-based label, as well as for its 1993 predecessor, RETURNING, on Portland-based Burnside. (The notes for their 1975 debut album, IN CONCERT, on Vanguard, then an independent label in New York City, were written by by Mikal Gilmore. That album, label # 79383, has yet to be released on CD). Bactrian, by the way, is a species of two-humped camels native to the Mongolian region. Only a thousand or so remain extant. If I'd known that when I wrote my notes for the album, I would have mentioned it, since it would have been a no-brainer opening to say how musicians as gifted as Friesen and Moore are equally rare...

Having met up with Friesen at the coffee shop contained within a supermarket near his Northwest Portland home, we were joined by Moore, who, like myself, arrived in a rental car; he now spends most of his time at his new home in southern Arizona rather than in his old home town, to the point of renting out the house he and his wife built here. After some caffeinization and conversation, we proceeded to Friesen's home, specifically its music room, where the 2 photographs of them playing were made in the course of a very pleasant afternoon, my first in Portland. It was such a luxury to constitute the entire audience by myself, and be able to move about the room at will, in search of vantage points for my lens without having to worry about blocking anyone else's view.

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First is the show of hands, which practically gives me calluses just looking at it. Here are two players who love the range of their instrument and know how to use it across the spectrum, from the sound of mountains breathing to the upward spiral of raptors riding thermals into the heavens.



Friesen and Moore, after making music, in one of the side gardens of Friesen's home. The late afternoon light from behind and buoyantly splendid colors combine for a photograph I like to fancy would be just as much at home in *Better Homes and Gardens* as in a musical publication, be that a magazine or on an album cover. This wrapped up a productive afternoon, one so fine that if I'd had to fly home after less than 24 hours on the ground out there, I could have happily accepted such a fate – but I'm glad I stayed longer...

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Their conversations were lively, loving and probing, passing through some tunes familiar to us all and others familiar only to one player or the other, drawing forth exploratory responses that made for interesting listening... A more all-encompassing and documentary view which I hope gives some feel of the room. When I first entered, I worried that the ceiling track lights would present problems, so I hope this image presents proof that I could make good use of them, especially the arc of their track, which to my eye cusps on cosmic. Since the room, even with the lights cranked up, was on the darkish side, I have chosen to present both of these images in black and white, which is, in many ways, how I still think, visually, though I must say it's nice to have the choice digital photography gives. In general, whether in color or black and white, my digital photographs are not manipulated to any greater an extent than were my film images, and that was minimal. Regardless of medium, what's most important is to get it right in the first place. If you have to cobble things together after the fact, you probably missed it in the moment.

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Glen Moore at David Haney's dining room table, September 25, 2015

Later in the week, Glen and I had the opportunity to sit at the dining room table in the Air B&B where I was headquartered (more on that below) and talk for a while, during which time I shot this portrait. Having experimented with converting it into black and white, I decided to keep it in color, since his skin tones, deepened by the southern Arizona sun, render out even more strikingly than they would in that abstracted-into-bronze which comes so easily with digital black and white, a tone so sublimely and precisely perfected – on film! - by Jousef Karsh of Ottawa in the middle of the last century. (If you've not seen Karsh's portraits of Ernest Hemingway or Winston Churchill, check 'em out).

This is the latest addition to a series of photographs which began in Nashville in 1973. A wider selection from those 40+ years will be presented more fully in a future piece which continues to evolve and gradually accumulate. The latest tidbit added to the Moore dossier is a Facebook posting from last week by Robert Sabin, depicting a handsome painting of Glen playing his bass now on exhibition at the Portland airport: hometown boy makes good. Moore's story should be told in full, and is taking a while to bring to a boil, so consider this presentation as the first bubbles gurgling to the surface. It may take a while longer to fully cook, but it will, hopefully, turn into a well-spiced stew...

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David Haney, at his dining room table, September 27, 2015

A couple of days after Moore's visit, I had a chance to sit at that same table again with the landlord, my host, who also happens to be a Managing Editor of this publication, who kindly took his Air B&B apartment off the market to offer me accommodation during my visit, which made my trip far more feasible. If that, despite this full disclosure up front, constitutes conflict of interest, so be it. I would hope to be as straightforward and forward-thinking as I found David Haney himself to be. Earlier in my visit, in passing conversation, I had come to feel a great empathy for this fellow seeker who, like myself, usually has his fingers in several pies at once to keep all the balls in the air. Some facets of jazz-related music are always among the balls being juggled, but seldom constitute all those balls at any given time. Yet it remains at the forefront of what we do as creative beings, above or at least beyond merely being consumer-participants in the economy.

On day one, Haney had introduced me to Portland by relating the local saying about Mount Hood: If you can see it, that means it's going to rain, and if you can't see it, that means it's raining. (Against all odds, during the week I was out there, it rained only one day – otherwise it was beautiful, sunny and warm. Amen.) He also introduced me to the New Deal Cafe, a wonderful neighborhood place with good coffee, good food, personable staffers, reasonable prices - and of course free wifi.

Haney was very generous in sharing his recorded music with me, and I must confess there is still more of it I have yet to listen to than I have already heard, so I will not try to put it into any boxes, large or small. I will say he relishes the adventure of it all and seems comfortable with the idea of encountering the unknown, especially in good company, which he has done, repeatedly and gloriously, while the tapes are rolling. And, as he says, it's different every time. I hope a little bit of his good-natured impishness shows through in this image.

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BUELL NEIDLINGER

Chronologically, the capstone of my travels came with a drive up Interstate 5, from Portland through and around Seattle, along the way hitting the Cascadia Plate volcanic trifecta, sighting, all within the space of a few hours, Mount Hood, then what's left of Mount Saint Helens' and finally Mount Olympia. After driving (and driving... and driving...) through the Boeing plant in Everett, I enjoyed the ferry ride out to Whidbey Island, where Buell Neidlinger lives in a splendid isolation with his wife, the sprightly Maggie, herself another distinguished bassist, and their cat, as well as the largest selection of welder's caps I've ever seen. Buell has actually given up the bass, and, approaching 80, is concentrating on cello, the instrument of his youth, playing everything from Bach to Hovhanness, anchoring a locally-based string quartet.

His career has covered more waterfront than any other bassist, nay, any other musician I know. After a year at Yale, he went to New York, lived amongst the Boppers and the Beats, worked with Cecil Taylor as the 50s became the 60s, then accepted symphony chairs in Houston and Boston, taught at the university level, and recorded for years in the studios of Los Angeles with everyone from the Beach Boys to Barbra Streisand to Frank Zappa, while also expanding the parameters of bluegrass with other progressive players such as Richard Greene, and establishing a record label, K2B2, in collusion with LA's best-kept secret on saxophone, Marty Krystall, with a collective repertoire ranging from Monk and Herbie Nichols to original compositions. By the early 90s, he'd had enough of the land and milk and baloney, and resettled here, where he can watch the sun set over the water with mountain ridges receding into the Canadian distance beyond. Though the Guinness Book of World Records recently declared Ron Carter to have played on more jazz recording sessions than anyone else, with all due respect, I don't think his total number of sessions approaches Neidlinger's, nor has his career had nearly the breadth. Neidlinger is also a supreme raconteur; in the course of my visit, I recorded a couple of hours of stories, and, over dinner and breakfast, heard several additional hours' worth, which I can only hope to retain. His stories would constitute a great book. I hope he'll write it. Had I the means, I would gladly help him with the task, just to hear his recollections at greater length. His story about seeing Henry Grimes in LA during that fellow bassist's lost years is worthy of a chapter unto itself, but I won't even try to tell it. He sometimes peppers his conversation with vintage Beat sayings such as "Solid, Jackson."

All of these photos were shot in his back yard late on the afternoon of September 29, 2015. I choose to present them in black and white because the open-shaded light that far north after the autumnal equinox goes so blue as to irreparably skew the color, in a way that might detract from the images by, if nothing else, not improving them, possibly distracting the viewer from more fully appreciating any graphic strengths the images might otherwise possess. The only influence I had on the shoot before the fact was in determining the placement of his chair on the lawn. After that, I just tried to keep up. Now, well after the fact, I can't decide which of these 3 alternatives I like best, so I present them all.

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BUELL NEIDLINGER

1. Skepticism and curiosity

We hadn't seen one another for 27 years, our only earlier crossing of paths having been in what was then still West Berlin, when he led his band at JazzFest Berlin 1988. His soundcheck banter on the stage of Philharmonic Hall caught my ear, and we tossed it back and forth for a few minutes, during which time I got a nice shot of him over Peter Erskine's shoulder, of which I sent him a print, an image he remembered when I got in touch to arrange this visit. He'd noticed in '88 that I worked with Leica cameras, and, early on this time around, he noticed that I was not. He seemed fascinated by my machine – one of Fuji's most versatile rangefinder cameras, which has rendered the prestigious German brand not only far overpriced but also technologically irrelevant – so his gaze is literally focused on my camera in this first, most distant of the 3 frames – but he is also looking, questioningly, into my soul...

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2. Bemused acquiescence

I can only imagine the number of arrangements he'd had put in front of him in LA studios over the decades that would have brought on a similarly ambivalent expression, as if he could take it or leave it and, by the way, could we get on with it, please? Or perhaps this is a succinct visual expression of that old card player's lament: "Who dealt this mess, anyway?"

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3. Intensity

After much aesthetic wrestling about the ambiguity of the fist his right hand appears to make (when in fact what he is doing is holding his bow), I decided if there were going to be one and only one image from that shoot, this would have to be the one, the closest-up and most in-your-face.

Some photographic history may be relevant here, beginning with Alfred Stieglitz's 1903 portrait of J.P. Morgan, in which the scowling banking magnate is seated in a wooden chair, the arm of which he grips, looking, in the reflected light, for all the world like he's brandishing a knife at the viewer. More recent is Henri Cartier-Bresson's 1971 portrait of Ezra Pound, made in Venice (Italy, not California) which is simply a distinguished-looking white-haired man sitting in a chair, gripping his hands together in front of him, but those hands are in a bright pool of light and look like a tangled pair of gnarled fists, their size exaggerated by being closer to the lens than his face, which is in relative shadow, from which intense eyes glow burningly forth, either condemning the photographer for exposing his subject's age, or perhaps evincing a more general rage about time's dimming of the proverbial light, expressing more frustration than resignation toward a world gone mad. In Neidlinger's case, I like to think this stern-looking character could be the proverbial Zen master about to strike his pupil, as they sometimes do in hopes of inspiring sudden enlightenment. But he didn't hit me: he and Maggie took me out for a nice dinner, at a place where they are regulars, and, as such, are treated like royalty. This is as it should be.



Eddie Gale,
Sun Ra's
Original
Avant Garde
Trumpeter
by Tee Watts

To informed students of Jazz, Eddie Gale is perhaps the most unsung disciple of the avant garde new thing movement of the '60s led by John Coltrane. The young Eddie Gale studied under the Bop wings of the great Kenny Dorham. He was recorded on sessions with Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor, Larry Young and Elvin Jones, among others. He has performed with many notables in the Jazz world including Coltrane and Jackie Mclean. Probably Gale's most prolific work as a sideman occurred during his two tenures with the often misunderstood genius, Sun Ra and his Arkestra. He is also known a bandleader and composer. The following is based on interviews with Mr. Gale, held between March and August of 2016.

Eddie Gale was born and bred in Brooklyn. His parent's generational roots stretch back to the Gullah people of South Carolina.

"Yes well, my parents were from the deep south. My father was from Orangeburg, South Carolina and my mother from Charleston, though she grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina. My sister did an investigation some years back and discovered that our father, Johnny Gale, was descended from the Gullah peoples. He was a very dark skinned man who didn't get the education. He actually signed his name with an X. He also didn't know how old he actually was. Many people from the deep south didn't have education in those times. When people migrated north to find work, a result of that was better educational opportunities. My parents were very sensitive to fear. When we started identifying with Africa by wearing the Afro hair style and wearing dashikis my parents got very nervous. "Boy, don't you go out there with your head like that," they would say. I realized years later that because of the indoctrination of fear they couldn't identify with much more than being called boy or nigger. They taught me, sticks and stones may break my bones but names can never harm me. We had to carry that growing up in New York so we weren't afraid. We were around all types of peoples, colors and nationalities in Brooklyn so we didn't have any fear."



Eddie Gale
with
Illinois Jacquet

Growing up in Brooklyn, the young Eddie Gale was introduced to the study of brass by way of Scouting, specifically, Cub Scouting.

My whole beginning on the instrument was on bugle in the Cub Scouts and continued in the Scouting marching bands through Boy Scouts and Explorer Scouts. I was attracted to the horn and it was all just bugle. Everything had to be done by your embouchure combined with your listening, hearing, accepting and marching. You had to be in to it to learn by that method. I learned later that the whole formation of Jazz came out of marching. The cadence of it. All the things that go into it. Playing and marching at the same time as well as marching without playing. Or the horns laying out while the rhythms of the drums build. When we would march by the judges reviewing platform we would try to drown the other bands out, that were marching in the other direction, as well as make people dance. One thing that was taught to me was that the rhythm had to be strong enough to make people want to dance. I was taught that as a musician you had to be able to dance yourself, because if you couldn't, how was your playing going to make the people dance?

Ever a student of the study of will, Gale continues. "The main thing, and I believe this more so now, living in these years and that is, desire and will power are very important parts of learning any subject. You have to have the will to want to do this. That's what I had, the will to commit and challenge myself to do it. I even wrote a song on one of my albums called The Song Of Will which touches on the metaphysical side of our existence. The whole ideas of will power, spirituality, belief systems, meditation come into it. These things are now more accepted in the world. I've found that the will power to want to play the instrument still drives me to it.

One of the things I was doing before Scouting introduced me to the bugle was singing Doo-Wop. We had a good time harmonizing with each other. The expression from that, going into the horn, led to mimicking the vocals we were doing.



I was very bashful when young. Whereas a lot of guys would get out there and dance with their vocals, I would just stay in the background and do my part. I'll never forget an incident that occurred when I was on stage sittin' in with Illinois Jacquet, when I did get involved with playing trumpet. I was a young man, trying to play at the back of the stage. He said to me, "Son, you've got to come up to the front. You can't stand in the back and play. In this music, there's a front line. You've got the rhythm section and you've got the horn section. You are the horn section. You have to be up front. You can't stay in the background and play. I was like, "Ok, yes sir." I was too nervous to go out front and play. But I accepted it. You know, that's part of the Jazz culture. There are so many different terminologies, meanings, arrangements, styles, living conditions, etc. All kinds of things that the Jazz culture is about. They don't teach that in college these days. Many don't even know that a Jazz culture exists.

Jazz is a national treasure. April 30 was International Jazz Day. The whole month of April is Jazz appreciation month. In 1987, resolution 57 was sponsored by the Honorable Congressman John Conyers of Detroit which designated Jazz as a rare and valuable national treasure. These ideas and endorsements are very important when discussing the music of America. The art of improvisation, the ability to be instantly creative within certain parameters such as arrangements, tones, ideas and topics elevates Jazz to its own level.

On transitioning from bugle to trumpet "One of the ways I transitioned from bugle to trumpet was once I started getting involved instrumentally with the marching bands and all, I noticed there would sometimes be a soprano piston bugle in the band. It had one valve I said, 'wow, look at that.' I got my first trumpet from the pawn shop. I was able to buy it 'cuz from a little kid, I always worked, shining shoes on the weekend. My family was that type of family. I always hustled. But when I got my first trumpet, I didn't have anyone to show me anything, so I would sneak



downstairs in the basement and blow on it, doing the same things I'd been doing on the bugle. I would push on the pistons and see how the sound would change. I did that for about two years. I called it blowing my brains out. I would just blow man. I didn't care what I was doin'. Then I started listening to different recordings of trumpet players, which made me want to learn more. I started going out and observing people like Kenny Dorham, Chet Baker, Miles and all those other cats. I said, 'Man, I got to really get into this.' Then I got with Kenny Dorham. I went down to the club. See, in those days it was different. Musicians were different. It would be like, 'Ok young brother, what'chu won't?' 'I wanna sit in.'

'Ok, well, you better go learn this first.' See, you had to learn, Well You Needn't and Night In Tunisia, all the songs that were popular at the time. We learned by ear. So when I got with Kenny, I was exposed to notes on paper. It makes me laugh now, but when I saw the black dots on white paper with 5 lines and 4 spaces, I was shocked. "What am I supposed to do with that. I gotta do what? Learn scales and melody? I learned from singing that my instrument was a melodic instrument. I don't play a chord instrument. Then I had to learn about music theory; counterpoint, harmony. I learned that counterpoint, melody against melody, is what takes place in improvisation. Ultimately, the more melodic you can be determines how your music will be accepted. You learn to play evenly, to resolve passages that open up to the next statement. Learning how to think that way in playing through improvisation.

The University of the Bandstand

When I was coming up in the '50s, those that came before me, talked about the University of the Bandstand. That's when musicians would come together after hours and jam. That's where you would learn the concepts and philosophies behind the music.

Generally, the band would work Tuesday through Sunday in the clubs and the jam sessions would happen on Monday. There would be a house band hired for these Monday night sessions and other players would come in and jam. It was at one of these sessions that Sonny Stitt told me to, 'Go home and learn to play slow.' I was taken aback. I was thinking, as fast as he played that alto, good gracious I wanted to learn how to play trumpet that fast. I didn't realize it at the time, but he was encouraging me to develop my tone by playing half and whole notes, ballads and things like that. At the University of the Bandstand, Clark Terry told me about Arban's Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet. My first teacher, Kenny Dorham stressed that as well. Another aspect that was stressed at the University of the Bandstand was looking good on stage and stage presence. You had to be sharp to be a musician in New York. When I sat in with Illinois Jacquet as a teenager, I had on my double breasted jacket. Back then, guys were straightening their hair. Illinois Jacquet had his hair done. I tried that too once, but it got to close to the scalp and started burning. I had to leave that alone!

Today, when musicians try to come on my stage wearing sneakers, I have to tell them to please wear shoes, it's mandatory. In the '60s when we did the Ghetto Music performances, I had the orchestra wear robes with hoods on them. We were the first group that I know of that had that type of attire. The reason we were doing it is because I felt that with sixty or so musicians in front of a large audience, I needed to keep their attention and the hoods kept them from looking from side to side. Stage presence is very important."

As a teenager, Eddie Gale solved the mystery of getting into clubs despite being underage.

"What we did was, you know the hats that we wear with the (stingy) brim and all? As young boys, we used to call them men hats. The grown men would wear those hats wherever they went. So we, as young men would wear those hats in order to appear older and get into the clubs. That's how I got in to see Prez (Lester Young). I didn't know anything about him. I just saw his name up there and the picture. And man, we wanted to go hear that. So we learned through the culture, 'Oh, that's Lester Young, they call him Prez because he was so great on his saxophone, he was a leader in it.' Or it was Dizzy Gillespie or other leaders at the time who became icons to us. Miles Davis with the muted trumpet. The richness of space in his solos. After coming up through the Scouts all those young years, it may me want to pay attention to the Jazz culture. How they dressed differently. They didn't wear sneakers and stuff. They dressed up

sharp, with nice hats on, etc. It made a very different impression in my life about music. It's a way of life. It's not just something you do to enjoy, or just to be pleasing. And as I grew up more, it wasn't just about making money. We didn't think of it that way. We did it because of the love that we found in expressing ourselves. Later on though, you discover it's about making a living. Before I got with Sun-Ra and Cecil Taylor and all them, I was with a group called the Afro Jazz Lab. Every weekend we would be playing a party in somebody's basement, picking up a little change. We had a good time doing that. We didn't worry about who was promoting it, who knew us or who was writing about it. We didn't think like that. We were just having a good time playing music, learning songs to please our audience."

The Challenge of Parenting at 19 and a Family Introduction to Monk

"I started out very young being a parent. I got married the first time at 19 years old. Our parents had to sign for us to get married. Because I was taught by my father, 'Boy, you get out there and make some young girl pregnant, you better marry her and take care of those children.' See, that's what he did in my life. He and my mom were always there. I had a good example of taking care of your responsibilities. So when my parents started to go through changes when my girlfriend got pregnant I told them, 'No worries. We're going to get married.' So that's how that happened.

My father in law's best friend was Monk's brother in law. His name was Corky. Man, they put me in the back of the car one night and said to me, 'We're goin' to the city tonight and introduce you to Monk.' So, I'm all nervous in the back of the car, with my father in law in the front. That's how I met Monk. I laugh now because it was such an experience. It reminds me of another experience I had with my family in North Carolina about 5 years ago. My first cousin, who used to visit us in New York when we were young and vice versa, called me and said, 'You know, my daughter is getting married. Maybe if you come this way, you can do something for us.'

I said, 'Yes, what did you have in mind?'

He said, 'Will you do the Lord's Prayer?'

I said, 'Hunh?'

'Would you play the Lord's Prayer on your trumpet?'

I said, 'Gee, I've never had anybody ask me to do anything like that before.'

So, although I agreed to do it, right away I went into culture shock because, in the South, you can't just go into church and do an improvisation. You really have to go straight, no chaser. And the Lord's Prayer too? You can't come in there with sheet music. They would be like, 'Boy, you don't know the Lord's Prayer?' Right away my mind started going through all these cultural things. My wife Georgette and I drove across country to do it, which we didn't mind because we love traveling. But man, that was the most nerve wracking

performance of my whole life, except for sitting in with 'Trane. I mean, we all know how to recite the Lord's Prayer, but playing it was quite a challenge. I did it and remarkably, it turned me deeper into the whole idea of inner peace in my life and the acceptance of strong belief. It really covers that for me. It was such a challenge that I'd never been confronted with in music before.

I came up with the melody from knowing the prayer itself and using the intonation of how the voice recites it. I really had to practice it to get it right and accomplish that point of view. It goes back to when I went to Europe in 1973 and became fascinated with spiritual Jazz. I was so deeply impressed with Sun-Ra, Cecil Taylor and John Coltrane. To me, they were the leaders of the movement into the 21st century. The spiritual point of view is more creative. When you create things instantly, that's an act of spiritual movement taking place."

On Working with Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor and John Coltrane

Eddie Gale did two stints with Sun Ra's Arkestra. When we broach the subject, Gale reflects on Sun Ra's teaching on the idea of space.

"When I reflect on the Internet, I go back to the teachings of Master Sun-Ra about the whole idea of space. He was teaching this in the '50s. And that's just what the Internet is about. It's all taking place in (cyber) space. Space music. The creativeness of the Sun-Ra lyric, Space Is The Place. These are realities now, more clearly than ever before. I met him through Scoby Stroman who was Olatunji's drummer at the time. I used to see Scoby get up on stage and drive the whole Olatunji Band in Brooklyn.

Sun Ra was like a step-father to me. We were very close. He would come to Brooklyn and I'd introduce him to people that were in my life. I'd go to Manhattan with him and we would walk the streets. He would describe to me all sorts of ideas; intellectual word play and descriptions of things. I was a married man at the time and didn't live in the housing that Sun Ra had for his Arkestra members on East 3rd Street. John Gilmore, Marshall Allen, at times Pat Patrick (whose son Deval Patrick became the governor of Massachusetts) and Ronnie Boykins all lived there with Sun Ra. I rehearsed with them on East 3rd Street, right down the street from Slugs. Sun Ra got famous at Slugs. When the word got out people from all over the world would come to Slugs to see the Sun Ra Arkestra on Monday nights where he played every Monday night for a year.

I believe the first recording I ever did was on a Sun Ra album entitled Secrets of the Sun. He would have me stand next to the piano, rather than in the horn section. When he wanted me to solo, he would point and say, 'Now you play'.

He called me the original avant garde trumpeter, because I would create my own solos off of his music. On the road, I was responsible for carrying all the music for the rest of the horns. Working with Sun Ra was very exciting for me because he was so adventurous. Playing with him opened the door for me to get involved in the whole music scene.

I did many dates with him in the Tri-Cities area, down to Georgia and

across America to California.

In his last days on Earth, I visited him in the hospital in Alabama. I'm still in tune with his family. They became fond of me through Sun Ra. Actually, working with Cecil Taylor was even more difficult than working with Sun Ra. Cecil came and asked me to play with him after I did a couple of post Sun Ra things with Booker Ervin at Slugs.

Cecil would give you the notes from the piano at rehearsal. You had to transpose the notes on the spot."

'Okay, trumpet here's your notes.'

"I'm like what the heck? I would say to Jimmy Lyons the alto player, 'Jimmy how you do this shit man? Come on.'

He'd say, 'Play it through here and then write it out.' So I learned through these challenges, reading books on music theory. I was elevated to the major music scene by playing with Cecil because he was on Blue Note.

I also recorded with Larry Young during that period because I had the popularity going. We got together through alto sax player James Spaulding whom I talk to frequently to this day.

I played with John Coltrane twice at the Half Note. The first time it happened was at the Half Note in Manhattan, on a stormy night, believe it or not. I had been wanting to deal with John. A friend of mine talked me into going over there. The club was packed. John was playing with Elvin, McCoy and Jimmy Garrison. There were several other musicians there as John was letting people who were into the music, come and play with him. Pharoah Sanders, Dewey Johnson and a few other cats were lined up there waiting to sit in. So when the band took a break, I went over to where John was standing near the bar and introduced myself. I said, 'Mr. Coltrane, my name is Eddie Gale. I'm a trumpet player from Brooklyn and I came over here to see if I could get a chance to play with you.'

He glanced over at the line of cats waiting by the stage and said, 'I gotta see, I don't know yet.'

I said, 'Well, thank you Mr. Coltrane,' and turned to walk away.

He said, 'Well, wait a minute. Let's see what happens.' And they all heard him tell me that. So we all got a chance to play, but I was the last one to go up that night. After the set, John came up to me and asked me what did I do or take to make me play the way I was playing. I really didn't know exactly what he was referring to so I said, 'Well, I don't take anything Mr. Coltrane.'

John and I became pretty tight after that and he encouraged me to stay in touch with him. During that period, I was between day jobs and at one point had to pawn my horn. I told John about it and he had me come down to Birdland where he loaned me the \$35 to get my horn out.

I told him, 'Mr. Coltrane, I will definitely pay you back.'

He told me, 'Don't worry about it. Just don't stop playing the way you play.'

The second time I played with him, John Gilmore joined us on the bandstand with the same lineup. John Coltrane was between John Gilmore and myself and during his most fervent playing that night, went down almost to his knees. It was one hell of a performance. Someone took pictures of it but I never got a chance to get the pictures. We were out there! People have asked me what it was like playing with John. All I can remember is the horn played itself. We were out to lunch.

I was actually supposed to play on his Ascension album, but lost touch with him when my phone went out of service for awhile. He used to encourage me to call him collect and when he couldn't reach me for the Ascension date, he hired Freddie Hubbard instead. I was playing with Byron Allen at the time. John passed about two years after Ascension was recorded."

Current and Recent Projects

These days find Eddie Gale based on the West Coast, in San Jose, California. He has been San Jose's Ambassador of Jazz since 1974. He conducts his Inner Peace Adult & Youth Multicultural Orchestra in Concerts For Inner Peace In America And The World.

Always willing to interact musically with the youth, he talks fondly of his work with the Oakland Hip Hop group, The Coup.

"I went to a meeting a few years back. The meeting was about doing workshops for the California Arts Council which I ended up getting hired for and conducting for two years. Members of the Coup approached me and said, 'Eddie Gale, we know about you and your music. Why don't you come and sit in with us some time?'

'When do you want to do it?' They informed me they were playing at Boz Skagg's club, Slims the following week. So, I agreed to sit in with them assuming that they were a Jazz Fusion group, since they knew about Eddie Gale. When I got to the gig, there were all these young people milling about and I'm wondering what's going on. When I got backstage, I suddenly realized that they were Hip Hop and not Fusion. Man, I had a ball with those young people. I just stuck with the rhythm section and we made it happen. I ended up gigging with them for a year or so. They would announce from the stage epic battles between Eddie Gale's trumpet from the Jazz world and their DJ, Pam the Funkstress. We had a little thing we would do. She would scratch and I would do my trumpet thing. Coup member Boots Riley would shout, 'Come on with that Sun Ra shit!'

They were excited because they had asked many Jazz trumpet players to do it, but I became the only one who agreed to join them on stage. So, I'm still trying new things, still able to channel that adventurous spirit that I learned with Sun Ra.

For more information on Eddie Gale and his Inner Peace Adult & Youth Multicultural Orchestra visit www.eddiegale.com

Interview Tristan Honsinger



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

JUST A GHOST
CADENCE
INTERVIEW
WITH TRISTAN
HONSINGER
PHOTOS AND
TEXT BY KEN
WEISS

Tristan Honsinger has long been one of Jazz' most astounding cello players. Born October 23, 1949 in Burlington, Vermont, he was encouraged by his mother to take classical music lessons. He went on to study classical cello at the New England Conservatory in Boston and the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore but eventually an interest in Jazz and improvisational music developed, especially while living in Canada. He relocated to Europe in 1974, centered primarily in Amsterdam, although he currently lives in Berlin. Honsinger has appeared with many eminent free-thinking artists including Derek Bailey, Steve Lacy, Lol Coxhill, Louis Moholo, Sean Bergin, Toshinori Kondo, Evan Parker, Maarten Altena, Alexander von Schlippenbach, Misha Mengelberg and Han Bennink. He collaborated with Cecil Taylor during the pianist's historic month-long Berlin residency in the summer of 1988 and may be best known to Americans for his long association with the Instant Composers Pool Orchestra (ICP), of which he's an original member (1967). The ICP, the famed collective led by Misha Mengelberg and Han Bennink, celebrated its 48th anniversary in 2015 and Honsinger has been a perfect fit for the mischievous Dutch group. The ICP combines classical, jazz and folk elements with a (very) large helping of humor and the cellist is free to take center stage where he puts his rubbery, stick-like body to good use with unusual dance moves while leading a conduction. Truth be told, he bears a striking resemblance to the pioneering slapstick comedian Stan Laurel of Laurel and Hardy fame. This interview took place on January 11, 2015 at FringeArts in Philadelphia where Honsinger appeared with the ICP Orchestra.

Cadence: You've lived in Europe since 1974. I suspect that many Americans are surprised to find out that you are American. You even have an accent.

Tristan Honsinger: I don't know whether they're surprised. My accent has changed a little bit because of learning different languages and talking English to someone who doesn't really have a large vocabulary. It does influence how you talk to people who might have twenty

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words of English.

Cadence: *What's your cultural background?*

Honsinger: Both my parents were American. My father had a German background but also in his family was Irish and French Canadian and my mother's side is Jewish with an Alsatian background.

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

Honsinger: I left North America from Montreal and went to Holland and I don't think it was too much different. I think I had more culture shock in North America than in Europe because of the language. I had to learn to speak French and the opinion [of the Montrealers] was, honestly, that it's a terrible country that you come from so we don't like to talk English, we speak French. So basically, I shut up for two months, absorbed it, and one day I started talking French.

Cadence: *Do you think of yourself as American or European at this point?*

Honsinger: I think of myself as a little bit even more than that. How would you say? It's kind of like a diplomat, a cultural diplomat, who's constantly moving all over the Earth as a representative of his country but then, of course, countries confuse me because I had the impression that things would get better when I started to go to different lands and now it's gotten worse so it's very puzzling why when one establishes one's self in different lands, it's just part of the Earth, and I think this whole thing is a weakness on our part. The human race thinks the Earth is theirs because they can't fly away. Electromagnetism is much more, it is one truth.

Cadence: *I was surprised to learn that you don't have a website until I found out that you don't even use email. Why have you made this stunning career move of not utilizing any technology or social media to promote yourself?*

Honsinger: Because I have no relationship with buttons. OK, switches are alright, but buttons? So I'm a bit afraid of it, right? It's like I'm afraid of the piano as well, a little bit. I've gotten better with the piano since I've played with several pianists. I said, "What are they going to think of me because I play sometimes not well tempered?" It's either a little bit flat or a little bit sharp, which goes into microtones, but there are pianists that are interested in that. It's in the clusters that they find a little bit how to deal with someone that is slightly out of tune.

Cadence: *So your piano issue is not that you are scared of Misha Mengelberg?*

Honsinger: Yeah, he scared the hell out of me when I first met him but then I played with people like von Schlippenbach and Cecil Taylor, and they were more, they wouldn't come up to me and say, "What are you doing sir?"

Cadence: *You studied classical cello at the New England Conservatory in Boston but you ended up leaving the conservatory because you didn't feel welcome. What was the problem there?*

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Honsinger: The problem was that I took an audition and I met this very nice cellist who taught there so I said, 'OK, I want to go there.' I applied for several places and he said you can come and study with me but then I arrived and he was gone. He went on sabbatical to England, or something. Actually, it was an interesting thing because I met some very interesting colleagues, particularly a pianist who studied composition. These were the people who influenced me, in a certain way, in the classical world. One time we played Beethoven's Five Cello Sonatas for a recital and we decided to change the tempos and make rubatos and very exaggerated cello rondos and rubatos and all the cellists that came, they all left after maybe the first sonata. That was a very good experience for me. But I left because it just wasn't what I wanted to do. At the time, I wanted more to play chamber music and so I went to Peabody Conservatory [in Baltimore] the next year and the same thing kind of happened. There was a cellist that I applied to study with through a Romanian violinist, who I also studied with in the summer time, but then at one point I was really trying to stretch the time in what I was doing and he said to me, "You can't play like [Pablo] Casals, you have to play like me." And I said, 'Oh,' and I basically never returned. I had some friends, they were all foreign students, and they said, "Just leave Tristan. Go away, get out of America." So I went to Quebec, Canada.

Cadence: *Your Wikipedia page states that you moved to Montreal in 1969 to escape the draft and the Vietnam War. Is that true?*

Honsinger: Yes.

Cadence: *When and how did your interest in Jazz begin?*

Honsinger: I listened to Jazz when I was very young because my father and mother liked Jazz so I was introduced through their records. Quite specifically, I would say Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, and also Lead Belly, although he's not a Jazz musician, but my father was very fond of him. And of course, Louis Armstrong.

Cadence: *I've read that you became inspired to improvise after meeting Dutch percussionist Peter van Ginkel and listening to his copy of Topography of the Lungs by Evan Parker, Derek Bailey and Han Bennink.*

Honsinger: There was all kind of music that inspired me at the time, it wasn't only European or free Jazz or ethnic music. It was very interesting because I didn't know Charlie Parker, for instance, and then I discovered Ornette at the same time as Charlie Parker. I liked both of them but you usually discover these people in a historical [timeframe] so I should have known Charlie Parker before, but I didn't. He made sense to me, not in the form of bebop, it was his sound that I was very interested in. Also, Don Cherry, at the time, influenced me a lot. This was in Montreal. I played a lot on the street at that time and there was this man, I think he was a musicologist, and he came up to me and said, "Have you heard such and such," and I said, 'No,' so he invited me to his house to listen to records. I heard Spiritual Unity by Albert Ayler,

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Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

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Mingus, and Topography of the Lungs. After hearing this, I knew I had to make a choice and I chose. I thought I was closer to the European movement rather than the free Jazz movement

Cadence: *It's significant that you went on to record with all three of the artists on Topography of the Lungs.*

Honsinger: Yes. I also met Derek Bailey on the street in Paris. I couldn't play on the street in Amsterdam so I left Holland and went to Paris and he was playing with the Steve Lacy sextet as a guest and somehow he saw me playing on the street and he found my telephone number. My eyes must have been closed when I was playing. He called me up and asked to play with me on the break so I said, 'Of course.' We played something like ten minutes and we started up a relationship. At first, I found him very strange, not as a man, but his music. But when I played with him I was kind of shocked how he could lift me and make me play things that were beyond me. So he was a very important influence.

Cadence: *You got to play with him many times?*

Honsinger: Oh yes, many times in the '70s mostly, until we had a little tussle and we didn't see each other for five years. Eventually we started back up.

Cadence: *You had a tussle?*

Honsinger: Well, a little disagreement about money. These little things irritate these great masters.

Cadence: *Did Oscar Pettiford have a significant influence on you?*

Honsinger: No.

Cadence: *More so Pablo Casals?*

Honsinger: For his sound, yes.

Cadence: *Was it difficult to make the transition from your classical training to improvisational playing?*

Honsinger: Yes it was because in my brain I thought of beautiful things to play but I couldn't play them. The phrasing was totally different so I had to deconstruct my whole classical phrasing and it took ten years before I could basically feel comfortable in a different construction. I don't think we're playing compositions as such, let's say in the classical way, it's more organizing sound, right? And it's important that in the moment, where are you going? Misha asked me that long before I asked myself that. And I started to think about the content. OK, it's always the beginning of an improvisation and the end of it that's always very clear, somehow, but in the middle, it's full of black holes or something. I can explain it like that or cloudy weather or sunshine, but it needed, for me, a reface, a different mask today. It's always been associated to Jazz but I don't think that's enough today. I find that playing with Jazz musicians that come into the improvised music world, they seem to not understand that sometimes it's a kind of associative process rather than a compositional process. I think that Ornette was very associative and I really enjoyed that, as well as Don Cherry. They were playing associative things which basically, it was an improvising thing where the rhythm section was more Jazz in their first

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records, but how they created these different extensions of the melodies that Ornette wrote. But I found that Don Cherry, he did it much more free because he had a special technique of playing the trumpet so he would make counterpoint with Ornette's music, and that was basically what I learned in classical music and which I still believe, that it's very important in terms of the content of what we are trying to express.

Cadence: *Are there techniques or alterations that you use on cello that are unique or unusual?*

Honsinger: I used to do more but now I'm using my voice with words and sounds, therefore, sometimes the sound of the cello changes. Yes, it's a kind of extension of the cello. One person once told me that, "The problem with cello players is that they want to sound like a cello," and I had always, when I started improvising, I emulated trumpets and saxophones. It wasn't the cello because there were no exponents except for Joel Freedman and a few others like Carlos Scott. But it was still very much the cello, and I think what I tried to do was a little bit, it's not imitation, but I was like a sponge to kind of imitate all kinds of different things. And I think because I did that, of course the cello started to sound like other things.

Cadence: *There's not been an extensive history of Jazz cello through the years. Was it advantageous for you to play an instrument that few others had played in Jazz or was it problematic to convince others to include cello in their work?*

Honsinger: At the time, there wasn't much, there were hardly any cello players, right? So, yeah, I was in a time where there was absolutely no competition but I was so strange that people were kind of afraid of me because they didn't know what I would do. Now there are all kinds of cello players, everywhere, and very good, very schooled. They are ready to deal with this improvisational world. There are very good ones such as Okkyung Lee, Audrey Chen and Peggy Lee. At the time I was starting, it was advantageous and disadvantageous at the same time because I was influenced by Cecil's playing. I heard him just before I left to Europe and I was so impressed by his intensity and that it wasn't Jazz, it was something else. He was playing with Jimmy Lyons, who was a great companion to Cecil, and Andrew Cyrille. It just blew my world away.

Cadence: *Do you still perform any classical music?*

Honsinger: No, I can't read anymore. I'm useless really.

Cadence: *As you noted earlier, you had a tough introduction to Amsterdam when you got there. You were arrested the first time you played cello on the street.*

Honsinger: Yes, that's when I moved to Paris.

Cadence: *The playing was that bad?*

Honsinger: No, no, it's just that they were doing that at that moment. They would take the instruments away by sneaking in as plainclothesmen. We had a crowd, in three minutes we had two hundred people and what they did was the police asked for our

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instruments and we asked, "How do we get them back?" "We don't know," they said. So we had to find a lawyer and we got them back like in two days. I didn't have any money so I moved to Paris to make some money. I lived in France for something like six months and then returned to Amsterdam.

Cadence: *What was your early big break in Europe?*

Honsinger: Derek. He put me on the map, almost immediately. I made my first recording with him (Duo, Incus, 1976), which I'm very proud of. Although some people don't like it but I don't care.

Cadence: *The late Tom Cora was a fellow American cellist who spent time in Europe. Did you have a relationship with him?*

Honsinger: We played several times together and I enjoyed it very much because he played the cello not in the classical way. He started playing cello, I think, with Karl Berger. He studied cello at Berger's school. He impressed me but basically, we're two different things. He extended the cello through electronics, he electrified his cello, so, of course, he got different sounds. I've stayed acoustic because I think you can do the same thing.

Cadence: *How would you summarize your approach to music making? What's important to you and what's not important to you?*

Honsinger: What's not important is following, following other people. I think associative working comes about. We have a group with Axel Dorner, Toby [Delius] and an Italian bass player [Antonio Borghini], and basically there are like four languages going on. For me, this is something that I've always tried to attain, this idea kind of like Dixieland in a certain way, but with a total other face. I have the classical thing, Antonio is more related to Jazz, and Toby and Axel have their own language. It's a very interesting group and I would say that what I don't want to do is to follow someone's way. I think the best music I've heard is when everybody is independent. They have their own sound, they have their own language. A good example is Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, for instance. It's two different languages.

Cadence: *Dutch journalist Erik van de Berg has described you as, "someone who hasn't lost his childhood fantasy entirely. His compositions are like a child's drawing, or even more like a story from Winnie the Pooh: awkward and touchingly simple, yet full of deeper meanings for those who want to see them." How do you feel about that description?*

Honsinger: I don't know about Winnie the Pooh, I would have to say that I'm more interested in Charles Dodgson [his pen name was Lewis Carroll] who wrote Alice in Wonderland which came before Einstein discovered relativity. This book can be very, very deep and also the language, the nonsense language which appears in such a, how do you say, he was a logician basically. He became related to this little girl and somehow he started to write this fantastic book which I read when I started to read, which was when I was twenty or something. And yes, that influenced me, of course. And also Samuel Beckett was

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very important for me, and Buster Keaton was very important for me. I think it's a blessing that I started to be influenced by other forms of expression and that confirms my basic support for associative working.

Cadence: *Humor is obviously an important element for you in what you do on stage. You enjoy being theatrical. What's the link between humor and art for you?*

Honsinger: I don't think there's any difference at all although I don't like the word art. I like more the word humor because it's not only artful, it's basically how we can relate to each other. As far as humor on stage, maybe I'm not serious, maybe I don't care about music as an art form. I'm interested in music as a vibration which includes humor and stoicism and all kinds of different things. Music is a big word. I think humor attracts, it brings focus. It's the kind of thing that is clear, somehow, with not having to say something. I can move like this [moves his arm and body to a side] and, at the right time, it can be very, very focused. I suppose that's why we started to do these conductions [in the ICP performances], these dancing conductions, because it's a different kind of focus. That was the problem with contemporary dance. Dance wasn't specifically related to music and I disagree, I mean with Merce Cunningham and John Cage, that they kind of divided the whole thing and I don't know what the point was. Why they did that? I worked a lot with dancers and, of course, they were into improvising, but the music was for them to improvise and then I started to use my voice and become rather, how would you say, obnoxious in how they divided things. I would say I've become very interested in not excluding anything and this is what happened in postmodern dance. They started to exclude different things and I thought it was unnecessary but, you know, it's only my opinion. There was a book I discovered by Wittgenstein. Misha said, "You should read this book," and so I did and it has a great deal to do with improvisation, the importance of being clear.

Cadence: *What was your early experience with Misha Mengelberg?*

Honsinger: We first met when he heard me playing at the Bimhuis when it opened up in Amsterdam. I'd just played with Han and Han said, "Hey, Misha, this is a cello player named Tristan and you should meet him," so he invited me to his house the next week. I brought my cello and we started to talk about books and different things. I had written some texts and I had brought them to show him. He suggested to me have you heard of this writer and this other writer. He was very eclectic, of course. He wasn't only a musician and that's where Misha influenced me.

Cadence: *You wrote some texts?*

Honsinger: Oh, yes, I do a lot. You see, my interest is really, I would say, music theatre rather than music. I have a group, as well, that includes a dancer, actresses, actors, well anything. I am interested in things that open the space. And I'm very, very interested in anything that can come together but seem coincidental but it's more than that.

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Sometimes things happen for different reasons when you don't play the music at a certain point. Like I give examples of characters. I think this is a very ancient thing to bring in characters and improvise around them. I started to do this. I'd put a grandfather, a granddaughter, and an ornithologist in a train and it turned out to be three different things going on but it was about the characters that inspired some really wonderful, fast-moving stuff. Just like good improvisation. So these ideas don't only come from music and that's what Misha did with a special man, Wim T. Schippers. He was a Fluxus guy from Holland and they met and started to do things together. I saw them do a series one time and it was so beautiful for me, but for some people, they didn't really get it. I didn't either but I started to get it finally and I'm still doing it.

Cadence: *Misha Mengelberg stories are very abundant. Do you have a good one to tell?*

Honsinger: Yes! Onetime the ICP Orchestra in, I think '77, we had to go to Wuppertal and play a concert. And I thought, yeah, we're gonna play. But they started out Misha and Han, just Misha and Han playing, and the rest of us had to sit there and wait. I said, 'What is this?' So I got on the stage and I started to play and Han started to follow me and then Misha gets up and he's jealous. I suspect that he's jealous. And he comes with his pocket watch and starts swinging it in front of me and says, "I give you five minutes to get off the stage."

Cadence: *Would you talk about your role with the ICP Orchestra?*

Honsinger: I have a special function, I think, in the group. It's not purely a musical thing, it's about shallow and deep. You can only go so deep and you hit the shallow shell and vice versa. I kind of don't obey the form sometimes. I'll play maybe four bars sometimes or play through. It's something like Misha started to do when, almost before he couldn't play, and it made really a lot of sense. It was really like Charles Ives' simultaneous events going on at the same time, musical material. I suppose I would have left the orchestra if it didn't allow such things to happen. Misha is a devil and he's a saint at the same time and I think I prefer to play with people like this rather than someone who sees a truth in what he's doing.

Cadence: *Is the role you play with the orchestra unique?*

Honsinger: Yes, but there were certain people through the years that also had this role. Misha was always looking for something that was not typical. Of course, Han is a great Jazz drummer, and Ernst [Glerum] is also a Jazz bass player, and then you have Michael Moore, so the Jazz is quite covered. So for instance, we played two days ago in New York and we started to play one of Misha's Jazz pieces, "Gare Guillemins," which is a train station in Liege, Belgium, and it starts off with a classical introduction for the cello and the viola, which is quite short, and then it goes into the Jazz. And Toby wrote the set list and he said, "Tristan, whenever you want to do a conduction, just do it." So I chose to do the conduction in this Jazz piece. I didn't know what

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I was going to do basically, but it worked, somehow, because the Jazz composition carried on but there was an abstract part that was going on at the same time. That's something that Misha started to make, these very little pieces, he called them "viruses," that would take you away from something that was going on. Something that had a strong structure and then we could do different things in what's usually a Jazz piece. For instance, when he asks [Peter] Brotzmann to play Jazz, and Brotzmann is not really a Jazz musician, but Brotzmann is kind of doing the same thing. He's doing something else, it's kind of layering I would say. This is where we are coming to now, these layers of different styles or modes. Different ways of making music but we can do three or four at the same time. I think this is starting to happen in the group and this is our fun. You know, it's not really serious.

Cadence: 2015 marks the 48th anniversary of the ICP and the current band remains nearly unchanged for almost 20 years. What's the secret to its rare longevity?

Honsinger: I suppose the availability and Misha's experimenting with different ideas in the '70s, I would say. He started off with a purely improvised tentet with Derek Bailey and Paul Rutherford. I saw it and it was totally cacophony and Misha wasn't pleased so he made another group and started to write pieces and it was a crazy group because Michel Waisvisz was in it working with his [self-invented electronic] "cracklebox," as he called it, and it was really different. Misha was really a devil then. He would ask like John Tchicai or Steve Lacy to play with their backs to the audience and they kind of looked at him like "You're fucking nuts, man! I'm not gonna' do it!" So he said, "Tristan, I want you to play with your back to the audience" and I said, 'Sure' [Laughs]. I didn't care because the cello fills up the space with its sound. Misha was always finding ways to breakdown someone's idea of what they're doing.

Cadence: Is it artistically healthy for the same group of artists to be together for twenty years?

Honsinger: Yes. Today we don't really play that much every year, we do something like thirty concerts. We don't play together every day.

Cadence: How have the dynamics of the ICP changed now that Misha Mengelberg is no longer healthy enough to perform and how is it to play without him or with a guest pianist?

Honsinger: Oh, the same. Misha's there, anyway for me. I mean, he's our ghost. We're gonna' play tonight with Uri Caine. He played last night in New York with us and I kind of liked it but some people don't like it because it's not associative to Misha's overall. It's basically Susanna [von Canon – the band's manager] and Han [who have added guest pianists]. Han loves to play with the piano and [Dutch pianist] Guss Janssen has been playing with the band at times now. Guss is also writing an opera of Misha's ideas that he's calling Cows. When Misha started to get Alzheimer's disease he stopped composing. He still had his ideas and a few little lyrics, along with some texts that

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Guss is using to construct with, including some, let's say, Mengelberg motifs. So yeah, we try to include Misha and I prefer to play Misha's compositions.

Cadence: *Han Bennink and Mengelberg are two strong-willed individuals who have been known to butt heads. How has their relationship effected the band?*

Honsinger: Oh, it's like kindergarten. One kid doesn't like the other kid, they have some kind of tussle, and then they forget about it shortly afterwards. I suppose because Han is such a kid. Anyway, it doesn't last that long.

Cadence: *Are you funnier than Han Bennink?*

Honsinger: Oh, we're differently funny I would have to say.

Cadence: *Who in the ICP thinks they're funny but they're really not?*

Honsinger: I think everybody is funny. They're modestly funny sometimes. I'm like a fish out of water so I just splash into it and do my thing.

Cadence: *The ICP has its own house label [ICP Records]. How is it decided who gets to put out solo projects on the label?*

Honsinger: I was asked by Han to do a solo record so we did it. It comes from mostly what they're interested in besides the ICP. It's mostly ICP members [that record on the label].

Cadence: *You mentioned your solo cello recording from 2000, the critically acclaimed A Camel's Kiss. What approach did you take to produce a solo cello recording?*

Honsinger: I approached it like any other recording. You have different ideas and you do it. I did it in two sessions, I remember, and that also helps that you don't try to do it all at once but you can.

Cadence: *How did you come up with the title A Camel's Kiss? Did you have an intimate experience with a camel?*

Honsinger: I had an experience with a llama one time. It was tied up outside the City Hall of Marseille and the funny thing was that these business people had to go past the llama to get into the City Hall. They were all dressed with suits and briefcases and they all had to look at the llama and their reactions were – I never laughed so hard in my life. I thought, yeah, it's a little bit like a camel, like kissing a camel.

Cadence: *Why didn't you call it A Llama's Kiss?*

Honsinger: Aahh, because I like the word camel.

Cadence: *Some fans know you best through your association with Cecil Taylor. You were participated during his historic Berlin month-long residency in July of 1988. How did you get involved with him?*

Honsinger: There was the October Meeting in Amsterdam the year before and Cecil was asked to do a project. I met him there.

Cadence: *What memories can you share about your time with Cecil Taylor?*

Honsinger: There were memories of really some very strange, how do you say, kind of like unworldly vibrations. I think he's another guy who believes in vibrations. He is American Indian mostly and

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that means that he has a totally different history from the whites or the blacks or whoever, and I think he built his whole thing on intransigent vibrations. Sometimes it's the total opposite of Derek Bailey, in a way. Derek makes space and Cecil is dealing with micro-space and it stands still sometimes.

Cadence: *How important to the European community was the Cecil Taylor residency in '88? Did it alter the scene there in any way?*

Honsinger: I can't really answer that. I played with him a couple times in Berlin but it seemed like, yeah, he's kind of an enigma for a lot of people, and sometimes they misunderstand his meanings. This happens sometimes in concerts but it's not that it's not good. He makes people confused sometimes and this creates another vibration I'd say, so it's multiple vibrations going on. When we worked, sometimes there were compositions and he wrote kind of like geography in a certain way, or a map. I was working on that at the same time, in '88 or '87, with a theatre group so people would learn these lines that Cecil wrote and they thought it was linear and it wasn't at all. I mean Cecil started at the bottom of the page somewhere and then everybody started at the top and then there's built in little cells. It's very dense.

Cadence: *You played the Village Vanguard with Cecil Taylor's quintet in 1995. That was your first New York City visit in over fifteen years.*

Honsinger: It was great! I thought the Vanguard had a lot of atmosphere and we played two very long sets a night. It went its own way - it went up, it went down, and then it went up again.

Cadence: *How was it for you as an American to come back and play that historic club with Cecil Taylor?*

Honsinger: The more incredible thing was that it was the first time in my life that I played with the same group for six days. He influenced me in that way, to try to do this in Berlin. We're trying to make residences instead of changing every day and I think it's time to do that because musicians cannot develop today as they could, maybe in the '60s and the '70s, because there is no time for it. That's the purpose of a residency for a week or two. You can really develop very quickly.

Cadence: *How would you compare playing the intense music of Cecil Taylor versus the humor-filled music of the ICP?*

Honsinger: They can't compare to each other, they're just different. Of course I played differently with Misha's group but I think I have something in common also with Cecil. I learned his specific ways. I felt I could develop microtonality with Cecil, I couldn't develop it with Misha.

Cadence: *You've mentioned your interest in theatre, what are your other interests outside of music?*

Honsinger: I don't read much anymore. I try to, how can I say, sometimes I write but it's a very reflective time for me so I don't do much more than what I can possibly do. I don't do much other than playing music or talking to people. For me, it's enough, life and music.

Cadence: *What would people be surprised to know about you?*

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Honsinger: The musician's life outside of the music, it's disgusting actually because you start drinking and taking drugs and that becomes a habit, right? And so, I got involved with drugs, hard drugs, and it wasn't a negative for me. It was positive in a sense that I started to realize that we cannot exclude anything. We're undivided, I would say, even if someone doesn't believe that. We are undivided and that's a deep teaching because you meet real down, depressed individuals [when you're using]. It's not pretty at all.

Cadence: *Can I confirm that you are off of the drugs?*

Honsinger: Well, sometimes I do drugs but not like before. Like maybe, what's it called here? A doobie?

Cadence: *The last few questions were given to me from other musicians to ask you:*

Erik Friedlander (cello) asked – “Have you ever experimented with electronics to manipulate the sound of the cello?”

Honsinger: No, like I mentioned earlier, I decided that was not necessary.

Wolter Wierbos (trombone) said – “Talk about your composing methods and if they've changed through the years?”

Honsinger: I started writing songs when I moved to Italy, which was in '79. This made me write with notes and intention. So it's the literal part that has developed in my case. I mean the literary, the talking, the theatre, I've been working on that since that time. It's a long way to Tipperary, so to say, but now it's important that I stand up for what I've learned about that – the word and music. I don't think I've changed my way but sometimes I can make different music with the instructions I give. That's what Misha was all about too, so it's more a kind of your thinking about something and its association. I wrote something about a giraffe. It's kind of like anecdotes, small stories, metaphors, and I've written quite a few of those pieces, real theatre music pieces. That's a little bit different than if I just play or write music. They're two kinds of techniques.

Wolter Wierbos also said – “Ask Tristan about his Italian period. He lived for a couple years in Vaglia, north of Florence, with Katie, the mother of his daughter. Sean Bergin lived across the road in another house, so they worked a lot together in that period.”

Honsinger: Yes, I made a piece of six days long where every night it was a different piece. It was kind of like a residency, it was my first residency. It was with an American Indian woman who had a group called Spider Women. She was an actress and her two sisters were actresses, so I asked them into it. Toshinori Kondo was also in that band. It was very fresh and I think it changed our lives in a certain way.

Cadence: *In what way did it change your life?*

Honsinger: In the way that perfection is ambiguous. We learned about that, about when we play we don't really necessarily have to think that we're going to play everything perfect. And so you stop caring about things that people care about. It's good for the music and for the change.

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Michael Moore (reeds) said – “How, when and where did you meet Sean Bergin?”

Honsinger: I met him in Amsterdam on the street. I was walking down the street. He didn't know me, I didn't know him. There were no instruments but we had a long chat about music and we became friends. He was involved in the same ideas I had about theatre. He was a great colleague at that time.

Ernst Glerum (bass) asked – “What is your idea about the future of improvised music?”

Honsinger: Oh, there's no future.

Cadence: That's it? OK. Do you have any final comments?

Honsinger: Not really, just embrace all the possibilities.

Cadence: Is there anything else we should know about Tristan Honsinger?

Honsinger: No, he's just a ghost [Laughs].



Photo Credit: Ken Weiss

Interview Joe Rosenberg



AN INTERVIEW
WITH
SAXOPHONIST
AND COMPOSER
JOE ROSENBERG
BY LUDWIG VAN
TRIKT

Cadence: Would it be fair to say that you arrived on the jazz scene (via recordings) as an artist who had not done the usual route of being a sideman?

J.R.: That's true, although it was not part of some master plan. As far back as I can remember I was trying to get my own gigs and organizing the musicians and choosing material. Which was the right approach, since no one was calling me, and it's still pretty much the way same today? With recording I started out making a demo to get more gigs, but after we were done the musicians I was playing with all said it was good enough to release as a cd. So I produced it, made the covers at home on my printer and brought it around to local record stores. I had no idea of how things worked, and since all the material was composed by other artists, I sent each of them a copy of the disc and asked them to tell me if I owed them any money for using their songs. The only one I heard back from was Anthony Braxton, who left the most generous and complimentary message I've probably ever received. He said that he now knew why his quartet was having difficulty getting work, because groups like mine were playing his music as well as him. Obviously quite an exaggeration, albeit very sincere. About a year later I got a call from Fred Maroth, the founder of Music and Arts Programs of America, telling me that he had heard of my recording and wanted to release it on Music & Arts. I thought it was a prank call because this kind of thing just doesn't happen. But it was on the level, and then I knew that Mr. Braxton had put in a word for me, although he denied knowing anything about it. Having that door opened for me, made it possible to release three more recordings on Music & Arts, which was quite an honor as far as I was concerned. Just to be in the same company as people like Mr. Braxton, Julius Hemphill and Oliver Lake encouraged me to continue searching for my own approach.

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Cadence: I wanted to expand upon any early bio information that needs to be fleshed out or is not correct. Let's just start with your early musical & personal history?

J.R.: I started on trumpet when I was 9 or 10, mostly because we already had a trumpet. My grandmother had played trumpet professionally and my father had played it in high school. But I had an older, and favorite, cousin who played drums and had given me a pair of drumsticks. So every time we would visit I couldn't wait to sit down behind his drum set. I had no real attraction to the trumpet and found it really difficult, so I dropped it after about a year and a half and started drum lessons. I took up the saxophone a year before attending Berklee College of Music because all drummers had to play some "melodic" instrument. There were actually a number of rock bands that I liked, before I started playing the saxophone, that had some saxophone, like Sam The Sham and the Pharaohs, Jim Pepper, Traffic, Coliseum, King Crimson and Frank Zappa. Although at that time I didn't think of any of them as bands with a saxophone. At the start of my second year at Berklee, after an extremely disheartening initial lesson with legendary drummer Alan Dawson, I switched my major from drums to saxophone. So while I was a sophomore at Berklee, I was essentially a beginner on the saxophone and even less proficient than I had been on drums.

Cadence: If you struggled with the tenor saxophone why did you then switch to the soprano saxophone, which is notoriously known for its intonation problems?

J.R.: My struggles were with the trumpet, not the tenor. I actually took up the alto when I first started with the saxophone. After a Christmas break-in during my first year at Berklee, I decided to replace the alto with a soprano. I had been interested in the instrument having heard it in a few of the rock bands I've mentioned as well as with Captain Beefheart, who I was also quite interested in back then. Plus I just liked that it was different from what most everybody else was playing.

Cadence: Did recording for Music & Arts result in any performance opportunities?

J.R.: For many years, with each new release and some favorable reviews I would hope that additional performance opportunities would come my way. Even more so after my third cd on Black Saint "Quicksand" with Mark Helias, Tom Rainey and Masako Hamamura. But it has never really happened and over the last few years I stopped expecting anything other than knowing that I was making music that was honest and relevant for me.

Cadence: Part of your studies were with the clarinetist Joe Viola, Buddy Collette and John Carter; could you please talk in depth about meeting and studying with each man?

J.R.: My first saxophone teacher at Berklee was a guy named Tom Anastos, a baritone player and refugee from Las Vegas Pit orchestras, who had played with Woody Herman. I remember more about

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various escapades with him than anything about my studies. But, as the only soprano major at the time, Tom recommended I request Joe Viola for my private teacher, and in the next semester I started studying with him. Mostly what I remember is playing all kinds of scales, modes and arpeggios, and while I'm playing one thing he would call out something different for me to switch to when I reached the top or bottom of my horn. Keep in mind I had only been playing the saxophone seriously for one semester, so this was like running an obstacle course while someone fired a gun at me. And the other big thing he told me, which in hindsight didn't work out for me, was that I had to play alto or tenor because you couldn't only play soprano. So I picked up a tenor and for the next 10 years or so the soprano became a double that often got neglected. After moving to Los Angeles a few years later I met Buddy Collette through a saxophonist friend and neighbor, Stan Karp. Stan is a highly respected saxophone teacher, now in Vancouver, who had studied with Buddy, Bill Green and for a time with Joe Henderson. Studying with Joe Viola had been all business, very serious and mostly about technique, at least with me. But I still remember the first time I went to Buddy's house, sitting in his living room waiting for him to finish with another student, and meeting him for the first time. Here was a musician who had been a friend and mentor to Mingus and Dolphy, the later being one of my idols. Buddy, like all of the really big name jazz musicians I've met, was as kind and generous, and respectful of me as a musician as could be, in spite of the fact that I couldn't make 1 and 1 equal 2. Buddy Collette was all about sound and everything related to that, breathing properly and embouchure. One day he demonstrated using a double embouchure, like on an oboe, and he slid up and down the horn like he had a pitch wheel. I don't remember why I stopped studying with Buddy, I guess just one of my many mistakes. Anyhow in the early 80's the jazz scene in Los Angeles was quite good. Lots of clubs, lots of big names coming to town, and a concert series at UCLA where I heard Old and New Dreams, Muhal Richard Abrams, Anthony Braxton, and the John Carter/Bobby Bradford Quartet, to name a few. I was so impressed with John Carter's sound on both clarinet and tenor that the next week I went to the music school he had with Red Callender and Charles McPherson and asked if I could study with him. He said, "Oh you should study with Charles he's the saxophone teacher here, I'm mostly teaching clarinet". I told him about the concert and that it was him that I wanted to study with. Once again stepping naively into deep water. With John Carter everything was a beautiful melody, which was not what I was expecting after witnessing his staggering runs up and down the clarinet and the intensity of the quartet's music. And like Buddy, as warm, respectful and generous as anyone could be. Whether working on a tune or some scales he wanted me to make no distinction, there were no exercises in the traditional sense, and they were all just melodies to him. While I never studied with David Liebman I feel the

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need to mention him. His book “Developing A Personal Saxophone Sound” brought all of the things I had been taught and crystallized them in a way that had previously eluded me. There was very little in his book that was new to me, but the way he presented it was so clear and applicable, it was like finally bring into sharp focus something that had always been just slightly blurry to me.

Cadence: Let's back track to what I imagine is a lengthy amusing but harrowing tale about your encounter with Alan Dawson?

J.R.: At the end of each school year everyone filled out a form selecting your preference for a private instructor on your instrument. So at the end of my first year I put down Alan Dawson, not actually expecting to get him. So I was pretty excited when I saw on a bulletin board that I had gotten my first choice. At that time Alan Dawson was the biggest jazz personality that I knew, he was a legend, at least at Berklee and in the Boston area. During the first week of the school year proficiency evaluations were conducted for everyone, so the teachers were just going non-stop to get them all done by the end of the week. So I went in for my evaluation and he asked me if it would be okay if he ate lunch while we did this, as he hadn't had time all day. And I couldn't believe he was asking me if it was ok for him to do anything. I sat down at the drum set, and he was at his desk behind me, and he told me to play a simple drum roll, starting out slowly and then gradually get faster. I began to play and after a few minutes he tells me that I can start to play faster anytime I want. Meanwhile I had been playing full out for probably 2 minutes. The rest of the evaluation didn't take very long. He told me that we were going to have to go back and work on some basics, and that it wasn't a problem. He could not have been any nicer about the whole thing, but I was completely demoralized. The next morning I went into the administration office and changed my major from drums to saxophone.

Cadence: Throughout your career have you been able to survive by just playing music?

J.R.: I have been very fortunate in that I have always been able to get a job and make money outside of music. This has enabled me to do what I want, more or less, when it comes to my music. I have had a few brief periods where I only played music, but that has always involved playing something more commercially oriented. I've also done a little teaching, but I don't adjust well to students that have objectives musically that are substantially different than mine. Which is another way of saying that I don't have enough patience with students that are not practicing a few hours a day?

Cadence: I am a baby boomer who grew up listening to jazz during the so called “the new thing” era; which was closely identified with the politics of the Civil Rights movement and black identity. If someone asked you a broad question of what your music is about? What would you say?

J.R.: Well I would say that that is certainly a broad question. What

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struck me about jazz from the very beginning were the individual voices and approaches, often identifiable within a few notes. Along with developing your own voice I was also drawn to the collective elements of jazz, particularly through my interest in Ornette Coleman. In 1991, coinciding with my return to music after a six year absence, I read Graham Lock's "Forces In Motion – The Music and Thoughts of Anthony Braxton". I was already somewhat familiar with his music, but his philosophies really helped me to start to define what I wanted to do and become, as an artist. Mr. Braxton's clarity about transmitting values through music, like developing your own voice (in life), continues to be a central principle of my work. A couple of other concepts of Mr. Braxton's that really resonated with me were that the music is not about me, or any individual, but the collective creation of something – an experience or journey. And Mr. Braxton's acknowledging his need or desire to exert his influence on creation while both leaving room for the other musicians to have their influence and by leaving a healthy segment, 33.33%, undefined. Thus insuring space for the unplanned, unexpected or unknown to influence the creation as well.

Cadence: You first established your musical name through the band Affinity; would you trace that bands development & recording history?

J.R.: Shortly after returning to music in 1991 I met the drummer Bobby Lurie (Billy Nayer Show) at a jam session in Berkeley and asked him if he was interested in doing something. He recommended the bassist Richard Saunders and then we tried a couple pianists. But we couldn't find what we were looking for and then Bobby and Richard recommended Rob Sudduth (Huey Lewis and the News), a very versatile tenor saxophonist, and that was the group. I knew that I was searching for my own thing but I still didn't know what that was, so we started with tunes from the artists who most influenced me. Our primary repertoire included compositions by Tristano, Monk, Dolphy, Ornette, and a few Anthony Braxton pieces. Our first gig was at the No Name Bar in Sausalito, CA and we did well enough to get a regular night there. I can still remember us charging into Braxton's Composition 58, his Sousa tribute, to a somewhat shocked audience. I don't remember exactly the sequence but at one point we decided that we needed a demo to get more gigs, and as I mentioned before, that turned into our first recording. We got a few unexpected and positive reviews, one being in Tower Record's Pulse Magazine and another in the UK magazine The Wire. Mr. Braxton also gave us very enthusiastic praise. Thus with a couple of regular gigs, one at a place called The Birdcage in Oakland, I felt we were on our way. There was a group of Cecil Taylor inspired players in the Bay Area at that time, and although I love Mr. Taylor's work, it's never really been my thing to play. But I went to hear some of them play and the bass player Michael Silverman (aka That One Guy) just knocked me out. He played so far in front of the beat that I felt like one of those ski jumpers hanging out over the tips of the skis as they fly through the air. So I said to

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my friend that brought me, Mathew Goodheart, I want that guy for my band, introduce me, and shortly after that I made the change to Michael on bass. There were a few guys in the Bay Area at that time getting some grant money so I took a shot and got a "Jazz Performance Fellowship" from the NEA on my first ever application. Between the time I submitted the application and the time the grant was awarded, the label Music & Art had re-released our self-produced cd. With the money from the NEA I put on six concerts, and then out of my own pocket I had them all recorded. We did two concerts with Buddy Collette on music associated with Eric Dolphy, two with Gary Foster on Lennie Tristano's music, and two sessions with Dewey Redman on music from Ornette Coleman. During the Dewey Redman concerts we also did a studio recording with Dewey but it didn't have the same fire. And consistent with the history of Tristano, the recordings of those concerts were not picked up by the record company (Music & Arts). I had planned to spread the concerts out over the better part of a year, but in the fall of 94 my wife got an offer from a client to move to Hong Kong and it seemed too interesting to pass up, just before the handover to China. So we ended up doing all six concerts and recordings over an eight-week period in the spring of 95; and just to take it over the top I also decided to record my first cd of my own compositions at the same time. In this eight week period we performed and recorded around 30 different pieces of music. Then I moved to Hong Kong and that was the end of the band.

Cadence: I want you to give us a glimpse into the art of improvisation by looking at one of your recordings – Joe Rosenberg Group "Groundwork" (Cadence Jazz Records #CJR1109) recorded December 16th, 1998. When there is a three horn line up (Jean-Luc Guionnet on alto sax & Oliver Py on tenor sax) there would seem to be a lot of trust that other players express the visions of the music. For a lay audience like me how does this musical interaction happen?

J.R.: First off of all I'm pretty sure that if you ask 10 musicians you would probably get 10 different answers. I've been very fortunate to have found a number of great musicians who are interested in trying to bring my ideas into a compelling experience for the listener. But for me the most important component is my clarity about the music, and this is something that continues to develop. Especially over the past 10 years I think there has been a distinct advancement in my clarity from one recording to the next. Second, I try to work with musicians that have their own personal sound and approach to improvising, as I have been trying to develop for myself, however they must believe it's about the music rather than an individual or a solo. The third component is being in the moment and making choices based on what is happening in that moment, which can mean sometimes choosing not to play in a particular moment, for example. And all of this calls for attentive and discerning listening. While I can certainly give some information about the concept or flavor of a composition, and some directions about how

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I think we should proceed, one has to be open to that. If not, you're fighting the whole way and that certainly comes through in the music. As long as those values that I mentioned are present I can be satisfied even though it becomes something other than what I had imagined.

Cadence: *When you recorded with the late Dewey Redman ("A Tribute to Ornette Coleman featuring Dewey Redman" by Joe Rosenberg's Affinity on Music & Arts CD-938 from 1996) what made him a superior improviser?*

J.R.: I don't know that I can really answer that question other than it was a great privilege to have the chance to play and record with him. I was drawn to Dewey because of his sound, and of course his association with Ornette Coleman. He was a very melodic improviser and often played quite tonally within a harmonically open piece and quite freely within pieces with a fixed harmonic sequence. Perhaps it's the tradition of R&B that he came from, along with Ornette and John Carter, to name just a few of the amazing saxophonists to come out of Fort Worth, Texas.

Cadence: *One of the terms that pops up in describing your music is "spiritual". What does that word mean to you in regards to your art & faith?*

J.R.: That, I believe, just happened in a recent review, and while I don't have a problem with it, it's not something I have thought about, certainly not in terms of faith. Of course I am always concerned about the "spirit" of music, the feel, the mood. I always think about the spirit of each composition, in fact of the whole recording, and in some cases honoring the original spirit of a particular piece of music. What's the point of the piece? How do we maintain the integrity of the piece while allowing for development and contrast? It's also very important regards the improvisation, how does the improvisation relate to the "spirit" of the composition?

Cadence: *What are your perspectives on the current international jazz scene? In 1993 Music & Arts released "Affinity plays Ornette Coleman's Little Symphony and eight other modern jazz classics" (CD-834). What are the new classics in your view? Who do you listen to and like on the soprano saxophone?*

J.R.: I know so few musicians outside of the ones that I usually work with that I don't think I have any real perceptiveness on the jazz scene outside of SE Asia. I'm sure there are musicians all around the world doing some really interesting work, and even more doing other's work really well. The title to my first cd was decided by Music & Arts, and I'm not sure how many people would agree that tunes like "Subconscious-lee" and "Little Symphony" are jazz classics, not to mention "Compositions 40B and 58" by Anthony Braxton. As for new classics, oxymoron aside, music is disseminated so differently today that I don't know that there will ever be new jazz classics. There is now access to everything from everywhere, which is both good & bad, and less of a center to the jazz world than there used to be. Not to mention

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that the aesthetic priorities today are much different than they were 40, 50, 60 years ago. There's a question that goes around in some circles about whether there would be any room today for Monk or Mingus, or even Miles for that matter. I'm not sure their level of individuality would be embraced as it was in the past. Although I think that the community is more open than it was during the homogenization that began in the mid to late 80's. But what do I know? I live in a very small corner of a corner of the jazz world. I have never seriously listened to other soprano players. I'm not saying that this was a good choice, but it's what I've done. And perhaps even more to the point, I don't listen to that much jazz and even less of what's been produced during the last 20 years. Mostly I listen to Hindustani Classical or Western Contemporary Classical music, and when I listen to jazz it tends to be things from the 50's or 60's. I think people will see with my latest recording, "Rituals & Legends" that came out last October, that I'm finding the differences in musical genres and styles to be less and less relevant for me.

Cadence: Part of our interview took place shortly after you released two disc on Quark Records in late 2014. Would it be fair to say that the Joe Rosenberg Ensemble's "Resolution" (Quark QR0201519) still reflects more of a jazz influence; while the duet recording with pianist Frederic Blondy "Rouge et Blanc" (Quark QRO201620) is more reflective of a new music sensibility?

J.R.: I can't escape the influence of jazz in any music I make, it's the music that I've been most dedicated to and that I'm most comfortable with. And while the approach on "Rouge et Blanc" is different, those aesthetics have had a place in my music for some time, and can be found on "Resolution". However, in the case of "Rouge et Blanc" it was the whole focus, and we tried to be very disciplined about it. My interest is in making music, and drawing from many influences to express what is important to me. As I have mentioned, of particular importance to both my improvising and composition has been Western Contemporary Classical and Hindustani Classical music. I am also very engaged in exploring freedom within the jazz tradition, and at the same time finding ways to shape music that has less predetermined parameters. My most recent release on Quark Records "Rituals & Legends" that was influenced by music from Burundi, India and Indonesia. My next recording, scheduled for December 2016, and another Hindustani artist. From my first recording I've been working with different styles to develop my music. My debut included music from Lee Konitz and Ornette Coleman, Art Blakey and Anthony Braxton, among others. As Steve Jobs said: "you can only connect the dots by looking back".

Cadence: How did you end up living in Bali? Are you a live performing artist? I can't imagine the logistics of recordings & touring?

Interview Joe Rosenberg

J.R.: My wife and I moved to Hong Kong in 1995 where we became permanent residents. We started coming to Bali for holidays and over the years kept increasing the amount of time we spend in Bali. I do perform live, never as much as I would like, but I've performed in Japan and China many times. After too long of an absence I recently returned to Japan for a couple of weeks, and as always, it was great. Hopefully I'll get to return there in the coming years. When I'm in Bali I play with the Jeko Fauzy Trio, comprised of some very talented local jazz musicians. We play mostly standards but try to maximize the group interplay and open things up as much as possible. They are also interested in playing more indeterminate music and we have done a few performances using some of my earlier compositions. I have never succeeded at building the relationships necessary to perform in Europe, although I certainly tried for many years. However, I continue to do most of my recording in France. I have been recording with my dear friend, percussionist Edward Perraud, for the past 15 years, and his contribution to my music is incalculable. Through Edward I met bassist Arnault Cuisinier, and through Arnault, pianist Bruno Angellini. These musicians in particular I feel are a perfect fit for my music. They all have a background in jazz, as well as contemporary classical music and some other music like Hindustani or Balinese music. But more importantly, while all being extraordinary improvisers their commitment is always to the music as a whole rather than themselves as individuals.

April 3rd, 2015

Brian Smith

Interview
Taken and
Transcribed
By
James
Bennington

Cadence: Some years ago now, you told me a great story about being on tour with the legendary drummer Beaver Harris.

Brian Smith: Yeah that was actually my good friend departed less than a month ago David Ware. That was David S. Ware's, I believe his first solo tour. And it was Beaver Harris, myself, and Gene Ashton who is now, he has another name now, I can't recall it (Ed. Note: Cooper-Moore), but yeah, that's who was on the gig. And it was quite an interesting expose', you know musically, and hanging out with Beaver (laughs). The thing that most rings in my mind, he didn't bring any drums over on the tour, everywhere we went they had drums for him, rightfully so, but when we came back to the airport at the end of the tour, he had at least three sets of drums that he had accumulated in Europe; you know companies had given him, or he was endorsing or something. And so we ended up, the band, having to pay to get his instruments back to the States, and David said that he would take care of us. And one day he called me up, about two years later, and he straightened me out, cause it cost over a thousand dollars to get all those drums back. Beaver didn't have Nan drum when he came, but he went back with about three sets plus! (laughing)

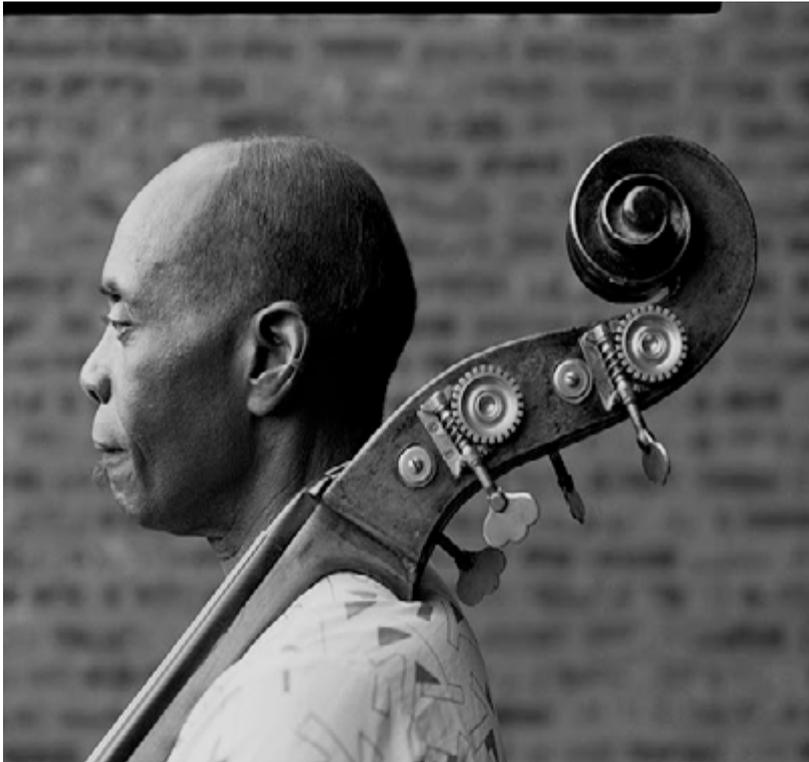
He was a wonderful guy and I think about him everyday... Bless his memory. He had one of the most beautiful wives I've ever seen (Ed. Note: Gloria 'Glo' Harris). He used to call her many times everyday from Europe... Boy, he'd call this woman everyday! We'd be missin' trains! What next?

Cadence: You were neighbors with saxophonist Daniel Carter in New York for awhile, he told me he would run into you occasionally and that you had made some gigs together. Daniel said you are one of his heroes. Can you tell me about your relationship and your thoughts on his music?

I enjoyed the work we did together, the three of us (Ed. Note: Daniel Carter, Brian Smith, Jimmy

Interview Brian Smith

Photo credit Kelly Weime



Bennington, performances/ recordings 11/2010 Chicago). And I wrote a piece for him called “Ole Danny Man”... remember we did that? (laughs)

Cadence: *Brian, you were in New York a long time (Ed Note: 1976-2009). Where you were working, who with, and how did you survive there?*

Brian Smith: Well, I moved to New York in '76. I came back in July 2009. as I first went there in 1968 but it was a short stay there, I only stayed there about a year and I wasn't ready to focus in on playing, I was studying. But professionally I moved there in January 1976 and I played with a lot of various people, at that time there was an influx there where a lot of Chicago guys were coming to New York, so I played with them, the California and St. Louis guys, the New Yorkers, Sam Rivers, Sonny Fortune (He was mentored by Coltrane, used to go over to his house and rehearse...a great musician and bandleader who is underrated), you know, Philly Joe Jones, David Murray, Dewey Redman, Anthony Braxton to name a few...next.

Interview Brian Smith

Cadence: *Please talk about your early days in Chicago and how your career developed to the point where you felt it was time to leave?*

Brian Smith: Yes, I played with, you know, with all the guys, Roscoe, and Muhal and all of em'. Ike Day, legendary drummer in Chicago... Max Roach's idol, he used to bring Clifford Brown and Sonny Rollins here just to hang with Ike.

Let's see...yeah. Oh I just, I don't know, I just looked up one day and thought I would try another venue you know. I was looking for a change.

Cadence: *Who had you been working with in Chicago before you left?*

Brian Smith: A lot of the same cats, I worked a once or twice with Von (Freeman), Troy Robinson, great alto/composer, trombonist John Watson, Ken Prince and a lot of different cats. I also did a lot of symphonic work, I played in the Chicago Civic Orchestra, the City of Chicago Orchestra...that was the orchestra that used to play over all the municipal functions, like Mayor Daley's functions when he'd have dinners, and I worked with the University of Chicago Orchestra (as Principal Bass) for some years, I also played in put-together ensembles/orchestras all up and down the North Shore and Suburbs of Chicago.

Cadence: *What about the AACM?*

Brian Smith: I played with Muhal Richard Abrams, he was a mentor to me, Henry Threadgill...they moved to New York after I did. When I got to New York the only people who were there were Kalaparusha, Steve McCall, and then Fred Hopkins moved. My wife (Judy) and I gave Fred and his wife Gizelle, a big going away party, and then I moved there the next year. Then a lot of the other cats started movin'... Muhal and Henry etc..

Charles Clark (bassist) passed-out in my arms and later died (on route to the hospital.)

He was one of the founding bass players of the AACM. He suffered from an aneurism on the platform of the Illinois Central train, we were coming from a Civic Orchestra rehearsal.

Charles was with Jarman's group which had Joseph Jarman, saxophone, Christopher Gaddy on piano, Thurman Barker, drums... there were two groups, the Roscoe Mitchell group had Lester Bowie, Malachi Favors on bass, Phillip Wilson was there on drums. Phillip Wilson then he left to go to play with Paul Butterfield...yeah... Wilson was murdered in New York... they tied him up. He ran in some other circles....but those two groups came out to be the Art Ensemble (of Chicago) from Joseph Jarman coming over into the group after Charles Clark and Christopher Gaddy's deaths. (Don) Moye joined the group in Paris... when the returned back to Chicago he, was with em'.

Cadence: *Tell me about your group, the Brian Smith Sextet.*

Interview Brian Smith

Brian Smith: The last two groups that I had in New York...included Ray Anderson on trombone, Chico Freeman on saxophones, Harvey Kaiser, alto and clarinets, Reggie Nicholson drums, Bryan Carrott on vibes. Other groups (sextets) included Warren Smith, drums Mike Moshman, trumpet, John Stubblefield, tenor John Purcell alto...and Bryan Carrott. Bryan and I also did a lot of duo work together over the years, we had a group called "A Meeting of Brian's" (laughing)...the Sextets played through-out the Tri-State area, New Jersey etc., a few festivals...we played the Vision festival NYC and a AACM concert.

In Chicago, the band consisted of Ed Wilkerson, Dushun Mosley, David Schumacher, Steve Berry, Jeff Parker on guitar, and/or Bruce Nelson on vibes. I like vibes or guitar over piano...it's seems more flexible for me. Don't get me wrong, I Love to play with piano, piano and bass is one of the most beautiful things....but for my own groups...vibes and or guitar is more flexible. But we played two nights at the Velvet, one with Jeff Parker and the next with Bruce Nelson.

Early while in New York, I was in (pianist) Mickey Tucker's group, which was a sextet, and that inspired me to have a similar horn arrangement for my group. Mickey's group had Marcus Belgrave, Junior Cook, Clifford Adams, Billy Hart...I loved the group, this one piece we used to play called "the Secret Mind of Frauline Stein" (laughs) one of his great pieces...a Hell of a piece!

Cadence: Although many know of you as a bassist, few know what a prolific composer you are. Does one outweigh the other in terms your attention?

Brian Smith: Sometimes...but not necessarily. You know if I'm writing sometimes I'll be focusing on that, we were talking about tunnel vision comin' up here, so sometimes if I got a writin' project I get it finished and then focus on playing or vise versa... sometimes you know, it all *depends on what it is.*

Cadence: Do you think of yourself as a bassist or as a composer or both?

Brian Smith: Bassist / Composer

Cadence: Can you talk about some of your pieces, I know many have been realized in performance, are there any available recordings of your works?

Brian Smith: Let's see... couple things are out there. One thing comes to mind is a composition on record by Tom Buckner called "Sign of the Times"... he's performing a piece of mine entitled the "Panther" for voice and piano, that's recorded on Lovely Music. And then I have recorded some of my your work to be released. The thing is, if you do stuff with other groups like orchestras, the best you can get is a tape, you know, cause you can't reproduce it without permission, unless

Interview Brian Smith

they record it. So I have a lot of my music out there, but I don't have recordings. You understand? In other words they give you a recording of the piece that you cannot use for any commercial purposes.

Cadence: *Where are some of the notable places your compositions have been performed?*

Brian Smith: Chicago, New York. San Francisco, Germany, Holland, London, etc..

Cadence: *You gave me some information about drummer Reggie Nicholson at the asking awhile back, and later, you told me about Butch Morris' and Julian Priester's current situations (Ed. Note: Mr. Morris suffering from illness at the time of this writing). How do account for your almost encyclopedic knowledge of the many artists and what has happened and what is happening with this music?*

Brian Smith: Well, I mean I have a modicum of a memory left so I just know guys, I know Julian, I knew he had been under the weather for a long time, even speaking to you about him, and then I got that email talking about the condition that had befallen him ...destitute... and its pretty horrible (Ed. Note: After years of service at Cornish College in Seattle, Mr. Priester retired with no pension and no benefits, losing his home and medical benefits).

Well, and I like History. You know, I mean, I think it's important to know what's going on around you at the time, and I've been around a little bit so I've seen and heard a few things come and go, a few people, like that.

Cadence: *I first met you and saw you perform with Douglas Ewart's Nyahbingi Drum Choir at Fred Anderson's Velvet Lounge. You were off to the side, doing your own thing, what I like to call 'contrapuntally melodic' playing. How did you develop this different way of playing bass?*

Brian Smith: Interesting, I didn't know that that was the case! (laughs). I was simply tryin' to keep up with all them percussionists, they was starin' at me (Laughs)! I just tried to lock in one or two of em' you know, and just go with the flow. Douglas and I grew up together in this music. I was best man at his first wedding. I've known Douglas now...we go back since the beginning. We kinda came on the scene at the same time.

Cadence: *What can you say about the late, great Fred Anderson and his club the Velvet Lounge?*

Brian Smith:

Well, as I was telling somebody, I always used to tell Fred that he was in the twenty first century and that he should modernize the Velvet, though I loved it and have missed it. But I started playin' with Fred in his basement when he lived in Evanston, we used to get together and have stuff out there, and have people over at his house, and he used to

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always say, "Hey man we need us a club, we gotta get a club." Ever since I've known him, which goes back to '1964 or somethin' like that, '65, "We gotta have a club." And to my amazement, when I moved to New York I started hearing about, the Velvet, and I said 'Hey Fred finally did it'. And I first played there with Hanah Jon Taylor, and I was only because I didn't get back to Chicago too often. Yeah, I played there with him, at the old place (Ed. Note: S. Indiana). Later, I played there at the new (on 22nd Street) with my own groups the Brian Smith Sextet...but I liked the Velvet and I think it's been a real void on the music scene here since it's been closed; I know for me.

Cadence: Please talk about your recorded output and some of the music you've made that you're most proud of.

Brian Smith: Well, let's see. I've recording mainly as a sideman and I've enjoyed, you know, Henry and I and Muhal did a couple recordings... Henry Threadgill, Muhal Richard Abrams, all fun things...

Henry (Threadgill) had the idea of four basses and four woodwinds, basses was me, Fred Hopkins, Rufus Reid, Leonard Jones, and woodwinds Henry Threadgill, Wallace McMillian, Douglas Ewart, Joseph Jarman, with added percussion, Don Moye, around 1975. There is a recording out under the title of "X-75".

We started in Chicago and went to New York. Maybe my thing inspired him cause in the early seventies I had the World Bass Violin Ensemble, that had, at different times, Rufus Reid, Eddie DeHass, Reggie Willis, Fred Hopkins, Bob Cunningham, Art Davis, Reggie Workman, and myself...we performed in New York and at Child City in South Shore, an auditorium, the AACM used to function out of there. In New York around 78' or 79' there were groups of like instrument ensembles such as the World Saxophone Quartet, the World Trombones, the World Piano Ensemble, so, yeah, the World Bass Violin Ensemble.

David Murray, has performed and recorded a couple of my compositions, and has performed them all over the world; 'Spanish Love Song' (Concion de Amour en Espanol) being one the other I am unable to recall at this moment. 'Spanish Love Song' was influenced early, when I lived down on the "Lower East Side". That's where a lot of Puerto Ricans live at the time.

Of my own groups, the Brian Smith Sextet, I have music that I've been threatening to put out. I am processing releaseing two albums to date. One, a jazz record; and a classical record of my written compositions.

Cadence: You've mentioned so many greats in this music, did you ever play with Sunny Murray?

Brian Smith: Sunny Murray...we had hits together throughout the years.... we toured Europe together actually, maybe with David S. Ware. Also with David Murray, he loved Sunny, and Amiri Baraka, on several occasions (Ed. Note: Mr. Smith appeared with Amiri Baraka in

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a duo setting recently at Columbia College, Chicago, 2011) ...we never recorded, but I liked him. Sunny was easy to play with. He was different. *Cadence: Where are things at for you right now? You recently appeared at the 2012 Chicago and Hyde Park Jazz Festivals I know...*

Brian Smith: How are things for me? Well I was very honored to play both of those, working with the likes of Edward Wilkerson and Mr. Jackson sitting there, Fred Jackson (saxophone/ AACM), it was a lot of fun...(long pause)...but I haven't been too active since coming back to Chicago.

Cadence: Any advice you can offer to any musician trying to play, or trying to keep playing, this music?

Brian Smith: Good Luck! (Laughs)

Cadence: Signal to Noise Magazine did a special feature on poster art (Ed. Note: Issue #58, Summer 2010) and I noticed your name appeared often in many different settings and ensembles...can you talk a little about that time and the Sound Unity Festival you were a part of?

A few of the artists you played with included Ahmed Abdullah, Beaver Harris, Arthur Jones, Leon Brown, John Betsch, and others...

Brian Smith: Arthur Jones, Ahmed Abdullah...yeah...well, I'm not really familiar with it, my recollection isn't too clear. Ahmed Abdullah and I played many wonderful years together in his bands. That was one of the small festivals in New York that started around, I don't know, that was early, cause I remember that place over there, that was, is it dated? I can't even remember, but I think that might have been a precursor to maybe Patricia and William Parker's (Vision) Festival. That might have been the precursor cause I remember the Cuando (Community Center, NYC) very well. I did some stuff there with Butch Morris.

All wonderful people. David (S.Ware) just left us maybe two three weeks ago.

But the funniest I recall, David... he had such a big sound...when we were going to Europe on this tour, he had rehearsals, in a rehearsal studio, and you know they had mikes and everything in there and David just had this big sound that was,...he could blow walls down...playin' with Cecil (Taylor) and, you know, just his own thing. So we were in there rehearsing, and Beaver played loud, so the band was at a nice volume, and this place also had a lot of Rock people that played there and hung there, too. So they was use to hearin' loud stuff...sound booths was padded and everything, and David was playin' and the attendant came in there, he knocked on the door one day, he said, "Man you all are playin' too loud! You got the mikes up too loud!" And he went over to David and he looked, his mike board, wasn't even on, the whole system wasn't on, (laughs).

I remember looking at him, cause the guy was so amazed, he said MY GOD, he said when realizing the mikes totally were Off, you know,

Interview Brian Smith

David had that kind of sound.

Cadence: *How do you feel your music is perceived now in 2012? Is this a good time for your music, or is it not so great a time for what you are trying to do, what do you think?*

Brian Smith: Well, it's confusing. I've been trying to retire from playing the bass for about twenty years, but I can't seem to do it. I've playin' all my life so I don't know what else to do, but I'd like to retire from the business, and then someone would call me for a gig, I say I'm retired and they say 'hey make the gig and retire after this gig', and so back into it.

Cadence: *What would you do if you retire?*

Brian Smith: Well that's the thing. I'd like to do something, you know... maybe play some 'tidtlywinks' (laughs)! No, I'd like to compose.

Cadence: *Any projects on the horizon, works that you would like to see realized before your career moves into the retirement you keep threatening?*

Brian Smith: A few big pieces I'd like to try to have performed...some Operatic type things and some Big Band stuff...uh hmm...I'm writing a piece now for (Chicago bassist) Brian Sandstrom's wife Virginia, she has a brass quintet, so she told me if I put a piece together, she'd get it played... so I've never written a brass quintet, so I thought I'd try it. In addition I am writing a piece for the New Jersey Symphony Youth Percussion Ensemble, as well as a piece for Harp and eight instruments. I also constantly composing songs and tunes. That's about the only thing I'm doing now, in this area.

Cadence: *Is there anything in particular that you look for in a group and the various instruments you regularly interact with that helps you to express yourself and develop this music?*

Brian Smith: What do I look for? Mmm...like I say, I don't, I don't look for anything, I just try to, you know, go with the flow...and um, kinda like that... I don't really have any pre-determined thing that I'm looking for, that I can lay my finger on, I try to just get into the mix and take it as it comes.

*Editors Note: The following is information, or 'asides', not originally discussed in the interview.

Brian Smith: I played with Jaki Byard. He liked me. We always threatened to do something but it never materialized...in New York. He was adventurous...the things he did with Richard Davis and Alan Dawson; they had timpani, Celeste, everything etc.

I was talking to Douglas (Ewart) about a lot of cats who come back to Chicago... die. That's how I feel...but, Chicago is a great place to get an education- both institutionally and from the streets.

Raphael Donald Garrett, I mean, he recorded with Coltrane and many others.

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Wilbur Ware, I saw Wilbur walkin' down the street with his bass in January or February in Chicago with no case on it...great cat... he lived and played with vibist Gordon Emanuel, step brother to Bob Cranshaw, the bassist with Sonny Rollins. They lived at 63rd and Cottage Grove up over a Walgreen's, where he died. He set the stage for bass players to come to New York....played with Monk.

I used to call Steve (McCall)...his old lady was a photographer...I would call him in the evening and he would be watering the grass, and he'd talk about how watering grass in the evening was best, he would give me the 411 on watering the grass. Next thing I knew he was gone. Fred Hopkins didn't want to move back here but he lost his place in New York, in Manhattan, and had no choice but to come back. Then he died.

Depression had a lot to do with it.

There's more of a blend in New York, where as here in Chicago, it's not so much...

New York has an exhilarating kind of scene, and here...it's a hard adjustment.

Chicago is another kind of energy.

Sunday, November 25, 2012, Chicago

PS This is my first published interview I have ever done!

***Available Recordings:**

Philly Joe Jones "Drum Night" 1977 (Japan-Mercury)

Anthony Braxton 1978 (HatArt)

David Murray "The London Concert" 1978 (Cadillac)

Barry Altschul "Another Time Another Place" 1978 (Muse)

Fred Anderson "Another Place- Live at the Moers Festival" 1978 (Moers)

Henry Threadgill 1979 (Arista)

Muhil Richard Abrams "Mama and Daddy" 1980 (Black Saint)

Henry Threadgill "When Was That" 1982 (About Time)

World Bass Violin Ensemble (Bass-i-cally Yours) 1983 (Black Saint)

Roscoe Mitchell 1987 (Lovely Music)

Thomas Buckner "Sign of the Times" 1994 (Lovely Music)

Luther Thomas "Realities Old and New" 2000 (C.I.M.P)

Luther Thomas "Leave it to Luther" 2003 (C.I.M.P)

Jimmy Bennington/Daniel Carter/Brian Smith "Tear It Down, Then Play a Ballad-

Live at the Heartland" 2013 (That Swan! Singles) *digital download only

**Special thanks to Bob Rusch for providing much needed information on available recordings.*

THE JOHNNY CASH OF FREE JAZZ INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY KEN WEISS



Photo credit: Ken Weiss



Photo credit: Ken Weiss

Urs Leimgruber (born Lucerne, Switzerland, January 1, 1952) has long been an important fixture on the European contemporary improvisation, Jazz, and New Music scene. A gifted performer utilizing extended and new playing techniques on soprano and tenor saxophone, Leimgruber has excelled as a solo performer and as a member of improvising "super groups" such as a trio with Barre Phillips and Jacques Demierre, Quartet Noir with Marilyn Crispell, Joëlle Léandre and Fritz Hauser, the group six with Demierre, Thomas Lehn, Okkyung Lee, Dorothea Schürch and Roger Turner, and the MMM Quartet with Leandre, Fred Frith and Alvin Curran, and he was cofounder of the Swiss group "OM" (Christy Doran, Bobby Burri, Fredy Studer) in the early seventies. Some of the other musicians he's connected with includes Steve Lacy, Joe McPhee, Evan Parker, Fred Frith, Keith Rowe, Günter Christmann, Tim Berne, Louis Sclavis, Sunny Murray, Günter Müller, Hans Koch, John Butcher, Omri Ziegele, Christian Kobi, Alex Huber, Andreas Willers, Pauline Oliveros, Trilok Gurtu, Michel Doneda, Pierre Favre and John Wolf Brennan. This interview took place on October 27, 2015 just prior to Leimgruber's duo performance with Jacques Demierre at The Rotunda in Philadelphia.

Cadence: *Your interest lies in instant-composition. How does instant-composing differ from free-improvisation?*

Urs Leimgruber: I think free-improvisation is just another form of composition and when we call it instant it means we compose instantly in the moment when we play. For me, there is not a difference between instant-composition and free-improvisation.

Cadence: *You're also an accomplished composer of chamber music works. How do you balance your love for instant-composition with the rigidity of chamber music composition?*

Leimgruber: Around 25-years-ago, I was writing pieces, mostly for saxophone – solo, duo, quartets. These days, when I write a piece, I only write for other people. My own projects, for the past 15-years, are based on free-

Interview Urs Leimgruber

improvisation mostly, except when I am involved with other projects that have scores and concepts. I might work on a prepared piece for months but with my work in improvisation, there is no preparation except drawing on my whole life.

Cadence: *So do you ever work off of charted music on stage?*

Leimgruber: I did of course but no more, except in certain situations when I play a piece by somebody else. In a few weeks there will be an exception because the trio, with Jacques Demierre and Barre Phillips, will play at the Zurich festival Tage für Neue Musik to perform a commissioned piece written by Jacques for The Tonhalle Symphony Orchestra and the trio. The trio will play for the first time with a score. But mostly, I don't use scores anymore, I compose music through improvisation.

Cadence: *In our communications leading up to this interview, you expressed your interest in "the aspects of silence, space, time, and the universe of sound." Would you expound on that?*

Leimgruber: I think silence is something permanent and all sounds fall into this big space of silence, that's where listening starts. In a concert place, I have to deal with another space. As soon as I start to play, I have to deal with the space in the sound. In the space I discover time. For years, I've heard it said time and space but for me it's space and time, it's the opposite. Time and space have historically been important in Jazz but since I'm working out of these traditional parameters, I've discovered space as the basis of time and the fundamental basis of sound.

Cadence: *How does sound effect the listener?*

Leimgruber: The sound and the music provokes inspiration and sensations in the mind and in the whole body. Through their own imagination they become part of the sound. It's all about a musical and spiritual experience.

Cadence: *I asked because you're a sound-sculptor and I didn't know if there were certain sounds that you created with the intent to cause a certain mood or response.*

Leimgruber: I deal with the sound, the space and the musicians I am playing with. When the people are attentively into the music, they support the music through their response and if the circle between the audience and the musicians is close, then it can happen magnificent unexpected.

Cadence: *How do you distinguish between music and noise?*

Leimgruber: Noise is just another expression of sound. Music includes any and every sound. Any sound I discover becomes music. Sound is permanent. We cannot stop it and that's one of the reasons I don't listen very often to sound recordings anymore. I rarely do and I only listen to them when I want to hear something specific. Other musicians give me CDs to listen; I have stacks of CDs I haven't heard yet at home. I don't listen to music just for fun. Listening is playing.

Cadence: *It might be bad for your CD sales if you let people know they don't have to listen to music.*

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Leimgruber: [Laughs] Maybe, yeah. The sound recording is an object. Every time we listen to it we perceive the music differently. We never hear the same recording in the same way. The music stays the same but the perception of the listener is changing. I guess that's why people get inspired by listening to sound recordings. Some people collect CD's and LP's as documents; that's another reason to buy records.

Cadence: *I'd like to go back to why you don't listen to music because that's really fascinating. I don't really understand why you don't listen to music?*

Leimgruber: I listen to sound permanently. As soon as I start to listen, there is sound. It includes every sound I am able to hear. The early morning sound, the sound of the coffee machine, voices, traffic, nature, any kind of environment sounds, music from the radio of the taxi driver... I am remixing sounds permanent by listening, but to listen to music, I definitely prefer the live concert.

Cadence: *You just touched on something that Joe McPhee told me recently in an interview regarding his interest in noise. He said, "I love subways, for example. I love the sound of jet engines and diesel engines and things falling and crashing." Does that also interest you?*

Leimgruber: All these sounds are live within our society, and they become part of my imagination. Almost any sound can be inspiring, especially the unexpected. But of course sound can be also disturbing. There are extreme heavy sounds that I don't really [like], for instance sounds from guns, which I hate for a different reason. I do like most sounds.

Cadence: *How much do you feel creative decisions are shaped by cultural differences and, vice versa, how much is the perception of sound influenced by cultural differences?*

Leimgruber: We have to deal with the whole history of music. Ethnic music, Oriental, African, Asiatic culture and music was very important for me, in a way much more than European Classic music. American Jazz music changed my life. I first heard Jazz when I was 6-years-old, my aunt played a Louie Armstrong album and I was just amazed. I listened to a lot of ethnic music including music played openly in the Alps. I'm from Lucerne, central Switzerland, close to where the Alps start, and I was often in the Alps as a kid. I was more touched by that culture and Jazz and Blues, more than by Classical music as a child.

Cadence: *What music from the Alps informed you as a child?*

Leimgruber: They have this way of praying with their voices called Alp Segen. Their instrument is the voice and a funnel, it's a mix of yodeling and speaking. And there were also the alphorns and the echo of the mountains. I heard that when I was a kid and I discovered years later on my saxophone, when I was playing natural harmonics, that I could go right back to my roots. That's actually my background and, of course, the music from the '60s, blues, beat, rock and roll.

Cadence: *You were formally trained in Classical and Jazz music.*

Leimgruber: Yes, I did Classical and Jazz studies at the same time when I was 17, but I was sure when I did it that it was not that important. At

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the same time I was playing a lot with local musicians and groups and soon we formed the group Om [with Christy Doran, Fredy Studer and Bobby Burri] and that was much more important. I learned things by studying but it really didn't help me to discover my own way. The best teacher for me was John Coltrane when I heard him on recordings. He actually told me, through his music, where to go without any words, only by his sound. I never tried to play like him. It was good to study harmony and theoretical aspects but I found my own way by playing with people.

Cadence: What led you to move to New York in 1982?

Leimgruber: That was the end of Om which finished after 10 years. My American connection came through percussionist Dom Um Romao, who played with Weather Report. He played 2 years with Om and then stayed in Europe. Dom had someone running his club in Manhattan, Black Beans on 22nd Street, and he gave me the keys to his apartment there. So I went to New York for several months and had a great time. I also had the chance to organize my own concerts in his club. I almost stayed but I met so many musicians there who wanted to go to Europe because they said there was no money [in New York] and that they had to do jobs where they couldn't play their own music. I went back home and in '88, I went to Paris for a commission to write music for a year but I ended up staying for 17 years.

Cadence: While living in New York, what musicians most impressed you?

Leimgruber: I heard many great Jazz players of course, but the most important for me was to play with local musicians. During a session I met (pianist) Don Friedman and that's where we started playing together. Several months later I formed together with him, Bobby Burri and Trilok Gurtu, the group Reflexionen.

Cadence: Listening back to your music with Don Friedman, and the beautiful compositions you wrote for that band, it's a bit startling to compare that to your later music.

Leimgruber: It's just natural that we change. After a recording session in 1990 by Joe McPhee together with Fritz Hauser, the music started really to change. The freedom of Joe's playing and the way Fritz was listening was extraordinary. Since then Fritz and me have worked over ten years quite regularly together, first as a trio with the bass player Adelhard Roidinger, and later in duo and in trio with Marilyn Crispell and Joëlle Léandre, which became later Quartet Noir. There are several recordings with this different groups on HatArt and Victo Records. During that time I was living in Paris.

Cadence: While living in Paris, you formed a relationship with Steve Lacy. What memories can you share from your time spent with him?

Leimgruber: We were neighbors. The first time I met him was actually on the street. Of course, I recognized him. We met in the neighborhood fairly often and we started talking and he told me to come by any time to have a drink and listen to music. So I went and I brought my first solo CD and he played me some old stuff that was not released. He was

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impressed with my CD and especially with my technique. We spent a great deal of time together. He came also to my place and I attended his concerts and at times we'd be on the same train going to concerts and we'd talk for hours. With Steve, I always discovered something. I can't say exactly what, but it was always something. It was never the same. There was always something magic. He invited me into his big band project, Itinerary, [which featured] Steve Lacy plus 16 musicians and was recorded on HatArt. That's the only time I performed with him. He also gave me some of his handwritten solo pieces for soprano. He was a real master and a profound sound artist.

Cadence: *You're currently touring with [pianist] Jacques Demierre but it originally was to include [bassist] Barre Phillips [who had to drop out due to medical necessity] to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the trio. Would you comment on spending 15 years together as a trio?*

Leimgruber: We started to play together in December 1999. I got a carte blanche by Jean-Marc Montera to present a new project for his festival in Marseille. We knew each other a long time before. During the '80s I was playing with Jacques in several groups in Switzerland and I met Barre in the '90s several times in Paris. During a concert at a festival in Montreuil, all of us were playing in different setups when I got the idea to bring the three of us together to play. So when Jean-Marc asked me, I proposed this trio. So we played the first concert in Marseille. It was amazing how we were on the same track. Since then the trio exists. It's like a long piece and every concert is just a continuation of what happened before. We've done, maybe 250 since then, and every concert is just the next. It's the same piece going on and on and we've never talked about what we play or about our music except when we are giving a master class or a workshop together and then we hear what the other is telling the people but we don't talk about it to each other. Every concert is a new musical experience.

Cadence: *Your goal is to create fresh music and sounds, is it not a detriment to play with the same people for 15 years?*

Leimgruber: The constellation with the three of us is unique. It has to do with how we listen and the way we think about sound. We are so radical in the sense of being open for every new situation. So every concert is new. Yes, 15 years but I don't feel 15 years, I feel we just started. Already at the first concert there was this big trust and confidence and we've developed our own language. It's amazing, it's never been boring. The never ending piece continues.

Cadence: *The title to the trio's 2015 Jazzwerkstatt release roughly translates to 1 to 3 and 2 back to 1. The 2 in the title indicates the trio combining with the audience. How do you see the audience fitting into a performance?*

Leimgruber: The musicians are playing by listening and the listeners are listening by playing with the sounds they hear. It's a spontaneous, experimental experience, the audience becomes part of the music. And through this process we all are no more the same than before.

Cadence: *Does the specific audience alter what you play?*

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Leimgruber: Yes it does, if the listener is attentively and open to the music. Inspiration is something very deep, it's connected to the unconscious. So if you get inspired, the music will alter you immediately. The concert experience is a social human situation. It's wonderful when the energy of the music and the public go together. Music has to be heard. You can hear that already on many important live recordings in the '60s with a small audience, a few people applauding. It's not a question how many people [are present], because as soon as somebody is here to listen, it has an effect to the music. It becomes magic. That's one of the reasons the most recordings of free improvised music are recorded live.

Cadence: Do you ever approach a piece with a specific intent in mind or is it always spontaneous?

Leimgruber: Mostly when I play with people, whether I've played with them before or not, I listen and play. I don't talk about what I play. When I play solo, then it's different. I'm alone and I'm responsible for the whole performance so I have to deal with the situation just by myself. It's possible that I can set up something that I want to do. Solo, you have to deal more with the situation because you are alone.

Cadence: You mentioned solo saxophone presentations and the fact that it is all on you to maintain interest for the length of the performance. You've put out a number of solo sax recordings in the past including Solo: 13 Pieces for Saxophone [Leo LR, 2006] and Chicago Solo [Leo LR, 2009]. Solo saxophone recordings, once rare, have become more popular to make. Has it become more difficult to make your mark with a solo sax recording?

Leimgruber: For the first Leo recording I recorded several different shorter pieces compared to the last recording Chicago Solo, where I am playing a concert length with two longer pieces and one short piece. I have the feeling that I play 1, 2, 3 pieces all the time. All the time the same but different, it's kind of like a lifetime piece. I have a natural contact to myself through the instrument. As long as I continue to develop my music through playing the instrument, there is still an intention to continue solo recordings.

Cadence: Twine [Clean Feed, 2007] is a duo recording you made with Evan Parker where both of you play soprano and tenor saxophones. How is it to play with a partner, who is playing the same horns as you and knows the instruments inside and out as well as you do?

Leimgruber: It was just wonderful. It was one of the most wonderful meetings I ever had with another saxophone player. It was so natural, so easy to play, and also we did not talk. Evan just said, "Would you mind to play the tenor both and the soprano both, don't mix?" That was a great idea to double the instruments. To play with Evan it was just inspiring.

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Cadence: *I wanted to make special mention of the MMM Quartet Live at the Metz' Arsenal recording [Leo LR, 2009]. The combination of you with Joelle Leandre, Fred Frith and Alvin Curran leads to really interesting mixings of sounds that are very musical. Is this still an active group?*

Leimgruber: Yes, it's still an active group and there is another recording coming out right now at ROUEGEART, a live recording in Lisboa. It's Joëlle's project. We know each other since 1988, when we started to play together in different groups - duo, trio, quartet. She is a magic and unique musician, la grande femme de la contrebasse. We don't play together that much but it's always a big pleasure to play with her and with Fred and Alvin. Through Fred, I actually met Barre. Fred invited Barre and me in 1996 to play in trio and since then we play together.

Cadence: *What, if any, is the significance to your song titles? Are they reflective of what you've played?*

Leimgruber: It's more spontaneous. Titles, for me, are not so important.

Cadence: *Most of your songs don't have titles, they have numbers, so when you actually title one, what does that mean?*

Leimgruber: It's an order. I like numbers and letters. For the trio, it's mostly Barre who comes up with the titles, but for my music, I don't want to determine the piece. The music should talk, not the title. I used to give titles but that was another time. A piece doesn't need a title but the CD companies and the radio love titles. I think the audience is not really curious about it.

Cadence: *The audience isn't yelling out requests to you? "Hey, play number 3!"*

Leimgruber: [Laughs] No, not yet!

Cadence: *What's your preferred performance setting – solo, duo, trio or larger group?*

Leimgruber: Trio is the ideal setup, but of course, choosing the right musicians is what's important. Duo is the most direct and exciting setting. Solo, you are free, you can do what you want but freedom is limited. Playing solo was very important for me to discover my instrument and it still is. Large ensembles are the most fragile because if you have one or two who don't understand the musical idea, it's going to be difficult. With larger groups, everyone should definitely play less.

Cadence: *What determines a successful performance for you?*

Leimgruber: It's all about a musical and spiritual experience. After a concert, I want everything to be no more the same than before. That's when I feel great.

Cadence: *What's your goal when practicing?*

Leimgruber: During practicing and researching, I want to discover something new, something different. I practice often on the same fundamental basics – long notes and intervals. Every day it's sounds different and I do research. Practicing is very important, I like to do it. I practice on one horn a day. I never practice both, I don't mix. Warming up is different, then I play both of course.

Cadence: *Why don't you practice together on both horns?*

Leimgruber: The ideal situation is to actually play one instrument. Some years ago, I was unsure to play both. Years back I played the bass saxophone, bass clarinet, and flute but over time I played them less and less. In concert it can be quite inspiring to play two, they complement each other and they become one instrument. But when I practice, there are two different instruments to deal with.

Cadence: *What other work do you do when you're not playing music?*

Leimgruber: I have no other job except I'm a freelance teacher at the Music University in Lucerne where I teach saxophone for master students, but it is not on a regular basis and I give workshops for free improvisation. Teaching is quite important, to give the experience to others. Also, when you teach, you have to think about your own music and what you're doing to explain it to others. I am married to Sulla Bodmer, she is a breathing therapist. I'm a real home-man. I love art and literature. I'm busy. Life is a fulltime job. I have no hobbies. I practice yoga and meditation everyday and spend time on the instruments if possible.

Cadence: *The last questions are from other musicians who have given me questions to ask you:*

Jacques Demierre (piano) asked – "We have been playing together, you, Barre [Phillips] and me, for 15 years now. Every concert in trio has been a unique sound experience. For health reasons, Barre unfortunately won't be with us for some concerts, but I wanted to associate him to these lines by relaying to you the questions he asks on the video we will play every night as an introduction to our performances: What is music? What happens in a concert?"

Leimgruber: When I was a teenager, I discovered sound through the music. Today I discover the music through the sound. When I listened to Jazz in the '60s, Coltrane, Ornette and Miles, I was involved in the sound of their music. During free-Jazz [movement], the music started to change. The music became more and more sound oriented. I am focused into sound to discover the music through sound. Sound becomes music, it becomes magic. What happens in a concert? It's all about a musical and spiritual experience. I want to risk as much as possible. No risk, no fun. It's a freefall. You cannot catch the music, the music catches you and quickly it goes away. After this experience you are no more the same.

Mats Gustafsson (reeds) asked – "What's your favorite saxophone solo on vinyl, Urs?"

Leimgruber: I don't have so many favorite solos but there are two special recordings by Evan Parker - Zanzou [Jazz & NOW, 1983] and Saxophone Solos [Incus, 1975] – and one by Steve Lacy – Axieme [Red, 1977]. The solos of these two 20th century saxophone innovators are so different but they mean the same - the sound space is the place. Evan Parker builds mostly by fast movements and microtones another space in the space, while Steve Lacy plays melodic, moderate into the

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space to extend the space. Evan and Steve are definitely two of the most important and innovative musicians and saxophone players in improvised music of the last 40 years.

Joelle Leandre (bass) asked - "Why do the musicians who play creative music, music that is not in the track of commercial music, seem like rebels to the musical community at large? I feel that I am a rebel, as well as you are a rebel."

Leimgruber: Playing music is a personal expression of life. In free improvisation, it is not only about sound and music. There is a philosophical, social-political engagement behind it. Of course I am a rebel and I still have the vision to change the world.

Michel Doneda (sax) - "For you, is it conceivable to live as a musician improviser without help or subsidies, and by extension, how do you live the relationship between political (cultural or general) and music?"

Leimgruber: Without cultural support I couldn't do a tour like I'm doing right now in the United States. Of course, I could but I would come home with a loss of money, which I've done in the past and which I would do in future if the support would stop. Many institutions and organizers in the field of creative music have financial support from the state or some cultural institutions for doing their work, organizing concerts, giving platforms for creations and for education. As a musician, it is evident that I represent opposition but it is even more important to give my musical experience and message to people and to get young people involved into creative music and free-improvisation.

Joe McPhee (multi-instruments) said - "I've had the privilege of knowing Urs for about 25 years. He is the "man in black," the Johnny Cash of free Jazz, a man of mystery. Urs is a very serious guy about his music but he doesn't take himself all that seriously. He is full of humor and has the most disarming smile you can imagine. I think of Urs Leimgruber as a "sound scientist" who ever so carefully examines every aspect of the sounds he makes. He has a technique where he uses a Harmon trumpet mute in the bell of his soprano and I'm stealing this idea. My question for Urs is how did you arrive at the idea to use the Harmon mute?"

Leimgruber: Thank you Joe for the flowers! I do it to be able to play even softer and to extend the sound possibilities into microtones. It's an extension of the instrument. I was always impressed by the sound of the trumpet and its mutes.

Cadence: What do you think about Joe McPhee stealing your idea of using the Harmon mute on the soprano?

Leimgruber: I just played and had a great time with Joe. I told him, 'No problem.' Feel free and have fun, it's an object to use.

Joe McPhee also asked - "Where does sound go once it is created and is every sound that ever was still going on?"

Leimgruber: Sound comes from far away and has it's own life. Every

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sound played goes on, even when you don't hear it anymore. But it never comes back. That's why we continue.

Vinny Golia (reeds) asked - "How is the Swiss forward thinking movement developing today?"

Leimgruber: We have plenty of musicians, young musicians that are more into the tradition, but we also have a lot of musicians who go further into some stuff. There are small movements all over in this country. We could have more public. I think there are more musicians than public, that's the problem, but I realize it's like that all over....

Evan Parker once said why that was. He joked that, "Most of the listeners started to play music, that's why there is less audience!"

[Laughs]

Vinny Golia also asked - "Are you going to be doing more of your brilliant work with saxophone quartets?"

Leimgruber: Right now there is no project planned.

Vinny Golia also asked - "Please talk about the Swiss musicians you came up on the scene with; people like Urs Blochlinger and Pierre Favre."

Leimgruber: Yeah, Urs unfortunately passed away to young quite a long time ago. He was a very impassioned musician. Pierre is still on the scene and still going on. He's absolutely great. He's very important as a pioneer, along with Irene Schweizer, in Switzerland definitely.

Pierre Favre (drum) said - "I've carried the root of this question for Urs with me to Poland and back home. It is difficult as Urs and myself have been following completely different ways since the beginning of our musical activities. The question I've carried around is "What is the vision that made you start playing music and keeps you doing it through all these years?" "

Leimgruber: As a kid I discovered sound as a space of freedom.

As soon as I started to play an instrument, I felt in love with music.

Through music I met so many friends which I would never meet without playing music. It's a gift and I learned the most through music and music became my life. It's about needing to have this musical experience again and again. It's about having adventure. When I play music, it's just great and that's why I continue. With experience, it becomes more and more wonderful. And to practice the instrument is like going into my garden, my own garden every day. I love to practice so that I can cultivate my garden.

John Wolf Brennan (piano) asked - "For a long time in your career, you managed to balance the sheer beauty of the tone (especially on the soprano saxophone) with the more avant-garde research for sounds unheard of (so far). I must admit that I still admire this phase of your work. One might be tempted to say, in other words, that you found a balance between the (romantic) quest for beauty and the ongoing (scientific) research for the "music of the moment," with all its vast array of sounds between noise, near silence, no sound at all, and sheets of sounds or explosive outbursts of sounds. I treasure fond memories

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of the seven years we played together (1982-1989), which resulted in a string of 4 duo albums: Mountain Hymn (1986), An Chara (1988), Polyphyllum (1989), and M.A.P. (Music for Another Planet) 1990, with guest vocalist Norma Winstone). In retrospect it seems to me that we enjoyed this healthy balance. However, in your following works, like Statement of an Anti-Rider, you decided to go a harder, maybe more advanced, but also maybe more severe, and even slightly self-punishing way, of avoiding this quest for beauty. Of course, one could immediately challenge the idea of "beauty" and state an "anti-idea," searching for anti-aesthetical and less affirmative forms. Of course, you still found admirers for your music, but sometimes your performances left the audience baffled. (I remember Weltwoche critic Peter Rüedi once described your playing as the equivalent of sitting in a dentist chair.... ;-)) Could you give us some personal insights on this matter? Please send him my sincere regards - I still think in high respect of him and his playing. Sadly, we only had one chance to play together again, in a trio with Evan Parker (with whom I recorded HeXtet for Leo Records, together with Julie Tippetts, Chris Cutler, Paul Rutherford, and Peter Whyman. But one day.....let's hope!"

Leimgruber: That's a large thing. We are changing, that's natural. I don't want to keep things the same. You can compare it to a retrospective of a painter such as Rothko – how he started and developed and then suddenly it changed completely. Listen to a composer like Stockhausen. He composed such extreme different pieces. If someone like Peter Rüedi feels, when he hears some sounds from me, like being in a dentist chair, that's fine. Maybe he is terrified of the dentist? Everyone should be free to deal with the sound they listen to. I don't really care. I love to work on borders and pass borders. Sometimes people come up to me and say, "Forty years ago you played so beautiful. Why don't you play anymore like this?" That's an old story. Barre Phillips played during his ECM period of time, in the late '70s, also different music, and people question him too. Some musicians become more and more experimental with age. Barre is a very good example. There are others they go back to Jazz and Blues. Derek Bailey was playing dance and light music for years before he got into free-music. Tony Oxley was a great Jazz drummer but he's played with sound for years. When Miles changed to electric, many said, "Come on, stop that bullshit!" We don't have to care what people say, we just have to go on to trust in our self and to deal with our passion, our vision.

Cadence: *So how does the listener of conventional Jazz music begin to approach and understand your work with sound?*

Leimgruber: They don't have to understand except that you're a musician or musicologist. People should sit-in, be open and curious, don't just listen to only what's there – listen also to what's not there. It's a unique experience.

Evan Parker (reeds) asked a question that will require some explanation on your part. He said – "Can I have another one of those toothbrushes?"

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Leimgruber: [Pause] [laughs] Can I have another one of those toothbrushes?

Cadence: *Did you ever give him a toothbrush?*

Leimgruber: No, I can't remember. Maybe I lent him mine, because in general I do clean my teeth before a concert.

Cadence: *I'll contact Evan and get back to you?*

Leimgruber: No, it's a great question. That's the best question so far because there is no real answer. Thank you Evan. [Laughs].



Photo credit: Ken Weiss

Interview Frank Walton

AN INTERVIEW
WITH TRUMPET
PLAYER, FRANK
WALTON BY
LUDWIG VAN
TRIKT



Cadence: Let's start with the very beginning – what year were you born in Birmingham Alabama?

F.W.: I would prefer you not mention my birth year, because some people try to date you. My contemporaries are the late Woody Shaw and Oscar Brashear. Birmingham had a large black population in the early fifties and sixties and I think before that the largest in America. When I was growing up there, Birmingham was an apartheid city you also had blacks discriminating against blacks. The bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist church that killed the four little black girls left an indelible mark on me. I was with my teacher, trumpeter Louis Smith that morning when he told me. (It was my freshman year at Tennessee State University).

Cadence: What was the social & musical environment like?

F.W.: The musical environment was nice the artist Ray Charles, Count Basie, Jimmy Smith would play dates there and Jazz was on the radio daily. There were two radio stations that you could hear Max Roach, Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins, Booker Little, John Coltrane, Lee Morgan (they loved Lee Morgan's music in Birmingham), Freddie Hubbard and Miles Davis. There were record stores in the city one was across the street from my high school Parker High. Musicians from Birmingham: Joe Guy (put the trumpet up to my lips), Erskine Hawkins, Joe Jones ("Papa Joe"), Avery Parrish, Sun Ra (Herman Sonny Blount), Joe Alexander, Charles Stephens, Carl Atkins, Arthur Dole, Lionel Hampton. Three of us from Birmingham found ourselves in three of the most experimental bands in the world; Charles Stephens in Sun Ra Arkestra, Carl Atkins with the theory master George Russell and I was in and out of the A.A.C.M. for a year or so.

Cadence: One of the most fascinating things about African American jazz artist who are from down south is how despite the racist and inferior school systems; is that many of

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the artists of your era are always articulating seemingly educated? Please comment?

F.W.: The school systems were racist but not inferior; some of the most brilliant thinkers are from the Jim Crow school systems: Martin Luther King, Angela Davis (same school as Sun Ra). The music some musicologist label as jazz has its origins in the South: Monk, Coltrane, Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie and Booker Little, all from that system. Educated is to be able to use syllogism. Racism is systemic.

Cadence: For histories sake let's flesh out more detail on the artist who were instrumental on your musical growth. Please delve into who exactly Amos Gordon (your private teacher while in high school) and trumpeter Jonathan Collins.

F.W.: I took private lessons from Amos Gordon in high school, he played alto saxophone with the Louis Armstrong Orchestra in the late 40's. Gordon also worked with Erskine Hawkins, Lucky Millender, and Andy Kirk. RCA recorded Amos Gordon with Louis Armstrong Orchestra (RCA Victor VPM 6044). I met Jonathan Collins thru Mr. Gordon; Jon was one of his students. We became friends and remained friends up until his death. Jon took me on the road with some of the students from Florida A&M University. We toured Canada and the southwest USA. I was seventeen at the time, the great alto saxophonist Johnny Logan was in the band. They finished the tour and went to New York City and joined the Lionel Hampton Orchestra. I left the tour to enroll in Tennessee State University. I met trumpeter Louis Smith who became one of my instructors along with Donald Sheffield. Don was the first trumpeter in the Houston and Nashville symphony orchestras. Louis Smith worked in the Horace Silver Quintet and recorded on Blue Note "Here Comes Louis Smith"). One other note is that Louis and trumpeter Booker Little were first cousins.

Cadence: Do you remember there being a collective feeling of being young artist in the forging of black identity?

F.W.: Yes from Louis Armstrong on down to the 60's with Miles Davis, Lee Morgan and Jackie McLean. You could feel it in the music.

Cadence: What was your first experience recording as a sideman?

F.W.: My first recording was in Birmingham, with Frank Adams, I don't remember the date, had to be after high school. Frank had been my elementary school band teacher; he went to Howard University with Benny Golson. I did some recording in Nashville and Muscle Shoals Alabama with drummer Billy Cox this was all commercial and as a side man playing jazz I did a date with violinist Leroy Jenkins. I don't know what he (i.e. Leroy Jenkins) did with the tapes. I used to sit in at Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase and Joe use to record everyone that played there. Joe might record a tune I did with Max Roach, James Spaulding, and Jon Lee on bass and a

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night with Gary Bartz and Howard King on drums, Hubert Eaves on piano. Maybe he will release some of these tapes at some time or another. I also did a session with one of Henry Threadgill's groups featuring Anthony Braxton on reeds, George Lewis on trombone, and Henry has the tapes for sure.

Cadence: *When did you step up from being a sideman to leading your own groups? Larry Smith who wrote the liner notes to your Delmark debut ("Reality" Lp DS-436) said that the sextet that you lead "could possibly mark a turning point in the whole image of Chicago Jazz"...please comment on that era of your artistry?*

F.W.: I was a member of the A.A.C.M. for a brief period. Muhal Richard Abrams always encouraged the musicians to do their thing. My first band had Vandy Harris on tenor sax, Miller Pertum on vibes. I also co-led a quintet with saxophonist Ed Wilkerson and this expanded to a sextet with Ari Brown on reeds, Jody Christian on piano, Rudolph Penson on bass with Ben Montgomery on drums, and we added Henry Threadgill for the "Reality" date. Yoron Israel came into the group and Lance Bryant, a great saxophonist, composer, and vocalist, replaced Ari Brown. My core group of musicians I love to work and record with are Lance Bryant, Yoron Israel, bassist Avery Sharpe, John Lockwood, Kevin Harris and saxophonist Jaleel Shaw and Allan Chase.

Cadence: *Would it be fair to say that since your debut – most of your recordings have been more in the tradition of hard bop?*

F.W.: Yes, when I get a budget we have a lot to say everyone in the group are composer's plus we have access to Hank Mobley's, Lee Morgan, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Freddie Hubbard's Sextet books. I need funds to rehearse and with a budget everything will fall in place.

Cadence: *Would it be possible to list your recordings and their availability for people trying to check out your music?*

F.W.: Go to the website: <http://www.han-walproductions.com/> you can access my recording. CD Baby, iTunes, Amazon, Jazz Record Mart.

Cadence: *What lead to you leaving the AACM?*

F.W.: I became very busy with free-lancing such as being in The Morris Ellis Orchestra and working with The Air Trio (Henry Threadgill, Fred Hopkins and Steve McCall). I played some in Muhal Richard Abrams Big Band and my own sextet. I was also moving in a different direction musically (swinging more). The AACM may have voted me out, but I was more than ready to move on with musicians in my circle.

Cadence: *A book on African American trumpeter Joe Wilder recently came out "Joe Wilder and Breaking of Barriers in American Music" published by Temple University Press. This book details his pioneering efforts to get work on Broadway and ABC. I wondered what your own experiences were like in Chicago's classical and commercial world.*

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F.W.: My experience on the Chicago music scene was for the most part good. The classical, jazz, and commercial jobs I was a part of came about from my teachers at The American Conservatory of Music & Roosevelt University who were in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. John Cenjevich had me sub in the Bobby Christian Orchestra and playing in the Neil Dunlap Big Band, Charles Geyer had me on a gig with members of the C.S.O. I was playing a lot of C and piccolo trumpet. There were a lot of free lance jobs for me in Chicago. Trumpeter David Spencer would recommend me for gigs from classical music to the O'Jays; then George Hunter a saxophonist and a contractor from Tenn. State gave me some work. I was a member of The Morris Ellis Orchestra two times and also a Black Society Band in Chicago, whose alumni included Booker Little, Bobby Bryant, pianist Harold Mabern and Frank Strozier. I would come back latter in my career to substitute in The Black Society Band. Trumpeter Frank Gordon helped me a lot with classical gigs and theory. Frank Gordon was in Ken Chaney's group The Awakening which I also substitute for him in that band and met bassist Rufus Reid there. I early on formed a quintet with saxophonist Ed Wilkerson and my sextet began to work the Chicago scene. But there was a lot of work that I and other black musicians didn't get because they were black. Over all it was cool, met some great musicians black and white who were great people.

Cadence: Do you have a definitive recording?

F.W.: There's nothing definitive about my music, it's on going and that's amazing since there are only 12 notes but so many different colors off each. I am just trying to improve day by day. I like some of the music on all of them, especially the "feel" the musicians have. "Old Folks" from the "Back Step" session is a nice feel from a great trio: pianist James William, Yoron Israel on drums and bassist John Lockwood. Maybe one day I can be part of a definitive recording. Let's stay in touch.

Interview Roberto Magris

AN INTERVIEW
WITH PIANIST
ROBERTO
MAGRIS BY
LUDWIG VAN
TRIKT



The Italian pianist and composer Roberto Magris was born in Trieste in 1959. He has recorded 27 Cds and has played concerts in 41 countries in Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australia. He's the musical director of JMood Records, the Kansas City jazz label.

Cadence: *You are the musical director of the Kansas City based label JMood Records. How did the cooperation with Paul Collins start? What is the goal of JMood Records, what are the reasons for founding the label?*

RM: Paul Collins, the JMood owner, happened to listen to the CDs that I had recorded for the Italian label Soulnote ("Check-in" with Tony Lakatos and "Il Bello Del Jazz" with Herb Geller) and was so impressed that he contacted me and arranged some concerts in Los Angeles. My quartet included saxophonist Tony Lakatos and Art Davis, the bassist for John Coltrane, and we had some very successful performances at the Jazz Bakery and at the Catalina Jazz Club in Hollywood. The concerts were recorded live and should have been released by Soulnote but things went wrong as after some months the BlackSaint/Soulnote collapsed and our master was lost. The next year I recorded on trio with Art Davis and Jimmy Junebug Jackson in Kansas City and this time Paul decided to release on his own the CD entitled "Kansas City Outbound" and gave birth to the JMood, also asking me to take care of the musical direction. Then, I recorded "Mating Call" in Los Angeles with Paul Carr and Idris Muhammad, "Morgan Rewind vol. 1 and vol. 2" dedicated to the music of Lee Morgan, with Albert Tootie Heath and Brandon Lee and Logan Richardson among the others, "One Night In With Hope And More vol. 1 and vol. 2" dedicated to the bebop piano (Bud Powell, Elmo Hope, Tadd Dameron, Herbie Nichols, Thelonious Monk) on trio with Elisa Pruett and Albert Tootie Heath, "Sam Reed meets Roberto Magris/ Ready for Reed", "Aliens in a bebop planet", "Cannonball Funk'n Friends" and more.... I'd say that the main goal of JMood is to rediscover and reinvent the jazz tradition, with a special focus on bebop (since Kansas City is the city of Charlie Parker) as well as looking ahead and "around" to

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new and interesting directions, always keeping an eye to the future of jazz. For this, me and Paul Collins have become twins and we've put together along the years a great team of musicians, technicians and friends.

Cadence: How did your musical career start? Did you start like so many other jazz musicians with classical music education?

RM: I played classical music in my teens and I met the jazz music in the 70's. While trying to investigate about jazz, I happened to listen to an Oscar Peterson's LP entitled "The Way I Really Play" and I was caught. Then, I was fond of Coltrane/McCoy, Ornette, Mingus, I went "back" to discover Parker, Monk, Powell, Teddy Wilson, Duke... then "up" again to Andrew Hill (still one of my favorites), Hancock, Corea, Steve Kuhn, Paul Bley... and I'm still around...

Cadence: How was the jazz scene in Italy when you started, how is it today?

RM: When I started, in Italy we had the "free jazz" moment, musicians like Giorgio Gaslini and visiting Americans like Sam Rivers, Steve Lacy and the Art Ensemble of Chicago were on the spotlight. In other words, no chance listen to any swingin' thing... About me, I was attracted by something different and I tried to develop a kind of "Middle-European" jazz (classic and folk heritage on a modal jazz carpet). Even if we had the iron curtain at those time, I tried to build musical friendships and collaborations with musicians from the Eastern European countries. I was pretty much at home in Prague, in those years.

Cadence: I listened to the album "Comunicazione Sonora" of the trio Gruppo Jazz Marca. Was this the first album you played on?

RM: Yes, I recorded it in 1981, when I was 22. With the trio Gruppo Jazz Marca I developed that kind of "Middle-European" vein that I mentioned before. We released 3 LPs, the most famous entitled "Mitteleuropa", that were reissued 25 years later on CD format, as collector's items, by the English label Arision.

To briefly resume my career for the Cadence readers, after the experience with the "Gruppo Jazz Marca", in the late 80es I started the Roberto Magris Quartet, which operated for a decade, recording 2 Cds and performing in Italy and in several European countries. In 1996, I decided for a complete change: since I found myself unexpectedly caught by the "acid jazz" musical trend and the Hammond organ sound, I started a new band initially named DMA/Direct Memory Access, then renamed "Alfabeats Nu Jazz". This band recorded 2 Cds and performed at several festivals in Europe and in Canada (Montreal Jazz Festival, Downtown Toronto, Halifax), Mexico, Venezuela and Curacao. After the "acid jazz" experience I was back to straight jazz and in 1998 I founded the "Europlane Orchestra", a central-European jazz venture sponsored by INCE-CEI (Central European Initiative) including some best musicians from Czechia, Slovakia, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Croatia. I composed

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and arranged the musical programs for this orchestra, we had several meetings, concerts and recorded 3 Cds, released by the Italian label Soulnote. When those countries entered the EEC at last, the money funds stopped to come but I tried to keep the project alive under the name of "Roberto Magris Europlane". At last, since it was complicate, I decided to simply start a second brand new edition of the Roberto Magris Quartet. With this new quartet I increased my international exposure, performing all around the world, Australia, Indonesia and China. Then, in 2006 I flight to Los Angeles where I met Paul Collins and here we are with the JMood Records and all the rest...

Cadence: What would you call the highlights of your time as a jazz musician until now?

RM: It was in Libreville, Gabon, where I was invited by the Italian Embassy to play a concert. I accepted with interest but I asked for meeting some local traditional musicians and possibly performing together. At last I played a concert for acoustic piano, Mvet (a string African instrument tuned in D flat) and percussions. That was such an experience for me since those musicians had no idea about jazz or other kinds of music except for their own tribal rhythms. We played a 2 hours concert of improvised African-Jazz-European music and this experience gave me a different view on what music actually is for the human beings. It was like bringing jazz back to the ancestrals issues of black magic Africa. On the other side I must say that one night in Libreville I entered an hotel and I found a sort of jazz group led by an old man playing trumpet. I got introduced and he asked me to play one song together. He proposed "A night in Tunisia" (!) and at the end of the session he gave me his card: he was a surgeon. Magic Africa...

Cadence: You worked with a lot of jazz stars throughout the years. Who was the most inspiring character you met?

RM: Herb Geller. I loved to play and spend time with him. He knew all sort of stories about musicians from the the bebop and West-Coast historical periods and he brought me straight to the essence of that kind of jazz. Musically he was a maestro and he introduced me to the music of Benny Carter and Billy Strayhorn from a new perspective (the right one). We played concerts together in several European countries and we recorded 2 CDs together: "Il Bello Del Jazz" on Soulnote and "An Evening With Herb Geller & The Roberto Magris Trio" on JMood.

Cadence: You are some kind of researcher, you work like a scientist exploring jazz styles - you seem to know everything about jazz history and you always "dip" completely into the subject you are working on (the Bebop for the "Aliens" album, the Soul Jazz for the Cannonball tribute, the West Coast style working with Herb Geller, the Philadelphia Jazz working with Sam Reed etc.). You take your work very seriously, don't you?

RM: I simply love this music. I have become a jazz musician out of a boy playing classical music and jazz is my music, it's something that is mine and represents me. I've listened to thousands (believe me!) of jazz records and I've played each solo, following note by note in my

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mind all the jazz masters, thanks to the fact that I have the perfect pitch. Of course I take my time to prepare the arrangements and to compose new music, but I don't study nor I practice the piano anymore, I just play when and what I like and I feel as music comes from heart, brain and "superior" places. So, I don't care about technique and I have a sort of "zen" attitude: hands just play themselves when music comes out. When I play I don't think, I just play. However, it's always been very important for me to remain "focused" and connected to the society, daily life, family and work, in order to keep the "spirit of the time" and evolve as a human being and as a musician.

Cadence: A question about your CD: "Aliens In A BeBop Planet". Interesting title. Was there a concept behind the album?

RM: Actually 2 concepts: the most evident is that my band and I are contemporary jazz musicians. "As Aliens" landing on "the bebop planet" to find what still remains today of that legendary period of jazz history. We tried our best to bring to new life the essence of this music, filtering our knowledge of the past from a contemporary point of view. The less obvious concept is that the true Alien is me... I'm an Italian jazz pianist born and still living in the city of Trieste, at the top of the Adriatic sea, in the crossing point between Italy and Slovenia and Austria, in the heart of the middle-Europe. Because of an odd re-incarnation process in combination with an unpredictable "kharma", I have found myself being asked by a producer from Kansas City to record an album about "bebop" in the homecity of Charlie Parker... hard to believe.. so I obviously am the Alien in a bebop planet..

Cadence: You re-invented "Giant Steps" in your own way. Very unusual. How did you make that decision?

RM: Instead of giving all a renewed version I felt a link to the tradition and I decided to give an "aged" version to it, as a part of all the history of jazz. The circle of the fourths has been discovered by Coltrane because we had before people like Teddy Wilson, Earl Hines, Bud Powell, Monk. All is connected and consequential... I wanted to demonstrate it and I was smiling when playing it that way.

Cadence: How much time do you dedicate to composing. How much do you enjoy it as another creative outlet?

RM: I love to compose but when I find a musical idea I am restless (sometimes I even can't sleep) until I haven't put all the components (melody, harmony and rhythm) well together and all makes sense musically to me. I believe that my compositions are a part of me that will remain available for the other people (listeners and musicians) and will possibly survive to me. I try to find inspiration from the power, the ritual force of music along with the human artistic creativity. I think that the music should dance inside us and for this reason I believe that the most difficult task for a composer is to create the "rhythm".. I ask myself "what should be the rhythm for this melody? What's its inner vibration?"

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Cadence: *You are also a great Hammond player. What do you like on this instrument?*

RM: Thank you! I'm just trying to play it as a fan of organ players like Larry Young, John Patton, Charles Earland but I don't consider myself a organ player properly. I love the B3 because it gives a sense of groove and soulfulness to the music and it has a beautiful sound to my ears, but I remain a piano player at the most.

Cadence: *Your latest album "Enigmatix" is a little bit different than your previous ones. As you told me in your letter it shows the "other" side of Roberto Magris, not the one of the bebop researcher.*

RM: Yes. I've always tried to look ahead with my music, in connection with the society, people and the world where I live. My previous CDs were focused on bebop, Lee Morgan etc. because of the producer's choice that I accepted to follow. But I am not a traditionalist. With "Enigmatix" I've "returned" to my usual approach, with a trio concept oriented to the contemporary world. It's the return of my "European jazz" mentality in an American environment and the return to the straight modern and ahead pianist and composer from the parenthesis of the bebop researcher.

Cadence: *Can you state more precisely what you mean by that?*

RM: I asked my musician to work on an "improvisational approach" and to maintain that kind of "attitude" while playing. This improvisational approach includes the whole tradition of jazz (from swing, bebop, modal, free) to funk, groove and pop references. I believe in a world music since we live in a globalized world. Since we have a "world music" coming from traditional and folk music from all over the world, we need to work also on a "world music" coming from our cities, industrial societies, frenetic modern concepts, as a result of the experiences of jazz and rock of the last century... a kind of progressive jazz...

Cadence: *How would you explain the global aspect in the music of "Enigmatix" which Paul Collins has mentioned in the Audio Notebook?*

RM: That's it... progressive but with the awareness of where it comes from... tradition looking ahead... Coltrane and Parker where the avantguard at their times and now, when we play their music, we play mainstream jazz. So, we need to experiment now a kind of music being prescient of the future, starting from our tradition to shape the future. To this aim, we need to observe and stay tuned..

Cadence: *Do you spend a lot of time in the United States/Kansas City?*

RM: I usually spend some weeks there every year and in those periods I have concerts, recordings and studio works. In the last years I played concerts in Los Angeles, St. Louis, Des Moines, Omaha, in the Kansas City area (Kansas and Missouri) and, very recently, in Fort Lauderdale and in Miami, with a stellar version of the Roberto Magris Quintet also including Brian Lynch and Chuck Bergeron. Since I feel very comfortable in the US and my music is very well accepted I'd like to possibly establish there more and more.

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Cadence: What are your plans for the near future?

RM: Now I've out my new and latest CD on JMood, entitled "Need To Bring Out Love" and I'm working to promote it at the best. At this purpose, I'll be back the US in October of this year. It's the sequel of "Enigmatix" and it's still with my US trio, with bassist Dominique Sanders and drummer Brian Steever plus singers Monique Danielle and Julia Haile performing in 3 vocal tracks. With the CD title and cover, I hope to get the listeners focused on the need of love that we have in this troubled world, especially in this period when the main issues in the television and news, magazines, media, are about terrorism, killings, social, racial and religion conflicts. I'm not afraid to point out an old fashioned motto as "peace and love"... as I feel that also musicians need and shouldn't forget to use their own chances to promote and ask people to remain focused on the need of peace and love in our lives, and to give a positive message even if apparently could seem out of context. Music is always the right context for this, not matter is it swings, rocks or grooves.



Hans Lüdemann Interview Virtuosity and “Virtual Piano”

By Ken Weiss



Photo credit: Ken Weiss



Photo credit: Ken Weiss

Hamburg-based Hans Lüdemann (born September 14, 1961, Hamburg, Germany) studied Classical piano at the Hamburg Conservatory and Jazz piano at the Musikhochschule Köln (Cologne) and with Joachim Kuhn. He later went on to make history as the first to achieve a Jazz master's degree in Germany. Lüdemann started his professional career in 1985 and was soon touring with a group led by Eberhard Weber and Jan Garbarek. Time spent in Africa has enriched his understanding of rhythm and harmony and transformed his art which is also broadened by an interest and use of the “virtual piano.” Lüdemann has worked with Paul Bley, Albert Mangelsdorff, Heinz Sauer, Toumani Diabate, Mark Feldman, Marc Ducret, Silke Eberhard, Thomas Heberer and Lee Konitz. He leads a number of groups including Rooms [with Sebastien Boisseau (b) and Dejan Terzic (d)] and Trio Ivoire [with Aly Keita (balafo) and Christian Thome (d)]. This interview took place on March 18, 2016 in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania while Lüdemann was working as a visiting professor. Of note, we met in his study which held a piano once used by Bill Evans for one of his recordings.

Cadence: When your name is searched on the Internet, it brings up Hans Lüdemann as a 1936 German destroyer vessel. Any relationship to you?

Hans Lüdemann: [Laughs] No, I'm afraid not. He was actually a war hero, who supposedly saved a lot of lives, but I'm not related to him.

Cadence: You're certainly a well-rounded Jazz artist. You play improvisational Jazz with people like Phil Minton, Mark Feldman, Mark Helias and Gebhard Ullmann, along with playing more traditional Jazz and collaborating with African musicians. You also occasionally perform Classical music in prominent settings.

Lüdemann: I don't see a separation between all of that. For me, there's a unity. It's all music and it's very important that I can deal with the different sides of music. I grew up with Classical music, it's the German roots you could say. Bach, Beethoven and Mozart feel very much at home. I was a freak for Jazz already

at a very young age. I liked Blues and Dixieland Jazz but at that time there were no Jazz piano teachers in Germany. They didn't exist in the '60s or early '70s, so the only way to learn piano was to get Classical lessons and that's what I did. I still tried to improvise and invent songs and imitate stuff on my own, in addition to doing what I had to do for my teacher. I always play Classical music, but only seldom perform it. I consider myself an improvising musician as well as someone who composes and plays his own music. It really helps to have the Classical technique as a piano player when you're trying to be very free with the instrument. You need to really know your instrument. The history of the piano is basically the history of Classical music going all the way back to Bach and Beethoven. I love the instrument and to really own it and feel completely at home with it, it is really beautiful to have all these sources to draw from because it's all great music. I try to stay connected with that, I think it makes my music stronger.

Cadence: It's fascinating that you, a German musician, is teaching Jazz history as a visiting professor at an American college. That's the proverbial "carrying coals to Newcastle." This is your second time as a visiting professor at Swarthmore College. How did you make the connection with the college?

Lüdemann: I have an old friend from Hamburg and we were both exchange students in the '70s in the United States and she became a professor at Swarthmore. We had lost contact for over twenty years and by chance, her dad went to a concert of mine in Germany and sent her my CD. She contacted me and asked me to do a concert at Swarthmore and eventually I was offered a guest professorship. I came for the first time in 2009 and it went really well and now I'm back six years later. They were very skeptical in the beginning, especially about a language barrier, but there was no problem.

Cadence: What's been the biggest surprise for you in teaching Americans about their own music?

Lüdemann: Coming here as a guest professor is a different role for me. What is very interesting is that in Classical music, nobody is asking a question why a Chinese pianist like Lang Lang could be a great Classical pianist, even though it's not his music. No one asks why Glen Gould, as a Canadian, can play German music. He can play Bach, and be famous for it, and nobody thinks that's weird. So why should it be weird that a German is a great Jazz pianist and expert on Jazz? Jazz has also been a universal form of art for most of its history, like classical music. It's quite normal that there should be experts and great artists in this music from all over the world. There's even the young player from as far away as Indonesia now, Joey Alexander, and he's a great talent. I find it an amazing opportunity and honor to be able to teach the history of the music I love at the place of its origin, close to Philadelphia, were many great Jazz musicians come from; from Bessie Smith to McCoy Tyner to Christian McBride. I also feel a big responsibility to do it and put a lot of heart and work into it and believe I probably learn the most through this experience. A part of it is getting in touch with musicians

over here and attending concerts in Philly and New York. I also read all the Jazz history books now because I have to be on top of everything. It is interesting that the American books are very much focused on the United States, which for me, as a European, is a narrow perspective that overlooks important parts of Jazz history. There are very few non-American musicians even mentioned in those books. Maybe Django Reinhardt and Jan Garbarek pop up, but very few. This huge country is very self-centered, but Jazz has actually been a universal music since it's beginning. It's been popular and has been played and developed by musicians all over the world. Also, it's very important for me as a college professor to stress the fact that Jazz is very much rooted in the African American experience. Of course, I'm not African American, but I am also not a white American so it kind of liberates me because I have a perspective that's uninhibited by all these issues. I don't come from a background with racial issues. I don't think of people as being African American or Latino or whatever, and for me, it's really hard to learn this concept in the United States. Many of my musical heroes were African American and I've been taught by Steve Coleman, Anthony Davis and Muhal Richard Abrams and I never thought of them as being different from Dave Holland or other great teachers I've had.

Cadence: You've spent significant time in America since the late '70s. What strikes you as most unusual about Americans and the American culture?

Lüdemann: What's very difficult to understand is how the communication works here. People will not always be open in criticizing people. Part of it is being very polite and nice to others, but the downside to it is that sometimes you have to guess what people mean. It can often be the contrary of what they are actually saying. It takes time to get a sense if people really mean what they say or are just being polite. I know Americans find Germans very blunt because Germans may say things very openly. In Germany, you just say things that you mean and that could be seen here as offensive and too direct. It's really interesting in America that when someone tells you something, you have to determine if it is a compliment or a critique.

Cadence: You've come up with the concept of "virtual piano" which enters into some of your pieces. Would you define what that is?

Lüdemann: It's a name I invented. I have acoustic piano samples in my laptop computer and I connect a keyboard to the computer so I can trigger this "virtual piano" sound. Because it's coming from the computer, I'm able to experiment with all parameters of the sound. I call it "virtual piano" because I want to make it clear that it's about the piano sound. That's all I use. I don't use organ sounds or electric piano sounds.

Cadence: How do you work "virtual piano" into your playing?

Lüdemann: I see "virtual piano" as an expansion of the acoustic piano. It extends the possibilities and the range so it basically allows me to manipulate the sound so I can change the sound quality. I can make it darker or lighter or distorted. I can also detune it or use different

tunings which allows me to go outside the normal twelve tone system and to play “between the keys” of the piano. Brass players, guitar, and violin players, they can catch the notes that are between the tones, but pianists can’t because they are not on the instrument. My “virtual piano” allows me to reach these notes, so the piano becomes more fluid. I often think of it as using blue notes. Sometimes it may sound like an old, funky piano that’s out of tune, but that’s also nice because the piano is a very clean instrument and this makes it dirtier and more expressive. You can actually bend notes which is a very expressive tool.

Cadence: *Are you aware of other musicians employing “virtual piano”?*

Lüdemann: I recently saw a catalog with a keyboard that’s called “virtual piano” but this is quite new. “Virtual piano” is not an established term, it’s just something I came up with to call this. I’m not aware of other musicians using this. I talked to Craig Taborn recently and he told me that he had done a project with Steve Coleman once where they played microtonal music and Craig was programming different scales but I think he played keyboards. Mine is a different concept. I’m combining sampled piano sounds with the piano. It’s contrary to what most people do.

Cadence: *I’ve seen you work inside the piano with a window wiper. How are you using that and do you utilize prepared piano?*

Lüdemann: There was a phase in the ‘90s where I did a lot of prepared piano, before I got into the “virtual piano.” What I do not like to use are preparations that are fixed in the piano because that means you are stuck, you’re limited to certain notes, and one of my principals in improvising is being free all the time. So the “virtual piano” is something that at any moment I can alter everything. It’s completely free. I can change the tuning from quarter tone to normal tuning and back while I’m improvising in a split second. I use a window wiper now because I can move it around and its tip is rubber which will not harm the strings. The piano likes rubber, it’s like safe Jazz, and you can actually play on the partials of the strings. It gives you a lot of possibilities and I can cover an octave with it so you can play chords with it. It can give a distortion effect and many different sounds. What’s very special on the Steinway piano is that my wiper actually fits in on the bass keys and I’ve written some compositions that are based on that. The window wiper can be put into the piano and you can play normally on the keyboard, but bass notes will transpose by an octave plus a fifth.

Cadence: *You had a special solo project [“Homage a Köln Concert”] in 2015 that celebrated the 40th anniversary of Keith Jarrett’s historic Köln concert. Why is Jarrett’s Köln Concert recording so important to you.*

Lüdemann: That’s one of the records that I grew up with. When the Keith Jarrett recording came out, it was something completely new. Nobody had done a completely improvised solo concert before. It was amazing. You had to be really courageous and also confident, and most

astonishingly, it worked! It was so strong and it just hit a nerve that matched the time and everybody bought it, even people who didn't listen to Jazz. It was something you had to have in your house. One of the secrets is that it has a Classical touch to it, the way he uses the dynamics of the piano, so it appealed to many listeners in Europe. Also, some of it is like Pop music with him playing very simple triads and grooves. He plays in a very relaxed feel which is really amazing for a solo concert because usually it's quite stressful to be alone on stage. As a pianist, you always feel that you have to show off and impress people, so to play something really relaxed is quite an achievement.

Cadence: You had the opportunity to perform your "Hommage a Köln Concert" at the Köln Opera, the same venue that Jarrett made the famous recording at in 1975. That had to be one of your career highlights?

Lüdemann: Yeah, it was a beautiful thing and it went really well. I was quite nervous about doing it and I had doubts if it would really work as an idea. I played some short parts of the Köln Concert as a reference to the historic event and also to act as markers and I improvised around them. It was like a film that cuts back and forth from 40 years ago to today. It was a bit of a paradox that I would reproduce music that was essentially improvised, but the Köln Concert was published as a book of piano music for a long time and it functions as an actual piano piece. I limited the actual reproduction of the concert because the idea of improvising is contrary to reproducing what's already recorded.

Cadence: Another pianist who influenced you significantly was Paul

Lüdemann: I first discovered Paul Bley through Keith Jarrett because I listened to Keith's recordings and it made me want to listen to who he listened to. I found out that he was influenced by Paul and when I checked out Paul's recordings I really thought Paul was even more interesting than Keith. He seemed to be the original guy who invented this kind of lyrical playing which was very free within the song forms and going outside the harmony and translating Ornette Coleman's concept of playing to the piano. I really admire the real original guys who invented something. The first transcription I ever did was Paul Bley's "When Will the Blues Leave?" I never expected to meet him but two friends of mine, Gebhard Ullmann and Andreas Willers, invited Paul to do a record date with them in Berlin. I went to Berlin for their rehearsal and Paul, [Laughs] he doesn't like to rehearse. He was notorious for that but I had no idea at the time. So Paul heard I was a pianist and he said, "Oh, that's great. Can you play something for me?" So I did and he said, "That was really great." I don't know, he may have just wanted to escape rehearsal. I ended up spending one or two days with Paul, showing him around Berlin, and he invited me to come visit him at his house, which I did a year later. I stayed at his house for a week and we listened to music every night until 5 AM. He played all his old tapes. It was amazing. Some years later he would also spend time at my house in Germany. When he had gigs in Europe, he invited me and I came. After a few years, we played some gigs and made a record

together [Moving Hearts, 1994, ITM/West Wind]. He was almost my parent's age but it didn't feel like that when I played with him. Jazz guys are cooler.

Cadence: *Paul Bley was known for his quirky personality and sense of humor. What was he like as a teacher/mentor and a friend?*

Lüdemann: He wasn't my teacher. I never asked him to have a lesson because I knew he wasn't a real teacher. I was teaching at the conservatory in Koln at the time and one time I invited him to do a workshop for the students. At his workshops he just talks. It's not like he's showing them anything or giving instructions. He never practiced. He had a Kawai piano at his house and I sat down and played it a little bit and his wife, Carol, said, "Oh, that's so great to have piano in the house. We haven't heard any piano in fifteen years!" [Laughs] Because he never touched the piano.

Cadence: *He wasn't composing?*

Lüdemann: No, he rarely ever composed. There are very few songs of his that could be considered compositions in a traditional way. He's a complete improviser. He only touched the piano when there was a gig or a recording, not before or after. He wanted to be fresh.

Cadence: *You actually spent time at his home a few months before he died in January 2016. Is that something you care to talk about?*

Lüdemann: I'm really glad about that. I spent a weekend in September there and he was already not in a very good state but we had some amazing moments. He was very tired and he had a problem with his brain. He was always nodding off at that time but then there were moments where he would wake up and he could be very funny and the real Paul Bley popped up. We also went out for a picnic which was really fun. Also, before I left, it was very moving. Carol, Paul and I watched a video of Paul's Oslo concert, the last record he did for ECM, which I found very impressive because he had this amazing sound. Many of the older players get weaker [with time] but he didn't change one inch. He had natural technique that was just amazing, especially when you know that he never practiced. So we watched that together and then I played for them for a half hour and they were very responsive and it made me feel very close to both of them, both physically and also in spirit. It was a very beautiful and moving feeling that will always be in my memory. After that I left and it was like our goodbye. I really miss him. There's no replacement for someone like Paul. He was unique. You don't find that extreme kind of personality in Jazz so often anymore. It's really hard to exist that way today. He did it the way he liked and everyone just had to put up with it. For the musicians who had to play with him, it was pretty much a nightmare, even when I played with him. He never told you what tune he was going to play. There were no clues. He would just start playing some kind of tune and if you didn't know it... That generation knew thousands of tunes. I'm sure he knew two or three thousand tunes by heart so he could play whatever he wanted and if he played with someone of his own generation, such as Gary Peacock,

the other guy could just pick it up. My generation doesn't know all the songs, we just don't. There aren't that many players around with that kind of background. Those guys grew up playing in the clubs every night, five sets per night. They played so many tunes within one year, and they played them every night, so they knew them by heart. Now our generation, we may have one gig and then the next gig is with a different band and with different tunes, so you can't remember what you just played. I don't often play standards so my repertoire isn't so big in that respect. I play my own music or the music of the other guys in the band. That's today's reality and often the tunes are quite complicated, you have to write them down.

Cadence: *You've spent significant time in Africa, including your honeymoon. Would you talk about your experience there and what it's meant to your own music?*

Lüdemann: I love Africa and it's a very positive experience for me in different ways. My first experience was on a very human level. I first went to West Africa in '84 to visit my brother, who used to live and work there, and I was very impressed by the people who were so poor. My brother was living in the bush in a very small village in the north of Benin. These people, who basically had nothing, heard that I was there to visit him and they gave me presents and the best food they had. I met the chief of a local village once and he said, "Ah, you are the brother, you come visiting. Wait a minute!" So he ran into his house and brought me two handfuls of eggs because that was the most precious that he had as a gift. These people were so friendly and amazing. I started getting really interested in the music and how rhythm and groove is really present in even how people move in daily life. The people actually work in a groove and rhythm. It's also there in the way they talk. Everything is rhythmic. Africa is like the paradise of rhythm. I felt very free there. People accept you like you are, you don't have to pretend anything. I always liked Abdullah Ibrahim, who is from South Africa – but his music has very little connection to West Africa. West Africa has this really old tradition with the griots and the balafon and the kora and high level of virtuosity and musical culture built up over hundreds of years. Music is very important there and it's more close to the people than in most other cultures. That's similar to Germany with Bach and Beethoven. In Germany, music is almost something holy, it's the deepest you can get. It can be different in America where music is often on the entertainment side or might sometimes even been treated as some kind of competitive "athletic discipline". In Germany and West Africa the music is very serious, it's very spiritual and deep and expresses the soul.

Cadence: *One of your trips to West Africa came in 1999 as a challenging solo tour.*

Lüdemann: Right, that's actually how the "virtual piano" came about. The Goethe Institute in Germany, which is like the U.S. State Department, sends artists out on tours. After they heard my CD *Natural Piano*, which incorporated African music, they decided I

should have a solo piano tour in West Africa. It turned out that many of the places there didn't even have a piano at all so the question was what to do. At that time, the keyboard's piano sounds were not good, so I ended up borrowing a sampler that had a sample piano sound which was the best that I found. So that's what I traveled with, along with my clavichord. It was amazing, I had over a hundred kilos of luggage and I was traveling alone. It was quite a nightmare at the airports with all the African porters wanting to grab all the suitcases and I had five or more pieces to look out for. I had also told the Goethe Institute that I wanted to play with African musicians and I was setup with balafon player Aly Keita in the Ivory Coast, who I still work with up to this day. He put a quartet together and then I also played with Toumani Diabaté in Mali and Tata Dindin in Senegal, the great kora player who I would later work with very intensely over many years. This was maybe the most liberating experience in my life. I experienced music from a totally different perspective. It was a chance to both see myself more clearly and also to be able to forget about a lot of Western musical conventions and conceptions.

Cadence: What was it like to travel to Africa in 2002 with Germany's president at the time - Johannes Rau?

Lüdemann: I've actually played for a lot of German presidents [Laughs]. One might say that presidents come and go, but I have stayed! They have this castle in Berlin where the president lives and where visiting presidents and politicians are invited and very often they will have a cultural program after dinner. I've played there a number of times but the only time I've traveled with one of the presidents was with Johannes Rau. He was traveling to South Africa and Mali and they considered me as an expert for cultural exchange with Africa. So I was actually a member of the delegation, which was very interesting because the other guys were big bosses of big companies or some scientists. There was even a famous writer. So we had dinner with the South Africa president, it was Thabo Mbeki at the time, and I gave him my CD. I also performed with Toumani Diabaté during that trip. It was an honor. I haven't played for the current president yet. He's the first one I've missed since 1998.

Cadence: Let's talk a little bit about your early days. You became fascinated by music at a young age and by 6, you were studying Classical piano but also improvising and exploring the Blues. As a European, how did you get into exploring American Blues music?

Lüdemann: Neighbors gave us this really ancient and huge and very funky, old upright piano with candleholders and I fell totally in love with it. My older brother started with Classical piano lessons and I begged my parents to get some too but they told me I was too small. So I just started on my own, trying to imitate what my brother played or whatever else I heard or could think of. I made up things myself. I'm not sure if it was really the Blues I played, but I was trying to! Some of my first heroes became Professor Longhair, Snooks Eaglin and Freddie

King. There was a Blues program on the radio by Tony Sheridan that I loved. A year later my parents gave in and allowed me to have lessons but the piano teacher at first refused to accept me because my technique was all wrong.

Cadence: *You were studying Classical music. How did you get enthused about Jazz?*

Lüdemann: When John Abercrombie's debut record *Timeless* came out, my brother played it for me and told me that on the tune "Lungs," drummer Jack DeJohnette was playing something different each bar. I thought that's impossible but when listening closely, it turned out to be true. It completely fascinated me because I suddenly understood that he was developing a stream of ideas while he was playing. It seemed to me the greatest thing. How could you be so free and creative and at the same time be part of an ensemble interpreting a piece of music and be playing a groove? I got hooked and since then, contemporary Jazz was what I was interested in and I became very dedicated to learn and play it. I practiced, played solo, and in bands, went to all kinds of concerts, caught everything I could find on the radio, on albums and in the *Real Book*. The music I listened to and identified with was mostly new and contemporary. It took me a while to realize where it came from and to connect to older styles of Jazz. The group that was really a model for me for a long time was the Abercrombie Gateway trio with DeJohnette and Dave Holland because they were three equal musicians and the soloist was not way in front with the others just backing him up.

Cadence: *How much opportunity did you have to absorb Jazz in Germany at the time in the late '70s-early '80s?*

Lüdemann: Even back in Hamburg, I had a chance to learn and play Bebop with Herb Geller and Walter Norris and to play in big bands, performing the music of Count Basie and Charles Mingus. But the side of Jazz that most attracted me has always been its creative and contemporary side as a personal expression and expression of its time. The first live concert of contemporary Jazz that I saw was the Jan Garbarek quartet with Bobo Stenson, Palle Danielsson, Jon Christensen and special guest Kenny Wheeler. It completely blew me away. I did not understand what they were doing at all, but it seemed to have great clarity, cohesion and energy, while giving great freedom to each musician. The question was: how the hell could they play together like that?

Cadence: *How did you enter the music scene?*

Lüdemann: I became a busy guy while still in high school, playing in the local Hamburg clubs late and going to school the next morning. At that time, formal Jazz education in Europe was just starting. I attended some summer workshops and was able to get some private lessons/sessions with Joachim Kühn, who lived in Hamburg at that time. I believe, I was the only student he ever had. I remember giving him a cassette of my first solo recordings I had made in 1980 after a show he played at Onkel Pö's Carnegie Hall to become his student. I also met

Gebhard Ullmann, Thomas Heberer and Andreas Willers during that time and we started our first projects together.

Cadence: *You mentioned formal Jazz education was just starting in Europe. What was your experience?*

Lüdemann: I was playing with Manfred Schoof in 1981 and he told me to go to Köln, the first Jazz school on a university level in Germany. It had just started and the education back then was not very structured. With Frank Wunsch and Reiner Brüninghaus I had very good pianists as my teachers, but I also worked a lot on my own and I consider Bach and Schönberg among my most important teachers. One of my buddies in Köln was Achim Kaufmann and we played piano duo. I started my own group NANA 1982 in Köln with saxophonist Roger Hanschel (who would become and is still my brother-in-law), Reiner Linke (b), and Klaus Mages (d). The band worked intensely for a number of years and received a scholarship to study at the Banff Centre in 1985. CBC did a TV documentary of our work with Dave Holland during that stay. The group later changed into a trio without drums named BLAU FRONTAL and did a project with Mark Feldman and Hank Roberts.

Cadence: *You spent time with Jan Garbarek.*

Lüdemann: I toured with Jan Garbarek, Eberhard Weber and Ralf Hübner from '85 -'86. Jan Garbarek and Eberhard Weber had been among my heroes, so to perform and tour with them was like a dream come true. But it also became a turning point. Up to that point, I had been influenced strongly by a number of artists associated with the ECM label. Jan and Eberhard were among those that had developed that new kind of esthetic but they also had their own strong individual voices. I realized that it was necessary to break with that esthetic to find my own voice. In the following years, I started experimenting a lot to find my own path.

Cadence: *What interesting memories can you share from your time with Garbarek and Weber?*

Lüdemann: I was still very young when I got to play with them. Eberhard was looking for a keyboard player for his group Chorus and I got recommended. I went to his house and he checked me out and he hired me for a two month tour of Asia. It was 30 concerts in 7 weeks through 10 countries. I was 24 and I had never played a big tour in my life before and here I was on stage with two of my big heroes. It was almost too much for me. He had me playing a Yamaha DX7 synthesizer, which nobody uses anymore, but at that time was the ultimate new keyboard. I was playing three of them: Eberhard's, Jan's and my own, stacked on a keyboard stand. It felt comfortable playing several electric keyboards, which I had been doing a lot before, but I missed having the acoustic piano. It still was amazing to be able to play with those guys. I was playing the music that I had been listening to and it really worked, but what I found weird was that they wouldn't improvise so much. After four or five concerts, we would always play the same set list and order of solos. It was organized like a Pop group and I found

that disappointing. I expected someone like Jan to be much more adventurous musically. You know Jan is one of the few guys who invented a completely new saxophone sound after Coltrane, except that some of that might also be credited to Jim Pepper. He's an absolutely unique guy on stage. I don't think I've ever played with somebody so sensitive, so seismographic. The smallest thing you do on stage, he will react to it. Also, he never stands in front of the others, which very often horn players do. He stands on the side so that he's in the group and never in front of the others. I really loved that and I learned from that. I hate when horn players step in front and they don't listen to what the other guys play. That happens very often and it's very boring. As a person, Jan is very calm and reserved. He also doesn't say much about the music when you play. You don't get much feedback, although one night, I don't know what happened, but I played the intro to one of his songs with a completely wrong chord and it took me a little bit to get back [on track]. Jan didn't react directly until after the gig. He came to me and said, "Ah, Hans, some nice reharmonization tonight!" He was kind of funny. He's a cool guy.

Cadence: You also worked with the great masters of the "Frankfurt School of Jazz" such as Albert Mangelsdorff, Heinz Sauer, Ralf Hübner, Günter Lenz, and Christoph Lauer since 1985. What was the mindset of the "Frankfurt School of Jazz" artists?

Lüdemann: Ralf was actually the drummer on that Asia tour with Jan and Eberhard and that's really how I developed the connection with that circle. Ralf was one of the main composers for the Radio Jazz Ensemble in Frankfurt and he invited me to play with them in '85 and since then, I've worked with them off and on as a guest soloist, composer and arranger. The Frankfurt School approaches Jazz in a way, which is maybe a little bit German also, where you treat the material that you play, the themes, the songs, the structures, that you really draw from them in your improvisations and your solos. So it's not like you play a head and then you just play up and down the changes. You take the motives and themes and you really try to develop the ideas and respect the framework and atmosphere of the song. So a solo played on one song must always be different. It's a convincing concept. I never understood all these Jazz solos where there's a head and afterwards it all sounds the same. Everybody's just playing up and down the changes and running through the chords and very often it doesn't have anything to do with the melody or the atmosphere. It's just showing how fast or how many different things you can play. Even if you play free, there's got to be structure. It's very rewarding, it's very interesting, and it gives a sense of unity to the music. It actually helps you create something specific with every song.

Cadence: Would you talk about Albert Mangelsdorff? What he was like as a person and how it was to play and interact with him?

Lüdemann: He was also more on the calm side. He wasn't a pushy guy, he wasn't in the foreground. The way it worked in that Radio Jazz Ensemble was that everyone would contribute compositions, and after

the take, we'd all go into the booth and listen to it. It was very nice with a collective kind of spirit in that group because it was the old Albert Mangelsdorff Quartet plus other older players and some younger guys like Christoph and me. Heinz always said, [Mumbles] "Oh, shit! This was not good enough - I have to do another solo!" Everyone really listened to each other, even Albert, he would never dominate in any way. He was the most respected, of course, but he was always kind of from the background. Everybody was always looking up to him, even Heinz. I mean, he's the father figure of German modern Jazz. He's the hero of German Jazz after World War II. Also because of his personality. He was a gentleman, never aggressive. He was always kind, friendly and low-key. The whole vibe of the group was very collective. It was never about somebody overplaying the others. It was always about constructing something together musically which was very beautiful. In the studio, everyone, these old guys, were hugging and talking to each other. Albert's older brother Emil was also in this band. He's now 85 and he plays a warm, beautiful alto sax, but he's more of an old-school Swing guy. He never went into the more free music like his brother.

Cadence: You've made many significant recordings but your 2012 5-CD box set *The Art of the Trio [Die Kunst des Trios]* is worth special mention. The epic project involves five completely different standard Jazz trios recorded over a year and a half period of time. What led you to undertake such a massive project?

Lüdemann: Every trio includes my compositions along with compositions from the other players. That was very important for the project because it meant that I was also challenging myself. It has a little bit to do with [the recording] Kind of Blue. It's focusing on this moment in Jazz where everything is really fresh – the first meeting of musicians, the first take of a song, the first performance that you have. This project was all of that. These are trios that never had played together before. They meet only once and put together a program only once and they are recorded and will never perform again. So it's all about this moment of performance and every take on those 5 CDs is a first take. It's about a freshness that only improvised music can have and tension that's there when you meet people for the first time. It's an essential of Jazz that's impossible to have with certain other types of music. All these trios were so different. They were designed so that each member could bring out his own individual voice. Each one was piano, bass and drums, but each one is a completely different band sound and atmosphere and intensity, and that's amazing because it was recorded over a relatively short period of time. I'm actually continuing this project with more trios. I've already done two more in the last year. One with Pierre Favre and Mark Helias and one with two African musicians, bassist Manou Gallo and drummer Boris Tchango.

Cadence: It's quite a financial undertaking to put out a 5-CD set.

Lüdemann: I know. Well, it was my fiftieth birthday and I thought it

was the moment to do something crazy and out of the ordinary. I had already done the recordings without the intent of releasing them. It was more of an experiment which could have completely failed also, but listening back to all the tapes, I thought it was really interesting, especially if you have the trios together and you can actually compare them. I figured, 'What the heck. I'm turning fifty, I don't care if it doesn't sell. I'm just going to do something crazy.' Fortunately, I have this label [BMC] in Budapest that is really into my music and they did a great job with the packaging. I also got a grant to help with the production. But it was very surprising for me that this actually was a very successful release and it won the 2013 ECHO Jazz award [Germany's Grammy equivalent] and got a lot of airplay and great reviews.

Cadence: *One of your original compositions is "Prinz" which appears on your 2010 Rooms recording. It's based on the Jazz standard "Someday My Prince Will Come." You end up completely fragmenting and reharmonizing the well-known tune on the basis that you believe the prince will not come. Why is that?*

Lüdemann: Right [Laughs]. Well, it's like a modern interpretation. The original song I really love. It's very romantic but the lyrics are a bit silly. Someday my prince will come? Is that the way we think? My attitude is rather my prince is never gonna come [Laughs], so that's the way I reinterpreted this song. It's a more disillusioned version of the song. It's based on the notes of the melody of the song but with different harmonies and different placement of the notes. When people play that song, it's very difficult to escape the famous versions by Bill Evans and Wynton Kelly, and the beautiful solos they played on it, so when I play it my way, there's no danger of that happening.

Cadence: *Your group TRIO IVOIRE includes Ivory Coast balaphone player Aly Keita. He's not a Jazz musician at heart so what accommodations have you made in order to fit with him?*

Lüdemann: It's interesting that these African musicians have a similar approach to music. The old African tradition is to play a repertoire of traditional songs that everybody knows and to improvise on them. African musicians like Toumani Diabaté consider themselves to be Jazz musicians. Playing with Aly presents a lot of difficulties. There's quite a gap to bridge between the two of us. There are the limitations of his instrument in terms of range and missing notes. Also, African music swings in a different way. His instrument is a percussion instrument and it's very hard to play lyrical on a percussion instrument. It typically leads to very rhythmically, very accentuated and precise phrasing while in Jazz you usually have more flexibility and you can float. The African rhythm is actually very percussive and very strict. It's much stricter than Jazz rhythm, so for me to fit with that, to take liberties with or against it, is something to really figure out. Ultimately, it's about giving and taking, so I'm losing some of my freedom but the energy that he brings into the music, his rhythmic and spiritual energy, is an

African energy that I love and makes up for all of that. So you lose something but gain something and it's the same for him. He cannot play everything that he's used to playing and he has to listen and play with much more dynamics. We have different approaches that we use. Sometimes I will follow him and play more "African," because I've studied a lot of African music and I've learned from him and other African musicians, and then there are other times where Aly plays European or contemporary Jazz music. We also have something in-between where we freely improvise, which is very different from what I do with other Jazz musicians. It usually becomes more minimalist and rhythmic. What I like is that it forces me to go other ways. There are certain rules and conventions in Jazz that you have to know and relate to, but in African music, for a pianist, it's almost like a white spot on the map, except for South Africa with Abdullah Ibrahim. In West Africa, piano does not have much of a tradition. There are some keyboard players that play in hotels or bars, they will play mostly top 40 stuff, but in real African music there is very little piano. For me, it was very liberating not to have to look to any model. I just listened to Aly and we would do something new. There is no other trio group that has balafon, piano and drums. It's a different thing.

Cadence: The last questions are from other musicians who have given me questions to ask you.

Simon Nabatov (piano) asked – "In the wake of Paul Bley's passing, reflect on the meaning and influences of his music on your own playing, "back then" as well as today."

Lüdemann: There was one moment when I was listening to music with Paul that really struck me. I played him something from Heinz Sauer and Bob Degen, the American pianist who some people say plays like Paul, that kind of lyricism. Paul said, "Hey, this guy sounds like me. Turn that off!" He hated it, he didn't like it at all because he thought Bob was trying to sound like him, which I don't completely agree on. I realized at that moment that the worst thing you can do if you really love somebody's playing is to play like them. Respecting somebody and really loving the way they play means you can't play like them. I know I can sound like Paul if I want to. I know him, I really know his music. I just played "Ida Lupino" at my last concert in his memory but I made sure to not play it like him. It's all about playing yourself and being yourself. What's interesting is that in some cases, when people play similar to another person, it's almost like mocking them. If you talked to me and I imitated you back to you, if I repeated what you said and how you said it, that's the same thing. Paul felt that way about someone copying him. In Jazz it's all about finding yourself. When I told him I was doing the Keith Jarrett concert he said, "Ah, you shouldn't do that. Play your own stuff." I think he's right, you need to focus on yourself. (In that case my solution was to play some quotes, rather like playing classical piano pieces and otherwise improvise myself.) That's really what it's about. And Paul is a great example for somebody with a

strong and recognizable personal sound – you hear that it is him after one note. I found out that, although Paul was a great inspiration, I am very different from him as a person but also in my approach to music and the instrument. But to be directly confronted with and experience his very personal and in some ways radical approach to music and the piano was also very impressive. He was a model for someone who has great and sometimes uncompromising integrity as an artist, which can be a source of self-confidence and is very useful to have.

Dejan Terzic (drums) asked - "How would you describe your music?"

Lüdemann: Crazy! Wild! [Laughs] In my music, there are different areas that are important for me and they come out, to a certain degree, in each project that I do but it's all different. Sometimes I'll focus on melodies, on lines. I'm not the typical pianist who's really into playing big harmonic stuff all the time and playing thick, colorful things. I'm much more interested in the single note and in the lines and in the melodies. Maybe that's why I like Keith Jarrett and Paul and Bud Powell. I like to have both simplicity and complexity - some of my compositions are more complex and relate to modern and microtonal music. What's essential for every project that I do is that I'm always looking for a communal thing. I think the start of that goes back to my beginning when I first played with my two brothers on all kinds of instruments. It felt very close, like we were one. I need to feel connected to the other players in my band and to create a unified whole embracing all the different personalities in it. First there is a structural level in the music: concerning lines and melodies I think the classical background is important in regard to polyphonic voices, counterpoint and voice-leading. There are harmonic questions to answer and some of my typical colors tend to be complementary like yellow with blue or sharp contrasts, sometimes intensified by microtonal intervals. In terms of rhythm, I feel polyrhythmically and refer to African rhythm, allowing me to constantly shift perspectives. Secondly there is the communal aspect I was talking about that extends to and includes the audience in performance. A third level is when I create and perform pieces, there are usually Meta-levels to the music of emotion, atmosphere, spirit, associations, a certain kind of energy or feel. The term that I like to describe my music as a whole or as a style is "Polyjazz," describing the fact that it is a unified concept but it has different layers and integrates diverse influences on all levels. And almost always, there is a bigger idea behind each project and each album: the TRIO IVOIRE is a musical answer to globalization, the T.E.E. and ROOMS are Pan-European projects, with the T.E.E. designed as the base of an expandable orchestral project, and Rooms as a most flexible and open small chamber ensemble. The combinations of piano with balaphone and piano with Kora also make it evident that two very different cultures are meeting on equal terms. And the solo programs with acoustic and virtual sounds explore our different contemporary realities.

Silke Eberhard (reedist) asked – “I’d like to ask you how you got interested in quarter-tone music and how you got the idea to transfer that to the piano?”

Lüdemann: The first step in that direction was with Hayden Chisholm, the saxophone player from New Zealand. He used to be my student and at that time he started changing his saxophone so that he could play quarter-tones. We had been playing in duo so I thought, ‘Gee, what am I going to do? I hear it, but I can’t do it.’ At that time I bought a clavichord where you can actually bend the notes, so I could do some stuff to come close to what he was doing. Since then, I have been interested in that pitch stuff. The first piece I wrote using quarter-tones was “The Virtual Piano” in 1999. I started out doing my own experiments and not until years later started to check out what existed, including Classical composition. In 2009 there was an article in a German Jazz magazine that put me in a line of heritage with Monk, Bill Evans and Ivan Wyschnegradsky – the latter I had never heard of before. I found out that there were some quarter-tone composers from the ‘20s. Then I heard about a quarter-tone concert in Hamburg with two pianos so I went to hear it. They played music from the old gurus - Charles Ives; some pieces of Ivan Wyschnegradsky, the Russian composer; Alois Hába, the Czech composer; and also Georg Friedrich Haas, who now lives in New York. That gave me a lot of ideas, but my own use of the quarter-tones is very different from them. For me, it’s mostly about blue notes, making them dirtier and more “harmful.” The greatest thing about microtonal music is that it completely resets your brain. After hearing it, you hear everything differently afterwards. It’s the same sort of effect if you play the clavichord, which is a very soft instrument, and you go to the piano afterwards. The piano sort of hits you really hard because you’re used to listening in a different way. The same is true for microtonal music. It’s very refreshing for the ear.

Sébastien Boisseau (bass) asked – “Hans, I remember we’ve discussed the special relationship between the sound of the virtual keyboard and the piano. With [your trio] ROOMS, at some points we are melting acoustic, electric, numerical, analogical, tonal and microtonal waves or signals. All of those coexist within quite classical jazz trio forms. It results in a feeling of distortion of what the listener expects from the melody or the harmony. We know some who are skeptical about this, even disturbed. They argue that it affects the “beauty” of the lines, or the sound in general. We know that “beauty is a rare thing.” Are you looking for a hidden beauty, one that people are not used to?”

Lüdemann: For me, it’s not so much about beauty, it’s about this time and the virtual world we live in. It’s like mirroring things. We go from talking face-to-face and then we go online and basically leave the real world for long periods of time so large parts of our lives have become virtual. It’s breaking the illusion that we are actually doing something real acoustic because every recording is like a trick. You would never be able to tell if I was actually playing the acoustic or non-acoustic piano

on the recording. Even myself, I can't tell sometimes because they are both recorded acoustic pianos on a recording. When it's live you can see which one I'm playing on, but not on the recording when it's is well done. In those moments when you can actually hear a difference, it may sound a little bit strange or alienated, and that's also interesting, I think, to play with those realities should be irritating also. It's good if it's irritating, it shouldn't always be beautiful. It's not interesting if it's all beautiful. It's also about being disturbing, about being strange. You know it's kind of frightening that we can be sitting here looking at our phones and being somewhere else all the time. It's a big change. I grew up in the '60s and '70s, there were no cell phones or laptops. Everyone would just hang out together and have a good time, and now I'm spending hours and hours on the fucking computer every day! That's the reality and I'm trying to work with it, to make music with it, and to ask questions with it. I want to break up aesthetics also. I started out with an ECM aesthetic, which was important when I started out with those guys. That was their aesthetic but what am I gonna do? I didn't create that music so I have to go somewhere else. I could have gone on to play in that vein after working with Garbarek and Weber, but what's the point of doing that? To sell records or to please certain expectations is not my primary goal. I think it's more interesting to break aesthetics then to fulfill them.

Achim Kaufmann (piano) asked - "Is there anything that you retain from your student days at the Köln Conservatory, any particular piece of advice or wisdom (or the opposite) that has stayed with you?"

Lüdemann: I actually learned a lot from Achim. We were and still are friends and hung out together as students. He's a very different kind of player from me and he had some things that I really liked that I didn't have. Also we went to Banff [Canada] together in '85 and trained with Richard Beirach, Muhal Richard Abrams, Steve Coleman and Dave Holland. One of the best learning experiences is to compare yourself directly with your peers. It was great to grow up with him and Simon [Nabatov]. Maybe I learned more from them than my teachers. When I studied at the Köln Conservatory it was the very beginning of Jazz studies in Germany and it was not very structured. We never actually studied a Duke Ellington score. But I got to play in combos of Manfred Schoof or the big band directed by Jiggs Whigham and I also was in touch with Classical music and students from that area. Being a student gave you room to work and develop, but much of the learning took place outside of school. You had to teach yourself. I think one of the greatest achievements from that time was the musicians association "Initiative Kölner Jazzhaus" (modelled after the AACM) that I became an active member of and that has since changed the Jazz scene of our city, region and country - its initiatives leading to the Jazz Haus school, Jazz Haus label, festival and the club "Stadtgarten", that became one of the important venues for contemporary Jazz in Europe with some of its members becoming active also on the national and international level. I

would advise younger musicians to also come together and get engaged and organized in their local scenes.

Thomas Heberer (trumpet) asked – “Remembering the late ‘70s in Hamburg, Germany, and thinking about the loosely associated group of teenagers hungry to cut their teeth in the Jazz world, it is delightful that we all made Jazz our life’s mission and are still at it - Gebhard Ullmann, Frank Gratkowski, Matthias Schubert, Andreas Willers, and you and I. The question to you is - why? What factors at the time in that environment allowed us to dream up this path?”

Lüdemann: Yeah, it’s astonishing. I first played with him when he was 15. I don’t know if I can answer that question. It seems we had a scene there that we weren’t even aware of. It was for a very short period. I came back from studying in California when I was 18 and that’s when I started playing with those guys. I think the ‘70s were a real exciting time with a lot of creative freedom and some of the contemporary Jazz of that time achieved quite big popularity. The upcoming German ECM label gave it probably even more presence in our country. It felt like Jazz had a lot of relevance in society and brought freshness into the culture and was something new that fit to the alternative lifestyle of our generation. To be part of that seemed to be a way of creatively expressing yourself and the time you live in – something very “en vogue” at that time. Maybe this “spirit of the ‘70s” of Jazz as a creative and contemporary expression is still what motivates us and has become our mission. What helped in Hamburg was that the radio station had an amazing Jazz program and a concert series. I have mentioned the small club “Onkel Pö’s Carnegie Hall” that showcased a large number of international, but also local bands – I saw even Pat Metheny and Jack DeJohnette there, in front of 150 people. But there were also the bigger “Fabrik” and an annual “New Jazz Festival.” There also was the NDR Bigband with its very open-minded director, Dieter Glawischnig, who encouraged the local scene and first attempted to start popular music at the Hamburg Musikhochschule as a summer program. Also Herb Geller was living there, a real bebop player who we did workshops with. I did a lot of playing in Hamburg during and at the time I went to the conservatory. I was playing solo, in several small bands and in three big bands at the same time. I don’t even know how I did it because I was still in school. I would rehearse and practice in the afternoon, play in the club at night, and sleep for a few hours and write my exams in the morning. I missed school a lot!

In My Own
Words,
Reflections
from Byron
Morris,
Part Two

Earlier, I mentioned that the band called the "Impacts" also hosted the Jam sessions on Sunday afternoons from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm, at The Club Royal.

This is where, I got a chance to meet some of the musicians in that area. I met saxophonist/trumpeter Joe McPhee who is from Poughkeepsie, NY, also saxophonist Mack Williams, who like me, worked for IBM he was a programmer. I would join both of these musicians' bands, and record with Joe McPhee (Joe McPhee & Survival Unit II @ WBAI's Free Music Store, 1971). Also, I invited musicians who I knew, to come to our Jam Sessions who lived in NYC... Jerry Wise on trumpet, Harold E. Smith on drums, who later, also recorded with Joe McPhee.... Joe McPhee and his business partner Craig Johnson, encouraged Jerry Wise and myself to put out our first LP; "UNITY Byron & Gerald" in 1972 from that last session in Washington, DC. They helped us through the process...

Mack Williams' Band; "Now," aka: "The Majesty of Soul", played all the current hits of that Era: "Rock Steady" by Aretha Franklin, "They Call Me Mr. Pitiful" by Otis Redding, James Browns' hits, etc. So, I got to work on my R&B chops.... with "The Majesty of Soul." Mack Williams, tenor & Bari Saxes, Bunny Christian, organ/vocals, Gene Williams, bass, Peter Finch, Guitar/vocals, Ronnie Johnson, drums, Mark Katz, trombone, Vince McEwan, trumpet, Byron Morris, alto sax, Kay Shalong, vocals, and Henry Hayes aka King Henry, vocals.... This was a very exciting band that folks could dance to. Out of all this musical activity, I managed to do well as a facilities Engineer for IBM. To talk about IBM in that time period (1969 - 1974) would require a whole separate book...

The first performance, which I played with Joe McPhee, was at Vassar College in April 1970, there in Poughkeepsie, NY. Joe was teaching a class on the History of Jazz Music, there at Vassar College. So the place was packed, and the students hung on to every note we played. In the band was Tyrone Crabb, bass, Mike Kull, piano, and Bruce Thompson, drums, Joe on tenor sax & trumpet, and I played alto sax... It was exciting!!! Totally different from the other bands musical repertoires. I had embraced all of the different music styles at

that time. I was very flexible musically... What really stands-out in my mind from that concert, was; we the musicians, started the concert without Joe McPhee, he was nowhere to be seen... We were playing an original song written by Joe, and as we completed the song's theme, I heard this loud screaming tenor sax sound coming from back stage, I turned to see Joe clad in a Monk's Habit, with the hood pulled-up over his head, which covered his head & face. The neck of the tenor sax disappeared into the hood, and I had never heard anyone play the saxophone so loud like that before... For a moment or two, I was startled, by Joe's appearance, and the sound of his saxophone being played at such an intense volume. I looked around at the other musicians, and they were all smiling, and the SRO audience all rose to their feet at once, screaming at the TOP OF THEIR LUNGS !!! "YEAH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The musical engagement at Vassar College in 1970, was the first time which I performed with Joe McPhee. After that, Joe and I performed together for the next several years until I moved away from Poughkeepsie, New York in mid-1974. I appeared on a CD with Joe called: "Joe McPhee & Survival Unit II at WBAI's Free Music Store, 1971" I also appeared on a TV program with Joe McPhee & Survival Unit II in 1972, produced by the Jazz Music Promoter; Chris Albertson.

The beginning of the Band Unity. I met Vincent McEwan around 1971, he was the replacement trumpeter for the Soul Band known as; "The Majesty of Soul," which I had been a member of since around mid-1970. Vince was born in the Bronx, in New York City, his Dad "Chick" McEwan was a fine guitar player who performed around New York for many years. Vince had also been a member of; Pucho & His Latin Soul Brothers Band. I met Vince at his first rehearsal with the soul band (Majesty of Soul), he wanted to warm-up on his trumpet a little before we started the rehearsal, so he asked the rhythm section to play a medium Blues in the key of F. When he started to improvise I knew right away that he was the "real deal on trumpet." He was very impressive and lyrical on his choice of notes, and his phrasing was "very hip," like the seasoned professional which he was... We became good friends, and would ride to our performances (Gigs), in either my car or his car. Our discussions during these car trips would touch on music, music history, favorite musicians, current events, etc., etc. I introduced Vince to Gerald Wise (the composer of "Kitty Bey") and the three of us talked about forming a band to play Jazz. Gerald Wise had written several compositions and Vince brought several compositions he had written, and I added to the compositions with a couple I had written, so we had a start. This is how our friendship developed out of mutual respect and admiration for each other, and the Music known World-Wide as Jazz...

Don Pullen was living and performing in New York City during this time frame. Don and I were High School Classmates, (Class of 1959) and had known each other since we were in kindergarten. I called Don and told him about the idea of putting together a Band to play original compositions, etc. He indicated that he would be interested. I met Frank Clayton, a fine bassist & drummer on a Gig with Joe McPhee. I asked Frank if he would be

interested in joining our proposed Band, and again, he was also interested. Vince McEwan, a fine trumpet player and composer was also interested in this new band. Vince and I had been working in "The Majesty of Soul," Band together, and Vince had great ideas and great Jazz chops... In talking with Frank Clayton, I found out that his wife was a singer, so I ask him to find out if she would be interested in joining the new Band also. During our conversation Frank told me that we could rehearse in the Loft where he and Jay Clayton lived. They lived in the SoHo section of New York City. So all the musicians were coming together, we just needed to call a rehearsal for the new Band. On a Saturday in October 1972, Unity held its first rehearsal in Frank & Jay's Loft in the SoHo section of New York City. Boy, were we in for a treat!!!

During that first rehearsal (Fall 1972) we worked on the composition; "Reunion" co-written by Lenny Martin and myself. Don Pullen piano, Frank Clayton bass, Jay Clayton vocals, Vince McEwan trumpet, Gerald Wise trumpet and me on alto & soprano saxes. We had not settled on a drummer yet, so we proceeded without a drummer for this rehearsal. Jay is a very creative vocalist, with, or without words. We were very impressed!!! After the rehearsal I was very happy about our beginnings for this new group... Some days later, I would find out that Don Pullen would get an offer to join Charles Mingus' Band, and he would be unable to be our pianist for Unity.

During this same time period: 1972-73; I met Jimmy Owens, Ornette Coleman, Frank Foster, Stanley Cowell, Clifford Jordan, Jimmy Heath, Mary Lou Williams.

Jimmy Owens encouraged me to apply for a Grant from National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). I applied and was awarded a grant from NEA. This was a grant to study with Frank Foster, who lived in Scars Dale, NY, which was about an hour's drive south of Poughkeepsie, NY where we lived...

In mid 1973 when we were looking for a music recording studio, for which to record an album of original music with the group Unity. I had a phone conversation with Stanley Cowell about that subject. Stanley, had heard some good feedback concerning a "State of the Art" small recording studio located in White Plains, New York, named the Minot Sound Studios. The Minot Sound Studios is where Unity recorded their two albums starting in late December 1973. "Unity, Blow Thru Your Mind" released in the spring of 1974 and "Byron Morris & Unity, Vibrations, Themes & Serenades" released in January 1979. In 1969 when we recorded the session in Washington, DC, which became the record album (vinyl-LP) "UNITY Byron & Gerald," our concept was a freer collective musical improvisation, more along the lines of what Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane had done. By late 1973, almost five years later, our concept had changed from freer to more structure, and by incorporating more and different musical influences; human voice, Latin rhythms, and other influences from a wider spectrum of musical ideas and sounds. UNITY had morphed into a Band with a more Global musical energy. Which is why our two albums from the 1973 and 1979 sessions are still popular and selling in Japan, Europe, England (UK), Australia, Canada, USA, etc. Today...

The musical composition "Kitty Bey," was written and arranged for the band Unity by trumpeter/composer Gerald L. Wise in 1973. The song was dedicated to a young Lady named Kitty Bey, who lived in New York City during the 1970's. She was a staunch supporter of the band Unity, and the new musical directions that the band was taking in those years. Everywhere the band would perform in New York City, Kitty Bey would be there to cheer us on. She had a certain presence and a rhythm in her speech and walk, which inspired Gerald Wise to write the musical composition named for her. Unity started performing the song in January 1973; each time we played the song individual band members would add their idea of how they viewed Kitty Bey. Finally, when we recorded the song in late 1973, after a year of working on how the song should sound a certain extraordinary creative power struck our performance during the recording session. Amazingly the song was done in only one take. "Kitty Bey," the song, and Unity's original 1974 recorded version of the song, has been Unity's most enduring musical Legacy to date.

Here is a sample of a review done in 2004 for the song: "Kitty Bey:"

"Unity was formed with similar values, aims and objectives to many other spiritually conscious groups at the time, as the name suggests. Uniquely, it managed to match the musical and spiritual searching of John Coltrane, Pharaoh Sanders and Ornette Coleman alongside an equally experimental New York art-music dimension that was brought into the group by vocalist Jay Clayton, who had performed with, amongst many others, Steve Reich. With bassist Milton Suggs having played in Sun Ra's Arkestra, and Byron Morris having studied with Ornette Coleman and Rahsaan Roland Kirk, it is possible to see the musical path that makes up "Kitty Bey", twelve minutes of musical intensity, which sounds like nothing else ever recorded." Author unknown....

Members of Unity that performed on the LP: "Blow Thru You Mind"



Jay Clayton, Milton Suggs, Vince McEwan & Byron, Abdushahid, Mike Kull,
Tony Waters

(Photos by Gerald L. Wise, except Jay Clayton by Robert Taylor)

Even though Unity was well received, where and whenever we performed, our engagements were few and far between... It was hard to keep the original core of musicians of Unity together because of lack of work or engagements, etc. My wife and I moved back to Washington, DC in mid 1974 to find steady employment in our career fields; of medical for my wife, and engineering for me... I also was a Radio Music Programmer on WPFW-FM in Washington, DC, from 1977 thru 1985, my show was called; "The Bright Moments Show", in honor of my friend; Rashaan Roland Kirk...

* In 1980, you worked with poet Eloise Greenfield to work on a collaboration of her poems with your music. How was this project born?

Mrs. Eloise Greenfield contacted me in early 1980 about her proposed project to put Jazz Music to her book of original Children's Poems, etc., "Honey, I Love." I found her idea intriguing, and agreed to work with her on the project. I contacted several musicians who had worked with me in the Band Unity; Vince McEwan; trumpet/flugelhorn, Cedric Lawson; piano, Don Pate; bass. My brother-in law David Fuller, was married to my Sister Deborah Joy Morris Fuller, David is a fine drummer, who had contacts with a sound studio in the Boston, MA area, where he lived. I informed Eloise Greenfield that we could have full use of a sound studio located in Boston, MA to record all the music for the project, and my Brother-in Law David Fuller could arrange Lodging for the musicians and for her. Off we went to Boston, MA, and we spent the better part of four days recording all the music to be used on the album;"Honey, I Love." Eloise Greenfield was very happy with the results of our efforts, she brought the finish tapes containing the music tracks back to Washington, DC, where she and the children over-dubbed their voices with our music tracks... This album has been released once again by SHOUT! Productions of JAPAN in 2013....

REFLECTIONS

Additional reflections back to my child hood, and beyond. I will do these reflections as they come back into my mind, stay with me folks.

Some of the musicians who would come and play the big upright piano in my grandmothers' living room; in Roanoke, VA, which was the same piano that Don Pullen and the legendary pianist Clyde "Fats" Wright, along with many others would play during that time period. My Dad had musician's friends in the various travelling bands during that time period (1950's). My Dad wrote arrangements for the Aristocrats Orchestra on that piano....In Basie' Band there were Bill Graham (alto sax), Marshal Royal (alto sax), and "Wild Bill" Davis (organist). And in Duke Ellington's band there was Jimmy Hamilton (tenor sax & clarinet). When they were in town, they would come by our house, etc., to talk and listen to my Dad's record collection, and to tell stories of their travels around the world. The Aristocrats Orchestra and its band members were all friends of our family, and each musician would share his musical knowledge with me. My earliest recollection was seeing and hearing the Aristocrats band at "The Club Morocco", located on Henry Street ("The Yard") in Roanoke, when I was maybe four or five years old, an indelible impression was made on me forever about music, and especially about this music we call jazz.

Byron Morris: In My Own Words, Pt. 2

When I went to high school (1955-59), I met some like minded students; Marvin Poindexter, Gordon Moore, Jimmy Lewis they had jazz record collections, and George Moore who had jazz LP's and a jazz photo scrap book...

Over the years I met and conversed with; Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson, Billy Eckstine, Ahmad Jamal, George Duvivier, Count Basie, Earl Fatha Hines, Sun Ra, Freddie Hubbard, Art Farmer, Elvin Jones, Jimmy Garrison, Charles Mingus, they all shared ideas and information with me. I became friends with; Don Pullen, Jimmy Owens, Jackie McLean, Ornette Coleman, Mary Lou Williams, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Cedric Lawson, Frank Foster, Percy & Jimmy Heath, Clifford Jordan, Philly Joe Jones, Joe McPhee, John Malachi, Kenny Barron, Ron Holloway, Andrew White, Wycliffe Gordon, and Hilton Ruiz, my very good friend and member of UNITY....

Jackie McLean and I became very close friends, Unity performed for Jackie, at the Hartt School of music, in the mid 1970s. Jackie, was head of the Jazz Music program at Hartt School of Music, now called; the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz. (University of Hartford), in Hartford, Connecticut (1970-2006).

The Fall of 1976, the Bird's Nest night club, Silver Spring, Maryland. Rahsaan after the "stroke" playing "Giant Steps" with one hand! Yes, you heard me, one hand!!! This was too much! I was seated next to the front of the stage which was about 14 inches high, after that unbelievable performance on "Giant Steps" I jumped up and grabbed Rahsaan around the waist and hugged him. Michael Hill his singer/bodyguard came out and grabbed me! The three of us were locked in an embrace for a few moments (Bright Moments!). Rahsaan asked me; "who are you?" I said: Byron Morris. Rahsaan told Michael Hill to release me. Rahsaan asked me to accompany him back to the dressing room. Once in the dressing room, Rahsaan told me that he had purchased the record album; "Blow Thru Your Mind" by Unity (see album cover photo under 1974 date on; part 3, page 1), earlier that same day. Rahsaan said that he had been most impressed with the musical direction of Unity, and in particular my approach and sound on the saxophone. I was totally in shock by all that I had heard in his playing, and now was hearing, as personal compliments directed at me, coming from this very great musician. Rahsaan. As time went on; his wife Dorthaan, his daughters, and I became very good friends, family even. Rahsaan visited my home and met my wife, sons, my grandmother and my father. Rahsaan was especially taken with my grandmother's cooking. It was a real Bright Moment for him. He and I would talk on the phone for what seemed like hours about the music, its history, and the musicians that were at the heart of the music's innovation. He was a total collector of the music, and had all the albums by all the greats... He knew the history and all the musical styles. Rahsaan is responsible for me learning the flute and adding it to my performances along with the alto & soprano saxophones. I wrote and recorded "Theme for Rahsaan" in his memory...Rahsaan visited me once during my Radio show: "The Bright

Moments" Show. My friends Chuck Taylor and "Big" Ron Sutton brought him from a performance at Fort DuPont Park... He played the Didgeridoo and the kalimba at the same time, while circular breathing. That piece of history was captured on tape by someone listening-in, and was used or quoted in the Book about Rashaan called "Bright Moments" by John Kruth....

Additional reflections back into my early days; 1962:

Spring 1962; Ray Charles and his Big Band in Concert, Atlanta, GA at the Rhythm Rink Auditorium. Two of my Tuskegee Institute Buddies; Calvert Jeffers and Fred Stone and myself drove over to Atlanta From Tuskegee, AL, to see Ray Charles. This turned out to be the first integrated concert in Atlanta Georgia History, meaning: Blacks & Whites were not assigned segregated seating, the seating was open. We were seated to the left side of the stage, and right across from us, more in the center of the auditorium was about four row of students from the University of Georgia. It was a grand and glorious performance put on by Ray Charles and his Band and the Raeletts. After more than fifty years I'm not sure who every band members was... Rhythm section: Edgar Willis; bass, Edward "Bruno" Carr; drums, Elbert "Sonny" Forriest; guitar. trumpets; Philip Guilbeau, Oliver Beaner, Roy Burrows, John Hunt. trombones; Grachan Moncur,III, Julian Priester, Frederic "Keg" Johnson; bass trombone, Henderson Chambers. Saxophones; Hank Crawford, alto sax/director, Rudy Powell; alto sax, David "FatHead" Newman; tenor sax & flute, James Clay; tenor sax, LeRoy "Hog" Cooper; baritone sax. The Raeletts; Margie Hendrix, Gwen Berry, Darlene McCray, & Patricia Richards. and of course the Master Musician, vocalist; Mr. Ray Charles on piano and the leader of the Band!! Of course when Ray did "Georgia on my mind" with "Fathead" doing a flute obbligato behind Ray's singing, and the Raeletts humming along softly underneath, the Rhythm Rink audience went a little crazy with glee.... The whole concert ended with Ray's big Hit of that time; "What'd I Say." We were all on our feet dancing and shouting!!! It was a good time, was had by all... a good time was had by all...

Spring 1963; Sam Cooke with Saxophonist King Curtis (Curtis Ousley) and the "KingPins" in a Club setting at the Royal Peacock Night Club, in Atlanta, GA. Two of my Classmates; Edmund "Greek" Leonard and William "Dap" Smith and I, went to see this show, we were students at Tuskegee Institute at the time... Sorry I don't remember the band members in the "KingPins." King Curtis & the "King Pins" opened the show with a couple of lively instrumentals and his hit "Soul Serenade," before Sam Cooke came on... "Twistin" the Night away was the order of Day, and that Song Resounded in every note which was played that night. Sam invited several very attractive young Ladies to come and dance with him... They and We all had a BALL!!! In Atlanta, GA, dancing the NIGHT AWAY... Sam Cooke left us way to soon, he was murdered in 1964... But, I will always remember Sam and King Curtis on that night in Atlanta, GA, all those many years ago, when I was young and life was sweet, and anything seemed possible, possible, possible.....

During the summer of 1962, I drove my Aunt Marie Taliaferro to Montclair, NJ, from Roanoke, VA, to visit family members. A college friend of mine lived in Montclair, and we got together to talk and exchange stories, etc. My friend Ron Fleming knew I loved Jazz music, and he made me aware that Thelonious Monk and his band were performing at the Village Gate Nite club, in New York City. My friend and I drove over to New York to hear Thelonious Monk. When we arrived at the club; The Village Gate, which was located in the Greenwich Village section of New York, City, we found out that in addition to the Thelonious Quartet, there were also two other bands playing there that night. The other two Bands; Herbie Mann and his Men; Herbie; flute, Chief Bey; drums percussions, Dave Pike; vibes, Ben Tucker; bass, Ahmed, Adul- Malik; bass, Ray Mantilla; percussions, Rudy Collins; drums, and the Eric Dolphy Quartet; with Eric on; alto saxophone, flute, and bass clarinet, Mal Waldron; piano, Richard Davis; bass, and Ed Blackwell; drums. Monk's band was; Monk on piano, Charlie Rouse; tenor saxophone, Butch Warren; bass, and Frankie Dunlop; drums. Butch Warren was on top of his music; solid, and on the creative side of the music of Monk... Boy! what a great night of music... What a great treat!!! What a great night of Music!!!! In the late summer of 1964, a friend; Billy Davenport, and I traveled to Baltimore, MD from Washington, DC , to see Jackie McLean and his band perform at the North End Lounge Club (club owned by Gary Bartz' Father& Mother) in Baltimore, MD. In Jackie's band were: Charles Tolliver; trumpet, Larry Willis; piano, Larry Ridley; bass, Jack DeJohnette; drums, and Jackie McLean on alto saxophone and the Leader of the Band. Some time towards the end of the second set, a very tall, thin, light skinned young man came into the club while the band was playing. Jackie became very animated and happy when he saw this young man, it was the Great bassist; Butch Warren. Jackie asked Butch to sit-in with the band, and Butch barrowed Larry Ridley's bass and began to play. The audience went crazy when Butch took a solo, which he used the bow to accomplish... Needless to say, Butch "brought the house down" with his playing... What great music!!! Butch Warren, what a great bassist, you will be missed Butch...

Meeting John Coltrane at the Bohemian Caverns Club:

It was in 1964 in Washington, DC at the Legendary Jazz Club; The Bohemian Caverns, is where I met and spoke with John Coltrane. The Band: John Coltrane; Leader, tenor & soprano saxophones, McCoy Tyner; piano, Jimmy Garrison; bass, Elvin Jones; drums. The classic John Coltrane Quartet. As I entered the club that night, in 1964 to see the John Coltrane Band, Jimmy Garrison walked up to me and asked if I had a cigarette?

I reached into my shirt pocket, and pulled out a pack of Newport's and offered him a couple. Jimmy asked; "was I a musician?" I told him yes, "what instrument do you play?" saxophone I said. "Have you ever met John Coltrane" he said, no I said, Jimmy started to walk toward a table in the rear portion of the club where John Coltrane sat smoking a cigar, this surprised me to see him smoking a cigar, because most younger men Coltrane's age smoked cigarettes during that time.

Jimmy said to Coltrane; "Chief, here is a young musician, and he plays saxophone, his name is Byron Morris, he wants to meet you." John Coltrane looked at me and said; "which saxophone do you play?" I told him that I played the alto saxophone. "Oh, I used to play the alto saxophone too," he said. He asked me if I enjoyed the way Johnny Hodges played the alto sax? I told him yes, but, that I also liked Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman. He asked me which make of saxophone I had?

I replied that I had a Conn with the tuner on the neck. He said that when he played the alto saxophone, that he also had a Conn alto... I told him that I also played a curved soprano sax, which was made by Gretsch, which I had with me. He asked to see the horn, which I then retrieved from my car, and handed-over to him. John Coltrane took the horn and looked it over very carefully, inspecting the instrument by opening and closing each key to see the response, looking at the pads, the springs, every small detail on the horn.

John Coltrane told me that my soprano sax was made by Conn for the Gretsch company, and that the horn was made out of very good metal, so that the sound quality must be excellent he said. I asked him to play the horn if he would like to. He looked at the cork on the neck of the horn and said; "the cork is too short & thin for my soprano mouthpiece, and your mouthpiece is a stock mouthpiece, which would not give me a true indication of what this horn would really sound like." He continued, "you need to have some work done on this horn, in terms of new pads, a new cork on the neck, and two or three springs need to be replaced, and overall adjustments need to be made, so maybe the next time I'm in town you could bring the horn by, and I will play on it some..."

The next time never happened. During the ensuing years; John Coltrane changed Band members, to include; Alice Coltrane; piano, Pharaoh Sanders; tenor sax, Rashid Ali; drums, with Jimmy Garrison; bass, being the lone remaining member from the Classic John Coltrane Quartet. When I saw Coltrane with the new band, he was busy working through all the new musical material, and I did not approach him again about playing on my recently over-hauled soprano saxophone.

My short time talking with, and being in John Coltrane's presence was very spiritual, and most informative; he had a very calm & sincere demeanor, and he took time on his "music break" to speak with me, and to be instructive about the care and upkeep of my saxophones... This was a very important life's lesson that was not lost on me...

The Bohemian Caverns is located in the basement level of a four story brick building on the corner of 11th & U Streets, NW, Washington, DC, USA. The club first opened in 1926, and hosted most of the greatest musicians since that time. The list of Great musicians are too numerous to delineate here, everyone from; Duke Ellington to John Coltrane and everyone else in between and afterwards... Pharaoh Sanders is due to appear there sometime this spring of 2011. So, the legacy continues...

Meeting Miles Davis at the Bohemian Caverns

My historic meeting with another Icon of the Music; Miles Dewey Davis. It was early 1965, and the Jazz Music World was all a buzz about the "enfant terrible" drummer; Tony Williams who was 19 years old in early 1965 when I first saw him playing with Miles. A friend of mine, and an excellent bass player; Lenny Martin and I went to hear Miles' new group. Herbie Hancock; piano, Wayne Shorter; tenor sax, Tony Williams; drums, Miles the leader on trumpet, and we got a surprise, that Ron Carter the bassist was not present for this engagement... Instead, Miles had a substitute bassist whose name I have forgotten after all these years. However, I do remember the incident that caused Lenny and I to meet and speak with Miles Davis...

When Lenny and I discovered that Ron Carter was not with Miles' Band on this occasion, we were very disappointed, but, at the same time very happy to hear Tony Williams, and the other great musicians of Miles' second Great Band. True to the clubs name; Caverns, there were large columns from the floor to the ceiling in several places throughout the club. In a real Caverns; there are stalactites form from the ceiling. As the drops fall to the floor, deposits build forming stalagmites. When a stalactites growing down from the ceiling meets a stalagmite growing up from the floor, a column or pillar is formed.

The Club was so crowded that night that club manager; Tony Taylor , allowed us to stand and watch the Band next to one of those large columns. We were quietly taking in the music, and I was listening intently to Tony Williams drumming. Lenny came closer to me and said; "the bass player is playing out of tune, playing flat for the most part." I didn't respond right away, so I turned my attention from the drums to the bass, to try and hear what Lenny had mentioned. In my excited state I probably spoke back to him too loudly. I said yeah!! the bass player is a little FLAT!! To confirm what Lenny had said to me. The next thing I knew, I heard this other slightly hoarse voice say; "WHO IS THAT TALKING ABOUT MY BASS PLAYER"??? I leaned forward to look around the column and came face to face with Miles Davis, who was standing on the other side of the column which I was standing next to. OH!!! Mr. Davis I said. "You're a Musician?" he said. Yes, I said. My friend and I are both musicians. " Well, you have pretty good hearing, because that bass player is playing FLAT!!!" He continued. Why are you standing up and not at a table? I told him the manager let us stand because there were no more tables available. You two guys go sit at my table which is over there near the Band stand, Miles said." Miles went back on the Band stand to finish the song, which they were playing. Lenny and I waited for the song to end, and we headed to the table which Miles had pointed out to us.

We sat down, and then Miles came over and sat down also. I looked at Miles, the way he was dressed, tailored Italian cut high end suit and shoes, beautiful silk shirt and contrasting tie, his hair fixed just right, his horn had his name; "Miles Davis" engraved on the horn. A very attractive Waitress came over, Miles told her to bring three Cognacs. Lenny and I looked at each other and smiled. Miles said; why aren't you guys playing a Gig

somewhere tonight? I responded that we were on our way to a Gig at a club down town DC, at 10th and K Sts., NW, which starts at Midnight, and last to about 4:00 am. Before I could finish the explanation, our Waitress with the three Cognacs arrived, with the drinks in three large brandy snifters, each one was half full of cognac. Miles picked-up his glass and said; "here's to you guys," and he drank a large portion from his glass in one swallow. Lenny followed Miles' example, and took down a large portion of his glass. I hadn't ever had cognac before so I sniffed the liquid first, then let a small portion go down my throat which seemed to burn all the way down to my stomach. I immediately put my glass down. Miles said, "so this Gig you guys have, any good looking women come in there?" Yes, I said. "Oh Hoooo!!!" Miles said, how do you get there from where we are? I explained how to get there from where we were at the Caverns. I pushed my glass of cognac towards Lenny, and it was time for us to leave for our gig at the "Crows Toe." We shook hands with Miles and thanked him for his hospitality, and told him we hoped to see him later that night at our Gig.

Miles didn't show, I don't believe we really expected him too. I can't speak for Lenny Martin, after all these years, he and Miles are both gone, as is Tony Williams. But, I will never forget meeting one of my all time favorite musician Icons; Miles Davis, and being an eyewitness to History... Miles Dewey Davis

Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, and Wild Bill Davis Trio Summer 1965 The Wonder Gardens Club, and Little Belmont Club Atlantic City, NJ. In May 1964 when I graduated College from Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, my Dad asked me what would I do next? I told him, back to a job I had waiting for me in Washington, DC, with The Otis Elevator Co. as an electronic technician. My Dad liked to take vacations in the summer time, and his Job with the Norfolk & Western Railroad Co., afforded him that opportunity. As we rode back to Roanoke, Virginia on the train, we discussed the possibly of sharing our vacations together over the next several summers. I spent a few days in Roanoke, VA, and then caught a ride with a friend of the family's back to Washington, DC. I moved into my own apartment on the third floor of a semi detached house located at 1212 Lamont St., NW, Washington, DC, I checked back-in to my job at Otis Elevator Co., and settled-in to a routine there. During the summer of 1964, Dad and I traveled to New York City together to the World's Fair there. We stayed with Fred & Julia Thompson, our cousin's who lived in St Albans Queens, NY, not that far from the world's Fair site... Thus started our summer vacation travels between Father and Son. With others to come, until I was married in the spring of 1967. The next summer of 1965, we traveled to Atlantic City, NJ, where my Grandmother; Mattie Morris, Aunt Gerri Smith, and Sister; Deborah Morris, were spending some time with our "Aunt Marcella Jackson, to celebrate my Grandmother's 65th birthday. My Grandmother and Aunt Marcella had been friends since the 1930's, and each summer my grandmother would spent time there with her and her family. During our visit to Atlantic City, in 1965, was when we went to the Wonder Gardens Club to see Julian "Cannonball" Adderley

and his band. I also got to meet a college friend (Tuskegee Inst.) of my Father's; William "Wild Bill" Davis, the great organist. Wild Bill Davis had been a fixture at The Little Belmont Club each summer season in Atlantic City, from Memorial Day until Labor Day, totaling all together twenty-five years... I believe we saw Wild Bill Davis before we saw Cannonball, which was a day or so later. Dad and I enjoyed listening to Wild Bill, with his organ trio; organ, guitar (Bill Jennings), and drums, really swinging, with a great sound. Which became the "Blue Print" for organ trios to come, with tenor sax added to that mix by some others. In fact Wild Bill added Johnny Hodges the great alto saxophonist to his group, when he was off from Duke Ellington's Band in the summer season. Wild Bill and Johnny recorded several highly acclaimed albums together during this time-off from Duke Ellington, for Johnny Hodges.. In fact Wild Bill added Johnny Hodges the great alto saxophonist to his group, when he was off from Duke Ellington's Band in the summer season. Wild Bill and Johnny recorded several highly acclaimed albums together during this time-off from Duke Ellington, for Johnny Hodges..

Dad had hadn't ever seen Cannonball Adderley in person before. I had seen him at Crampton Auditorium on Howard University's campus, in Washington, DC, a year or so earlier . At The Wonder Gardens Club, in Atlantic City, the band's personnel was; Cannonball; alto sax, Nat Adderley; cornet, Charles Lloyd; tenor sax, Joe Zawinul ;piano, Herbie Lewis; bass, and Roy McCurdy; drums. The band was really cookin', as the older musicians use to say; "they had the Pots on"!! The three horns, sounded like a much larger group. Their arrangements were great. Dad leaned in close to listen very intensely. My mind drifted back to 1956, when my Dad was the first to exposed me to the great saxophonist Julian "Cannonball" Adderley on an EmArcy sampler LP, with Cannonball playing; "The Song is You." Man, his sound and dexterity on the alto sax was a revelation for me. I looked around at my family members; grandmother, sister, aunt and they we were all enjoying hearing one of the great Band's of that era. My Dad was most elated to hear this great Artist at work, and he was taking in every note of music which they played. We hung on to every note which was played until the final song ended. Then came Cannon's theme song, which was played, and then, that was all for the night.

My Dad and I walked over to the bar, which stretched a long a wall towards the rear of the club. Dad ordered a drink and asked me if I wanted anything, I told him that a beer would be real tasty about now. As he beckoned for the bar tender to get me a beer, Cannonball slid in on a stool on the other side of Dad. I looked over at the rest of the family seated at our table, and they were deep in conversation. I made a motion towards them, indicating did they want anything to drink. No, was there signal back.. I turned to see Dad and Cannonball having a conversation. I stood up walked closer to hear their conversation. Dad told Cannonball that he had seen Cannonball's father playing trumpet with "Belton's Syncopators" in late 1930's, when he (my Dad) attended Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Cannonball was

very delighted to hear this information. He said that this is great to hear. He started to talk about when he attended Florida A&M University, and my Dad and Cannonball started to sound like they had a lot of similar experiences. Cannonball was a very engaging and congenial fellow, and a awesome musician and Band leader... **** Cortlandt Sevelle Belton Sr., had a famous jazz orchestra (Florida Society Syncopators) AKA Belton's Society Syncopators, during the 1920's and 30's, performing nationally in the USA.

At one point Dad told Cannonball that I also went to Tuskegee, and had graduated last year (1964). He thinks he can play the saxophone also, my Dad said. Cannonball looked at me and asked if I played in the band at Tuskegee? Yes, I did I responded. I continued; I played in the marching band; alto sax, the concert band; bass clarinet, the Woodwind Quartet; bass clarinet, and the Jazz band; alto sax. Cannonball said you must have been a music major? No, I said Tuskegee does not have a school of music at Tuskegee. My major was Electrical Construction Engineering. Wow, Cannonball said, you must have been very busy at Tuskegee? He continued, who was your Band Director at Tuskegee? I said; Mr. Lucius R. Wyatt, who is a graduate of Florida A&M University, and with a Master's Degree from Eastman School of Music. Cannonball said you having a good FAMU Alumni, as a Band Director, I know that your musical education would be solid... My Dad and I had a great time taking with Cannonball. What a wonderful time we had that summer of 1965...



Cannonball & Nat Adderley
P/R Photographs unknown Photographer

In My Own Words

Reflections from Byron Morris



Before I went into my reflecting back mode, I was in the Spring of 1970, having just performed with saxophonist Joe McPhee at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. I had been living in Poughkeepsie, NY, where I was working for IBM as a facilities electrical engineer, since June of 1969. I had also spent time with two other Bands; "The Impacts" (Brad Griffin leader) and "The Majesty of Soul" (Mack Williams leader). There are no known tape recordings of these two music groups mentioned above, but there should be. Both groups had very talented musicians, etc., and I enjoyed and learned from my time spent with each Group...

I continued to collaborate with Joe McPhee, and was part of a recording session with him at the Radio Station WBAI - FM's "Free Music Store in New York City, on 30 October 1971, with Joe McPhee - tenor sax & trumpet, Clifford Thornton - baritone horn and cornet, Byron Morris, alto & soprano saxes, Mike Kull, piano and Harold Smith, drums. This session was released on the Swiss Label: HAT HUT Records, LTD Sept 1996 under the title: Joe McPhee Survival Unit II at WBAI's Free Music Store, 1971.

March 5, 1971 was when Betty and I welcomed our second Son; Aaron into the world... The family has now grown to four persons....

During this same time, Jerry Wise, Vince McEwan and I were working on bringing the Band Unity to life with new original compositions and young exciting musicians... SEE Part 2 Pages 3 & 4 for more information on the Band UNITY..

Unity's first performance was in January 1973, for a celebration in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Poughkeepsie, NY Middle School. Vince McEwan & Jimmy Owens, trumpets, Jay Clayton, vocals, Mike Kull, Frank Clayton, bass, Abdush Shahid, drums, Byron Morris alto & soprano saxes.... The song "Kitty Bey" was performed for the first time, and received rave reviews from the audience and the press corps present at the concert that day....

By the Fall of 1986, I had been leading the Band "Unity" at the Takoma Station Club, off and on since mid 1985. I say off and on, because the Club changed ownership, and the new owner didn't

pick-up the option right-away to keep "Unity" and it's Jazz format at the Club. Eventually, the new owner called and asked me to come by and see him. It seemed as though we had a lot of fans who wanted to keep hearing our exciting brand of Jazz music, and they had let the owner know it emphatically. The owner and I met to settle the matter as to money and days for Unity's performances. We started in the late summer of 1986 playing three days a week; Thursday thru Saturday, 9:00 pm to 12:00 pm. The band members: Barnett "Dr B" Williams; congas and percussions, Lenny Robinson; drums, Pepe Gonzalez; bass, Wade Beach; piano & keyboards, Tom Williams; trumpet & flugelhorn, and yours truly on alto, soprano saxes & flute. Unity was performing at a high and exciting level. We featured Jazz, Latin and Funk tunes to keep the audiences cheering for more. We also added two additional musicians on Saturday nights only, they were: Gerald Pennington; trombone and Tony Duncanson; on timbales & percussions. The Club owner told me that in November 1986, he was bringing in Art Blakey and The Jazz Messengers for one Saturday night event only. He said we, Unity could have that night off. I asked him if Unity could open for the Jazz Messengers. I said, we could play one forty-five minute set of music, and then turn the rest of the night over to Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. The owner said; "how much is that gonna cost me?" I told him that we (Unity) had put the club on the map for Jazz Music in DC, over the past year and half. I believed the excitement of seeing an internationally known musician & bandleader such as Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, and Unity together in the same setting would further establish the club as a "go to" place for Great Jazz Music. I suggested he have the audience pay a cover charge. The owner liked that idea, he smiled and said; "so how much do I have to pay for you and Unity?" I said, well, our regular weekend fee. To which I added; since you and the club will be covered by the cover, no pun intended. We both laughed over that statement, but the owner agreed to those terms.

When I told the members of Unity that we would be opening for The Jazz Messengers, they were really excited and elated at the thought of playing in front of such great musicians. They were pumped up big time, and so was I... The magical Saturday night in November, 1986 had finally arrived. All the musicians of Unity arrived early to set-up their instruments, we were at full Saturday night strength, with an octet (8) musicians ready to bring forth the exciting musical energy. Which Unity was well known for. As we went about the process of setting-up our instruments, I noticed that the club seemed somehow more well lighted, more orderly, tables and chairs were looking fresher than usual. There were extra waitress's, and a couple extra bar tenders tonight. Everyone seemed to be going about their usual routine with an extra verve and energy. The club owner asked me to come to his office, which was located in the basement of the club. He handed me an envelope which contained the money we had agreed upon for this special occasion. He smiled and told me he wanted us to start the music at 8:00 pm and play for one hour only. He also wanted me to introduce Art Blakey. The Messengers would play two sets which would start at 9:30 pm. Then the

owner shook my hand, and wished us good luck. When I got back on the main floor of the club, I gathered the musicians to go over which songs we would play on our one set of music. One of the musicians told me that he had heard one of bar tenders say that The Messengers were running late by thirty to forty minutes. I said, so we might have to play a little longer, which suited everyone just fine, as we all smiled.

At 8:00 pm I kicked off the band with; "Sometimes Braid" one of our Latin tunes. All the musicians bore down on this song with much verve and feeling. Everyone sounded fresh and very energized, I laid back and smiled at the Band members, they smiled back, and we were off to an incredible evening . It was one of those nights, when everything you attempt musically seems to come off just right. We never sounded better, which goes to show you how motivation, and competition can engender great results in one's musical performance. During our set, the club owner motion for me to come over where he was standing. When I got over to where he was, he told me that Art Blakey was running a little late, maybe ten to fifteen minutes late, he said for us to keep playing until Art and his band got there. I spoke to the band members before the next song, and told them about Art Blakey and his group being about fifteen minutes late getting here. The band members looked at me and smiled, and said; " we got it, we are cookin' now, we're smokin"! This is our "spot" we gonna set the "bar" high for them to have climb over."

On the next tune; "Panamanian Aire" the band was really taking-off, great playing from all the band members, the crowd was cheering us on, and shouting out; yeah!, blow!, cook!... Our regular audience knew and loved our mix of Latin-Jazz and Funk. At about 9:20 pm I looked out at the audience, near the door way between the main Bar area, and where we were performing, and I saw Art Blakey standing there Smiling at us. As we finished the song, I turned to the band said last tune, Art is in the house, let's finish with "Ugetsu" (sometimes called Fantasy in D, written by Cedar Walton an ex jazz messenger and great pianist). This song has long been used by Art Blakey and the Messengers, so this was our way of welcoming them to our "House" (Takoma Station Club). At the end of this our last song for the evening, we got a standing ovation from our home town crowd... Sweet!!!! Yeah!!! Yeah!!!!

I introduced Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers; "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am proud, no, excited to introduce to you, for the first time at the Takoma Station Club, in Washington, DC, the Legendary drummer Mr. Art Blakey, and his Jazz Messengers; with Woody Shaw on trumpet; Kenny Garrett; alto sax, Donald "Silk" Brown; piano, and David Williams on bass!!! Let's have a Big hand for the Jazz Messengers!!!!!!!!!!" They opened with a Wayne Shorter composition; "Witch Hunt" which was a killer, in my estimation. That "high bar" we thought we had set for them, they leaped over it without any problem, in fact, they reset the bar higher. what Great players, all at the top of their game, on this special night in our house (Takoma Station), and in our town (Washington, DC, Capital of the USA).

PHOTO GALLERY



"The Impacts" circa late 1969 L to R: Byron Morris - alto sax, Dan Seeders - bass, Ray Bird - guitar, Doug Lanier - drums, Brad Griffin - Leader & guitar. Poughkeepsie, NY
Photo: by Antony J. Olheiser



NOW!!! aka The Majesty of Soul... circa early 1970's
Front Row: Byron Morris - alto sax, Kay Shalong aka Karen Earley vocals, Mack Williams, Leader tenor & Bari saxes, 2nd Row: trumpeter Unknown, Henry Hayes vocals aka "King Henry", Marc Katz - trombone. Back Row: Ronnie Johnson - drums, Eugene Williams - bass, Peter Finch - guitar & vocals Near Poughkeepsie, New York

Byron Morris: In My Own Words, Pt. 2



Byron Morris and Art Blakey Fall 1986 Takoma Station Club
Washington, DC, what a Night!!!! Unity & The Jazz Messengers
Photo by Michael Wilderman



Byron Morris and Art Blakey Fall 1986 Takoma Station Club
Washington, DC, what a Night!!!! Unity & The Jazz Messengers
Photo by Michael Wilderman

Between Sets Russ Hewitt

Between Sets with Russ Hewitt

Well that was fun.
What's next...

by Karl Stober



Miles Davis once stated about the craft of making music, "Do not fear mistakes, there are none." In the opinion of many in jazz, it's not what you plan but what you discover, that ends up on the stage. The wonderfully magical concept that exists in the jazz psyche is the ability to take any road the improvisational journey takes one, thusly making it all gel on the music sheet. With that said it is also imperative to have focus and direction as to what you want coming out on the final push-n-play. Self-discipline is the foundation of a musician's quest. Case in point and for your examination lets go between sets to meet guitarist Russ Hewitt... Russ Hewitt, known for his eclectic style, which can be, said to be a mix of Heavy Metal/Rock Smooth Jazz and Brazilian jazz along with some Nuevo Flamenco and others stated, "If your going to do it, do it right, because all of it lasts forever!" Hewitt is speaking of course about the digital age we are in currently.

Karl Stober: Describe the musical vs. the human psyche of Russ Hewitt.

Russ Hewitt: One thing in particular continues to shape my musical psyche, and it happened just after the release of my first CD, Bajo el Sol. People would always mention it in passing how they'd leave the CD repeat as they cooked, cleaned, relaxed, whatever. At that moment it dawns on me: I have to write songs that are musically transparent. Whether I accomplish this is anyone's opinion, but it's why I spend so much time between recordings. When I listen to music for personal enjoyment, I catch myself thinking, "This isn't bad, but I likely won't ever listen to it again." I have no illusions that I'm the only one who does this. Because of this, I exhaust everything to ensure a song is perfect before it's released. When I hear a new song or CD by an artist I'm familiar with I know almost immediately whether they're phoning it in or haven't spent the time necessary on the composition. And because I have a lot more eyes and ears on me today than ever before, my fans, endorsers, fellow musicians, and even family are too important to let down simply because I didn't try hard enough. Of course, the

Between Sets Russ Hewitt

converse might hold true: I could be overthinking it all. Ha! The human side of me is pretty laid back. I have a quote that I like to use. I'm not sure who said or if I came up with it but it at least reminds me to keep a good balance in my life, and to just roll with the punches: Music is everything. It's just not the only thing.

Karl Stober: *Define jazz as the populace sees it and then again as you see it.*

Russ Hewitt: Jazz faces the same problem that Classical music faces, which is when the populous listens to it it's usually the classic artists and songs. Stan Getz, Chet Baker, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Frank Sinatra and players from that era for Jazz, and Bach, Mozart and Beethoven for Classical. I admit I'm guilty of that too. Of course, there are exceptions but there are so many incredible new artists and songs out there I feel like we are always competing with the past. There also seems to be a lot more artists vying for a smaller piece of the pie. Total US consumption in the Jazz and Classical genres sits at 1.4 percent, while only children's music is lower, sitting at 1 percent. Latin music doesn't fare much better at 2.6 percent, which kind of kills my Latin Jazz versions of lullabies backed with a Classical Orchestra project.

Karl Stober: *In the past decade how has your music grown from project to project along with your philosophies?*

Russ Hewitt: My philosophy the last decade is if you're going to do it, you better do it right. In this digital age, everything will last forever. Even stuff that wasn't meant to! Whatever I was putting out I wanted it to be the best representation of my playing and songwriting at the time because once it's out there there's no taking it back. I look at my own habits after discovering a new artist, which is to go back and get their entire catalog of music, so I didn't want the production of my music to sound, dated or poorly made. After I recorded and mixed my first CD, *Bajo el Sol*, I was unhappy with the final result. There were a ton of tuning and sonic issues that couldn't be fixed. My producer, Bob Parr, and I decided to trash the whole recording and start from the beginning with a new set of players and studio. The whole process took 3 years with costs I don't even like thinking about, but the end result is something I couldn't be prouder of.

Karl Stober: *How do you perceive the music business now from when you started?*

Russ Hewitt: When I released my first radio single back in 2008, there were 220 various outlets I sent it to. Now, there are only 140 outlets, according to my radio promoter. A lot of the big Smooth Jazz stations in major markets are gone, like San Diego, Seattle, New York, Atlanta, and Dallas. But for those that are still around, they are playing more songs with vocals and not just instrumentals. To say the old model of doing things no longer applies is an understatement. Everything from how music is consumed, purchased and played has changed and continues to change. I hear stories and updates from my music insiders and the news kind of takes the wind out of your sail. Luckily, there are a lot of books and articles written to help the modern musician, but it does

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seem like every 3 to 4 months there's a new approach, social media site, or philosophy on how to do things. On the plus side, it's never been better for the independent artists or even the big establishments like the Grammys have all embraced bands who aren't signed to a label. Another big plus is there seems to be a lot of opportunities for licensing, press, film work, streaming, and remote session work than ever before. The only strategy seems to be adapted and move on.

Karl Stober: *Talk about the education connected with jazz to that of other genres.*

Russ Hewitt: As musicians we are an amalgamation of everything we learn. I think the influences of a guitar player are more obvious than with a player of another instrument because guitar influences are more easily picked out and identifiable. My playing is a combination of common styles like Heavy Metal/Rock, shred and Country guitar and uncommon styles like Nuevo Flamenco, Gypsy Jazz, Smooth Jazz and Brazilian guitar. None of which have official schooling, although nowadays anything you could possibly want to know or learn is on YouTube. Ultimately, it comes down to how you put it all together and what you do with it. I took one semester of Jazz guitar in college but quit to focus on my Classical studies, rock band and chops, which in the short term was a disservice to myself because I didn't learn the jazz standards. However, in the long term I'm glad I don't have that institutionalized influence to draw upon when composing my originals. When I look at or study Jazz now, I'm able to pick and choose what I think will work best for my style and playing.

Karl Stober: *Lets go into detail on your new project as to concept and theory.*

Russ Hewitt: I try and accomplish what is probably the worst thing to do, which is to be all things to all people. Ha! The first group of people would be strangers who don't know me or my music. The questions to answer are, "Will they be entertained or bored after the third song?" and "Can they enjoy and follow the songs having never heard them?" The next group is my friends, family and producer who don't hesitate to let me know when they don't like something or if a particular part isn't working. It almost seems like they enjoy doing that. The third group is guitar players. "Am I playing a cool lick? Is the phrasing good? Is there a good combination of technique and taste?" These are the types of questions I'll ask myself. I even go so far as not repeating the same licks in different songs. I got the idea when I was watching a Bireli Lagrene DVD and noticed he didn't repeat anything. Now, of course, the technique of playing something will remain the same: 3-notes-per-string, arpeggios, thirds, octaves, etc. However, the notes and phrasing will be different. The last group is fellow musicians. The goal is if they have to learn my music or break it down it's a little more involved than it appears. The key is never forgetting the audience is listening, and you don't want to make something complicated for the sake of being complicated. A good example is my song Soldade, which is in 11/8 and could easily be set within a romantic movie, but you wouldn't find it

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very easy to learn or play.

Karl Stober: *How do you approach an original and where do you get your inspiration?*

Russ Hewitt: What's that saying, 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration? Of course, I'm inspired by people, places and events, but because there are no lyrics my approach to writing music may be a little different. My intent is to create a sonic backdrop on which the listener projects a thought or image. I have done my job if one of my songs makes you think of someone, reminisce about a far off place or destination you've been, or makes you drive fast. Ha. One of the best reviews I've gotten was from author Angela O. Peart, who was inspired to write separate short stories based on the songs from my first CD. You can still tell a story with instrumental music, but it's not my story, it's the listener's.

Karl Stober: *Are there layers as you create and what are they as you come to completion of a song?*

Russ Hewitt: I compose everything in most simplistic way possible: a click track and one track each for rhythm, melody and solo guitars. Because I might need to play the song in something as small as a duo guitar setting or as big as an ensemble, I need it to be flexible. A good song should be able to stand on its own merits, and adding in the bass, drums, percussion or any other instrument to a basic track only brings the song to life. After the song is recorded, that's when my producer Bob Parr and I sit in the studio and add any additional tracks, be it strings or orchestra, loops, keyboards, pads, additional percussion or whatever else we feel would add to the song. Some of my songs feature just the band-only, while others, like Gabriela mi Corazon, have a total of 80 tracks! There's so many subtle things happening in that song that it's almost subliminal. I have to give all the credit to Bob and his "mad scientist" approach!

Karl Stober: *How do you choose and put together your album partners?*

Russ Hewitt: I've been very blessed to have incredible musicians appear on each of my CDs. Drummer Walfredo Reyes Jr., who's been on hundreds of recordings, including five Santana albums, three Steve Winwood albums, Chicago, and Ricky Martin, among others. He's also a percussionist so he knows not to make the drums too busy but still allows for space and fills for multiple percussion tracks. Walfredo has an incredible lineage when it comes to Latin music, and thus a good sense of what the song needs, whether more of a pop feel or more of an authentic Latin feel. Raphael Padilla, who was in Miami Sound Machine, Shakira, and now Chris Isaak. Raphael's timing and ability to layer tracks are uncanny, and he never ceases to amaze me. Flamenco guitar prodigy Alfredo Caceres, who plays with the Gypsy Kings, All-Stars and Hamed Nikpay, continues to expand my rhythm and rumba knowledge with patterns beyond what I already know and play. Laying a solid foundation the rest of the group builds upon is bassist Bob Parr. Bob has produced, engineered and played bass on hundreds of recordings, and has even been an LA session player. We're all

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professionals, and each of them is here because of their musicianship. It's because of this that everyone knows their suggestions matter and they can make recommendations or changes while ultimately being relied upon to play what each feel is best for the song. No one is trying to show off or throw in unnecessary licks just because they can. I play locally with some incredible players who I would love to have play on my recordings, but I have such a nice balance of what's working for me right now I'm afraid to mess with it. You hear about it all the time. An artist becomes successful off a CD, and the first thing they do for the next one is change studios, producers and songwriters. Now, why would you go and do a thing like that?

Karl Stober: *What cut was most difficult for you this go around and explain.*

Russ Hewitt: There's seems to be a tricky part in each song, but the one that took the longest is Persian Sky. The song uses the Algerian Scale, which is an 8-note scale (not the normal 7-note scale) that creates some pretty cool harmonies that I use for the intro lick, bridge and solo sections. I did a lot of listening and dissecting of songs by Persian pop artists like Googoosh, Andranik Madadian (Andy) and Dariush Eghbali for about 4 weeks to get the feel and song structure of that style. The chord progressions were already similar to what I was using, but it's where the chords changed in the progression that was new to me.

Persian Sky was supposed to go on my 2011 CD, Alma Vieja, but I felt it wasn't quite right so I kept the song off and put it to bed. Several years ago I did a concert where I was the backing band for a many Persian artists. I had to learn traditional music as well as some modern songs, and the whole experience inspired me to take another look at Persian Sky. I re-wrote the verse and chorus four different times, and on the fifth revision I had what I thought I wanted. However, I still felt like something was missing and couldn't quite put my finger on it. Enter Ardeshir Farah of Strunz and Farah, who I'm a huge fan of. It seemed like a logical choice to reach out to Ardeshir and have him play on it. When I got the song back from him, I was absolutely blown away. He took my exact melody and turned it into something with a feel and style I couldn't have come up with on my own. On top of that, trading off solos with Ardeshir forced me step up my game!

Karl Stober: *Which cut are you most proud of and why?*

Russ Hewitt: Well, it goes without saying that I'm proud of all of it. For me, it comes down to little victories in each song. It might be something small or clever that isn't easily spotted by the listener or even a musician, but to me these little victories are rewarding on a writer or guitar player level. I'm proud of the chord shapes and progressions in the Samba, Samba Sao Paulo, and the bossa nova, Um Abraco Do Bossa; the call and answer chorus melody in Brisa de Monte; the key change for the chorus in Serenidad; the different sections that make up San Elizario; and finally, just actually finishing Persian Sky. I could go on, but each song had its own challenges that once overcome, made the song come together.

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REVIEWS OF CDS, LPS AND BOOKS

A collection from
Robert Rusch of some-
times
disparate materi-
al though generally
relating to music
recordings or perfor-
mance.

A NOTE TO READERS: I cover a lot of items in this column and it is only a fraction of what crosses my desk. I choose to only write about things that I find of interest, usually that is due to quality of music but not always. You can contact me at rdr@cadencebuilding.com. Mail received is subject to editing and may be included in the next column at my discretion. If you do not want your correspondence printed please let us know. Cheers, rdr.

Horace Parlan was one of Mingus' most dynamic pianists, born in 1931 and suffering childhood Polio that crippled his right hand he developed a punchy style which fit well with the Mingus dynamics of the late 1950s. In 1972 to escape the rat race of New York City and North American Racism he expatriated to Denmark where he married and moved to a small house in the country. Eventually he and his wife moved to a retirement home. Since then, his wife died and Parlan, now blind, is dependent on a wheelchair. His spirits, however are not compromised and he says he is happy as long as he can hear and go to concerts. Now Stunt has issued MY SCANDINAVIAN BLUES [stucd 16012] by US4 [Tomas Franck-ts, Thomas Clausen-p, Jimmi Roger Pedersen-b, Adam Nussbaum-drm]. This is a tribute to Parlan by the group and here they handle 11 Parlan compositions [55:04] very nicely. The group is joined by vocalist Sinne Eeg on a couple equally fine tracks. In addition to the CD there is a DVD/video of the group playing, interspersed with shots of Parlan in various environments and at times speaking about his life. There is also a discussion led by Clausen about Parlan and the music. The text of this discussion is printed over the video. This is a modest and heartfelt effort and should be embraced by Parlan and bop fans in general. It is a nice tribute to the living.

FREDDIE REDD [p] is pushing 90 and it is now more than 50 years since he recorded the music for the play "The Connection" for which he remains best known. The play (about drug use) was of minor interest, as I remember. The musicians were on stage but off to the side, playing intermittently throughout the production.

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I have always found Redd's recordings of interest. His latest is WITH DUE RESPECT [Steeplechase 31817] a 11/14 and 2/15 recording. Joining Redd are John Mosca [tbn], Chris Byars [as/flt], Stefano Doglioni [b clt], Jay Anderson [b], Billy Drummond [drm] and on one track James Byars on oboe. The 9 track [63:27] program is all Redd compositions. The tunes are passible but not very exciting, but what is exciting is Byars' Jackie McLean inspired sax work. (McLean is on the recording of the "The Connection" BlueNote). Other than that this seemed a rather enervated date. Disappointing.

Enlightening would be the word about how I feel towards pianist/keyboardist A BU's [a.k.a. Dai Liang] new recording, BUTTERFLIES FLY IN PAIRS [Sennheiser media art. no. 566668]. Bu is Chinese and around 15 (as far as I can discern, Bu was born in 2000) when he made this undated [circa April 2015] recording. A Bu is a dynamic and lyrical pianist and also the composer of these 11 tracks [71:52]. The basic trio [Tom Kennedy-b, Ryan J. Lee-drm] is augmented by various guests [Antonio Hart-sax, David Watson-flt/sax, Darryl Dixon-sax] on various tracks. Cecilia Stalin sings on one tune [Memories of Love], and both song and singer are impressive. It is not all to my taste as the electric piano and electric bass dumb it down a bit and the 18 minute DVD is hype and nonessential to the enjoyment of the music on the CD, but when it is all "working" —it works well.

Two years earlier [2013], when A Bu was about 13, he recorded 88 TONES OF BLACK AND WHITE [Sennseiser Media senmeccd/dvd 001]. This recording is different in many ways. The accompanying DVD presents 3 live performances straight with no hype and they are quite exciting and excellent. Meanwhile, the CD presents 13 [75:35] non original tracks including 4 by Coltrane and 2 by Petrucciani. On this trio date, Bu is backed by Shao Ha Ha on drums and Ma Kai on bass and this is more of a straight ahead jazz recording. The sound is excellent and so is the music. Bu is very able in keeping the music fresh and bright and without gimmicks. It keeps the listener guessing where the music will go next. He demonstrates a full command of the keyboard and dynamics and if asked I'd guess he might have listened to a bit of Ahmad Jamal. CD and DVD make up an outstanding set.

It would be hard to be bored by NACHTCAFÉ [Jazzhaus Music jhm 241] by DIRK ENGELHARDT [ts/ss], HANNES ZERBE [p] and HEIDE BARTHOLOMÄUS [reading text], as there are 17 tracks [60:57] ranging in length :34 to 7:57. The text readings (in German) are by Gottfried Benn [1881-1956], a poet who had a brief flirtation with Nazism but enough of an association to damn him and keep him from greater recognition. The 8 cuts with Benn readings are lost on me and have background music by the duo. The 9 cuts with just the duo (a relationship of 8 years) are very nice, some of it sounds composed, either way this is very melodic. Engelhardt plays a lovely pure soprano and Zerbe prances on piano, chording or single note picking. Zerbe's recording began in the mid 70s in East Germany and except for a 1992

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BVhaast recording his subsequent work has been on Jazzhaus. This is a duo which should be given recording opportunities. Exhilarating. Not so exhilarating is the latest from The Bridge, THE SYNC [The Bridge Sessions tbs 02] recorded 10/4&17/14. This is a free feeling concert of 3 parts [50:02] with Sylvaine Héлары [flt/voice], Eve Risser [piano], Fred Longberg-Holm [cello] and Mike Reed [drm]. The parts sound like a whole improv as it builds as one long piece—sometimes coherent sometimes incoherent. If you like things kattywompus this is for you. For me I'd like greater focus.

Pianist MISHA TSIGANOV immigrated to the United States from Russia in the early 1990s to follow his jazz passions. On 9/8/15 he went into the studio and recorded SPRING FEELINGS [Criss Cross 1384 CD] with a quintet [Alex Sipiagin-tpt, Seamus Blake-ts, Hans Glawischnig-b, Donald Edwards-drm]. 5 of the 9 tracks [64:27] are originals the rest are standards. Two [Yes or No/ Infant Eyes] are by Wayne Shorter. This CD has the feel of a live date and on Shorter's "Yes Or No", the band is burning up to a point that I expected to hear applause after solos. The group exudes a Messenger-like ambiance. Sipiagin is a standout throughout but not to de-elevate the group which is also solid throughout. Tsiganov likes to play with times, often in counterpoint, and really does a masterful job of playing and arranging. There just are no weak points on this recording.

There's a touch of Ahmad Jamal (as well as Bill Evans) in COREY KENDRICK's [p] work on ROOTLESS [no label 888295 417341]. His trio [Nick Bracewell-drm, Joe Vasquez-b] has put together a very understated set [57:50] of 8 Kendrick originals and 3 standards [Nature Boy, In The Wee Small Hours, Yesterdays]. On the standards one can hear how Kendrick uses space to inform the emotion of the piece more than improvised drama. There is little drama on this disc, or restlessness but still, though a tad generic, it is very pleasant listening. LENNY MARCUS [p], has been putting out records since the 1980s.

His music is easily accessible but never pandering to commercialism. His latest, MOVING FOURTH [LJM-024] offers up 13 tracks [57:13] of which 10 are originals. The standards are "The In Crowd" (he does more with this than Ramsey Lewis), "Solar" and "What A Wonderful World". Marcus shows a full range on the keys with nods to McCoy Tyner, Beethoven and Ramsey Lewis. It is ironic that on the hype sheet accompanying the CD is a quote credited to this fine magazine, Cadence, that says "Marcus resembles Keith Jarrett" — of which I hear no resemblance. This is really Marcus' date. He is joined by his trio [Larry Scott-drm, Rick Eckberg-b] and friends [Vladimir Espinosa-perc, Ken Hitchcock-sax, Chris Magee-tpt/fly, Tom Artwick-sax/flt] all of whom make fine contributions but the writing and arranging is subservient to the piano. Marcus has written some fine originals here and he is the one who shines in totality. It's about music.

Howard Riley, Stan Tracey and other British pianists have/had consistently been creating quality creative improvised music under the

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radar, or at least under the North American radar, for the better part of half a century. Such a musician would also be pianist KEITH TIPPETT. Tippett's latest release, recorded 10/24&25/14 is **THE NINE DANCES OF PATRICK O'GONOGON** [Discus 56 cd]. This 11 part piece was commissioned by Richard Wiltshire and Tippett credits him and David Green with making this effort possible. Tippett acknowledges Wiltshire in particular "the musicians were paid promptly" and goes on to credit the generosity of both men. Having spent 50 years in this business Tippett knows well that simple honesty and commitment should be acknowledged. T'were honesty and commitment always the rule not the exception! The suite is quite enjoyable with Tippett's memories of Irish folk music and dance coloring some of the music. It is both the music and band: Fulvio Sigurta [tpt/flg], Sam Mayne [as/ss/flt], James Gardiner-Bateman [as], Kieran McLeod [tbn], Rob Harvey [Tbn] Tom McCredie [b] and Peter Fairclough [perc] that holds interest here. Julie Tippetts lends voice to one track. Nothing stale and the soloist are nicely credited for each section. This was a welcome creative breeze during a too hot summer. All the attention this would receive if his name was Charles Mingus.

BRAZZAMERICA [no label 888295 396745] is both the name of the album and the group [Leco Reis-b, Cidinho Teixeira-p, Edson Ferreira-drm]. The 13 tracks [61:37] are, I believe, mostly uncredited originals with "So What" used as one of the tune's opener. This is a very understated release and while all 3 members of the trio are Brazilian born there is little sense of Brazilian music in the program. Reis has several nice solos. Pleasant listening without much personality.

REGGIE WATKINS [tbn] has issued a nice tribute to Jimmy Knepper on **AVID ADMIRER** [Bynk records 003]. The background to this December 5th & 6th, 2015 recording and how Watkins came in possession of Knepper's horn is given in the liner notes by Knepper's daughter, Robin. All the music [46:18] here, with the exception of "Goodbye", are Knepper originals. Watkins plays a fine trombone, sounding muted for the most part. I'm not sure who did the arrangements but they are quite interesting, as at times the music's lines go in independent directions similar to a style Mingus often orchestrated. Also quite impressive is Matt Parker [ts/ss] whose argumentative style is refreshingly offbeat. On first listening this recording failed to impress me but once I accepted the originality in the left field approach, everything fell into place. Orrin Evans, the perfect pianist for this date, is only on 6 tracks and pianist Tuomo Uusitalo fills in on the remaining 3. Rounding out the rhythm section are Steve Whipple [b] and Reggie Quinerly [drm]. Unexpected listening.

The **BLACK ART JAZZ COLLECTIVE** [Wayne Escoffery-ts, Jeremy Pelt-tpt, James Burton-tbn, Xavier Davis-p, Vicente Archer-b, Johnathan Blake-drm] was organized around 2012 by founding members Escoffery, Burton and Pelt for the purpose of presenting Black culture and in that regard 5 of the 8 originals [59:32] on this

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11/30/14 recording called, PRESENTED BY THE SIDE DOOR JAZZ CLUB [Sunnyside ssc 1441] are inspired by various folks [Dubois, Obama, Truth and Joe Henderson]. The rather cumbersome title comes from a Connecticut jazz club where the group had a 2 day gig. The final track on this issue was recorded live. The music from this group is for the most part very compact, and while the solos are of substance, especially Pelt's Hubbard-like work, the heaviness of the whole makes for solid but tiring listening. Best taken in pieces and worth the effort. THUMBSCREW [Mary Halvorson-gtr, Michael Formanek-b, Tomas Fujiwara-drm] has a new recording [7/2-4/15] out on Cuneiform Records, CONVALLARIA [Rune 415]. The 11 compositions [73:05], composed by various members of the group, have little identity other than to serve as a base for improvisation, that said there are parts where it sounds like sections may be written out for two against the improv of one. I speculate of course but that is one of the pleasures of exposure to non-traditional rhythm music, following a line as it slips in and out of the meat of the music. Halvorson seems to have greater focus and grounding here than on some of her more outward bound releases. Some of the themes here are quite pretty and if orchestrated for a larger group it might make that more obvious. A good place to start for contemporary/avant guitar.

RAYMOND BONI [gtr/harm] and DIDIER LASSERRE [perc] play with sound and silence on SOFT EYES [improvising beings ib 48]. There are moments when only silence is emanating from the speakers. 7 of the 9 tracks [42:46] are originals. The non originals [I Am Singing One Of These Songs, Nature Boy] are suspended by somewhat random sound and the composition is almost lost. Recorded 4/25/15 this is difficult music/sound as its focus comes and goes much like a mist. Because of its use of silence it is often difficult to know, without looking at your CD player, when one track starts and stops. I started using the phrase creative improvised music to be inclusive of improvised, but non jazz music, of which this is a prime example. Engaging but unknowing. From Cuneiform comes I JUST DID SAY SOMETHING [Rune 422] by the group, I.P.A. [Atle Nymo-ts, Magnus Broo-tpt, Mattias Ståhl-vbs, Ingebrigt Håker Flaten-b, Håkon Mjåset Johansen-drm]. Purists of one particular jazz genre will probably find little satisfaction with this recording in that this quintet, a group since 2007, crosses many genres moving easily and convincingly from inside to outside. The quintet encompasses musicians who have played mainstream to modern to avant and I suspect their allegiance is, to put it broadly, creative improvised music without qualifiers. 9 tracks [53:59] of originals from group members. Good music.

Trumpeter SHUNZO OHNO, who has been part of the scene for almost 50 years has a new CD out called RENEW [Pulsebeats Records so 1003]. This project is a dedication to communities having to renew from natural disasters. 8 Ohno originals and one by Buster Williams make up the 9 tracks total [59:46]. Ohno is backed by various rhythm

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which for the most part keeps a pulse over which Ohno plays a wistful trumpet. This is a very programmed release and 2 tracks have spoken word [George Yamazawa] narration. Ohno moved to New York City in 1974 and was homeless for a while. In 1988 a car accident permanently damaged his lips and teeth, then in 1996 he had throat cancer which did more damage. It is little wonder, as a result of the maladies, Ohno had to refigure his embouchure. A gentle late Miles Davis sound. Also gentle in its sound is OMAR SOSA's [keys/effects] latest EROS [OTA Records 1029]. On this 5/15-19/15 recording Sosa teams up with the formidable Italian trumpeter, PAOLO FRESU who brings his talents on the flugelhorn as well as effects and percussion. Other major contributors are Natacha Atlas [voice] and Jaques Morelenbaum [cello]. Priority here is mood, which is set off by Fresu's plaintive muted horn work playing over poly-rhythmic designs. There is a fair amount of dubbing on the 12 Fresu-Sosa originals [69:50] which are successful in maintaining the yearning or reflective mood. The last track [Why] is asterisked as ghost track, not sure why, it is listed as 17:13 but after about 5 minutes of quiet wonderful music it is then silent for about 2 minutes before coming back with music sounding more like funk-fusion a la Miles Davis which plays the CD out for 10 minutes. An unnecessary and dated gimmick on a recording of otherwise nice moods.

GILLES TORRENT [ss/ts], a self taught musician has issued 2 CDs on Altrisuoni records:

JAZZ INSPIRATION VOL. 1 [AS 340] and JAZZ INSPIRATION VOL.2 [AS 341]. Volume 1 has 10 cuts [62:56] 7 of which are originals and also includes "Naima" and Dophy's "The Mandrake". Recorded 6/3/11, 1/27/12 and 11/5&6/14 with Linda Gallix [p], François Gallix [b] and Nicolas Serret [drm] the music has definite overtones of Coltrane, most evident on the later dates. Torrent's intonation wavers at times but still a rather pleasant listen though I find pianist Gallix remarkably bland and swing-less. Volume 2 has 7 cuts [68:00], including "I Want To Talk About You", "Crescent", "Tequila" and "Bahia", from 1/16/05 and 5/9/97. The personnel varies on these 2 dates. On the earlier date Emmanuel Borghi [p] takes a McCoy Tyner-ish position behind Torrent's wistful Coltrane-like wanderings, while drummer Laurent Sarrien is a bit plodding and heavy handed. The CD ends with the silly "Tequila", which may make your head shout "Tequila" but sounds absurd. Much inspiration is missing on these CDs.

Folks who remember Peter Kuhn [clts/ts/as] from about 40 years ago should find it exciting that after a few decades he once again has a new release out (for more on coverage on Kuhn see the historical and reissue section further down this column). THE OTHER SHORE [Nobusiness Records nbcd 88] was recorded 6/16/15 and is an improv trio [Kyle Motl-b, Nathan Hubbard-drm] playing 8 pieces [73:41]. The liner notes by Ed Hazell will bring Kuhn's adventures of the past 35 years up to date (after kicking drugs, he started a reptile business for 10

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years). There is also a current photo of Kuhn blowing a tenor looking like a man with lots of stories to tell. Unfortunately I don't find his tales as masterful or interesting as I did 35+ years ago. Let me amend that by saying Kuhn plays in a similar (perhaps less direct at times) fashion but this is decades later and lots of people play in this (free) fashion now. Perhaps I expected too much but I also expected as much. Still worthy of a listen and glad it is out.

JOHANNES MUELLER [ts] covers a variety of genres well— N.O. funk to bluesy bop to Getzian light accompaniment on vocals to improves on his JAZZ MILE; GLOOMY SMOKEY LIGHT [Personality Records pr 22]. Joined by his quintet [Carlo Nardozza-tp, Volker Engelberth-p, Gautier Laurent-b, Chris Strik-drm] and guests for 7 originals and 3 standards [66:38] Mueller takes a chance on trying to appeal to broad tastes but of course then risks appealing to none. Pleasant enough, although it reaches a low on a dull rendition of "Every Breath You Take" with an equally uninteresting vocal by Andrea Reichhart. Still 2 cuts later the arrangement and playing of the band on the original, "Great Expectations", is a nearly 8 minute joy. Then the next track Pharrell's "Happy" is given Salsa treatment and teeters on a commercial mistake. I should mention that vocalist Reichhart guests on two tracks and despite my misgivings on "Every Breath", she does a respectable job on "Save Your Love For Me". A mixed bag from real talent on this undated recording.

ARI AMBROSE [ts] has a lovely ambience of past and present on his 2/15 recording RETROSPECT [Steeplechase scd 31816] with Alex Norris [tpt], Jeremy Manasia [p], Jay Anderson [b] and Donald Edwards [drm]. The program [68:14] of 2 fine originals and 5 non originals [Sophisticated Lady, Back Road, Gone With The Wind, Escapade, Just One Of Those Things] goes down nicely and Norris' trumpet is a fine compliment to the leader's soulful sound which at times reflects Ben Webster but is much more than that. In the interesting liner notes, by Neil Tesser, Ambrose reflects on his musical journeys up to now; interesting and heartfelt.

Much is made in the liners of the Joe Henderson-Kenny Dorham connection to the leaders development— maybe so and there are echoes of it in this music just as there are echoes (very faint) of Ellington in Manasia's playing, but so what? Once the heads are cleared it is the Ambrose quintet's sound and individualism that sells this CD.

LIVIO ALMEIDA [ts/ss] is from Brazil and has released ACTION & REACTION [Lalmeidmusic 888295 269247] a June 2014 recording of 7 originals [51:12] with Vitor Gonçalves-p, Eduardo Belo- b, Zack O'Farrill-drm and on 2 tracks Adam O'Farrill [tpt] is added. Almeida is a mainstream bopper who shows no indication that he is Coltrane influenced in delivery but he plays with passion and is particularly strong when Adam O'Farrill joins the front line. O'Farrill is an added plus not just because Almeida seems to respond so well to him but also he seems an original trumpet voice. New voices, promising voices.

Also from Brazil is SERGIO PEREIRA [gtr/voice] whose SWINGANDO

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[no label 888295452311] is his debut release. Here he is supported, in different combinations, by a dozen recording rhythm associates, on 7 original compositions [39:40]. On this date [Feb-Apr 2016]. Pereira weaves a gentle and joyous session of mostly bossa novas and does so without referencing Jobim.

Fans of sax and B3 will find interest with MAX IONATA's [saxes], REWIND [Via Veneto Jazz vvj 109] with Frits Landesbergen [drm/vbs] and Alberto Gurrisi [org]. 6 of the 9 tracks [48:32] are Ionata originals joined by George Coleman's, "Amsterdam After Dark" and Jobim's "Chovendo Na Roseira". Gurrisi plays C3 and I'm not sure how it is different from a B3 but it sounds the same to me. Ionata plays straight ahead in a Gene Ammons direction. The mood completely changes on the last track [Mr G.T.] when the trio expands to a quartet with the addition of Amedeo Ariano on drums and Ionata then plays what sounds a bit like an electric sax—a forgettable effort and with a faded ending to boot. That aside, pleasant listening.

Joey DeFrancesco brings along his B3, as well as on one track his piano and moog on ERIC HARGETT's [bs/ts/moog/fender rhodes/vbs] 12/18/11 recording STEPPIN' UP [Whaling City Sound wcs 083]. Rounding out the trio is drummer Gerry Gibbs and bassist Hamilton Price joins on one track. Don't be fooled by the array of instruments. This is basically a rather funky blowing sax and B3 date with some background over dubbing. 8 originals plus "Hackensack" and "You Don't Know What Love Is" make up this date. Hargett plays a biting bari and the liners make reference to Ronnie Cuber (perhaps?). Recorded without rehearsal the date has a sharp edge to it and DeFrancesco is in top form.

In the 4/16 Papatamus, I wrote about a number of BRUCE GERTZ's albums on his Open Mind Jazz label and now he has issued A DIFFERENT TAKE [omj 008] with his long time musical associate JERRY BERGONZI [ss/as/ts]. The 11 originals [72:53], 6 by Gertz and 5 by Bergonzi, are pretty much dominated by Bergonzi who seems over all in good form on these 2015 dates. Gertz's writing is the more open of the 2 while Bergonzi's is more tune suggestive. It matters little as they are both open to improvisation and reward as improvs. Austin McMahon is the (cymbal happy) drummer and on some titles Conley DelRay joins on piano. What really strikes me about this date is the relaxed but straight ahead designs of the music, no gimmicks (aside from a fade out) just music to be listened to for its musicality. Bergonzi fans take note.

With the advent of the LP there were a number of records issued of jam sessions, a gathering of jazz folk who, taking advantage of the longer recorded time the Lp offered over 78s, would record informally. JUST FOR FUN [Blujazz bj 3437] suggests such a gathering for that is when DOUG MACDONALD [gtr], at Don Thomson's suggestion, got a pool of 11 jazz folks together on 9/2/14 in front of an audience and had, what Thomson calls, a jazz marathon. The result is this 2

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CD set [130:10]. 12 cuts made up by a few MacDonald originals and 9 standards played by various groupings. The participants were Lanny Morgan [as], Rickey Woodard [ts], Bob Summers [tpt], Les Benedict [tbn], Andy Langham or Llew Matthews [p], Luther Hughes or John Williams [b] and Paul Kreibich or Roy McCurdy [drm]. This moves along nicely in a relaxed way, it's always good to hear Lanny Morgan's tart playing. My only real complaint is the use of electricity on the bass which cheapens the sound and adds nothing. It is good to hear MacDonald as he is a fine guitarist with a number of fine releases, even so he manages to stay below the radar and rarely appears on many popularity lists. But lists are only lists, music is music and I've never gone to a concert to hear a list.

Trombonist STEVE WIEST has issued THE HIGH ROAD [Blujazz bj 3438] a set [41:47] of originals plus "Cantaloupe Island". The backup here includes guitar, keyboards, an electric wind instrument [EWI] and other rhythm. The result is music which is crowded and massive with no subtlety—effectively sounding and feeling like a herd of elephants trumpeting into one's living space. The rhythm is obvious, the melody somewhere and the talent of the musicians obscured by their very music.

ED NEUMEISTER [tbn] has been inhabiting the jazz biz for over 40 years which has included substantial tenures with the Ellington Orchestra and Mel Lewis' bands. Neumeister didn't even lead a recording until the late 90s. Finally PAO records has issued a 12/8/10 recording, SUITE ELLINGTON [PAO 11290]. And sweet this is. Joined by Billy Drewes [clt/as], Jim Rotondi [tpt], Fritz Pauer [p], Peter Herbert [b] and Jeff Ballard [drm], the all Ellington program is arranged by Neumeister and captures the flavor and coloring of Ellington without aping the master. This concert is also nicely paced with no grandstanding. "The Single Pedal (sic) Of A Rose" (as part of "The Queens Suite"), is a beautiful solo outing for the leader. This was recorded 10/7/15. A fine fine tribute.

Trombonist JIMMY O'CONNELL has turned in a fine full throated debut in ARRHYTHMIA [Outside In Music 1603]. O'Connell is from Detroit and relocated to NYC in 2006. He leads off the 8 tracks [57:08] with Jay Jay's "Lament" which would give you an accurate idea of his influence. "Lament" is just one of 3 standards here [Bolivia, In The Wee Small Hours] which join 5 O'Connell originals. Special mention of Andrew Gould [as/ss] whose plaintive playing is demanding of attention. The remainder of the Sextet [sic] is Tim Basom [gtr], Tuomo Uusitalo [p], Peter Slavov [b] and Jimmy MacBride [drm]. An excellent debut for an excellent sextet, recorded 10/19/15 and ready to be heard now.

Some fresh writing is offered up by HENRY WOLKING and the Salt Lake Jazz Orchestra on IN SEA [Big Round Records br 8944]. Wolkling used to lead the University Of Utah Jazz Ensemble but now is in retirement and has struck out on his own. Jerry Floor [as/ss/clt] leads

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the 18+ member big band through 12 tracks [73:41], 5 of them Wolking originals, 3 by Claude Debussy, "God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman" (not as hip as the MJQ's version but calmer than Kenton's) and fine original arrangements of "That's A Plenty" and "High Society". Lots of well used solo space and soloists are noted below each tune. A joyous noise indeed, more please.

The start of normalization of relations between the USA and Cuba has brought on a steady stream of releases of Cuban music into the states. ABRAZO: The Havana Sessions [Ansonica Records 0001] is a 2 CD set of recordings done in November 2015. One CD is of various big bands playing compositions by Timothy Lee Miller, Don Bowyer and Bunny Beck. The second CD is choir work with no jazz interest. Liners are by Bob Lord. I wish I shared his enthusiasm for this rather faceless effort. STEVE LEHMAN [as] is a talented sax player out of the Jackie McLean school. Back in 2001, I produced his first 2 led sessions and a few years later he began to work with electronics, alternate sounds and genres. His latest is SÉLÉBÉYONE [PI Recordings 66]. Here Lehman blends rap with electronics and jazz. While rap has its appeal it is lost on me past a point and makes me yearn for Lehman's more jazz oriented abilities. However if rap is to your liking, the jazz elements here add a depth not always found in rap. Rounding out the personnel on this 1/11&12/16 recording are Gaston Bandimic & HPrizm- vocal, Maciek Lasserre-ss, Carlos Homs-keys, Drew Gress-b and Damion Reid- drm. VINCE ERCOLAMENTO [ts/ss] brings his quartet [Joe Chiappone-gtr, Peter Chwazik-b/gtr], Paul Matriani-drm] to INNER SOUL [no label 888295 456265] an undated set of 10 originals [58:41]. This is a breezy set of bop which plays well but is rather indistinct. It moves along nicely and features some nice moments but overall it lacks a personality to set it apart from the hundreds (yes, hundreds) of other releases. Fadeout and often an imprecise sound for the rhythm behind the leader does not help set this one apart.

I remember JOHN STOWELL [g] from the mid '70s when he made a series of rather ethereal recordings. Over the years he seems to have tempered that sound. His latest pairs him up once more with his long time associate, MICHAEL ZILBER [sax/p]. BASEMENT BLUES [Origin 82717] is with the quartet [John Shifflett-b, Jason Lewis- drm] recorded 3/12 and 3/15. The program here is made up of 8 originals plus one Jerome Kern [Nobody Else But Me] and one Bill Evans tune [Very Early]. The music retains some of that reflective/ethereal wandering sound but it is nicely set off by Zilber's playing which at times is rather amusing. Here the wandering leads to directions, thoughts and musical introspections that can be captivating. In addition there are some compositions by Zilber which are quite nice. Listening rewards grow with each replay.

THEMROS 3 [Michael Griener-drm, Richard Koch-tpt, Benjamin Weidekamp-as/clt] is a trio out of Germany who brings a good amount of humorous short forms, some might say childlike or childish, to their

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free improvs. The 8 originals [31:08] recorded 12/8&9/15 are manic and playful but leave the listener wanting some more developed lines and variety. The album is called ROCTHEM! [WhyPlayJazz rs 029].

I played SIMON KANZLER's [vbs] recording right after Themros 3 and the contrast could not have been more pronounced. On DOUBLE IDENTITY [WhyPlayJazz rs 27], a 1/15 recording, Kanzler and group [Elias Stemeseder-p, Max Andrzejewski-drm, Igor Spallati-b, Max Mucha-b, plus an 7 piece chamber ensemble] play with sound, silence and moodiness. The 9 Kanzler compositions [64:42] rarely raise their voice. The ensemble is aboard for the 3 part title piece [23:24] where 3 members of the ensemble [Benjamin Weidekamp-clt, Florian Bergmann-b.cl, Antonis Anissegos-p] also join in the limited (?) improvisation. The patterns, repetition and development are a bit of a throwback to 20th century written/classical music.

Nurnichtnur Records is about experimental sound production not music per se; an understanding that applies well to FLORIAN WITTENBURG's [keys/synths/electronics] EAGLE PRAYER [Nurnichtnur116 01 20]. The 7 tracks [50:14] offer a variety of sound abstractions plus a couple of poems, which to me are joyless. It is beyond my insights. Sound.

Paul Hanson brings the odd sound of the bassoon to JEFF DENSON's [b/voc] 12/17/15, 1/7/16 and 1/16&17/16 recording; CONCENTRIC CIRCLES [RidgewayRecords rrcd 003]. Denson sings well in a tenor voice on 2 of the 10 tracks [48:15]. The playlist is all originals except for "I Got It Bad"; a not too successful solo effort of the Ellington classic. Denson, who has done a number of recordings with Lee Konitz, has chosen well in choosing bandmate Hanson as his bassoon sound blends well with Denson's bowed bass, in particular. The bassoon brings to mind Errol Buddle of the Australian Jazz Quartet though Denson's music is more adventuresome but not avant guard. A pleasant, rather upbeat, set of originals.

Pianist PEGGY STERN, who had a tenure with Lee Konitz in the early 1990s, has produced Z OCTET [Estrella Prod 678572 220043]. The octet is Su Terry [clt], Alex Coke [flt], Alex Heitlinger [tbn], Ilija Delarosa [cel], Richard Mikel [b], Wayne Salzman [drm] and vocals by Suzi Stern (unrelated) on 2 tracks. Peggy Stern composed and arranged all of the 10 cuts [45:46] and the emphasis is most definitely on composition and arranging. The music leans a bit on the classical side but its jazz sensibilities are clear and I sense it is as Stern wanted it. There is some wonderful music here which draws from many traditions and emotions. All of this blends into a smooth yet stimulating and enjoyable listen. Recorded 5/24/15.

SHORELINE BLUES [Quadrangle music 888295 428088] is a nicely understated trio date [Darren Litzie-p, Ben Bilello-drm] led by journeyman bassist JEFF FULLER [b/b gr]. Of the 10 tracks [49:27] half of them are breezy yet catchy Fuller originals but it is Litzie who composed the title track. Litzie has the touch of someone who studied

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classical music and as far as I can tell all of his and Bilello's recordings have been with Fuller. Fuller has some nice grounded solos and in my opinion is best on acoustic bass, and goes solo for a fine keep-them-in-their-seats reading of "Oleo".

New age-y music is offered up by SEBASTIANO MELONI's solo piano on MOODS AND SKETCHES [Big Round Records 8945]. Recorded 5/29&30/15, the 12 improvs [37:52] for the most part are brief, pleasant enough and quickly forgotten.

SLAVA GANELIN [korg microsonation, computer dell] and LENNY SENDERSKY [reeds] have put together HOTEL CINEMA [Leo cd lr 764]. This is interesting because, as the promotional hype sheet says, you might "think this is a work performed by a 50 piece orchestra". Indeed you might but it is only these 2 players and it is recorded live, without any pre-recorded material. The jazz elements are minimal and the music is pleasant enough and the ability to suggest a large orchestra is remarkable. The performance [45:03] was recorded 3/7/16.

BEAT GENERATION BALLADS [Huddersfield Contemporary Records hcr 11cd] presents 2 works for piano composed by Michael Finnissy and performed by PHILIP THOMAS [p]. This release is to celebrate Finnissy's seventieth year. Although this is composed music it is hard to tell that it is not free improvs. Composed or Free improvs it really doesn't matter, or shouldn't matter to the listener. Being of the Beat Generation and admirer of much abstract music, this left me cold. Depending on your tolerance for space and quiet you may feel differently.

SENRI OË [p] has put together an album of his 8 compositions [35:48] with the curious title ANSWER JULY [PND Records 888295 459082], PND stands for Peace Never Dies. Oe's basic group is Jim Robertson [b], Yacine Boulares [sax] and Reggie Quinerly [drm] and to this he adds a variety of others on a program of carefully crafted originals. Nice tunes but the clincher is the lyrics of Becca Stevens, which are sung by Sheila Jordan, Lauren Kinhan, Theo Bleckmann, Becca Stevens, Dylan Pramuk or Junko Airta and The New School Singers. Jon Hendricks is credited as co-composer on 3 of the tracks. This whole disc has a lovely gentle ambience to it and while it is not specifically a Christmas release, one piece is titled "The Garden Christmas", and the music as a whole still evokes the season. A very curious CD which falls nicely on these jazz ears.

JOEY ALEXANDER [p] has his second release out; COUNTDOWN [Motema 202]. There is plenty of hype and PR behind this 13 year old prodigy which is usually the sign of marketing over talent. This time his talent needs no marketing as his talent is huge. Joey Alexander jumps to the head of class with other great jazz pianists many times his senior. Hyperbole, from this cynic? No, one would never guess this is a 13 year old as his technique is so mature and nuanced. On this date one can also judge his considerable compositional chops as 3 of the 9 tracks [61:16] are Alexander originals and of substance at that. Joining

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Alexander are Larry Grenadier or Dan Chmielinski [b], Ulysses Owens, Jr. [drm] and on one track Chris Potter [ss]. A second excellent outing of fine piano jazz from this talent deserving ...

No longer the craze it was 40 some years ago Ragtime has again become a relic of a music of the past but always around the corner. Its stately composition, stylized format and melodic quality draws appreciation from a wide area of musical tastes. CLASSIC RAGS: NEW ORLEANS STYLE [Solo Art SACD-171] is by KRIS TOKARSKI [p] with Cassidy Holden [b] and Hal Smith [drm]. 14 traditional Rags [54:33] recorded 3/7-8/16. Purists will find no complaint.

Anita O'day was a jazz singer, Bette Midler is a performer and both are fine singers but different from one another. JUNE GARBER is like Midler in that you pretty much expect a vocal interpretation to be repeated over and over while the delivery remains more or less the same. There is a broad musical spectrum on the dozen tracks [53:44] offered up on THIS I KNOW [JG 180614]. Garber sings songs inspired by her South African origins, where she lived until 1975 before moving to Canada. The material is made up of standards and originals. One of Garber's originals expresses the grief she felt after the death of her husband of 35 years. She is an exceptional singer/performer and is convincing in her delivery. There is a reflective feel to the whole performance with the inclusion of tunes like "Live For Life", "I'm Going To Live Till I Die", "It Was A Very Good Year", "Don't Cry Out Loud" and so forth. The heart of her back up is a trio [Mark Kieswetter-p, George Koller-b, Ben Wittman-drm] with various add ons including fine contributions from Guido Basso [tpt/flg] and John MacMurchy [sax]. Reflective not Depressive, not jazz but with Jazz elements.

Because I was puzzled by JUNE GARBER'S seemingly hybrid style, and there is an impulse for reviewers to pigeon hole everything, I decided to reference Garber's earlier work to see if I could discern perhaps what her hybrid was hiding. SMILE [7 Arts Entertainment 0008] is a September 2005 date backed by a quintet [Bill King-p/org, Pat LaBarbera-sax, Reg Schwager-gtr, Duncan Hopkins-b, Davide DiRenzo-drm]. The program is 14 standards including a couple Ellington tracks and a very nice "Bewitched". Again, Garber resists my pigeon holing, on pieces like "On The Street Where You Live" or "All That Jazz" where she suggests a singer out of the theatre or cabaret while on "It Don't Mean A Thing", "Cry Me A River", "The Nearness Of You" or "Old Devil Moon", she is a credible jazz singer, she also enjoys some strong jazz backing.

A 2008 set finds JUNE GARBER in the company of a fine jazz group [Bill King-keys, William Sperandei-tpt, Mike Murley-ts, Duncan Hopkins-b, Mark Kelso-drm, Davide DiRenzo-drm, Luis Mario Ochoa-gtr, Luis Obergoso-perc, Anne Lindsay-vln] on HERE'S TO YOU [7 Arts Entertainment 0017]. Here, Garber draws from musicals and movies [Cool, Wouldn't It Be Lovely, Alfie, Over The Rainbow]

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for some of her material on the 13 tracks [59:00]. In her liners Garber writes "I wanted to include songs with a sense of nostalgia" and she certainly has done that with songs like: "Here's To Life", "Over The Rainbow", "Alfie", "You Were Never Mine", "You've Changed", "Black Coffee" and "The Second Time Around". There is not a dud in this set and the jazz element of the back up is very well done. Anne Lindsay's violin is in the Stephane Grappelli tradition and she can swing hot or sweet. Mike Murley is very much in a Stan Getz mood and stands out. William Sperandei, a new name to me, also has some fine moments. Garber handily turns "Bye Bye Blues" into "Cloudburst" and even though the track is under 3 minutes there's plenty of room for the band to wail. And what am I to make of June Garber? Well, she certainly is a jazz singer, this CD proves that, but she is also credible as a pop, theatrical or cabaret singer. The weakness I found in her latest release is not present in her first two releases. This issue is recommended without reservations and I look forward to the next.

CHERYL FISHER's [voc] latest CD is QUIETLY THERE [OAA 22133]. Fisher has chosen 12 songs [54:33] for mood and meaning. Her concept was to create an album for a mellow mood, an "album, letting its mellow mood merge with your own" which may be possible if you don't pay attention to the lyrics where the meaning doesn't make one think mellow, but rather, melancholy. The tunes here are from The Great American Songbook. She contributes one original, "Flower In The Sink", a waltz-like song of time passing and loss. Other material included on this 5/24&25/15 recording [Let There Be Love/You Go To My Head/Some Other Time/Here's To Life/You're Looking At Me] plus not well known songs by well known writers. John Stowell [gtr] and various others give effective backup on this very effecting recording. Soft Brazilian jazz tinged music is what OS CLÁVELITOS serves up on ARRIVING [Suonotrittata oc 313]. This offers up a few Getz-like licks on 12 originals [50:28] but that's not what is notable about this effort. What is notable is the relaxing Brazilian sound and the lyrics sung by Chieko Honda. The music and lyrics are provided by different band members [Anthony Lanni-gtr/voc, Dan Kendall-b/acc, Livio Almeida-ts/ss/flt, Uka Gameiro-drm, Arei Sekiguchi-perc] and are quite interesting and it's interesting to dwell on them as an 8 page lyric print-out comes with the CD. Its smoothness held up well to repeats. REBEKAH VICTORIA [voc/perc] and Jazzkwest [Chuck Mancini-gtr/voc, Bob Steele-b, Bob Belanski-drm] have issued #OLDFASHIONEDTWITTERTWT [Jazzkwest cd 001]. Besides it picture pun depicting the title (Ms. Victoria, in vintage style is holding a bird in one hand and a birdcage in the other), this CD is notable for VICTORIA's handling of 16 (mostly) standards [61:39]. She sings in a style in which she enunciates words with varying emphasis and her phrasing lingers at times making for an uneven delivery. She alternates between this odd style of singing and talking the lyrics. This is not a smooth listen and ranges between notable readings with an individual

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delivery to vocal train wrecks. An unfortunate delivery of “Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most” is one example. On some tracks the trio is augmented by featured guests. A puzzlement.

ALISON LEWIS [voc] has released a far too short CD [28:04] called SEVEN [no label 888295 428880]. One assumes Seven alludes to the fact that the CD has seven tracks (5 standards and 2 originals). Lewis is a stylist and this CD has elements of pop and country as much as formula jazz. Listening to her handle “My Funny Valentine” makes me wish she’d just let go of all the production and effects and sing with a good jazz trio or quartet. Backing on this undated work comes from a pool of 10 musicians.

SHEILA LANDIS [voc] and RICK MATLE [gtr] have been making music together since the 90s. BEAUTIFUL THINGS [Shelan Records 024] is a program [52:09] of 13 standards and 2 originals. Landis, over the years, has developed a light sensitive delivery and is at her best when she plays it straight and is not imitating the sound of instruments, scatting or otherwise trying to be Jazzy. The extra hoopla in this case suggests she doesn’t trust her own talent to sell a song. The material here comes from 3 undated sessions. When she narrates during a tune she brings to mind another Michigander, Sheila Jordan. Close, but this is still not her definitive recording.

TRUDY KERR [voc] has a new undated release; THE HOUSE [Jazzit Records jitcd 1665]. This is not in total a jazz CD but a bit of contemporary and cabaret in the majority. The 13 tracks [58:22] include 5 originals mostly compositional collaborations with pianist Andrea Vicari. Also making up the quartet is Martin Hathaway [as/cln/flt] and Geoff Gascoyne [b]. One take which would qualify as jazz is a wonderful reading of “Waltz For Debby”, one the other hand there is a rather morose reading of “Crystal Silence”. The title tune (by Vicari and Kerr) dips into nostalgia and the lyrics are about Kerr’s childhood house in Brisbane, Australia. It is my hope Kerr will return to a jazz genre.

LYN STANLEY [voc] has a new release [dated 2015] INTERLUDES [A.T. Music 3104]. Stanley brings together a mixture of well known standards [Don’t Explain, Nice ‘N Easy, Just One Of Those Things, In A Sentimental Mood, etc], and lesser known tunes [Black Velvet, I Was A Little Too Lonely, The Island, Last Tango In Paris, etc]. Joining Stanley on the 14 cuts [59:10] is a band appearing in various groupings which includes Bill Cunliffe [p], John Chiodini [gtr], Henrick Meurkens [hrm], Bob McChesney [tbn] and Mike Garson [p]. Stanley is part night club, pop and jazz singer. She can be coy – similar to Julie London, though Stanley’s voice is more robust and the suggestion of London and certain affectations is far less pronounced here as on her earlier recordings.

STANLEY’s first recording, LOST IN ROMANCE [A.T. Music 3101] made in 2013 again brings an interesting mix of well known and lesser known standards [62:32]. On this recording material comes

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from a wide circle of composers including Willie Dixon, Sondheim, George Harrison, Berlin, Legrand, etc.. Here she draws talent from 13 musicians including Jeff Hamilton [drm], Bob Sheppard [ts], Mike Lang [p], Thom Rotella [gtr] Bob McChesney [tbn] etc. It is apparent from this initial recording that she is a singer who exudes confidence and vision both in exercise of talent and production values. There is an audiophile aspect to Stanley's productions. All of these are also available as double 12" 45rpm 180 gram vinyl releases (same matrix #s as the CDs). And a turn around to the usual there is an extra track [The Man I Love] on the vinyl edition on the Potions release. Between # 3101 and # 3104 comes the 2014 release POTIONS: FROM THE 50'S [A.T. MUSIC 3103]. Here again are 15 well chosen tracks [59:23] from a variety of genres including [Lullaby Of Birdland, Hey There, I'm Walkin', Misty, Love Potion #9], all material one might hear on '50s radio. Again Stanley chooses from a group of musicians including Luis Conte, Joe La Barbera, Mike Lang, Kenny Werner, Rickey Woodard, Bill Cunliffe, Glenn Dewey, etc.. There are about 3 hours of Lyn Stanley on these 3 CDs and at first I was not overly impressed but by the second listen through I had become acclimated to Stanley's style and period approach and found myself quite enjoying the sincerity she projects and the variety in the program. While not hard vocal jazz recordings, there are enough well placed solos to satisfy those with jazz interests. Stanley mines the space Rosemary Clooney occupied, somewhere between jazz and pop. If that is an area you enjoy then I'd strongly suggest you search her out.

More overtly jazz is DANIELA SCHÄCHTER's [p/voc], VANHEUSENISM [no label 700261 435473]. This is a tribute to the music of Jimmy Van Heusen with 11 of the 12 tracks [76:11] Van Heusen tunes and one Schächter original. Backed by a nice tight quartet [Mike Tucker-ts, Michael O'Brian-b, Mark Walker-drm] Schächter also put nice fresh arrangements to familiar music, recorded 1/5-6/15. There are a few things to recommend this recording. The first is Schächter's hard driving piano delivery/work as she is not content to just play Van Heusen's lines but also ventures out in compelling improvisations. And second, Schächter approaches these familiar tunes in an original manner, her phrasing is original and thankfully not some warmed over Sinatra-isms. As mentioned earlier the quartet came to play and play they do. Very nice indeed.

MAGGIE HERRON [p/voc] has done the rare thing in that on BETWEEN THE MUSIC & THE MOON [no label 888295 429580] she has composed or co-composed 11 of the 12 tracks [52:00] tracks. Joining in on this undated set are Bill Cunliffe [p], Grant Geissman [gtr], Bob Sheppard [sax/flt], Ron Stout [tpt] Bob McChesney [tbn] Dean Taba [b] and others in various combinations. Herron has a very definable voice in a Nina Simone register and it is emotive with a touch of horseness. Dawn Herron (daughter) is co-credited on a number of the tunes. The lyrics on these tunes are notable, however I wish there was

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a lyric printout. Singers looking for fresh material might check out this recording. This is Herron's third recording, I believe, her first was IN THE WINGS [no label 888295 134958] where, except for a Van Heusen tune, the 10 tracks [42:52] are all originals. This was recorded in 2010, I believe, and like her latest release some material is in French, fitting for her chanteuse like style. Again her lyrics are notable for their humor and/or their outlook. Again, Taba is aboard on bass along with Paul Lindbergh [sax], Noel Okimoto [drm], Doug Webb [ts], Eldred Ahlo [tpt] and others. Once more there is fine material which could be a rich strike for a singer to mine.

On her second CD, GOOD THING, MAGGIE HERRON only wrote 5 of the 13 tunes [55:28] other tunes are standards including: "Straighten' Up And Fly Right", "Woodstock", "Moon River", and "Body And Soul". Joining in the fun, in various combinations are Brian Bromberg [b], Bob Sheppard [sax] and others. Distinctive voice, exceptional writing and lyrics, so why is the name Maggie Herron largely unknown? Check her out!

SCOTT MORGAN [voc] sings in a throaty tenor and sometimes he will speed talk lyrics in the manner Jon Hendricks occasionally employs. On SONGS OF LIFE [Miranda Music mncd 1024] one gets the feeling that he chose the 13 tunes [50:45] of love and life carefully. Tunes like, "I Just Found Out About Love", "Lost In The Star"s, "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" and so forth reek of genuine meaning and connection. Backing is from Fred Hersch [p], Matt Aronoff [b] and Ross Pederson [drm] with Joel Frahm [ts] added on 4 tracks and Janis Siegel [voc], poorly represented, on one track [I'll Follow]. That aside, this is a tender, if imperfect, set. A bit like James Taylor but less whiney and more hip.

KRISTEN LEE SERGEANT is a new voice and it is a good one able to take harmonic leaps and be subtly seductive on INSIDE OUT [Whaling City Sound wcs 087]. My only complaint is that the program of 9 non-originals has a running time of only 33:39. That's okay for a demo, which this may have been, but I want to hear more. Sergeant is joined, on this undated mini masterpiece, by David Budway [p], Chris Berger [b] and Vince Ector [drm]. More please.

BARBARA DANE [voc] has been singing jazz, with traditional jazz bands for over 60 years and occasionally with folk groups. Now Dreadnaught Music has issued "THROW IT AWAY" [DN 1701], a collection of 13 songs [65:09], well suited to her experienced voice. The program includes: "I'm Sellin' My Porkchops", "Slow", "Throw It Away", "American Tune", "How Can You Face Me?", "In My Life" and "My Brain". Joining the 88 year old singer on this undated set is Tammy Hall [p], Ruth Davies [b], Bill Maginnis [drms] and on 3 cuts Pablo Menéndez [Blues harp] and on 1 track Richard Hadlock [ss]. Dane's voice appears in good shape though an abundance of reverb surrounds her sound, that aside, this is a thoughtful and very entertaining set.

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Fanatics of the Great American Songbook may be attracted to MASUMI ORMANDY's [voc] SUNSHINE IN MANHATTAN [Miles High Records mhr 8626]. This is a minor recording of 10 familiar standards [40:12] with little going for it. Ormandy is backed by Lee Tombouljian [p], Dean Johnson [b] and Tim Horner [drm]. Guests, Freddie Hendrix [tpt], Paul Meyers [gtr] and Houston Person [ts] and Sara Caswell [violin] make professional and perfunctory contributions. It sounds like a vanity project, nothing wrong with that but Ormandy is not ready and I'll leave it at that.

From the beginning, when AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS [p/voc] came on the scene in the mid 1970s as a new voice joining the top echelon of new music coming out of the coordinated Chicago improvised music scene, she was keenly interested in roots music with a message. She has recorded in spots over the years but SAMA ROU : SONGS FROM MY SOUL [Amina C Records 888295 432719] is her first led recording in over 25 years. The 9 tracks [61:36] here are a mixture of originals and traditional Negro spirituals and Myers mixes it up by playing avant guard piano lines juxtaposed with the more traditional gospel lines. Recorded during December 2015 and January 2016

her vocal work retains a determination and no-nonsense quality while her distinctive piano structures and wanderings are never too far from a roots throwback. Highlight here is "Go Down Moses" whose repeated refrain let em go eventually is haunting. Myers has carved out a niche between Billie and Nina.

SASHA'S BLOC is made up by a group of musicians [Brandon Fields-sax, Bob McChesney-tbn, Alex Budman-reeds, Andy Langham-p, Alvin Chea-voc, Kye Palmer-tpt, Kevin Winard-drm, Nora Rothman-voc, Steve Cutter-gtr] headed by Alex Gershman [b]. There's carelessness with the personnel listing on HEART OF FIRE Miles High Prod 888295 207713]. There are spelling discrepancies on names of musicians (I went with the spellings that seemed most likely). The liners mention a core nonet and the core vocalist as Rothman but in the hype sheet it suggests Chea is the core vocalist. Quibbles aside, it just suggests that this is a self produced album by Gershman (also a surgeon and philanthropist) to promote his compositions and there is nothing wrong with that (half of one composition is "Perdido" which is uncredited), if the music is worth promoting, and it is. The 11 compositions [48:10] range from theatrical to jazzy, the back-up is clearly secondary to the lyrics and composition but it is respectful as music, not perfunctory. The exception where the playing is first and foremost is on "Perdido" where the band stretches out and there are some nice spots for Budman's bari. It's possible this is meant for a musical play, it seems feasible and it's better than Chicago. I should also mention vocalist Jane Monheit guests on 4 tracks here.

PIERRE-ANTOINE BADAROUX [as/ss] leads the Umlaut Big Band on vol. 2 of EURO SWING [Umlaut umfr-CD18]. This looks at the influence Americans had on European musicians between 1925 and

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1940. Badaroux transcribed most of the 15 tracks [45:33] for the band, tunes by or arranged by: Benny Carter, Duke Ellington, Sam Wooding, Freddy Johnson, Fud Livingston etc.. The material comes from European tours where the American bands recorded in Europe. I have not afforded myself the time to check these transcriptions, instead I have been content to enjoy this period music. Some of these pieces like Fud Livingston's "Sax Appeal" were not recorded outside of Europe for decades. The particulars, whys and wherefores are all explained in the liner booklet.

SCOTT REEVES' [flg] Jazz Orchestra has come out with PORTRAITS AND PLACES [Origin 82710] a 1/6&7/15 recording of his big band. Steve Wilson [ss/as/flt] is the feature but this band is packed with talent including Jim Ridl [p], Tim Armacost [ts], Bill Mobley [tpt], Vito Chiavuzzo [as], Nathan Eklund [tpt], Andy Watson [drm], Matt McDonald [tbn], Max Seigel [bass tbn], Terry Goss [bari/bass clt] and Seneca Black [lead tmpt] all of whom have solo space somewhere on the 8 tracks [57:08] that make up this CD. Most of the music are Reeves' originals with the exception of "Waters Of March". All of the music is arranged by Reeves. This is a very nice listening experience. Reeves writes wonderful back up support for the soloists who make good use of the spotlight. On one track there is some conversation in Japanese which I found intrusive but not enough that it ruined the joy of the entire disc, which held my interest on several re-listenings.

MATT ULERY [b/tu] has produced a rather interesting release in, LOOM/LARGE [Woolgathering Records wb 0003]. All the music [73:11] here was composed and arranged by Ulery with the exception of "The Peacocks", and excellent arrangement and take [8:38] on the Rowles' standard. Ulery's writing and arranging is multi-faceted and mixes a classical and jazz feel with skill and which should rivet any music lovers attention. There are two groups used here. On the opening 2 cuts [18:63] a 14 piece band is employed with Zach Brock [vln] as the featured soloist. On the next 11 cuts, a quintet is employed [Geof Bradford-clts, Russ Johnson-tpt, Rob Clearfield-p/org, Jon Deitemyer-drm] but the music contains the same sense of written exploration and intelligence. Get this for composition and arrangement as it is impressive.

MARK DRESSER [b] has issued an interesting set of 7 originals [67:22] by his septet [Nicole Mitchell-flts, Marty Ehrlich-clts, David Morales Boroff-vln, Mike Dessen-tbn, Joshua White-p, Jim Black-drm] on SEDIMENTAL YOU [Clean Feed cf 385 cd]. This is a somewhat orchestrated session [12/14&15/15] as opposed to a free blowing set, that said there is a freeness to the music here which is laid down in the same way Mingus combined structure and freedom. Dresser has written informative notes on the structure and inspiration, personal and political, behind each composition. Boroff's violin (I think this is his first recording), is very impressive and it cuts through the music like a horn. There is so much going on in this music, in structure and

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improvisation it is remarkable. There is a sense of 21st century classical music but more so that of unforced jazz, almost Third Stream with guts. Dresser deserves praise not only for the compositional quality of the music but for putting together a group of musicians who could pull it off.

Music of a different color can be found on SOURCE [Liminal Music Records lml 222] by the SLM ENSEMBLE. The SLM Ensemble is a large ensemble set up by its co-directors; SARAH WEAVER and MARK DRESSER to offer an outlet for experimental music. Weaver and Dresser had previously worked together in 2009 on Deep Tones For Peace, experimental music recorded simultaneously in New York and Isreal on a piece called, "SLM". The CD here offers up 2 extended compositions, "Spectral Syn" [26:56] recorded 11/23/08 and "Cycles Of Awakening" [39:02]. The earlier piece is laborious and would make drying paint seem upbeat. The second composition is by far the more interesting in that it evolves (slowly) and has space for free improvisation. The performances draw from a group that includes Jen Shyu [voc], Robert Dick [flts], Jane Ira Bloom [ss], Dave Taylor [b.tbn], Ursel Schlicht [p] Oliver Lake [as] Ray Anderson [tbn] Gerry Hemingway [perc] and so forth. The longer piece continues to unfold. Steve Kirby [acc & el gtr] has issued ILLUMINATIONS [Whaling City Sound wcs 084] which seems wanting to appeal to hard core and fusion fans simultaneously. There is even a touch of the wandering ECM sound as well. Depending on how you like your genres mixed this might be something of interest. I could kiss off this release except this is meaningful music, that is to say, these guys play and not insipidly. Several musicians join Kirby on this undated set, the most propionate being John Funkhouser [p], Greg Loughman [b], Mike Connors [drm] Aubrey Johnson [mainly wordless vocals] and Bill Vint [sax/flt]. 9 originals plus "I Hear A Rhapsody" and "Over The Rainbow" make up the 11 tracks total [65:37]. Worth a listen.

TONI GERMANI [as/voc] has been kicking around for a couple of decades [DDQ Records and Splasch] and now has his first release on Slam Records: SONGS IN A BOX [slamcd 573]. Joining him on this 10/23 & 12/3/15 set of 7 originals [70:07] are Giovanni Ceccarelli [p], Mauro Gargano [b] and Patrick Goraguer [drm]. As a whole the album is dedicated to truth and freedom fighters while some of the dedications on individual compositions are interesting like to all the women named Angelica I have known of or on the one piece with vocals (sung in Italian) to all those who are destroying the planet or to all the migrants. This is a very laid back set, the leader plays in an un-rushed manner and with clearly formulated lines in a matter-of-fact style.

There is nothing matter-of-fact about PAUL DUNMALL's playing as more often than not there is a ferocious immediacy to it. One of the most frequently recorded leaders of the past 25 years, it would seem hardly a month goes by when he is not recording. An unabashed

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admirer of Coltrane, 3 of his Coltrane tributes were covered in the Oct-Dec 2015 Papatamus, his playing is torturous and unrelenting. Dunmall's latest, UNDERGROUND UNDERGROUND [Slam cd 2101] is inspired by Coltrane's "Sunship". The 6 originals [66:05] were recorded 7/21/15 with Dunmall's long time drummer, Tony Bianco, sometime associate Howard Cottle [ts] and new associate Olie Brice [b]. To give you an idea of Cottle's playing Slam has listed the order of which tenor man is playing when. If you enjoy balls-to-the-wall tenor playing you may like this twice as much. It is wonderful and exhausts me. Choose yer poison.

ORBERT DAVIS [tpt/flg] brings his Chicago Jazz Philharmonic together for HAVANA BLUE [3 sixteen records cd 31608]. There are 11 tracks on this CD [52:38], the first 7 are Davis' "Havana Blue Suite", recorded live 4/13/13 and is inspired by his trip to Cuba in 2012. The music is written except for some on top soloing by Davis and occasional other soloists when the orchestra lays down uptempo sections catching the rhythms of Cuba. It's a well developed and concise suite, the remainder of the record was recorded in studio and is made up of "Manteca", "Chega De Saudade" and 2 originals, rhythmically heavy they are nicely orchestrated with brief, uncredited solos. Fans of Latin music will find much to like here.

CORINA BARTRA is the Artistic Director of the AFRO PERUVIAN NEW TRENDS ORCHESTRA. Bartra wrote 10 of the 12 tracks [67:45] on UNITING BEATS [Bluespiral cd 12] and they are multi-rhythmic and multi-dimensional and make for rather compelling listening. This is not world jazz, other than the use of Latin rhythms, but it is a heavily orchestrated 10/12 piece jazz band. Some very fine writing whose charts should be used by other bands. I suspect Bartra is the pianist, it is uncredited but there is a fluency with the music that suggests it. A release that deserves not to be lost in the avalanche.

THE CANDY MEN [Arbors Records 19450] by HARRY ALLEN'S [ts] New York Saxophone Band [Gary Smulyan-bs, Grant Stewart-ts, Eric Alexander-ts, plus Rossano Sportiello-p, Joel Forbes-b, Kevin Kanner-drm] offers up the tried and true 4 sax blend popularized by Woody Herman's Four Brother's band in the late 1940's. The 12 track [67:00] CD opens with "Four Brothers" using Al Cohn's arrangement from the 1950s. Allen contributes 4 originals to this program of covers, all fashionably swinging in the vernacular. Recorded 8/19&20/15 there is little need more to be said about this date and Marc Myers' program notes are thorough. Kanner's crisp punctuation moves things right along and there is lots of solid soloing to please.

REISSUES & HISTORIC

If you're reading this column you don't need me to tell you about the music found on CLASSIC 1936-1947 COUNT BASIE AND LESTER YOUNG STUDIO SESSIONS [Mosaic md 8-263]. Okay, it is great and the title and matrix number tells the artists, years and amount of discs

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[8]. But there is a reason to invest in Mosaic boxes for while one may or may not have the material on various LPs and CDs, this brings it together and pulls it together with the LP sized program notes, in this case 47 pages of session by session of most interesting notes by Loren Schoenberg along with discography and dozens of not always familiar photos. Confusing at first is the fact that this time around the material is not presented in chronological order due to contractual reasons (noted by producer Scott Wenzel). This collection opens with Prez's first recording, the 11/9/36 Jones-Smith Inc. [Carl Smith-tpt, Jo Jones-drm, Prez, Basie, Walter Page-b Jimmy Rushing-voc] sides. The 4 numbers plus all unissued takes for me are one of jazz' apex and I can't imagine hearing these takes while dying and not being happy. 21 years later Basie, Rushing and Prez got together at Newport '57 and managed to get the same infectious swing going again. Jimmy Rushing was a natural, inventing a genre for blues singing yet to be equaled. Fortunately there is also an abundance of Rushing on these sides, perhaps Mosaic will consider a box of Rushing's Columbia sides. There are many other singers turning up here but it is the Rushing sides in total that rule. There are some right-angles here usually when someone is trying to play to the musical sweet side of a period but then again it is these exceptions which make the classic playing so illuminating. As for Prez, he seems to have been born fully formed, even on his earlier sides his lyrical sing song playing was marked by a repetition and tension he carried all his life. It was a fortunate coming together of talent and geography, a big bang occurrence. Also included in this collection are a number of beautiful sides with Prez in small group settings cut on the west coast in the mid and late '40s, with Nat Cole or Johnny Guarneri on piano. There is a picture of Prez and Ellington together at Newport '55. Which reminds me of an observation, why did Prez rarely record Ellington tunes? (Basie did a couple of sides playing Ellington). I could kick myself as I spent several hours with Basie alone and never asked him that question, and now the time has passed but fortunately the evidence of great art remains in recorded evidence. Mosaic has taken some fine gems and put them in a setting worthy for this and succeeding generations.

PETER KUHN [clts/ts] came on the scene in the mid 1970s and made a handful of excellent recordings, including dates on the Hat and Soul Note labels. However, by the early 1980s he had already dropped off the scene. A not well kept secret was he was strung out. He writes about this period in a 24-page booklet that accompanies NO COMING, NO GOING [Nobusiness records nbcd 89-90]. This is an outstanding 2 CD set which reissues his Livin' Right recording of 12/19/78 with his quintet [Toshinori Kondo-tpt/alto horn, Arthur Williams-tpt. William Parker-b, Denis Charles-drm] and a previously unissued duo concert [9/29/79] with Denis Charles. Both Kuhn and Charles are in great shape and the music [61:24] is essential for either's discography. Kuhn plays tenor sax, as well as clarinet and bass clarinet, all with the same rough

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harrowing designs. Charles is the equal, his conversational drumming is outstanding and memorable on the 4 originals and reminds one of what an important personality he was to this music for the last half of the 20th century. The liner booklet and the music make this a safe bet for anyone interested in free jazz.

Fou Records has reissued a 1/8/84 recording, some of which appeared on Hat Art records #2010. Now it would seem the entire concert [10 tracks-57:07] with DAUNIK LAZRO [as], JOËLLE LÉANDRE [b/voice] and GEORGE LEWIS [tbn/toys] is issued as ENFANCES 8 JANV. 1984 [fr-cd18]. This might be looked at now as Dada-esq free jazz. There is no hesitation here between these 3 as they take on improvs ranging 1:29 to 11:14 and it has a period sound which is as fresh as when first recorded. A little gem from Lazro too little heard from today.

The George Buck Jazz Foundation continues to reissue vinyl onto CD. From Audiophile Records it is CAROL SLOANE's very fine 10/16/77 Ellington tribute SOPHISTICATED LADY [ACD-195]. 12 Ellington [41:77] associated tracks backed by Roland Hanna [p], George Mraz [b] and Richie Pratt [d]. Hanna's piano has an odd glass like brittleness to it but it is not distracting enough to not recommend this fine effort. If you're new to Sloane or a fan of Ella or Ellington (that covers just everyone) get this beautiful recording. Unreserved recommendation. Also from the Buck Foundation come reissues from the Progressive catalogue which they acquired from producer and founder George Statiras in the 1980s. Statiras [1922-1984] was a true friend of jazz who produced many fine jazz records, one of a handful of decent people heading a record label. GEORGE MRAZ' [b] release PLUCKING AND BOWING [PCD-7038] was recorded 7/28/78 with his trio [Tom Garvin-p, Peter Donald-drm]. It is a light but very listenable date of 10 tunes [44:00], a mixture of standards along with originals from the group. To my knowledge, this session is previously unissued.

George Mraz and Al Foster [drm] are aboard for a 6/18/81 double CD [126:15] by MAL WALDRON called NEWS: RUN ABOUT MAL [PCD- 7060-7061]. This set was originally issued in Japan as were many of the Progressives as Statiras had a backing deal with the Japanese. Issued in the states it included 5 extra tracks that I don't believe were in the original Japanese issues. The 12-page liner booklet gives a good thumbnail sketch of Waldron's life but does not mention the nervous breakdown he had in the mid 1960s, which also had a profound effect on his piano stylings making them more pronounced, repetitive and personal. For the 23 standards here, he is fortunate to have the rhythm section he had, as they not only keep up with him but push him as well. This is prime bold Waldron and includes 2 takes of a brilliantly interpretative reading of "With A Song In My Heart".

Mention CHUCK WAYNE [1923-1997] to me and I immediately think of a stylish and tasteful bop guitarist whose led sessions were few and often on small labels that were hard to come by. I believe, TRAVELING [PCD-7008] was the last date Wayne did under his leadership.

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Recorded in 2 sessions on 12/21&27/76, Wayne is joined by Ronnie Bedford [drm] Jay Leonhart [b] and on the 12/27 date Warren Chiasson [vbs] is added. There is some great guitar over the 10 standards [55:19] here including 2 alternates added to the CD. Bedford is at times a bit heavy on the drums and electric guitar is unnecessary but when Wayne is wailing away, that is what is going to get your attention. A giant with ideas flowing faster than you can say "Charlie Parker".

WALTER NORRIS' [p] STEPPING ON CRACKS [Progressive pcd 7039] is a trio [George Mraz-b, Ronnie Bedford-drm] date from 7/17/78. Norris' [1931-2011] early claim to fame was that he was the rare pianist with an Ornette Coleman group appearing on Coleman's his first recording for Contemporary Records. This was/is a wonderful recording, to quote Norris, "I think 20th Century Jazz is the combination of emotional and intellectual music". On this program he deals beautifully with the rampant emotionalism of his original, "Stepping on Cracks", his lone original here, and the intellectualism (and emotion) of "A Child Is Born". Add to this some outstanding spots for Mraz and Bedford and you have a near perfect listening experience. But wait there's more as the folks at GHB have added alternate takes of 4 of the original 5 takes [73:04]. These alternates are safeties, not seconds. GHB has also printed Norris's original notes as well as a remembrance by DJ Will Thornbury. A bargain for a few bucks.

Omnivore Records continues its reissue program of later MAYNARD FERGUSON. This time they offer up a 2 CD set titled COMPLETE HIGH VOLTAGE [OVCD-185]. This brings together Ferguson's two Intima LPs recorded in 1987 & '88 and adds 2 tracks (never before issued) to the second session. Both of the sessions use a small group [septets] on programs that are very fusion-y and electric. Its odd how perspective/hindsight can change the way one feels about music; at one time I would have rejected these out right. Today, while they hold limited interest, I hear a musicality that I would not have credited 20 years ago. Get past the funk guitar twang, the back beats and programmed drumming, the synths and fade outs and there is still Maynard blowing high Cs over high Cs. One track, "Walkin' On The Pier" features vocalist Carl Anderson which goes for the smooth commercial George Benson sound of the mid 80s. Fine fusion Ferguson.

Avid continues to reissue jazz in their 2-CD sets and most recently issued JACKIE DAVIS: FIVE CLASSIC ALBUMS [AMSC 1202]. Davis played the Hammond more like Wild Bill Davis than Jimmy Smith, and I'm assuming the Hammond he is using is a B3 or some predecessor to the B4. He had a degree of popularity in the 1950s and '60s and had a fairly long tenure with Capitol Records then, in the 1960s, with Warner Bros. His appeal was with older jazz listeners who wanted parlor jazz and he didn't transition to Modern Jazz. Today I'd be surprised if many jazz fans under 50 have any thoughts about

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Jackie Davis, unless possibly as sideman to Dinah Washington, Louis Jordan or Ella Fitzgerald. The 5 records reissued here are: *Jumpin' Jackie* [10/57], *Hammond Gone Cha Cha* [1960], *Meets The Trombones* [9/59], *Tiger On The Hammond* [1960] and *Big Beat Hammond* [10/60]. Sidemen include Irving Ashby, Gerald Wilson [band], Milt Holland and Joe Comfort. He obviously played for an older audience's comfort but if you listen closely you will catch him making a hip reference to a modern jazz world of which he never became a part of.

LARRY YOUNG was of another time for organists as he came up in the next period of organ, after the B4-ers. **FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS** [AMSC 1204] reissues Young's first 4 recordings: *Testifying* [8/2/60], *Forrest Fire* [a Jimmy Forrest date 8/9/60], *Young Blues* [9/30/60] and *Groove Street* [2/27/62]. Today, Young [1950-78] is probably best known for his postbop work and his Blue Note release, *Unity*. Here, Avid has reissued Young's first recordings and all 4 include the unheralded guitarist Thornel Schwartz and Jimmie Smith on drums. Young is steeped in the blues and while his sound is a bit generic it shows some signs similar to Jimmy McGriff, who started recording at the same time as Young. In the past I have found these recordings only mildly interesting and now I don't find any reason to think differently. When a sax is present [Jimmy Forrest, Bill Leslie, Joe Holiday] things pick up and when he and Schwartz groove, as they can, it's a pleasure.

DUKE PEARSON: FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS [AMSC 1198] brings together 4 Blue Notes [Profile-10/25/59, *Tender Feelin's*-12/15&19/59, *Byrd In Flight*-Jan. and July 1960, *Hush*-1/12/62]. Pearson [1932-80] was probably best known for his composition "Jeannine", his career long association with Donald Byrd and a series of session made in the '60s mostly for Blue Note. Afflicted with MS, his career faded out in the 1970s. Pearson was a lithe pianist whose playing contrasted nicely with hard bop and like Donald Byrd he was lyrical. Profile, (which he told me in 1979 was one of 3 of his favorite recordings), and *Tender Feelin's* are both trio recordings with Gene Taylor [b] and Lex Humphries [drm]. The other 2 records are with trumpeter Donald Byrd. *Byrd In Flight* is Byrd's date, not sure why Avid could not find another Pearson date in its place. Never-the-less they offer a good look at Byrd before he turned commercial (Pearson also told me he didn't care for Byrd's change of course). Also involved with some of these dates were Hank Mobley, Johnny Coles and Jackie McLean. [162:21]

HERBIE NICHOLS [p] did not record much and what little he did was often on mainstream or traditional jazz records which were of little note for his piano work. Nichols [1919-63] was a modernist roughly in the Monk and Weston schools. Pretty much ignored, it wasn't until after his death and a chapter in A.B. Spellman's book, *Four Lives*, that interest grew. **FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS** [AMSC 1209] basically collects his best work extant. If you have the Mosaic box on Nichols (preferred) then there is no need for this but if you don't and want an economical substitute then get this. Reissued here are his 3 Blue Notes: *The Prophetic vol.1* [5/6/55] and *The Prophetic vol. 2* [5/13/55],

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Trio [8/55 & 4/56] and Bethlehem: Love, Gloom, Cash, Love [11/10/57] recordings.

OSCAR PETTIFORD [b/cello]: SIX CLASSIC ALBUMS [AMSC 1201] brings together The New O.P. Sextet-12/29/53, O.P. Sextet-3/13/54, O.P. Modern Quintet-12/55, Basically Duke, O.P. Orchestra In Hi-Fi vols.1 & 2 [157:19]. Pettiford [1922-60] was a utility player in the NYC area in the 1940s and by the 1950s he was one of the most recorded jazzmen in NYC, then pretty much the center of modern jazz. A volatile personality in 1958 he expatriated to Denmark. Pettiford was more than a sideman — he was a catalyst and composer of some note. The recordings, all of which have had many reissues except one, give a nice concise look at his talents. Among his credits is he pioneered the use of cello in jazz, and there are parts on these recordings where he is playing cello. Due to his local he could draw from some of the best and here you can hear Julius Watkins' french horn, a sound O.P. favored, along with Jimmy Cleveland's trombone, another player/sound he favored. Also heard: Al Cohn, Clark Terry, Dave Schildkraut, Tal Farlow and others. This is a nice concise portrait of O.P. and even if you have some of this reissued material, this will put the exclamation point on this jazzman and to an extent one of the dominate sounds of the 1950s, East Coast style.

Alto saxman EARL BOSTIC [1912-65] was a jazzman turned commercial. His influence was Bechet which may account for his Gato Barbieri-like raspy vibrato. He worked in Lionel Hampton's group for years and may have picked up Hamp's showmanship and love of backbeats. Like Hamp's and Jack McDuff's bands (is there a guitarist over 50 who didn't play with McDuff?) there are dozens of jazz men that passed through Bostic's bands. The material here on FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS [AMSC 1210] comes from the '51 through '58 period which included at one time: Walter Perkins, Redd Holt, Clifton Smalls, Jimmy Shirley, John Coltrane, Blue Mitchell, Tommy & Stanley Turrentine, Teddy Charles, Johnny Coles, Benny Golson, Barney Kessel and the list goes on. He made a mountain of recordings for King Records, some of which is presented here which is a good introduction to Bostic but after 2+ hours of listening I'm ready for anything less formalistic and at times, on later dates, insipid.

Avid also has a roots series and to us comes B.B. KING: FOUR CLASSIC ALBUMS [amsc 1203]. This brings together 4 records [Singing' The Blues-1957, Wails-1958, The Blues-1958, My Kind Of Blues-1961]. Although the original recordings gave no discographical info (nor does Avid), these are the Kent/Crown Recordings from Los Angeles. The recording dates are suspect and the back up is most probably a small band King used to travel with. This is the period just before ABC took King under contract [1962]. Once under new management and a new label, King's sound was refined and his signature style emerged; a sound that would identify this popular bluesman over the next 50 years. BB's blues here are more basic, with

Papatamus

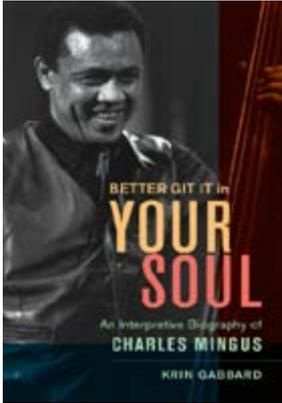
less emphasis on his guitar, but the voice is unmistakable. Planet Arts has issued CREATIVE MUSIC STUDIO: ARCHIVE SELECTIONS VOLUME 2 [pa 301547]. This is a 3 CD set with one CD each devoted to small ensembles, large ensembles and world music. The CMS was located in mid-state NY where a rotating staff would meet with students in a boarding school situation to learn fundamentals and strategies of improvised music. The staff was made up of established musicians while the students were working musicians or what-to-be hopefuls. During the day the teachers would hold workshops and in the evening there would be concerts once or twice a week as I remember. Karl Berger is the founder. There is a mixture of the profound and the profundity to many of these performances but overall this makes good listening and presents artists old and new at a stage in their artistic position between 1977 and 1981. The tracks run between 3:25 and 20:05 with the 3 large ensemble tracks being the longest and the 6 world music tracks generally being the shortest. Leaders of the groups are: Anthony Braxton/Marilyn Crispell, Kalaparusha, Frederic Rzewski/Karl Berger, Paul Motian, Lee Konitz, Don Cherry, Baikida Carroll, Gerry Hemingway, Ismet Siral, Aiyb Dieng/Karl Berger, Paulo Moura, Amadou Jarr and Collin Walcott. It would seem that CMS is using discretion in choosing which performances to issue as there are countless hours of archival tapes of recorded concerts and some of it should remain archived but unheard. This is the second issue of 3 CDs, and it is hoped that the standard for future issues remains high.

VINYL

Since 2009, Wide Ear Records has released about 3 records a year. Their latest is INTERESTING [WER019] by TOBIAS MEIER [sax and other instruments] with Frantz Loriot [viola], Silvan Jeger [cello] and Dominique Girod [b]. This is industrial and made up of a series of one long solo and 9 microscopic thoughts [18:57] recorded between 2014 and 2015 and released on a 10" LP. This is arhythmic (although there is a repetitive rhythm) sound. The effect reminds me of a one man Borbetomagus. Meier has several LPs on Wide Ear which I have not heard so it is not possible to write about this relative to his previous work. It is sound that inches ahead like a slow moving monolith.

Robert D. Rusch
[edited by Kara Rusch]

Book Look



BOOK REVIEW: BETTER GIT IT IN YOUR SOUL

From the very start one could tell this was going to be an enjoyable read. After perusing the almost nine pages of the introduction to *BETTER GIT IT IN YOUR SOUL* by Krin Gabbard (University of California Press, 296 pages, softbound) this writer experienced a *deja vu* with the author over several biographical aspects. For instance, I too collected *Mad* in the fifties, as a matter of fact the entire EC comics line until they disappeared while I was gone protecting Oklahoma from the Viet Cong. There were other similarities also but I would be remiss to say it didn't take me back. Divided into four sections there is a wide range of coverage present; Part I: A Circus In A Bath tub/ Part II: Autobiography, Autofiction And Some Poetry/ Part III: Third Stream Music And The Rest Is History/ Part IV: On And Off The Bandstand With Richmond, Dolphy And Knepper. The first part is the longest and covers childhood, the early years of sideman gigs with leaders as diverse as Ellington, Armstrong, Hampton, Norvo, Parker, Billy Taylor and others. This leads up to the famed Jazz At Massey Hall concert, working with Bud Powell at Birdland and eventually a short spell with Art Tatum.

The next portion deals with his signing to the Atlantic label and the rest, as they say, is history. The following sections continue dealing with the playing/bandleading of our protagonist with short stints at RCA-Victor and Bethlehem companies before signing up with mega-label Columbia, the one-off reunion with Duke & Max for *Money Jungle*, the larger group late period albums including the Joni Mitchell collaboration up to his eventual demise. Part II might perhaps be the most controversial of the sections as it deals with Mingus the writer, not necessarily the composer, but writer of prose and poetry. Mr. Gabbard had access to assorted files and writing archives and the original manuscript to the autobiography *Beneath The Underdog* not available to the general public so I can't comment on those but I remember the autobiography being a hard read, as far as I was concerned, when first published. Going back over it I found it not so difficult and more enjoyable. His free verse style of poetry is

Book Look

comparable to the Beat writers of the day and his prose, had more of it been published at the time, no doubt would have prompted the critics to lump him in with Jack Kerouac. His early literary appreciation is traced back to influences like Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, etc. and his Weary Blues album of Langston Hughes. This section will appeal more to literature students and scholars of such than to the ordinary reader. It's back to a more musical setting for Part III. Sort of a reiteration of Part I, but in more detail. This overview of the man's career which can be summarized in the names of some of his musical liaisons;

Barney Bigard, Howard McGhee, Armstrong, Dinah Washington, Duke, Hampton, Miles, Norvo, Bird, Kid Ory, Tatum and other sublime dissidents. One thing I was especially looking for was any mention of the short shrift Mingus (and Bill Evans, also) got in the multi-part Jazz documentary by Ken Burns and, sure enough, there it was on pages 182 & 183 where it states in the sentence "It should come as no surprise that Burns and his staff granted Mingus less than three minutes in their seventeen-and-one half hour history of jazz." The final major section, Part IV: On and Off the Bandstand with Richmond, Dolphy and Knepper was my favorite read. At thirty-four pages it is the shortest of the four main parts and, for my part, it wouldn't have made me mad if it were twice that length. There is no problem with the choice of this esteemed trio of sidemen but there were so many more (especially Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Booker Ervin) that this reader would have loved to have seen included. Astute Cadence readers will no doubt be aware of the stories behind Richmond, the former tenor player who was the bassist's longest sideman or Dolphy, who was to Mingus what Trane was to Miles but might not be too familiar with trombonist Knepper who had an on/off relationship with the volatile artist. This portion ends appropriately with a discussion of the movie Jerry Maguire with Knepper's solo on "Haitian Fight Song".

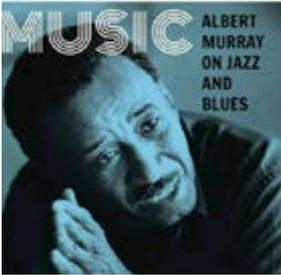
It provides a smooth segue into the Epilogue subtitled Mingus In The Movies which was my second favorite section. Following it is a little of two pages of Acknowledgments, a discography in text order, extensive notes & large bibliography. A must have for all that love the music.

Larry Hollis

Book Look

editor paul devlin foreword gary giddins
afterword greg thomas

MURRAY TALKS



BOOK REVIEW: MURRAY TALKS

Aside from being a riveting read **MURRAY TALKS MUSIC: ALBERT MURRAY ON JAZZ AND BLUES** (University of Minnesota Press, 274 pages, hardbound) might be the catalyst to turn novice music buffs on to a lesser publicized writer. Edited by Paul Devlin with a Foreword by well-known jazz critic Gary Giddins book ended by an Afterword by educator Greg Thomas it colates interviews, liner notes, discussions and excerpts covering a wide spectrum of Murray's interests. An old English Major trick I often used in my corrupt college days was to check out the index, which I did here and one might find of interest. It begins with a listing for Hank Aaron and ends with William Zinsser. That last name is of the author of *Mitchell & Ruff: An American Profile In Jazz* that Murray greatly admired. From a celebrated athlete to an pair of fairly obscure jazz musicians. There is much good reading here from these mostly unpublished works but a particular highlight for me was the interview with Dizzy, who was just as much as "ratchet-jaw" as Murray. Another gem is a 1981 (a year before he died) interview with Dan "Slamfoot" Minor, a big band trombonist who I wondered might be related to Orville "Piggy" Minor. Blues aficionados will find the section on David "Honeyboy" Edwards of special note. Murray reminded me of some of the old-time blues singers (like John Lee Hooker) who weren't exactly accomplished vocalists but could talk a song to death. Special kudos must go out to Paul Devlin who did a marvelous job editing all this and wrote a great and lengthy introduction entitled *Making Words Swing, On And Off The Page*. There is an eight page photo section, acknowledgments, A & B Appendixes and a helpful index. Having only the Basie book and the classic *Stomping The Blues* in my library it was surprising to learn of the prolific writings this man produced during his life. This labor of love certainly fleshes out those works nicely.

Larry Hollis

DVD Critique

MARCOS FERNANDES SOUNDING THE SPACE

Directed by Hans Fjellestad 68:15

Performers include: Marcos fernandes, Carl Stone, Yumiko Tanaka, Kouen Morishita, Matsutoshi Utashima, Koichi Akada, Hirokazu Morikawa, Yuko Hirai, Seiichi Yamamoto Yokohama, Kyoto, Matsue, Okayama 2008

This is a fascinating documentary about Marcos fernandes, a percussionist and someone who is interested in the relationship between sound and space. As Koichi Yoshida, Professor at Yokohama National University says, "Architecture changes sound and sound can change with each listener."

In this film Fernandes, who is the grandson of Uheiji Nagano, a prominent architect in Japan in the early part of the 20th century, decided to perform in some of the buildings built by his grandfather. His idea is to perform music that reflects the space it is performed in. As I started watching the film, I immediately thought of two people, John Cage and Max Neuhaus. Cage, of course, is the man behind the idea of any kind of sound being music, and Neuhaus, a percussionist who created a career for himself in the 60s performing the works of avant-garde composers such as Cage, later got involved in soundscapes, where the environment played a role in how the sounds were produced.

Fernandes is shown walking around the cities with a microphone and headphones listening to the sounds of the city. He looks at the spaces in which he will be performing and in each space uses different musicians. The one constant with him is Yumiko Tanaka, who plays traditional Japanese string instruments as well as an array of electronics, as well as singing and reciting. Other performers include saxes, guitars, piano as well as dancers, whose motions also help to define the space along side how the music help to define the space.

We hear interviews with the people who now are in charge of the buildings, as well as short statements by Fernandes. And, most importantly, we get to see good chunks of the performances. Most of the music reflects traditional Japanese music, Western classical music, avant-garde or experimental music, and jazz. The music is improvised. And as I have said on many occasions, free jazz and avant-garde classical music can often not be distinguished from each other since they use the same musical materials. And that is certainly the case here.

The dancers also add a nice dimension to the work. At times I was reminded of the work Merce Cunningham used to do with Cage.

In short, a must for anyone interested in avant-garde, Japanese, or free improvised musics.

Bernie Koenig

DVD Critique



GUNTER HAMPEL MUSIC AND DANCE IMPROVISATION COMPANY LIVE

BIRTH 150831
BALLHAUS BERLIN AUG 31
2015
NO TUNES LISTED

Music and Dance Company:
: Gunter Hampel, b cl, flt,
vib; Johannes Schliermacher,
ts; Bernd Oezsevim, d,
Cavana Lee Hampel, v; Danilo
Cardoso, Magdalena Dzecoo,
Ruomi Lee hampel, dancers

Omniversal Firebird Earkestra;
Johannes Boehmer, Fabian
Engwicht, Fritz Moshammer,
tp; Robin Hut, Andrej
Ugoljew, tbn; Paul berberich,
Sam Hudson, as; Johannes
Schliermacher, ts; Franz Stahl
bs;; Sydney Werner, bass;
Phillip Bernhard d

I am a huge Gunter Hampel fan. I have always loved his vib playing and I also like his work on other instruments. I got to review a live set of his a while back. With large improvising groups it is sometimes hard to figure out what is going on from a recording, but watching the band makes all the difference.

The show starts off with Hampel walking into the club playing his bass clarinet. While he is playing Bernd comes out and arranges his drums. Then the other two members of the quartet come out and start playing together. They are then joined first by one dancer, and eventually all three dancers are onstage.

Hampel then switches to vibes and uses a different pair of mallets in each hand. Something I have been known to do as well. Soft mallets for the chords and harder mallets for the melody line. The dancing, which is energetic and at times almost gymnastic, seems a mix of practiced and improvised patterns. At times there will be one, two or three dancers onstage. The dancers and musicians engage in great conversations with each other and it appears to go back and forth. Sometimes musicians follow dancers, other dancers follow music

The second part of the show features the big band. They play for a while before the dancers come out again. Some parts of the band seemed arranged and others improvised. There were some great solos.

This part of the show which lasts about forty-five minutes was comprised of two long tunes to which the dancers improvised.

The DVD was really great. It was a pleasure to watch Gunter Hampel both as instrumentalist and band leader, and as I love this kind of dancing, I thoroughly enjoyed the whole show. Highly recommended.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues-Profile

Name: Rudresh Mahanthappa

Instrument: Alto Saxophone

Place of Birth: Trieste, Italy

Recommended Albums: Black Water, Raw Materials w/Vijay Iyer, Dual Identity w/ Steve Lehman, Apex w/Bunky Green, Samdhi.

Rudresh Mahanthappa was born on May 4, 1971. His father was an academic who often took his sabbaticals in Europe. It was during one of these sabbaticals in Italy that Rudresh was born. His Indian-born parents had immigrated to the United States before his birth and made their permanent residence in Boulder, Colorado. The family returned to Boulder when Rudresh was just months old. With the exception of a few other of his father's sabbaticals, Rudresh spent the entirety of his childhood in Boulder where he attended Fairview Public Schools.

Rudresh began his musical endeavors by taking recorder lessons in elementary school. He began playing the saxophone before his fourth grade year when he attended his school's summer band camp. He also studied saxophone privately with Mark Harris until he graduated high school in 1988. Rudresh attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston first and graduated from there in 1992. Following his work at Berklee, Rudresh released his first album as a leader in 1994, titled *Yatra*. The album is a collection of trio and quartet performances that was released to limited distribution. Rudresh had also moved to Chicago by this time and was attending DePaul University. In 1998 he earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Jazz Composition.

1998 was a pivotal year for Rudresh as he took the plunge and moved to New York City. Almost immediately after moving, he began working and collaborating with pianist Vijay Iyer. Between 1998 and 2005, Rudresh recorded five albums as a sideman with Vijay. Rudresh released *Black Water* in 2002, his second album as a leader. This album was more widely distributed than his first album and helped solidify his critical acclaim by receiving mentions in publications such as *Down Beat*. Since 2006, Rudresh has released eleven albums as a leader or co-leader, and he has appeared as a sideman on another eleven. Many of his most revered works have been collaborations with artists like Steve Lehman, Bunky Green, and of course his association with MacArthur Genius Vijay Iyer.

His demand and artistry as a musician has led to fellowships with Guggenheim and the New York Foundation for the Arts. He has received grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and the New York State Council on the Arts. He has also received awards as a saxophonist from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, *Down Beat*, and the Jazz Journalists Association. His output as a leader has continued to increase with four new albums in the last five years. Rudresh has also branched outside of his usual working groups and recorded albums with Jack DeJohnette and Danilo Pérez. Beyond that, Rudresh has maintained a number of working ensembles in addition to his quartet (the Indo-Pak Coalition and MSG, to name just a few) and continues to work with incredibly diverse artists that range from Craig Taborn to Rez Abassi. Throughout his career Rudresh has continued to promote his global perspective while maintaining his openness as an artist. His blend of bebop and electronic jazz with South Indian music has created a revolutionary set of recordings that are free from boundaries and rich with enthusiasm for the future.

Dustin Mallory

New Issues-Profile

**RUDRESH
MAHANTHAPPA
BIRD CALLS
ACT 9581-2**

BIRD CALLS #1/ ON THE DL
(BASED ON "DONNA LEE")/
BIRDS CALLS #2/ CHILLIN'
(BASED ON "RELAXIN'
AT THE CAMARILLO")/
BIRD CALLS #3/ TALIN IS
THINKING (BASED ON
"PARKER'S MOOD")/
BOTH HANDS (BASED ON
"DEXTERITY")/ BIRD CALLS
#4/ GOPURAM (BASED ON
"STEEPLECHASE")/ MAYBE
LATER (BASED ON "NOW'S
THE TIME")/ BIRD CALLS #5/
SURE WHY NOT? (BASED
ON "CONFIRMATION AND
BARBADOS")/ MAN, THANKS
FOR COMING (BASED ON
"ANTHROPOLOGY")
62:00

Rudresh Mahanthappa, as;
Adam O'Farrill, tpt; Matt
Mitchell, p; François Moutin,
b; Rudy Royston, d.
August 4-5, 2014.

The newest album from saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa is simultaneously the most historically grounded and forward looking album to come out in some time. Dedicated to the great saxophonist Charlie Parker, this album serves as an homage to Parker's impact and legacy. Although based on Parker tunes, each piece is an original composition. Rudresh uses Parker's melodic fragments, motives, solo quotes, and other fragments of harmony and form to create these compositions. The pieces are not contrafacts but rather original compositions that use Parker as the jumping off point for a new piece. However, that's where the Bird connections end and the contemporary scales and stylings of modern playing take over. The band consists of staple François Moutin and recent addition to the band Matt Mitchell.

Alongside this core is drummer Rudy Royston and trumpeter Adam O'Farrill of the O'Farrill Latin and Afro-Cuban musical dynasty. This is an exceptional band that interacts with grace and ferocity. Mitchell's comping behind Rudresh's blazing saxophone provides just the right amount of texture and density to propel the music. Royston is also one of the best in the business and a performer that this reviewer has had the great opportunity to see perform live on a few occasions.

The album begins with the first in a series of "Bird Calls" that precede each of the allusory pieces. The band comes out strong with a free opening that sets the tone. "On the DL" has an aggressive modal quality which uses vamps that give the musicians plenty of room to stretch out and groove. This track contains some burning solos. Also, check out "Chillin'" and "Maybe Later," for more mind-bending solo work. Rudresh's fiery saxophone also explores some multiphonic effects on "Bird Calls #3" as it continues to thread the common phrases that intertwine through the compositions. The album is excellent throughout and each track has something worthy of attention. It's a whirlwind journey that is easily one of the best albums of 2015.

Dustin Mallory

New Issues-Profile

ARTIST PROFILE

Name: Rich Halley

Instrument: Tenor saxophone

Place of Birth: Portland, Oregon

Background: Active in jazz since the 1960s, tenor specialist Rich Halley has lived in Cairo and Chicago, where he absorbed the influence of the avant-garde. With an interest in a wide range of musical idioms, Halley developed a distinctive sound on his instrument, noted for its warm, rich tone as well as for his distinctive phrasing. In the 1980s, Halley began recording for labels like Nine Winds and developed close connections with many West Coast improvisers. His period of greatest activity has been since the 1990s.

During this period, Halley co-founded the Portland Creative Music Guild and began his long-standing trio with bassist Clyde Reed and drummer Dave Storrs, releasing a number of acclaimed recordings with this group. More recently, the Rich Halley 4 (reviewed here) has been the focus of much of Halley's musical efforts, though he continues to play and collaborate widely.

Recommended works:

Waterloo Ice House, Live at the Penofin Jazz Festival, Requiem for a Pit Viper.

RICH HALLEY 4 - CREATING STRUCTURE,

PINE EAGLE

ANALOG COUNTERPOINT / RAIN PERCOLATES LATERITE / RIDING THE TRADE WINDS / ANGULAR MOMENTUM / THE SHADOW OF EVENING / METAL BUZZ / STREET RUMORS / VIEW THROUGH THE ECLIPSE / ECHOES OF THE SOUTH SIDE / THE TUMBLED LANDS / SMALL PERTURBATIONS / WORKING THE INTERSTICES / QUIET LIKE STONE / PUSHING BREATH / THE SHOVE / THE RESPONSE. 61:38. Halley (ts, perc), Michael Vlatkovich (tbn, perc, wind chimes, acc), Clyde Reed (b), Carson Halley (d). May 30-31, 2014, Portland, Oregon.

Halley is one of those unfairly neglected West Coast players who, were he in a different zip code, might be known on a level commensurate with his talents. He plays beautifully inside-out tenor, drawing together different eras and idioms in a seamless, inventive lyricism. In that sense and otherwise, Vlatkovich is an ideal front-line partner (though he doesn't appear on every track), and the Reed/Halley rhythm team keeps things subtle, elastic, and often grooving. Perhaps because of so much history playing together, the band sounds impressively intuitive and responsive across this varied recording, often seeming to complete each other's phrasing in ways that greatly enhance the urgency of the performances. Hear it on "Rain Percolates Laterite," a pulse-quickening, rimshot groove with Halley and Vlatkovich like baying hounds or supplicants in a ritual. But it's also there in the evolution of wide-open improvised passages, as during those arresting passages when the textural piece "Trade Winds" somehow blooms into an abstracted Sonny Rollins calypso. Halley's son Carson is really adept at setting up spare, minimal repetitions like the one opening "Shadow," and these pliable frameworks are essential to how the group realizes different colors and ideas. And though just a quartet, this is a group that evokes quite a bit in their various different subgroupings, as with the tasty horn duo on "Metal Buzz," or the spacious, almost hesitant conversation between bass and sax on "Street Rumors." But of course it's the full group at peak activity that makes the greatest impression, lively with counter-rhythms and a feel for melody. Highlights include the bright and Ornette-ish "Echoes of the South Side," the rousing and heated "Tumbled Lands," and the lovely shift from the sour, balladic "Working the Interstices" to the nearly funky polyphony on "The Shove." Halley and his band deliver once again.

Jason Bivins

New Issues-Profile

PROFILE:

Name: Barry Guy

Instrument:

Contrabass

Place of Birth:

London, England

Background: A musical polymath, Guy became involved in the British free improvisation scene of the 1960s before he was yet twenty, soon appearing on records with Howard Riley, John Stevens, and as a key member of ISKRA 1903. From the start, Guy has displayed a consistent interest in composing for large ensembles, most notably the long-standing London Jazz Composers Orchestra, the vehicle for some of his most ambitious and impressive works. Aside from his longstanding associations with Evan Parker and Guy Lytton, Guy has performed as a solo artist, in small groups with Marilyn Crispell, Mats Gustafsson, and Agustí Fernández, and with his New Orchestra and Blue Shroud Band.

BARRY GUY

TIME PASSING

MAYA 1501

INTRODUCTION &

GLISSANDI I / PART I /

PART II / PART III / PART IV /

GLISSANDI II / PART V / PART

VI / PING / PART VII. 71:54.

Guy (b), Savina Yannatou (vcl), Anja Pöche (vcl),

Matthew Brook (vcl),

Camerata Zürich. November

17, 2013, Huddersfield,

England.

Guy will be familiar to almost everyone reading this as one of the most important contrabassists in improvised music, and one of the key figures among first generation British free improvisers. Fewer, perhaps, know that Guy is not only classically trained but has regularly performed classical music, ranging from English plainsong to 20th century new music. While one can certainly get a sense of that range from his marvelous large ensemble composing, the voice-focused *Time Passing* makes his fluency in various idioms even clearer.

With the aid of the fluid, resourceful Camerata Zurich, Guy creates a series of quite compelling and colorful settings for strings. Some of these are linear, others textural, and there is at least some room for improvisation (though Guy does not feature himself, he's always creative, even in a supporting role). One will hear in his writing echoes of Penderecki, Lutoslawski, perhaps even Grisey. But the music here, accompanied by a hefty libretto, is about interplay between Matthew Brook's resonant bass-baritone, Anja Pöche's soprano, and Yannatou's often unpredictable contributions. Repetition of certain key phrases is effectively used in contrast with the slow-moving, low-end strings Guy favors. Vocalists intone, for example, "Now she lives outside the walls" or "At 20 I got marching orders," and the suggestive lines make for some evocative, at times unsettling effects. Throughout, the vocalists balance individual and collective emphasis, underscored by Guy's attention to nuance and dynamics (there are loads of "wow" moments where voices merge with strings, especially in long melismatic or overtone-rich sections). Improv freaks will find themselves more drawn to the open settings of "Part III" or "Glissandi II." But to my ears the best bits are those which meld the multiple idioms Guy is working with here: in the lonely, affecting "Part V" and the long "Ping," overflowing with blended, overlapping vocals.

Recommended works: *Ode*, *Improvisations Are Forever Now*, *Harmos*, *Fizzles*, *Odyssey*, *Inscape – Tableaux*, *Tarfala*, *Blue Shroud*.

Jason Bivins

New Issues-Profile

Label Profile: Dreambox Media

Dreambox Media's clearly defined mission is to record and promote independent Philadelphia jazz talent. The label has been doing this for 20 years...or for 29 years, if you count those that Encounter Records, its predecessor, was in existence. Under Jim Miller's guidance, Dreambox Media has amassed a catalog of more than a hundred releases that include a wide range of instrumentalists and singers—some nationally known like Shirley Scott and Orrin Evans, and others who have remained strictly a part of the Philadelphia jazz scene. Dreambox Media continues its ambitious schedule of releasing new albums documenting eastern Pennsylvania's seemingly inexhaustible jazz talent, this time ranging from younger musicians to jazz veterans. The common thread for the label's most recent four albums seems to be the musicians' tributes to their jazz influences. Wayne Shorter's influence is evident in Dan Loeb's playing and in Jordan Berger's choice of "Infant Eyes." Joe Henderson infuses Mike Boone's *Heart and Soul*, even when his group isn't playing "Shade of Jade" or "Serenity." Though Tony Miceli and Diane Monroe may be expected to evoke Gary Burton (for Miceli's style is more lyrical than Bobby Hutchison's or Milt Jackson's) or Joe Venuti or Stéphane Grappelli, their song choices reveal interests in Thelonious Monk, Chick Corea and Vince Guaraldi. Although he switched from trumpet to piano at the age of 22, Steve Rudolph evinces the grace and fluidity of Bill Evans or Tommy Flanagan, for the sheer joy of performing infuses his recordings.

The following list of new Dreambox Media releases demonstrates the broad range of talent that this plucky label, which now goes against the tide of digital platforms, promotes in order to keep jazz vital to the spirit of its home town. (Has there been a Dreambox Media Appreciation Concert? There should be.)

New Issues

1) JORDAN BERGER FIRST

DREAMBOX MEDIA DMJ-
1130

QUALM / CONGREGATION
/ PLAYED TWICE / FIRST /
INFANT EYES / SECOND / A
LETTER TO ROBERT HUNTER /
PRIMONK / SELF-INFLICTED /
THIRD. 59:24.

Berger, b, elec b; Dan Loeb,
ts; Patrick Hughes, tpt; Tim
Wendel, g; Mike Frank,
p; Matt Scarano, Byron
Landham, d. No date given,
Wyncote, PA.

2) MIKE BOONE HEART AND SOUL

DREAMBOX MEDIA DMJ-
1142

SHADE OF JADE / TOT ZIENS
/ SERENITY / JOHN/WAYNE
/ BOLIVIA / THIS MOMENT'S
SWEETNESS / HEART AND
SOUL / REST IN PEACE /
LOONEY BLUES. 74:22.

Boone, b, elec b; John Swana,
EVI valve tbn; Tim Brey, p,
kybd; Anwar Marshall, d;
Rhonda Fearrington, vcl.
4/18/14, Philadelphia, PA.

First of all, congratulations to Jordan Berger for First. (1) introduces to the jazz world a bassist of note. Accordingly, Berger's first track on First is a brief solo introduction called "Qualm," whose quickness, precise articulation and melodic sensibility would command attention in a jazz club with comments like "Who was that?" or "Did you hear that?" But Berger wants his group to bring to life his compositions in its various shades and textures. And so, appropriately, "Qualm" glides into the next track, "Congregation," with its sections of five-four. The Jordan Berger sextet enters the track fully engaged. Its sound is not only matured as if they had performed together for years, but also distinctive with their own individuality of ideas held together by Berger's compositions. Nonetheless, the force of not just Berger's talent, but also his personality, remains undeniable, even as he steps into the background with firm, vibrant support. His trilogy of compositions, "First," "Second" and "Third," interspersed throughout the album, allows the musicians to improvise freely, though still governed by an overriding groove, like the six-eight sway made consistent during "First" by Berger and his imaginative drummer, Matt Scarano. The sextet's other members are just as professional, with attention to dynamics and harmony and individuality of sound. Tenor saxophonist Dan Loeb makes his presence known whenever he performs, his phrasing fluid and affecting and no doubt influenced by Wayne Shorter, and his harmonic involvement enhancing the group's unified sound. Sure enough, First includes Shorter's "Infant Eyes," sung by Chrissie Loftus. But Berger's influences include Thelonious Monk, it seems, and he performs "Played Twice" as a duo with pianist Mike Frank, switching from unison melody to darting interjections to their own swing. "Primonk" makes reference to Monk in name only as Berger moves to electric bass in his composition of contrasts between rock-influenced force and sections of calming modality. "A Letter to Robert Hunter" provides the best opportunity to appreciate the talent of these musicians as this minor-key bluesy track allows guitarist Tim Wendel, trumpeter Patrick

New Issues

3) DIANE MONROE & TONY MICELI ALONE TOGETHER DREAMBOX MEDIA DMJ- 1140

ICARUS / VINCE GUARALDI
/ SPAIN / FLEETIN' BLUES
/ EAST OF THE SUN /
BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS
NO. 5 / TENNESSEE WALTZ
/ HERE'S THAT RAINY DAY
/ WADE (IN THE WATER) /
ERONEL / ALONE TOGETHER
/ MISTERIOSO / THEME FROM
STAR TREK. 66:20.

Monroe, vln; Miceli, vib. No
date given, Winslow, NJ.

4) STEVE RUDOLPH TRIO LIVE! DREAMBOX MEDIA DMJ- 1131

ALICE IN WONDERLAND
/ JUST IN TIME / CLOSE
ENOUGH FOR LOVE / COME
SUNDAY / THE LAMP IS LOW
/ HOW COULD YOU DO A
THING LIKE THAT TO ME /
YOU KNOW I CARE / BILL'S
BLUES 60:23.

Rudolph, p; Steve Meashey,
b; Joe Hunt, d. 8/2005,
Carlisle, PA.

Hughes, Loeb and, yes, Berger himself to solo with assurance and soulfulness. Consisting of first-rate Philadelphia musicians, Berger's sextet deserves a Second and a Third. Their abundance of ideas can't be contained in First's mere 59 minutes.

2) captures the Mike Boone Quartet in a 2014 live performance at Chris' Jazz Café in Philadelphia, where his local followers cheer on song after song with the enthusiasm appropriate to the decorum of a nightclub where people go to listen to the music. Respected in Philadelphia for his commitment to the jazz scene there, as well as for his dedication to assisting younger musicians, Boone's years of professional experience, including with Buddy Rich and Mose Allison, have allowed him to immerse himself in the music to the extent that he himself becomes the instrument to the music's message. A believer in music's efficacy for healing and uniting, Boone aptly reflects his faith in music's power with the title of his most recent album, *Heart and Soul*. The performance teams Boone with John Swana, with whom Boone has performed often in the past. Another loyal Philadelphian who chose to establish a jazz career there, Swana, initially a trumpeter, plays EVI and valve trombone, showing an instantaneous communication with Boone created by years of work together. True to his commitment to the succeeding generation of jazz talent, Boone rounds out his quartet with next-generation pianist Tim Brey and drummer Anwar Marshall. Boone chose to open the engagement with Joe Henderson's "Shade of Jade," and Henderson's spirit in their music recurs. Henderson's "Serenity" appears too as Swana, on valve trombone, captures the composition's sense of ease and resolution, expressed through originality, slanting approaches to improvisational surprise, and swing. That Henderson influence carries through to their own pieces, like "John/Wayne," the group's confident immersion in the song instead of flash being an appropriate follow-up to "Serenity." A tribute to Cedar Walton occurs with the electrified version of "Bolivia," which features one of jazz's

New Issues

immediately recognizable bass vamps. Boone's slow minor-key meditation, "Rest in Peace," allows Brey to develop an extended solo of haunting beauty. The title track, a statement of Boone's belief about music's influence on the quality of life, contains its own memorable, lilting melody that, like the other compositions, veers between contained intensity and reassuring calmness. Marshall's fluid and respectful work on drums energizes the group, particularly on "Looney Blues," as he switches from free-rhythm soundscape to a fast swing. Fittingly, the off-the-beat ending reflects the accents of the album's first tune, "Shade of Jade."

Alone Together, appropriately titled, joins the sounds of two instruments infrequently heard in jazz contexts. Without back-up, Diane Monroe and Tony Miceli take those possibilities a step further by forming a duo, thus even more unconventional, of instantaneous interplay between just those two instruments, comparable in exploration, but not similar, to the Gary Burton/Chick Corea innovations with their vibes/piano duo. An incremental process, the formation of the duo solidified in 2009, even though Monroe and Miceli, two Philadelphia-based veterans of their instruments, had worked together on various projects since 1980. (3) is their first album together. One is struck by the fullness of the duo's sound, despite their initial worries about sustaining or varying sonic production. Actually, the resonance of Miceli's vibes contributes to harmonic continuity for fluidity of sound. Consummate professionals, Monroe and Miceli have worked out an ability to engage listeners through creative technical mastery. They even continue that musical feeling when they aren't playing as audiences would imagine moods, such as swing, during the rests, as in the "Theme from Star Trek." Speaking of which, the Star Trek reference allows the duo to grab an audience's attention with a recognizable theme, even though they both have performed in numerous other styles with the likes of Max Roach, Dave Grusin, Uri Caine, Dave Liebman and Joe Lovano. That diversity of styles is evident on Alone Together, as they vary genres from country music to blues to spirituals to standards to the non-categorizable music of Thelonious Monk. With fulfilling and original arrangements, Monroe and Miceli have figured out how to inject their personalities into the music. Monroe's "Fleeting Blues" not only features the wryness of her interpretation with end-of-phrase glissandos, blue notes and a vocalistic attack on notes she chooses to emphasize. It also includes a signature vamp for Miceli to play behind her. On Monk's "Eronel" they take turns with accompaniment, and Monroe comps on violin with piano-like jabs and Miceli solos with rippling ease. Both include on the album solo performances of three minutes, give or take a few seconds. Miceli chose "Tennessee Waltz," which he performs with slow, meditative affection and mellifluous grace. Monroe plays a tour de force version of "Wade in the Water" that combines soulfulness and folk-music fiddling with self-accompaniment and dramatic effects borrowed from classical technique.

New Issues

Keith Jarrett. Bill Evans. Tommy Flanagan. Hank Jones. Steve Rudolph. David Hazeltine. Marian McPartland. Kenny Barron. Fred Hersch. Steve Kuhn. Ted Rosenthal. Barry Harris. Ahmad Jamal.

Whose name doesn't belong in that list?

If you think it's Steve Rudolph's, you're right!

He's the only person the list to spend twenty years playing piano in a hotel lounge out of the mainstream, instead of gaining recognition at one time or another in the New York jazz scene.

The quality of Rudolph's piano work belongs among that of the others' on the list, though. If his version of "Alice in Wonderland" were submitted for a blindfold test, there's absolutely no doubt that some of the names of the other pianists in the first paragraph would be ventured.

But the importance of family can be a powerful influence on career decisions, and Rudolph's regular gig at the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Hilton provides him with the peace of mind that allows him comfort, challenge and local recognition. The same is true of Joe Hunt, who performed with Stan Getz and Bill Evans, but who settled in Harrisburg to be near his family. With Steve Meashey on bass, all of a sudden, a major jazz piano trio formed—but one heard only by the fortunate few in the Harrisburg vicinity.

An audience at the Carlisle, Pennsylvania First Presbyterian Church heard it too, and that concert comprises the trio's Live! Album. The Steve Rudolph Trio certainly was in fine form that day in 2005, for Rudolph performed with grace, swing, originality and the ease of a veteran jazz pianist. Not only has he developed a personal style, but also obviously Rudolph loves the opportunity to perform in front of an audience, for his diverse song list no doubt was designed to entertain.

Plus, he quotes. "You Know I Care" briefly recalls "Stella by Starlight," even as Rudolph fashions it into his own interpretation, at first without accompaniment as he employs his own counterpoint, moving chords, shimmering tremolos and glistening crescendos. Rudolph's solo on "Just in Time" glides easily into a phrase from "It Don't Mean a Thing" after the energetic drum-and-bass intro. On "Close Enough for Love," the give-and-take between Rudolph and Meashey takes on a Modern Jazz Quartet feel made so familiar by John Lewis and Percy Heath. "How Could You Do a Thing Like That to Me" features Rudolph's light touch as the song's rests allow "Cute"-like drum fills. "Bill's Blues" at a fast tempo excites the audience with its energizing pace, build-up of musical tension, quick development of ideas, and Rudolph's rapid-fire articulation. "Come Sunday" moves into a pronounced sway as the trio engages in the cohesiveness that develops (quoting "Willow Weep for Me"), and Rudolph's lyrical and soulful approach is entirely appropriate to the venue of the concert.

Unfortunately, Hunt moved on to Boston, and (4) documents their last performance. Fortunately, Rudolph continues to play at the Hilton. Lucky Harrisburgers.

Bill Donaldson

Reissues on Vinyl



**(1) ERIC ALEXANDER,
CHICAGO FIRE,
HIGHNOTE HLP-7262.**

SAVE YOUR LOVE FOR ME (*) /
EDDIE HARRIS / BLUESKI FOR
VONSKI / THE BEE HIVE (*) /
YOU TALK THAT TALK(*) (8) /
DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE FROM
ME. 41:29.

Alexander, ts; Jeremy Pelt,
tpt(*); Harold Mabern, p; John
Webber, b; Joe Farnsworth, d.
11/26/2013.
Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

**(2) TOM HARRELL,
NO. 5,
HIGHNOTE HLP-7236.**

BLUE 'N' BOOGIE / NO. 5 /
JOURNEY TO THE STARS /
PRESENT / STAR EYES / RIGHT
AS RAIN / MELODY IN B-FLAT.
38:56.

Harrell, tpt, flgh; Wayne
Escoffery, ts; Danny Grissett,
p; el p; Ugonna Okegwo, b;
Johnathan Blake, d.
12/30/2011. Brooklyn, NY.

The Highnote label continues its practice of releasing selected back catalog titles for reissue on high grade vinyl. This time out it is two of their most popular and respected artists, tenor saxist Eric Alexander and trumpeter/flugelhornist Tom Harrell leading top-flight units through programs of mostly originals. It is unclear how the tune choices are made as there are more songs on the compact disc editions but since there were no outright clunkers on either disc it is somewhat irrelevant.

Once again trumpet man Jeremy Pelt guests on a few tracks (1) and the two horn blend adds welcome variety. The remainder of the group contains Alexander regulars that have appeared on the majority of his Highnote albums and are generally considered his “working band”. Webber and Farnsworth have developed a rhythmic rapport that is super strong and veteran Mabern is unquestionably a national treasure. As Doug Ramsey states in his excellent (if slightly abbreviated) liners this is a concept work that couldn't make more sense. Eric was weaned on the bandstands in the Windy City which has a long and honored tradition of spawning tough tenors. As for the selections, the two non-originals are both usually taken as ballads but the Buddy Johnson evergreen is set in a “Killer Joe” stroll while “Don't Take Your Love From Me” is cloaked in a samba rhythm with Eric neatly paraphrasing the melody at the start of his second solo chorus. Named for the fabled Chi-town nightspot, Harold Mabern's “The Bee Hive” has hot drums amid horn punches before kicking into way up with altissimo shouts from Alexander before an impressive trumpet ride leading to Farnsworth's chance to thump some tubs and the horns open “You Talk That Talk” with a call & response head before heated soloing. Those conversent with the Chicago tenor tradition will instantly recognize the funky feel of “Eddie Harris” with Mabern laying in some churchy chords via his Memphis roots.

Reissues on Vinyl



Seldom do younger musicians delve into a down blues but the Von Freeman dedication after a spoken introduction has some serious preaching from the leader and a forceful upright solo from Webber. And there you have it; what this writer thinks is Eric Alexander's most successful Highnote release to date. Now if he would just team up with label mate Mike LaDonne for a salute to his old boss The Mighty Burner.

By the time this album (2) was first released in mid-2012 as denoted by its title brass master Tom Harrell had logged on a handful of Highnote titles with this combo and was rightly considered at the top of the rung for jazz trumpeters. Comprised of the same band members as the previous four issues he decided to break things up somewhat by utilizing the full quintet on only four of the eleven tracks.

On this vinyl edition there are seven of those numbers present and "Right As Rain", the neo-boppish title track and the catchy "Melody In B-Flat" sport the fivesome in full glory. Elsewhere there is the lovely ballads "Present" with silken flugelhorn over electric piano and the overdubbed muted trumpets slyly inserted on a previously recorded item "Journey To The Stars". Perhaps the most adventurous, the classic "Star Eyes" is Harrell alone in impressive improvisation while the bebop staple "Blue 'N' Boogie" by a certain John Birks Gillespie is set in a "Chasin' The Trane" vein with the leader burning with Johnathan Blake kicking the kit ferociously. Never a slouch when it comes to hard swinging, Harrell is even more celebrated for his sense of lyricism often compared to the balladic interpretations of either Miles or Chet but he always made this writer think of the under-appreciated Art Farmer. Escoffery and Grissett are their usual reliable selves on this must-have reissue. Both records are pressed on 180 gram vinyl and highly recommended.

Larry Hollis

Reissues

JUNIOR WELLS, SOUTHSIDE BLUES JAM,

DELMARK DE628.

STOP BREAKING DOWN / I
COULD HAVE HAD RELIGION
/ JUST MAKE LOVE TO ME /
LEND ME YOUR LOVE / LONG
DISTANCE CALL / BLUES
FOR MAYOR DALEY / IN MY
YOUNGER DAYS / TROUBLE
DON'T LAST(*) / IT'S TOO
LATE BROTHER / WARMIN' UP
/ LOVE MY BABY / I COULD
HAVE HAD RELIGION / ROCK
ME / LEXINGTON MOVIES
/ GOT TO PLAY THE BLUES.

73:23.

Collective personnel: Wells,
vcl, hca; Buddy Guy, Louis
Myers, g; Guy, vcl(*)/ Otis
Spann, p; Earnest Johnson,
b; Fred Below, d. 12/30/1969.

1/8/1970.

JUNIOR MANCE, JUBILATION, SACKVILLE

AUTUMN LEAVES / GEORGIA
ON MY MIND / JUBILATION
/ JUST SQUEEZE ME / THE
SINGLE PETAL OF A ROSE /
ATLANTA BLUES / ALL THE
THINGS YOU ARE / LADY BE
GOOD / ST. LOUIS BLUES
/ BIRKS WORKLS / LOVER
MAN / WHAT IS THIS THING
CALLED LOVE / OLD FOLKS /
SMALL FRY. 66:06.

Mance, p. 9/14/1944.
Montreal, Canada.

At almost seventy-three and one half minutes it is easy to identify this reissue as an expanded edition of a much-revered 1970 blues record. Another identifier is the sixteen page booklet inside the front cover of the digi-pak replete with extra commentary and photographs. But the improvement of greatest interest will have to be the seven bonus tracks added. Only one (an extended "I Could Have Had Religion") is an alternate take and most, save for "Warmin' Up" & "Love My Baby", have the great Louis Myers on guitar. Buddy Guy vocally joins in on Eddie Jones' "Trouble Don't Last" and adds his distinctive guitar to the originally lp cuts. The leader concentrates mostly on singing with sparse harp contributions. Junior never attained the commercial (or even artistic) level that his major guru Little Walter Jacobs did but, aside from his misguided trips into James Brown country, his small label work (also in tandem with Buddy Guy) is his greatest legacy. Recommended.

Larry Hollis

A standard packed solo piano recital from one of the most under-praised piano players in jazz. Mance has been around for a long time, playing the entire history of jazz keyboard in a range as broad as anyone touching the eighty-eights today. Unlike so many contemporary players, Mance has never been afraid of the blues and is, in fact, a master of the form. His lone original here, "Jubilation" is a joyous amalgamation of gospel and blues which, after a florid start heads into a sanctified call and response theme. His out-of-time introductions should be a lesson to neophyte ticklers. There is also a large dollop of stride to be heard throughout. A pair of Ducal gems, two W.C. Handy charts and a couple of Hoagland Carmichael items, one well-known, the other, the fairly obscure "Small Fry" whimsically delivered. A fitting companion to his other solo outing for Sackville, Mance Special.

Larry Hollis

Reissues



STAN GETZ, MOMENTS IN TIME, RESONANCE-2020.2

SUMMER NIGHT / O GRANDE
AMOR / INFANT EYES / THE
CRY OF THE WILD GOOSE
/ PEACE / CON ALMA
/ PRELUDE TO A KISS /
MORNING STAR. 64:39.

Getz, ts; Joanne Brackeen, p;
Clint Houston, b; Billy Hart, d.
5/11-16/1976. San Francisco,
CA.

STAN GETZ, GETZ/GILBERTO '76, RESONANCE-2021.

SPOKEN INTRO BY STAN
GETZ / E PRECISO PERDOAR /
AGUAS DE MARCO / RETRATO
EM BRANCO E PRETO /
SAMBA DA MINHA TERRA /
CHEGA DE SAUDADE / ROSA
MORENA 55:13.

Joao Gilberto, vcl, g; Getz,
ts; Joanne Brackeen, p; Clint
Houston, b; Billy Hart, d. 5/11-
16/1976. San Francisco, CA.

Of all the Lester Young acolytes of the 1950's California Cool School, Stanley Getz was the smoothest operator of them all. He had tiptoed to jazz stardom with a wispy tone and wealth of lyrical ideas but by the time of these recently unearthed tapings from Frisco's Keystone Korner in the mid-seventies he had dug his heels in tone-wise while still retaining his melodious inclinations. The band is first rate with Brackeen a tad less adventurous than she was wont to be at that point in time but way more than adequate. Her and Houston are on the same page rhythmically and as was his usual way, Billy Hart could do no wrong. This quartet performed at Club Montmartre in January of the next year with Niels -Henning Orsted Pedersen on upright to less effect than it does here. By that time the only items left on the setlist were Shorter's "Infant Eyes" and "Con Alma(With Soul)" by Dizzy. That this album is sublime and an essential for Getz fans is well established.

Despite not having a specific identifying date the Getz/Gilberto disc is from the same engagement increasing the same combo to a quintet. Both co-leaders were well familiar with one another by this time having collaborated on the classic self-titled bossa nova album from 1964 and it shows in their relaxed interplay. Only one selection from that work is heard, "Doralice" which is a bit longer than the original recording. Gilberto's soothing voice sings the lyrics in Portuguese which they were meant to be sung and his unobtrusive six-string strumming adds a nice texture to the proceedings. All hands are listening to one another on this one also. As with all Resonance releases both issues are attractively packaged with photos from the gig, interviews and annotation inside booklets of twenty-seven and thirty-one pages respectively. A keeper for those with ears for smooth sambas.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ECHOES OF SWING, BLUE PEPPER, ACT 07644,

BLUE PEPPER / AZZURRO
/ BLUE PRELUDE(*) /
LA PALOMA AZUL (THE
BLUE DOVE) / BLUE
& NAUGHTY / BLUE
MOON / BLACK STICK
BLUES / BLUE RIVER(*)
/ OUT OF THE BLUE(+)/
AOI SANMYAKU (BLUE
MOUNTAIN RANGE)
/ THE SMURF / BLUE
GARDENIA(*) / THE BLUE
MEDICINE (RADOVAN'S
REMEDY) / WILD CAT
BLUES / AZURE. 52:35
Colin T. Dawson, tpt,
vcl(*); Chris Hopkins,
as; Bernd Lhotzky, p,
celeste(+); Oliver Mewes,
d.

ADAM BIRNBAUM/ DOUG WEISS/AL FOSTER, THREE OF A MIND, DAEDALUS RECORDS 8001.

BINARY / DREAM WALTZ /
THIRTY THREE / BRANDYN
/ ROCKPORT MOON /
STUTTERSTEP / KIZUNA /
DREAM SONG #1: HUFFY
HENRY / OOH! WHAT YOU
DO TO ME. 58:00.
Birnbaum, p; Weiss, b;
Foster, d. 5/24/2012. No
location listed.

Part of the ACT music & vision label's Good Time Jazz series Echoes Of Swing (EOS henceforth) is a bassless quartet of two horns plus keyboards and drums. Over their almost two decades together they have amassed an impressive array of awards and positive reviews and this is another one. From the opening Ellington/Strayhorn title number to the final Duke tome "Azure" this is most certainly an eclectic setlist of titles from Fats Waller, Richard Rogers and Sidney Bechet to a traditional Mexican folk song to a pair of original instrumentals from band members Colin Dawson (Blue Medicine) and Chris Hopkins (Blue & Naughty) this is a headwind of fresh air for listeners everywhere. Arrangements from everyone except drummer Mewes are clever and inventive. The singing of Dawson is, shall we say "serviceable", but the instrumental dexterity is fantastic. Must agree with Scott Hamilton, who should know, that this is EOS' best effort ever. The sounds this foursome produce will echo in your head for some time to come.

Larry Hollis

It was difficult to ascertain whether Three Of A Mind was the name of the band, the title of the album or maybe both. Drum master Al Foster is without a doubt the biggest name among the band members but bassist Doug Weiss has an impeccable resume (there is dvd documentation of him in Al Foster's quintet) while pianist Birnbaum has two releases under his name but is still fairly under the radar. The last mentioned is responsible of seven of the nine tunes presented with Foster providing "Brandyn" (half of the name of his publishing company) & the frolicsome "Ohh! What You Do To Me". The lead-off "Binary" is probably the most animated with its introspective swing and the appropriately named "Stutterstep" is cleverly syncopated while the threesomes more serious side shows up on the next-to-last listing drawn from a longer suite. Modern piano-driven jazz with a pronounced lyrical bent.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

MAXWELL
GUALTIERI
FOR LOS
ANGELES
PFMENTUM
PFM088

A DANCE/
POSSESSION-
BLOSSOM/60
MINUTES

Gualtieri, g; Los
ngeles/CA; February,
2015

SAM TAYLOR,
MY FUTURE
JUST PASSED,
CELLAR LIVE
030315.

LOVE ME OR LEAVE
ME / MY FUTURE
JUST PASSED /
DO SOMETHING /
SHE'S FUNNY THAT
WAY / WHY DON'T
I / MEAN TO ME /
ERONEL / YOU ARE
TOO BEAUTIFUL /
T.O.'S BLUES. 40:35.

Taylor, ts; Aidan
O'Donnell, b; Taro
Okamoto, d. New
York, NY. 12/12/14.

Patience is the name of the game with this experimental adventure. I had never heard of Gualtieri before this album, but after reading the title of the CD and getting five minutes into the first of two tracks I knew that he was a CalArts guy. Extended techniques are the weapon of choice in this dark, austere journey of sound. Gualtieri is perfectly comfortable exploring nothing but timbre. In the second track he dives all in with strategies like rubbing his guitar strings (with some sort of foreign object) for an extended period of time. Later on it sounds like he is trying to stuff whatever he was rubbing on the strings inside the pickup. Any “notes” that happen during this piece are on accident. Musical pitches are not meant to be understood in the traditional compositional sense. But I hope not to turn the listener away from this CD. For Los Angeles is well-worth the investment of your time if you want to imagine what David Lynch’s subconscious sounds like.

Ryan Meagher

On this CD, Sam Taylor spends 40 minutes making old-school jazz sound really good. He plays classic tenor saxophone that is lushly eloquent and romantic on ballads like “My Future Just Passed” and “She’s Funny That Way” and jovial and freewheeling on “Do Something” and “Love Me Or Leave Me”. The rhythm section of O’Donnell and Okamoto is bouncy and supportive and they both get nice features, Okamoto on “Love Me or Leave Me” and O’Donnell on Monk’s Eronel”.

Most of the tracks are in the 4 to 5 minute range with only one lasting as long as 6. That means Taylor just has time to make short punchy statements and get out, editing his ideas down to their essence. The one exception to that is “You Are Too Beautiful” done as a solo saxophone piece, two and a half minutes of Taylor slowly probing and wandering through the theme, a display of how good his technique really is. Hopefully he’ll continue to develop in adventurous ways as his career goes on.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues

**FRANK GRATKOWSKI
LEO RECORDS 35TH
ANNIVERSARY
MOSCOW**

LEO RECORDS LR317

HOME FREE/HOUSE GAMES/
HITTING IT HOME/OUR DIGS/
HOMECOMING

Gratkowski, as, b cl, cl; Alexey
Kruglov, as, basset horn;
Simon Nabatov, p; Oleg
Yudanov, d, perc; Moscow/
RUS; October, 2014

**GIANCARLO MAZZU,
LICIANO TROJA
TASTING BEAUTY**

SLAM 563

TASTING BEAUTY/ BLUES
FOR GIUSEPPINO/ QUANDO
AMAVAMO/ QUI/ BARBARA
AND BLAISE/ SOMIGLIA/
NATURAL WISDOM/ FAT
MOUSE IN BROOKLYN/
VILLAGE FLOWERS/ CASERTA
53:11

Giancarlo Mazzu g; Luciano
Troja, p Brooklyn NY April
30, 2013

Imagine that a never-seen-before Federico Fellini film about Russian Cosmonauts was unearthed. This would be the soundtrack to that imaginary film. The playing on this album is extraordinary. I do not believe I have heard reedmen with such command over extended techniques. And the way that Gratkowski weaves melodic lines reminiscent of Anthony Braxton between extended-technique vocabulary all his own is astounding. His improvisations are free-flowing, yet remain contained with a sense of strong direction. If the reeds are the Cosmonauts, Nabatov is the tether that keeps them from drifting away from the ship. His tinny-sounding piano remains a constant, and provides support for Gratkowski and Kuglov so they can explore and report back to mission control. Yudanov sounds inspired by each member equally and never overplays. The interplay between all four members is quite stunning, actually, and their chemistry is evident in the close of the first track. Overall, this is a terrific album that is rife with influence from the masters of similar approaches to improvised music. I cannot see a reason why we should not call these four masters in their own right.

Ryan Meagher

I got to review this duo's earlier CD on Slam 2 years ago. That was comprised primarily of standards. This one is comprised of originals: four by Mazzu, five by Troja and two jointly. I quite liked the earlier CD for the great interplay between these two. The same thing is found here. And the originals all have nice melodic lines, but are primarily foundations for their improvisations. The CD is well planned with a nice variety of textures and tempos to keep the listener interested. Some of the highlights for me are the rhythm of "Blues," the Italian flavor of "Qui" and the nice quiet and clam of "Wisdom." As I said in the review two years ago, these two work well together, they listen to each other and create wonderful interplay.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



(1) WILL CAVINESS
SEXTET
A WALK

CELLAR LIVE CL071115

HORACE SENSE / A WALK /

MY SHINING HOUR / NIGHT

WARRIOR / J'S WAY / SPLEEN /

TRUST IN ME. 43:45.

Caviness, tpt, flgh; Benjamin

Drazen, as; Sam Dillon, ts; Jeb

Patton, p; Will Slater, b; Pete

Van Nostrand, d. June 20,

2014, Brooklyn, NY.

If the depth of a musician's playing is revealed by his or her ballad playing, trumpeter Will Caviness excels markedly by that criterion in his wonderful interpretation of "Trust in Me," one of seven outstanding selections on (1). Caviness's fine writing skills are also apparent on this recording, which features his own arrangements on all selections and five of his own compositions.

The genesis for this recording from Caviness, a Memphis native and now a five-year resident of New York City, came in 2011 as he began to delve deeply into the music of classic jazz groups, first analyzing the music of Art Blakey and others from the period of 1958-1961 by transcribing and playing back selections from these artists, and later developing his own writing in this genre. Saxophonists Benjamin Drazen and Sam Dillon participated in these sessions with Caviness, exploring both the classic and later the original music. Caviness obtained Drazen and Dillon plus the top-flight rhythm section of Jeb Patton (piano), Will Slater (bass), and Pete Van Nostrand (drums) for this recording.

The opening "Horace Sense," Caviness's tribute to Horace Silver, was influenced by the horn harmonies used by the Cannonball Adderley sextet in his "Live in New York" recording. Its strong melody and use of both suspended and resolved harmonies make for a compelling jazz piece, which also holds true for "A Walk," a thoughtful Caviness composition in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. On a subtler level, Caviness's writing on the introduction and background horn figures on "My Shining Hour" and "Spleen" is very well-crafted. Outstanding performances on all selections are provided by Caviness's sextet, a group of musicians who (in Caviness's words) "respect the jazz tradition while providing a fresh new outlook." Certainly Will Caviness has done the same on this fine album.

Don Lerman

New Issues



**(2) STEVKO BUSCH /
PAUL VAN KEMENADE
DEDICATION**
DNL2015.2 / KEMO 014

CONTEMPLATION IX - FOR
PARIS / BROKEN BONES /
FOLLOW / MAYA / THE GATE /
ONE NOTE CARAMBA / MODE
VI / CONTEMPLATION X - FOR
PARIS / CONTEMPLATION XI -
FOR PARIS / CONTEMPLATION
XII - FOR PARIS / FOR RUSSIA
WITH LOVE 2.0 / BAREN
AUF DEM WEG / SHEN KHAR
VENAKHI. 42:33.

Busch, p; Van Kemenade, as.
Spring and fall 2015, Tilburg,
Netherlands.

The music of the duo of Stevko Busch and Paul van Kemenade has the qualities of both buoyancy and reflection. Four titles of the twelve selections on (2) include the word "Contemplation," short pieces (under 3 minutes) each listed as jointly composed by the two performers, each characterized by van Kemenade's alto saxophone soaring over and around twinkling notes in the upper register of Busch's piano. Either or both performers also had a hand in 6 of the 8 remaining compositions, with the two other selections being an original by Paul Motian and a Georgian traditional piece. Kemenade's ethereal airy alto pairs with Busch's luminous piano throughout the album to evoke varying moods, foreboding in "Broken Bones," thought-provoking on the Motian piece "Mode VI," and uplifting in the folksong-like "Follow" and on several other selections. Each artist also offers expressive individual musical statements in brief (under 2 minutes) solos, Busch on "Maya" and van Kemenade on "One Note Caramba." This CD is of top quality and of a unique character.

Don Lerman

New Issues



(1) LE REX WILD MAN

CUNEIFORM RECORDS

RUNE 411

MOLE'S DREAM OF THE
PRAIRIE / HOME ALONE /
THE DWARF / MR. RICHARD
KIEL / LE CLIC / HYMN TO
THE COLD / WILD MAN /
RIFF RAFF / SUGAR MAPLE
/ ANCHOR / DON'T LEAN
ON THE CASE! / A WALK ON
SOUTH MICHIGAN / BE IN
SHAPE. 58:15.

Benedikt Reising, as; Marc
Stucki, ts; Andreas Tschopp,
tbn; Marc Unternahrer, tba;
Rico Bauman, d. September
25-27, 2014, Chicago, IL.

Le Rex, a quintet from Switzerland, has an instrumental makeup (two saxophones, trombone, and tuba and drums) that might cause great anxiety to the most dedicated of junior high or high school jazz band directors. And yet, after hearing the 2015 release (1) from Le Rex on the cutting-edge and progressive Cuneiform label, it is hard to imagine this out-of-the-ordinary music coming from anything but the idiosyncratic Le Rex group. The music, which has a very natural acoustic quality, possesses an irreverent humor that will both surprise and entertain listeners. The writers of this imaginative music, tenor saxophonist Marc Stucki (who wrote seven of the album's 13 original compositions), trombonist Andreas Tschopp (two compositions), alto saxophonist Benedikt Reising (two compositions), and tuba player Marc Unternahrer (one composition), each find a way to employ the group's low brass, saxophones, and drums in creative ways, establishing interesting and sometimes quirky rhythmic grooves, harmonies, and melodies. All of the horn players contribute excellent solos as well, each furthering the group's unique character.

Don Lerman

New Issues

(2) CHARLES
RUGGIERO
AS HEARD ON TV
RONDETTA JAZZ RJ1014

BEWITCHED / LAW AND
ORDER / MOONLIGHTING
/ THE BUGS BUNNY SHOW
"THIS IS IT" / GAME OF
THRONES / ICARLY "LEAVE IT
ALL TO ME" / GOOD TIMES /
THE HONEYMOONERS "YOU
ARE MY GREATEST LOVE".
41:43.

Ruggiero, d; Jeremy
Manasia, p; Mike Karn, b; Ian
Hendrickson-Smith, flt (1), as
(5, 6, 7); Alex Norris, tpt (1, 5,
6, 7); Stacey Dillard, ss (2), ts
(8); Laura Mace, voc (6). May
3-4, 2015, Brooklyn, NY.

(3) CARRIE WICKS
MAYBE
OA2 RECORDS 22125

GHOST OF A PERFECT FLAME
/ SMALL DAY TOMORROW
/.DESOLATION MOON / IT
COULD HAPPEN TO YOU
/ MAYBE / WATERCOLOR
RHYME / AFTERNOON / THE
BOTTOM OF YOUR HEART
/ DREAMTIME / WALTZ
BEYOND / SOLITUDE. 83:30.

Wicks, vcl; Bill Anschell, p; Jeff
Johnson, b; Byron Vannoy, d;
Aria Prame, vcl (5); May 19,
25-27, June 12, 2015, Seattle,
WA.

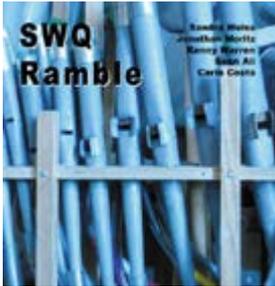
Drummer Charles Ruggiero presents jazz versions of television theme songs on (2). The arrangements were capably written by Ruggiero and well performed by his groups ranging in size from trio to sextet. Ruggiero and the rhythm section of pianist Jeremy Manasia and bassist Mike Karn trio establish a light swinging feeling on the uptempo swingers "Bewitched" and "The Bugs Bunny Show." Stacy Dillard's tenor sax interpretation of the romantic old theme to "The Honeyymooners," which was written by Jackie Gleason, is a highlight of the recording.

Don Lerman

Carrie Wicks brings a highly individual vocal style, having more of a conversational/poetic orientation than a melodic one, to her program of mostly original music on (3). Wicks co-wrote eight of the eleven selections (six with Ken Nottingham and two with Nick Allison), with the other three in the standards/jazz standards category. Wicks is backed by an excellent and adaptable jazz trio of pianist Bill Anschell, bassist Jeff Johnson, and drummer Byron Vannoy. Aria Prame joins Wicks in a well-done vocal duet on "Maybe," a country tune which the two singers co-wrote with Nottingham.

Don Lerman

New Issues



SWQ RAMBLE LEO 738

WATER IN TUBES/
TRANSITION SUITE
DIFFUSION/ TRANSITION
SUITE SCATTERING/
TRANSITION SUITE
DISPERSION/ RAMBLE ON
47:47

Sandra Weiss, as, bsn;
Jonathan Moritz, ss, ts; Kenny
Warren, tpt, Sean Ali, bass,
Carlo Costa d Bklyn, NY Feb
6, 2015

LUCIA IANNIELLO MAINTENANT

SLAM 566
MAINTENANT/ BALLAD FOR
SAMUEL/ OUR SUMMER/
DESRT FAIRY PRINCESS/
OTHER/ PEYOTE SONG NO.
111/ SICILY/ PRELIMINAIRES
AMOUREUX 56:27

Lucia Ianniello, Bb and C tpts,
flgh, effects and objects;
Diana Torti, v; Giuseppe La
Spina, g; Paolo Tombolesi,
kybds, bass, perc Rome,
Italy July 2014 to March 2015

While this record is clearly not for everyone, I thoroughly enjoyed it. If I just put this on and asked someone to classify it, one could say it was avant-garde classical, or jazz, or just some musicians messing around. But the label doesn't matter. Here we have five musicians creating interesting sound effects all based on the idea of water flowing. But I can imagine some composer influenced by John Cage creating something like this.

"Water in Tubes" sounds just like it says. The use of the bassoon and trumpet mouthpiece to create water like sounds is interesting and effective. Each track develops the idea in different ways. The three part suite develops in complexity with everyone contributing to the idea.

I assume the SW of the SWQ refers to Sandra Weiss, and her bassoon appears to take the lead in many places. But all five musicians work together to create the suite. I especially like the subtle use of percussion, and the bass solo on "Ramble" to my ears reflects the influence of Charles Mingus.

For those who like this type of music, just 'ramble on' down to your local store and buy it.

Bernie Koenig

Another very nice record from Italy, with a sound based back in the 60s. Ianniello's trumpets dominate but everyone gets to play. I especially like the work of Torti. She has a nice flowing voice and uses it effectively.

The melodies are very nice, and occasionally we even hear some dissonance. But over all this CD is very melodic. The highlights of the CD, besides the melodies, are the great interplay between the members of the band. Ianniello and Torti turn in some excellent work together, as do Ianniello and La Spina and Tombolesi. In some places the keyboards take on a variety of sounds such as an organ, on "Peyote." The unison playing by Ianniello and Tombolesi is really great.

Not sure what else to say except sit back and enjoy.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



IVO PERELMAN COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

LEO 744

VIOLET/ YELLOW/ VIOLET
AND YELLOW/ BLUE/ RED/
BLUE AND RED/ GREEN/
MAGENTA/ GREEN AND
MAGENTA/ WHITE 46:10

Ivo Perelman ts; Mathew
Shipp, p no recording info



COUNTERPOINT

LEO 730

PART 1/ PART 2/ PART 3/ PART
4/ PART 5/ PART 6/ PART 7/
PART 8/ PART 9/ PART 10
48:00

Ivo Perelman ts; Matt Maneri
via; Joe Morris, g Bklyn NY
March 2015

I must admit not looking forward to these 2 CDs. Over the last few years I have reviewed a number of Perelman CDs and the more I listened, the less I liked his playing. He tends to fall back on his little riffs or his screaming, which at first can be exciting, but after a while becomes boring.

So I was very pleasantly surprised with both of CDs. (1) turned out to be quite mellow and melodic, with only the occasional screech. He creates some very nice melodic lines. I think the strength of this record is the fact that tunes are on the short side. Perelman makes his statement and limits his improvisations before he has time to get into his fallback positions.

Shipp provides excellent support. I would like to have heard him in a bit more solo space, but the record is Perelman's and Shipp is the accompanist. He certainly knows how to listen to Perelman.

All in all, a nice mellow surprise from Perelman. (2) is a different story. Perelman here is still a bit mellow but there is constant interplay between the three players which makes for a very different listening experience. Given that the titles imply parts of a whole, that is how tried to listen to the CD. The tempos vary, as do the melodic lines and the interplay. But the whole CD sounds like a continuous improvisation with lulls, which often happens in extended improvisations. A particular pattern is worked on and comes to an end, then someone picks up another idea and everyone joins in again. The three players work very well together, sometimes sounding in unison, others just working around what they hear. Perelman stays mellow with very little high note screaming, with Part 7 the exception, as he stays part of the ongoing three-way conversation. Manieri's viola is a treat for my ears, especially when working with Perelman, as well as in solo spots, while Morris moves back and forth between single note lines and chorded sections.

My favorite parts are 5 and 6 which are taken at slow tempos so the interplay can be heard very clearly. I thought the way that Part 9 ended the CD was over, but then Part 10 started. While it wasn't quite a summation of the whole CD, it had the feel of the players making sure they left nothing unsaid. I quite enjoyed this record.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



ULRICH GUMPERT
QUARTETT
A NEW ONE
INTAKT 257

THE OPENER/ A NEW ONE/
RECITATIVO SECCO/ THE BOP
& THE HARD BE/ SUSSHOLZ/
100 MAASSGELINZERTE/
IFFIE/ NUMBER NINE/ JA?/
SCROLLIN'/ IFFIE'S SALOON
:5859

Jürg Wickihalder, ss, as,
ts; Ulrich Gumpert, p; Jan
Röder, bass; Michael Griener,
d September 27, 28, 2014
Winterhur, Switzerland

Here we have a Swiss quartet, playing music that sounds like it is based in the late 60s or early 70s bop to free. The group plays with great energy, and they all play well together. The two main soloists are Kickihalder and Gumpert. Wikihalder reflects a number of influences with a heavy tone out of the Coleman Hawkins school but plays more like Coltrane. He is deft on all saxes. Gumpert also reflects a range of influences from heavy chording and single lines of so many bop pianists with a touch of ---since he is Swiss I should say Irene Schweizer.

The tunes are nice, with "New" reminiscent of "Move." And "Iffie" reminded me a bit of Coltrane's "Naima," not so much in the melody but in the feeling and in Wikihalder's tone. "Nine" stands out for me. It is a simple riff melody with some great solos. Here is where Griener shines, keeping a beat in a solo mode in between and under Wikihalder and Gumpert. And "Ja" is perhaps the most interesting piece, taken at fast tempo, the interplay between Wikihalder and Gumpert is really good, and borders on freer playing. And finally, on "Scrollin" Roder gets to solo. I should also mention his solid support throughout the CD.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



JOE ROSENBERG ENSEMBLE RITUALS AND LEGENDS QUARK 201522

RAMKALI/ AKAZEHE/ TEEN
TAL/ KCAK/ RAMKALI (ALT)
67:39

Antonin-Tri Hoang as;
Arnault Cuisiner, bass; Bruno
Angelini, p; Edward Perraud, d;
Joe Rosenberg, ss; Olivier Py,
bs; Stephane Payen, as/ Robin
Finker, ts Paris, December,
2014

In the insert there are three quotes, which, I assume are to be read as an intro to the music. They are: “Dissonance is a beauty that familiarity hasn’t yet destroyed” by Richard Powers, “Tradition is not necessarily a prison” by Cecil Taylor and “It ain’t over til it’s over” by Yogi Berra.

While there is little dissonance here there are some Cecil Taylor moments in Angelini’s playing. But for the most part this record could have been made in the 60s. That is not, of course a bad thing, but it does date the music somewhat. Or maybe, it just puts it into that tradition.

The highlight of this CD is the writing. All tunes, and I assume arrangements, are by Rosenberg. His tunes have nice melodies and I like the way in which he uses the contrasting sounds of the different saxes. Not every player is on every track which also adds the difference in sound.

The CD is Rosenberg’s as he is the main soloist as well. He gets a nice smooth sound on the soprano and improvises some very nice long lines. On a couple of tracks notably “Akazehe” and “Teen” there some excellent moments of interplay between Rosenberg and Payen and Py. The contrast between the soprano and baritone is really nice. Cuisiner and Perraud provide very tasteful rock solid support.

Definitely part of a tradition, good writing and good playing make this a very listenable CD. One does not have to worry about when it will be over.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues

UWE OBERG
TWICE, AT LEAST



UWE OBERG TWICE, AT LEAST

LEO 733

CHANT 11/ KELVIN/

TOUCHING/ ENZYM & EROS/

(VARIATIONS)/ MAGNETIC

WOOD/ BLUES/ KING KORN/

BRILLIANT CORNERS/

PANNONICA 56:55

Uwe Oberg, p Tracks 1-5

Wiesbaden, Dec 7 2012, 6-7

Wiesbaden, March 3 2015

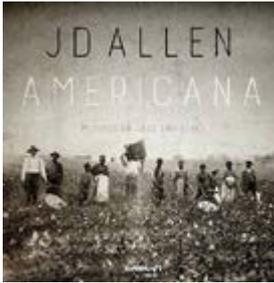
As I listen to this CD I get the impression that Oberg is a classical—or at least classically trained—pianist trying to improvise. I get this impression from the way in which he phrases and the way in which he uses the strings. I can visualize him playing the keys with one hand while leaning over the piano to strum the strings. He does this quite effectively, and, more to the point, he does not overdo it.

He does a great job of mixing single note melodic lines with heavy chordal passages, at times reminiscent of the sturm and drang of romantic piano music, but he also has a good sense of syncopation in his phrasing. The CD ends with a couple of Monk tunes and as I listened I realized that he was using Monkish harmonies throughout the CD. This really comes through on “King Korn.” His version of “Brilliant Corners” mixed with his own composition is really interesting. He builds on Monk’s harmonies in a very out manner, using interesting contrasts, creating a whole new way of playing Monk.

In short, a very interesting recording.

Bernie Koenig

New Issues



**JD ALLEN,
AMERICANA
(MUSINGS ON JAZZ
AND BLUES),**

SAVANT 2155.

TELL THE TRUTH, SHAME THE
DEVIL / ANOTHER MAN DONE
GONE / COTTON / SUGAR
FREE / BIGGER THOMAS /
AMERICANA / LIGHTNIN' / IF
YOU'RE LONESOME, THEN
YOU'RE NOT ALONE / LILLIE
MAE JONES. 45:01.

Allen, ts; Gregg August, b;
Rudy Royston, d. 1 / 2 //2016.
Paramus, NJ.

**SARI KESSLER,
DO RIGHT,**

SELF-RELEASE (NO #).

WALK ON BY / AFTER
YOU'VE GONE / WHY DON'T
YOU DO RIGHT / THE GAL
FROM JOE'S/ SUNNY / IT'S
A WONDERFUL WORLD /
I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU /
THE FRIM FRAM SAUCE /
FEELING GOOD / MY EMPTY
BED BLUES / TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT / MOONGLOW.

49:25.

With a last name like his one has to wonder if there might be some kinship connective to Snooze Jazz trumpeter Chris Botti but I kinda doubt it. Julio's priorities seem to lie more in the Third Stream melding of Nuevo Tango movement with Classical frameworks. For his second project with pianist/producer Pablo Ziegler he has bigger eyes with the employment of a full orchestra under the baton of Argentine conductor Saul Zaks for a fairly predictable program heavily laden with works by the legendary Astor Piazzola with a representative total of nine compositions interlaced with pieces by Hector Stamponi, Juan Carlos Cobian and a pair from music director Ziegler. Botti's fishhorn is not as fluid as Trane or Sam Rivers of course and his tenor never employs the hoarseness of the late Gato Barbieri but all said, this is a pleasing program of tangos that will go down smoothly with the dance crowd.

Larry Hollis

After reading the liners to Sari Kessler's debut disc I immediately was reminded of the 1974 movie *Alice Doesn't Live Here Any More*. Tweaked over a period of almost two years this is a labor of love that shows. Contributing to the success of the recording are the stellar sideman present; Di Martino has proven his accompaniment skills on numerous dates while Ron Affif is an under recognized fret master. Then, last but certainly not least, we have the mighty Houston Person adding his smokey tenor to three cuts (*After You've Gone/Why Don't You Do Right/My Empty Bed Blues*). The latter title is my favorite track and the sole original writing. It's neat the way the horns never appear together and although the tunelist is tried and true the clever arrangements from James Shipp & Kessler emphasize the attractiveness of her voice. An impressive debut.

(Collective personnel): Kessler, vcl; John Di Martino, p; Ron Affif, g; Steve Whipple, b; Willard Dyson, d; Houston Person, ts; Naje Noordhuis, tpt, flgh. No dates given. Hoboken, NJ.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**GRENCO OPEN
COLLECTIVE
DERENGES/DAWN:
COMPOSITIONS BY
GYORGY SZABADOS
SLAM 565**

DISC ONE: THE WEDDING*
/ SUPPLICATION* /
ADYTON*+. 45:19. DISC
TWO: COMMENDATION
TO OUR WOMEN / DANCE
OF REANIMATION /
MINSTRELSY*+^#. 32:49.

Istvan Grenco (ss, ts, bcl,
pipe), Mate Pozsar (p), Robert
Benko (b), Szilveszter Miklos
(d, perc), Szilard Mezei (vla
on *), Adam Meggyes (tpt on
+), Abel Fazekas (cl, pipe on
^), Gergo Kovats (bari s, pipe
on #). April 9-11, 2015, no
location given.

Prior to digging into this twofer for review, I wasn't familiar with Grenco or any of his fellow musicians (much less the work of Szabados) other than violist Mezei, who guests on a few tracks here. Hopefully this release will bring him a wider audience, for the music here is creative and frequently impressive. Opening with a lengthy bass solo that foretells the music's balance between space and density, individual and collective improvising, the release spotlights musicians and compositions that are unpredictable and intense, regardless of their mood. As "The Wedding" unfolds, there's an emotionalism to the playing that, no matter how far-reaching or expressive, keeps things impressively focused. There's plenty of energy, and some nice mixups for multiple improvisers. Horns and strings find equal amounts to relish in tunes that range from Free Jazz to gnarly Bop to European Folk. While the tunes move quickly from feel to feel, the compositions feel balanced and never rushed. Part of the credit for this goes to how well Benko and Miklos are able to steer the ship, the latter especially impressive in his use of polyrhythms and tonal range. And on performances like "Supplication," the band shows it's happy to linger in textural atmospheres as well. When all the elements are balanced and things are humming, as with the racing "Adyton," things are quite compelling (here not least in the interplay between Meggyes' intense trumpet, Mezei's grainy lines, and Miklos' blocky momentum). The tunes boiled down to Grenco's main quartet exemplify different virtues than the heady brew elsewhere. "Commendation to Our Women" is an understated lyrical piece for tenor and piano, while "Dance of Reanimation" demonstrates the band's exuberance for straightforward, pulse-driven materials. And while I wasn't quite as sold by the ensemble "pipe" piece "Minstrelsy," it's hard not to give this release a hearty recommendation overall.

Jason Bivins

New Issues

1) UWE OBERG/SILKE EBERHARD TURNS LEO 749

PING PONG POGO / KING KORN /
EMPHASIS / ENZYM & EROS (VAR.
2) / BOTH / SYNDROME – NARROW
WINDOW / BATTERIE / SCOOTIN’
ABOUT / ROOMER’S LOOT /
SKETCH NO. 5 / MR. JOY. 53:39.
Oberg (p), Eberhard (as, cl). January
17, 2015, Berlin, Germany; and April
14, 2015, Cologne, Germany.

2) GEBHARD ULLMANN/ ACHIM KAUFMANN GEODE LEO 727

INTERANIMATION / LIGHTLY
ENTICED / ROADSIDE VERGES /
OF LINNETS AND IVORY / FAULT-
LINES / EULENBLIND / FLECKGEIST
/ ZIRCON SHUFFLE / BONE,
GRISTLE AND QUARTZ / JASPER
AX / STORM INSIDE / COBWEB
INTERIORS. 54:50.
Ullmann (ts, bcl), Kaufmann (p). July
1, 2013, Berlin.

3) WADADA LEO SMITH/ VIJAY IYER A COSMIC RHYTHM WITH EACH STROKE ECM 2486

PASSAGE / ALL BECOMES ALIVE
/ THE EMPTY MIND RECEIVES /
LABYRINTHS / A DIVINE COURAGE
/ UNCUT EMERALDS / A COLD FIRE
/ NOTES ON WATER / MARIAN
ANDERSON. 66:19.
Smith (tpt), Iyer (p, kybd, elec).
October 2015, NYC, NY.

The performances on (1) all occurred before Paul Bley passed in January 2016. They are infused, however, with the spirit of his own piano experimentalism and with that of his longtime associates. There are pieces here not only by the two exceptional improvisers in this duo, but by Jimmy Giuffre, Carla Bley, and Annette Peacock. But while they honor their sources, this music is fresh and never merely imitative. After the quite exuberant opener, the musicians impart a kind of raunchy, mutant swing feel to “King Korn,” and Eberhard especially sounds wonderful on this performance. After two alto tracks, she solos thoughtfully to open Giuffre’s “Emphasis,” manifesting her own considered phraseology and attention to timbre. Oberg is a spacious player, fascinated by resonance and pulse alike, and hence a great partner. The music here, while mellow in healthy doses, always flashes the hint that the flame could be turned up (which it sometimes is, though sparingly enough not to wear out its welcome, as on the spiky and fragmentary Oberg piece “Enzym & Eros”). Annette Peacock’s “Both” is rendered gorgeous and grainy here, as the duo playfully deals with its melodic bagatelles and occasional chromaticism. I also really dug the circulating swirl of Carla Bley’s “Syndrome,” gloriously disorienting and with an elegant transition into the more ponderous material of Oberg’s “Narrow Window.” That kind of balance is evident throughout, not just between pieces – from the punch of Bley’s “Batterie” to the lithe Giuffre vehicle “Scootin’” – but within them, as with the improvisation “Roomer’s Loot,” where Eberhard’s occasionally antic altissimo clarinet contrasts marvelously with limpid pianism. Very fine record.

Ullmann and Kaufmann (2) are almost perfectly matched in sensibility as well, but theirs is a simpatico expressed not so much in balance and contrast (though they certainly don’t lack in these areas) as in momentum and presto-chango exuberance. There’s lots of range on this disc, but it’s all grounded in some of the earthy, almost mineral-like qualities suggested in some of the titles. Things open up with the bracing “Interanimation,” filled with flurries of sound and fast-moving lines. It’s followed by the suggestive

New Issues

"Lightly Enticed," which finds them shifting to bass clarinet harmonics and billowing clouds. And just to continue the impression that there's something quite visual, almost cinematic about this date, "Roadside Verges" has the feel of flickering flame. This isn't to say that the record is merely impressionistic, though. "Of Linnets and Ivory" is more pulse-driven, accruing dense layers as it works itself into a nice lather. Ullmann's tone-bending tenor gives a woozy feel to "Fault-lines" and "Fleckgeist," and on his tasty solo piece "Jasper Ax" you can hear his range of influences, in some ways going way back to Coleman Hawkins but without at all sounding anachronistic. Likewise, Kaufmann revels in some Byard-esque mutant historical morphing on "Eulenblind." Throughout, they come up with some fairly vivid effects. There is coiled and understated droning on "Bone, Gristle & Quartz." Those who like it even more reserved will go for the low-end prepared piano and hushed squeaks of the closer. But it's hard not to fall for the standout "Storm Inside," the most note-heavy thing here, like revved up Tristano in a free setting.

Heavy hitters and award winners Smith and Iyer (3) share an aesthetic, but not in the sense of mimesis of phraseology or anything so prosaic. It's in their concern for space and presence overall that they find those qualities that make duo recordings (and this is one of the best I've heard in some time) work well: contrast and tension. On each of these finely wrought performances, they create distinctive spaces. More often than not, from the spare lyricism of the opening "Passage" to the final track, the performances are limpid but never less than intense, the musicians' restraint hinting at possibility. To be sure, these fellows are resourceful and expressive, and they know how to conjure up just enough heat and tension when required, whether a gently interleaved dissonance or an electronic cloud. Hear this focus vividly on "All Becomes Alive," where Smith's bright single notes are trailed by an insistent electronic revenant, a low Rhodes undertone that Iyer introduces against the backdrop. "The Empty Mind Receives" is as pared down as its title suggests, and there is something to all this space and reserve that does lend itself to the idea of playing without ego (which is not the same as playing devoid of expressivity, natch). There is elegant mute work, billowing low end piano, and as this powerful track develops, Smith goes into the deep as well, followed by some judicious arpeggiating in the dark atmosphere. By contrast, "Labyrinths" is a bit frantic and racing, stuffed with jabbing piano and lithe trumpet runs. Each track seems to evoke a different facet of their musical language, from the lonely fire of "A Divine Courage," where against Iyer's low thrum Smith plays some almost puckish lines, to the ethereal and wafting "Notes on Water," to the sublime "Uncut Emeralds," which opens with such delicate upper register piano that it's almost like a toy piano or windchimes, slowly moving forward from there to balance the elegant with the emphatic oomph. Fittingly, closer "Marian Anderson" is one of the most arresting tracks, its reflective chordal work sometimes sounding as if rapture was barely being held in check. A gorgeous date, with much to be savored, but it's also music that doesn't reveal its secrets too easily.

Jason Bivins

New Issues



ADISON EVANS HERO

ADITONE 001

DROPBEAR BOOGALOO / LITTLE
TULIP / IF EVER I WOULD LEAVE
YOU / BLUE / THE EPICUREAN /
OPEN YOUR EYES / RIBBON IN
THE SKY / MAMA / RESPIRARE
/ DO WHAT'S BEST FOR YOU
/ PRAYER FOR YOSHI / NEVER
FORGET TO SAY THANK YOU.

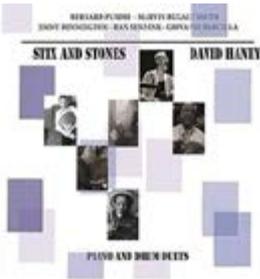
58:00.

Evans (bari s, as), Matthew Jordell
(tpt, flgh), Mathis Picard (p),
Dan Chmielinski (b), Roberto
Giaquinto (d), Melanie Charles
(vcl). April 25-26, 2015, Brooklyn,
NYC.

Let's get this out of the way up front: this is a record with makeup and hair credits. Evans – part of Beyonce's touring retinue, with experience backing up folks ranging from Nicki Minaj to Trisha Yearwood – is displayed in several photographs sporting a wispy, cotton-candy blue coif, a sheer dress, and close-ups of her painted nails on the saxophones' keypads. Yet despite the heavy commercial emphasis, Evans is passably competent on the big horn, even if her solos are fairly pedestrian. Likewise, there are plenty of decent turns from her colleagues, even if they're forgotten quickly. The bulk of the material here is squarely in the pocket, early 1960s Blue Note fare: the grooving, Lee Morgan-ish opener, the slightly stiff ballad "Little Tulip," and the gauzy, Hancockian "Open Your Eyes." When the material varies from this approach, it's in one of two ways. The lesser deviation nods to Evans' work in popular music. There is wince-inducing pop balladry on Queen Bey's "Blue" (with airplay-ready, fashionably coquettish vocals, even more so on the atrocious "Mama" and the almost redeemable "Do What's Best for You"). Mr. Wonder's "Ribbon in the Sky" is less funky than one might expect, but at least boasts a nice flugelhorn contribution. The better deviation comes via an updating of the jazz quotient so as to emphasize modern mainstream. Evans' clacking, up-tempo rearrangement of "If Ever" is more like it, with a tart alto/trumpet stutter and second line work from the steady drummer. And they find the sweet spot on Steve Wilson's "The Epicurean," where Evans navigate complex lines quite lithely (and Jordell really steps out finely in his solo here). The record ends strongly, from "Respirare" (with Evans' best improvising, here pleasantly chromatic), the nice hymn for Yoshi, and the closer, the record's strongest piece. All in all, for its faults and its tiresome presentation, this is solid, amiable music that is genuine in its affection for source materials. They could have shaved off the vocal tracks for a tighter running time and a more musically balanced release.

Jason Bivins

New Issues



DAVID HANEY STIX AND STONES SLAM 567

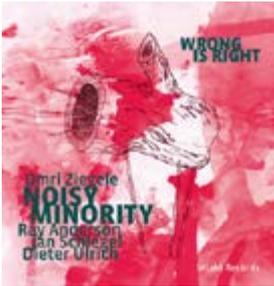
ANGEL FOOT* / PRETTY
PRANCING WOMAN+ /
DOLPHY'S HAT~ / TICKING
TIME BOMB^ / SIX FOUR
FOUR FOUR* / OPPOSITES~ /
OCTAVIOS WITH BULAGUS^
/ IMPROVISATION ON
A THEME BY TOMAS
SVOBODA* / QUANTUM
GALOPY~ / HOUSE PARTY
STARTING#. 59:52.

Haney (p), Bernard Purdie (d on *), Jimmy Bennington (d on +), Giovanni Barcella (d on ~), Marvin "Bugalu" Smith (d on ^), Han Bennink (d on #). June 20, 2003, Vancouver, BC; June 22, 2005 and February 17, 2009, Portland, OR; February 12, 2012, Gent, Belgium; April 9, 2013, Marlboro, NY; and November 21, 2014, Brooklyn, NY.

I've never thought of Haney as a pianist who necessarily emphasizes the percussive qualities of his instrument but here he plays with crisp imagination and responsiveness in the company of some very different drummers. It's a great idea for a record, and it's a justifiably well-loved format. The improvisations with Purdie are fairly revelatory, Haney always seeming to hint around the edges of recognizable songs (I heard a hint of Chapin, perhaps, and some Monkish allusions) while Pretty Purdie grooves hard, but with openness enough to suggest he's perfectly at home in this context. Haney's heart is really with the two Herbie Nichols tracks, though his style is his own. Bennington is deft in his brushwork on "Pretty Prancing Woman," filling the tune with bright edges and rhythmic jitters that match what Haney's up to. Bennink is well and truly reined in on "House Party Starting," his accents just so and his swing peerless. Barcella is new to me, but he's wonderfully texturally sensitive on Haney's ruminative "Dolphy's Hat," which features some of the pianist's most engaging playing on this date. Things are appropriately tense and taut on "Ticking Time Bomb," with some of Haney's most adventurous playing (harmonically dense but somehow also filled with space), and they're simpatico on "Octavios" too. It's quite a range of material and things are fresh throughout, from the deliciously abstract funk on "6444" to the coiling "Opposites," all the way to the rimshot groove of "Theme." Vivid and creative, a fine record.

Jason Bivins

New Issues

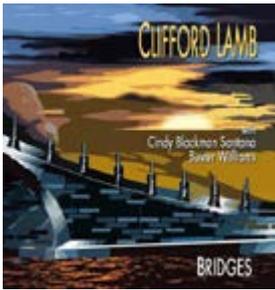


Alto saxophonist Ziegele has something of a saucy disposition as regards organizing his music. Akin to the small groups of, say, Rudi Mahall, the trio Noisy Minority favors a kind of halfway anarchic approach to post-bop. That is to say, they play themes and pulses with great exuberance but take them apart with perhaps even greater relish. This combination of sprinting unisons, loping post-bop figures that groove along on Schlegel's nimble electric bass and Ulrich's taut drumming, and regular breakdowns and guttural texture makes Anderson the perfect guest.

The methodology they use is, for all its visceral pleasures, absolutely fascinating. It seems that just when one feels a crescendo or a transition coming – as when Schlegel steps on a distortion pedal in “Late Cats’ Rushing Hour” – the group stops, leaving space for pattering percussion or Ziegele’s excellently avian playing. “Where I’m Going To” is almost like a cautious resumption of the preceding improvisation, with two-horn tartness balanced by creeping rhythm and counterpoint once more. On all these pieces, Ziegele’s punchy, sometimes declamatory solos (and the style is heard even in his vocal recitations) match up nicely with Anderson’s typical exuberance. When set within the quirky, often quite varied pieces – from the almost severe abstraction of “Finally Your Own Voice” to the stuttering “Decimal System” – the result is a continual sense of unpredictability. Seemingly out of nowhere, they’ll drop off into near total silence, while elsewhere (the tellingly titled “In the Old Ways”) they’ll groove more or less conventionally. Where they really shine is in the transition points. Listen to them on “Tolck,” where Ziegele helps build the piece from spare parts with some fantastic mouthpiece manipulation, ultimately lathering up into hard grooves that trip and hop back up, only to somehow find an ending made of sweet melancholy (with some very nice upper register stuff from Schlegel). And the title track takes this a bit further still, opening with near-lyrical fragments, building into a bouncing groove that breaks down to an Anderson solo before moving off into still another new direction. Fascinating, fresh stuff.

Jason Bivins

New Issues



CLIFFORD LAMB, BRIDGES,

WEBER WORKS 16201.
BRIDGES / MARTITA /
SUMMERTIME / SMILE /
MY FUNNY VALENTINE / O
GRANDE AMOR / PEOPLE.
29:59.

Lamb, p; Cindy Blackman-
Santana, d; Buster Williams,
b. Hollywood, CA.

JULIO BOTTI, SAX TO TANGO, ZOH0 ZM201607.

PRIMAVERA PORTENA
/ INVIERNO PORTENO /
NIEBLAS DEL RIACHUELO /
ANOS DE SOLEDAD / FUGA
Y MISTERIO / OBLIVION /
ROJOTANGO / FLOR DE
LINO / OTONO PORTENO
/ VERANO PORTENO /
MILONGA EN EL VIENTO / LA
RAYUELA / LIBERTANGO.
63:32.

Botti, ss, ts; Pablo Ziegler,
p, md, prod; University
of Southern Denmark
Symphony Orchestra (No
personnel listed). Saul Zaks,
cond; Franco Pinna, d, perc.
6/10-11/2015. Sonderborg,
Denmark.

Clifford Lamb is a pianist who has an elegant touch on the instrument, a feel for slow, unwinding lines and beautiful melody that shows strongly on his two originals, “Martita” and “Bridges”. He also has a nice way of easing into standards through abstract introductions. His version of “My Funny Valentine” is flush with 19th century romanticism while his treatment of “People” builds in playful, staccato moments with a definite Chick influence.

The last three pieces are piano solos but for the first four, Lamb plays in a trio with Buster Williams and Cindy Blackman-Santana. Williams is his usual understated and tasteful self but Blackman shows the influence of her idol, Tony Williams with a heavy, slick sound that is not always congruent with the other musicians. Her bashing works on a Latin-flavored “Summertime” but it overwhelms a more delicate take on Charlie Chaplin’s “Smile”. This is a decent outing for Lamb but it’s only half an hour long. Maybe next time he will work up a full length program.

Jerome Wilson

With a last name like his one has to wonder if there might be some kinship connective to Snooze Jazz trumpeter Chris Botti but I kinda doubt it. Julio’s priorities seem to lie more in the Third Stream melding of Nuevo Tango movement with Classical frameworks. For his second project with pianist/producer Pablo Ziegler he has bigger eyes with the employment of a full orchestra under the baton of Argentine conductor Saul Zaks for a fairly predictable program heavily laden with works by the legendary Astor Piazzola with a representative total of nine compositions interlaced with pieces by Hector Stamponi, Juan Carlos Cobian and a pair from music director Ziegler. Botti’s fishhorn is not as fluid as Trane or Sam Rivers of course and his tenor never employs the hoarseness of the late Gato Barbieri but all said, this is a pleasing program of tangos that will go down smoothly with the dance crowd.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

1) ALEXA FILA / SAL MOSCA,
A WORK OF ART,
ZINNIA 120.
WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED
LOVE / SWEET LORRAINE
/ MEMORIES OF YOU /
SUNNYSIDE OF THE STREET /
IMAGINATION / I CAN'T BELIEVE
THAT YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME
/ HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN /
JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS /
OVER THE RAINBOW / IT'S ALL
RIGHT WITH ME / SKYLARK /
THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT /
I GOT RHYTHM. 62:55.
Fila, vcl; Mosca, p. 2005, Mount
Vernon, NY.

2) NANCY HARMS,
ELLINGTON AT NIGHT,
GAZELLE 003.
LUSH LIFE / ROCKS IN MY
BED / DO NOTHIN' TILL YOU
HEAR FROM ME / LOST IN
MEDITATION / TROUBLED
WATERS / PRELUDE TO A
KISS / LONG, STRONG AND
CONSECUTIVE / STRANGE
FEELING / REFLECTIONS / I
GOT IT BAD (AND THAT AIN'T
GOOD) / I'M BEGINNING TO SEE
THE LIGHT / I LIKE THE SUNRISE.
52:23.
Harms, vcl; Jeremy Siskind, p;
Danton Boller, b; Willie Jones III,
d. 6-7/15, Brooklyn, NY.

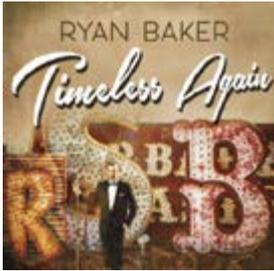
S al Mosca's liner notes on (1) states that this CD "is not the usual vocal-piano format but improvised by both musicians". Maybe so but Alexa Fila's vocals here adhere very closely to the melodies of all the standards performed and I can't hear where she improvises much at all. That's not to say her performance is bad. The recording of this CD is a bit unpolished but Fila's voice still comes off as pleasant with hints of swing and modulation on some tunes but wavering slightly flat on others. Mosca, on the other hand, improvises with elaborate but controlled engagement, the best moments coming when he lets himself solo for an entire chorus of a song before the vocal starts as on "Just One Of Those Things" and "It's All Right With Me". Another highlight is his sparse and poignant playing on "The Way You Look Tonight" which is matched by one of Fila's most heartfelt performances. There's a rough, homemade feel to this session that in the end adds to its charm.

Nancy Harms' CD is a more polished effort that explores both some of the famous and obscure works in the Duke Ellington canon. Her voice is mature with a whispery, lived in texture perfect for the intimate performances of these songs.

Stalwart tunes like "Lush Life", "Beginning To See The Light" and "I Got It Bad" are sexy, intimate and playful with excellent support provided by pianist Jeremy Siskind and his trio. "Rocks In My Bed", with Danton Boller's plucked bass as the sole accompaniment, is sassy and sensual. "Troubled Waters", a tune Ellington performed but didn't write, plays out theatrically, first with grand drama then up-tempo swing. A rarity called "Strange Feeling" is a Kurt Weill-ish show tune with bumpy, circular piano and a slightly tongue in cheek vocal that breaks down into a circus waltz. A string quartet is added on the tunes "Reflections" and "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me" giving Harms the coquettish, world weary sound of a Julie London or Peggy Lee and also nicely offsetting Siskind's sparkling piano on "Do Nothin'". Duke Ellington tributes are not exactly thin on the ground but this is one of the more distinctive efforts to turn up recently.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues



RYAN BAKER, TIMELESS AGAIN, (NO LABEL OR NUMBER).
LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY / STELLA BY STARLIGHT / WALTZ FOR DEBBY / CARAVAN / BORN TO BE BLUE / ON A CLEAR DAY / ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE / PENTHOUSE SERENADE / THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT / ALONE TOGETHER / LITTLE BETH / I'LL STRING ALONG WITH YOU / THE MOON LOOKS DOWN AND LAUGHS / STARDUST / AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'. 56:13.
Baker, vcl; Joe Lano, g; Jeff Davis, b; Jess Copen, d; Rocky Lombard, tpt, flgh; Dave Loeb, p; Eric Tewalt, ss, ts, as. 2014, Las Vegas, NV.

Ryan Baker's day job is being a Frank Sinatra impersonator in various Las Vegas shows. This CD has him singing in his own voice in front of a small jazz combo and sounding pretty good.

You can still hear an echo of Sinatra in his natural voice but it's very faint. His vocal range is small but he carries a melody well and the lively arrangements by guitarist Joe Lano flatter him, giving him room to stretch out and even indulge in a bit of scat singing.

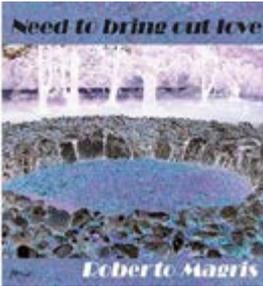
Some of the arrangements adhere largely to the usual performance of these tunes but there are surprises.

"I'll String Along With You" and "Stella By Starlight" are enhanced with light bossa nova guitar strumming and "Ain't Misbehavin'" gets a practically new melody. Even when he just plays rhythm instead of the melody Lano's work is always lyrical and tight, especially on bouncy versions of "Alone Together" and "Stardust".

In the midst of all the standards Baker contributes one original, "Little Beth", a cute song about a pet dog that will probably leave most pet owners misty-eyed. Overall this CD shows Ryan Baker to be a subtly impressive singer who really shines in this low key setting.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues



ROBERTO MAGRIS, NEED TO BRING OUT LOVE, JMOOD 013.

OUT THERE SOMEWHERE
/ JOYICIE GIRL / I WANT TO
TALK ABOUT YOU* / SWAMI
BLUES / CANDLEWOOD
DREAMS / WHAT LOVE /
TOGETHER IN LOVE+ / NEED
TO BRING OUT LOVE* /
AUDIO NOTEBOOK. 56:39.
Magris, p; Dominique Sanders,
b; Brian Steever, d; Julia
Haile*, Monique Danielle+, vcl.
10/27/13, 11/3/14, Lenexa, KS.

WOODY SHAW & LOUIS HAYES, THE TOUR VOLUME ONE, HIGHNOTE 7291.

THE MOONTRANE /
OBSEQUIOUS / BOOK'S
BOSSA / ICHI-BAN / SUN
BATH / INVITATION. 64:16.
Shaw, tpt; Hayes, d; Junior
Cook, ts; Ronnie Matthews,
p; Stafford James, b. 3/22/76,
Stuttgart, Germany.

Italian-born Roberto Magris has done a few small group CDs exploring the work of hard bop composers like Lee Morgan and Elmo Hope but on this one he pares thing down to a trio setting that shows off his piano skills. Magris excels at simple, catchy melodies with a dollop of funk that allow him to roam freely around the keyboard. "Swami Blues" has the slippery soul groove of a Horace Silver song, Don Pullen's "Joycie Girl" comes out a real hip shaker and "Out There Somewhere" features Magris going wild over a choppy funk beat set down by drummer Brian Steever. The trio covers other moods as well. "Candlewood Dreams" is an elegant and expansive ballad and "What Love" is an extended exercise in Lennie Tristano-style improvisation on "What Is This Thing Called Love". The rhythm section of Steever and bassist Dominique Sanders is consistently tight and flexible and two different singers also contribute. Monique Danielle's voice is pure and strong on the lovely "Together In Love" while Julia Haile displays more of a soulful voice on the title track and "I Want To Talk About You". Roberto Magris has a strong, joyous command of the piano which comes through strongly on this effort.

Jerome Wilson

Some people have been singing the posthumous praises of trumpeter Woody Shaw for a long time. If you hadn't gotten into him before, this newly issued live set from 1976 is a powerful example of how great he was. He leads a group of polished veterans who play blazing hard bop of the first order here. Shaw is particularly intense tearing up his own "The Moontrane" and Larry Young's "Obsequious" with a high speed attack. Junior Cook's tenor is wild and unfettered, Ronnie Matthews' piano cascades out in furious support and bassist Stafford James and co-leader Louis Hayes are both on fire. The group's intensity shows up throughout, on the mid-tempo bossa nova of "Book's Bossa", the hip-switching funk of "Sun Bath" and a version of "Invitation" where James and Hayes get to shine. Woody Shaw's fire, melodic beauty and drive is constantly dazzling throughout the set. There are plenty of other recordings that show his greatness as a writer and conceptualist. This one is a testament to Woody Shaw, the trumpet player.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues

1) CADENTIA NOVA DANICA, AUGUST 1966 JAZZHUS MONTMARTRE,

STORYVILLE 101 8441.
THE EDUCATION OF AN
AMPHIBIAN / KIRSTEN /
INSIDE THULE / CHESS / VIET
KONG.

Hugh Steinmetz, tpt; Kim
Menzer, tb; John Tchicai,
Karsten Vogel, as; Steffen
Andersen, Finn von Eyben,
b; Thrige Andersen, d;
Giorgio Musoni, perc. 8/66,
Copenhagen, Denmark.

2) FINN VON EYBEN & RADIOJAZZGRUPPEN, FINN VON EYBEN PLAYS FINN VON EYBEN,

STORYVILLE 101 8442.
ASIA -1 / MORE FLOWERS -1 /
KROGERUP -1 / SPRINGTIME
-1 / OUT OF SOMETHING -1
/ ROADS OF FLOWERS -2 /
FLOWER POINT -2 / JOYS
AND FLOWERS -2. 58:00.

1: Finn von Eyben
Workshop: von Eyben, b;
Jesper Bech Nielsen, ts; Kim
Menzer, tb; Soren Sragin,
p; Teit Jorgensen, d. 3/66,
Copenhagen, Denmark.
-2: Radiojazzgruppen: von
Eyben, Niels-Henning Orsted
Pederson, b; Andras Adorjan,
fl; Allan Botschinsky, Palle
Mikkelsen, tpt; Eje Thelin, tb;
Bent Nielsen, Uffe Karskov,
Per Carsten Peterson, Bernt
Rosengren, sax, fl; Fritz von
Bulow, g; Otto Francker, vib,
mba; Ole Kock Hansen, cel;
Bjarne Rostvold, d. 9/9/67.

Cadentia Nova Danica was a band of free-thinking young Danish musicians, captivated by New York's Free Jazz movement of the 1960's, who clustered around the returning John Tchicai who had been an integral part of that scene. The group recorded two albums in its day but (1) is a newly discovered record of their very first performance back in 1966.

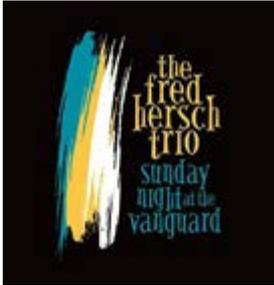
There are unavoidable similarities to the avant garde things going on in America and Germany at the time but there is also a cooler, more studied feel to this music with slow bass drones and massed horns gradually rising into screaming explosions. "Inside Thule" and "Viet Kong" both have strong, yearning melodies inside their heavy wailing. "Viet Kong" is particularly effective, with a folkish theme reminiscent of Albert Ayler that is explored at length by the horns before things start whirling into a maelstrom. The only lackluster work here is "Chess" is an experiment in improvised percussion over repeating horn figures that is okay to listen to but not very involving. The rest of this set still conveys great emotional power even though it's 50 years old.

Most of the members of Cadentia Nova Danica went on to have long careers in jazz. Bassist Finn von Eyben, however, eventually put away his instrument to pursue a distinguished career in cancer research. (2) is a record of some of the musical experiments he did before he got out of music. This CD features him with both a small and a large group. His quintet shows the influence of the John Coltrane and Archie Shepp small groups of the day. On "Asia" horn players Jesper Beck Nielsen and Kim Menzer bray and moan at length while Soren Sragin plays a jangly piano riff like McCoy Tyner and the bass and drums boil. "Krogerup" is a peppy march pulled apart by Nielsen's sax, Menzer's trombone and Sragin's piano. "Springtime" is a more expansive collision of forces with Sragin getting a lighter, more brittle sound. The large ensemble Radiojazzgruppen tracks are more complex. "Roads Of Flowers" resembles a large scale Anthony Braxton work with large blocks of sound moving around quietly amidst occasional solo statements. "Flower Point" has a jazzier rhythmic flow that leads to sections of flute and bass solos, brass and soprano sax swarms and a cluster of celeste, soprano and marimba that suggests Harry Partch. "Joys And Flowers" is an over-the-top mix of mix of comic menace that sounds like Raymond Scott's "Powerhouse" mixed with the throbbing faux-African drumming of Louis "Moondog" Hardin's music.

This CD shows that von Eyben had a real talent for composition. What he's been doing for the last 25 years is vitally important of course but it's too bad he couldn't have kept up with the music in his spare time.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues



**THE FRED HERSCH
TRIO,
SUNDAY NIGHT AT
THE VANGUARD,
PALMETTO 2183.**

A Cockeyed Optimist /
Serpentine / The Optimum
Thing / Calligram / Blackwing
Palomino / For No One /
Everybody's Song But My
Own / The Peacocks / We
See / Solo Encore: Valentine.
68:00.

Hersch, p; John Hebert, b; Eric
McPherson, d. 3/27/16, New
York, NY.

Fred Hersch himself asks the pertinent question in his liner notes. He's previously made three live CDs at the Village Vanguard. Why a fourth? You only have to listen to the CD to figure that out. This is excellent music. Hersch and his mates John Herbert and Eric McPherson are in top form throughout this session, playing Hersch originals and lesser-known songs by other composers with near-telepathic cohesion.

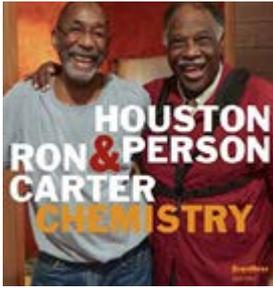
On Hersch's own works his tumbling abstraction over McPherson's splattering cymbals recalls Paul Bley but he also does effortless bebop strutting on "Blackwing Palomino" and "Optimum Thing" with the rhythm section beautifully filling out the sound. "Calligram" is a skewed walking 4/4 rhythm that constantly shifts time but still maintains a groove.

As for others' works, "Cockeyed Optimist", from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* sways with a crystalline touch out of Bill Evans. Kenny Wheeler's "Everybody's Song" starts with a minimalist Latin sound that expands into a swirling statement of the theme, Monk's "We See" has the whole trio prancing about and Jimmy Rowles' "The Peacocks" effectively mixes grand drama and improvisation.

Fred Hersch is one of today's preeminent jazz pianists and this CD shows once again how he flourishes in a live setting, playing with both classy elegance and exuberant swing. He can record at the Vanguard four more times and it would be fine with me.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues



HOUSTON PERSON & RON CARTER, CHEMISTRY, HIGHNOTE 7293.

BYE BYE BLACKBIRD / BUT BEAUTIFUL / YOUNG AND FOOLISH / FOOLS RUSH IN / CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS? / BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH / I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TIME IT WAS / I CAN'T GET STARTED / BLUE MONK / WHEN I FALL IN LOVE. 49:03.

Person, ts; Carter, b. 12/22/15, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

OMAR COLEMAN, LIVE! AT ROSA'S LOUNGE,

DELMARK DE 845.

SNATCH IT BACK AND HOLD IT/ WALL TO WALL / I'M READY / BORN AND RAISED / SLOW DOWN BABY / SIT DOWN BABY/ JODY'S GOT YOUR GIRL AND GONE / RASPBERRY WINE(*) / LUCKY MAN(*) / ONE REQUEST(*) / GIVE ME THE GREEN LIGHT(*) / TWO HEADED WOMAN(*).

61:49.

Coleman, vcl, hca; Peter Galanis, g; Neal O'Hara, kybd; Dave Forte, Ari Seder (*), b; Marty Binder, d. 8/25; 9/15 & 22/ 2015. Chicago.

This is one laid down by veterans all around, septuagenarians Ron Carter and Houston Person in front of the microphones and 91-year-old Rudy Van Gilder in the control booth who recorded this session in his famous studio with customary warmth and clarity.

Carter is, of course, one of jazz's most acclaimed bassists while Person is an old-school traditional tenor sax player who doesn't always get the respect her deserves. He's usually heard in small groups or accompanying singers but this duo setting really shines a spotlight on his robust sound. The two musicians romp together playfully with Carter doing a carefree lope behind Person's easygoing swing on "Bye Bye Blackbird" and "Young And Foolish". The slower tempoed ballads like "I Didn't Know What Time It Was" and "Blame It On My Youth" allow full appreciation of Person's deep, luxuriant tone. On "Blue Monk". Carter takes more of the lead playing the melody in a lower register while Person stays higher up and dropping in a dazzling solo.

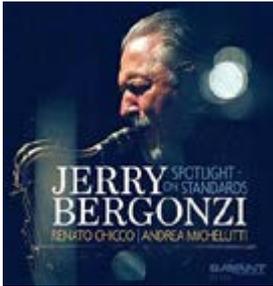
This set has the informal intimacy of two friends just kick back and having fun for themselves. This is a delightful, effortlessly hip set.

Jerome Wilson

Harmonicist Omar Coleman is something of a new face on the scene. This Chicago native had an earlier self-released album and a debut disc for the esteemed Delmark label Born And Raised that I reviewed for this magazine earlier this year. Now comes this live session from the venerable Rosa's Lounge which took place last year. The program is to be expected; a couple of Willie Dixon remakes, a Rufus Thomas rarity, two pairs of covers from Coleman influences Junior Wells and Johnnie Taylor and a slew of original songs from the leader. Regular lead guitarist Pete Galanis shares the bulk of the soloing with Coleman's hot harp for more of the same with the added excitement of an in-concert appearance. If you dug the last one you'll do the same for this one.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



JERRY BERGONZI, SPOTLIGHT ON STANDARDS, SAVANT SCD 2158.

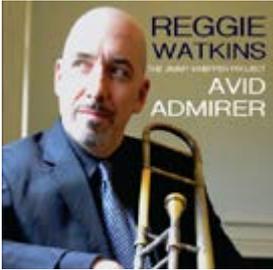
WITCHCRAFT / BI-SOLAR /
BLUE CUBE / FIRST LADY /
GABRIELLA / DANCING IN THE
DARK / OUT OF NOWHERE /
COME RAIN OR COME CHINE /
STELLA BY STARLIGHT. 63:35.

Bergonzi, ts; Ranato Chicco
organ; Andrea Michelutti, d.
3/27/2016. Cavalicco, Udine,
Italy.

Seasoned saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi brings back that old cliché “Everything Old Is New Again” to relevance with this batch of refurbished warhorses in an organ trio setting. If you’re one of those snobbish skeptics that think the Great American Songbook has been drained by from countless recastings and repetition over the decades, put this disc on and think again. From the very first track, a radical redo of the dusty diamond “Witchcraft” reharmonized in attitude from a a jaunty, finger-popping swinger to a trip to a darker place in keeping with its title. It’s been over 60 years since this one was first put to manuscript paper. He makes some serious Trane tracks on “Come Rain Or Come Shine” and it would be a hoot to see Astaire glide to “Dancing In The Dark” but my favorite of the staples has got to be the closing number “Stella By Starlight”. Penned in 1946 by Victor Young with lyrics from Ned Washington, this was the next to longest cut and could have been twice that without me complaining. Elsewhere are four originals, a pair of which are contrafacts of well-known jazz tunes whose titles are disclosed by annotator Neil Tesser in his fine notes. B-3 pilot Chicco is an equally adept soloist, alert accompanist and gets a chance to get a little grease in on the funky “Blue Cube”. A definite contender for some Best Of The Year lists.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



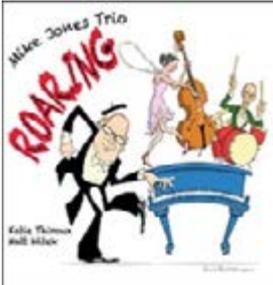
**REGGIE WATKINS,
AVID ADMIRER,**
BYNK RECORDS 003.
FIGMENT FRAGMENT(*)
/ IDOL OF THE FILES(*) /
CUNNINGBIRD(*) / NOCCH
TRISTE(*) / IN THE INTERIM(*)
/ AVID ADMIRER(*) / OGLING
OGRE / PRIMROSE PATH /
GOODBYE. 46:16.

Watkins, tbn; Matt Parker,
ss, ts; Orrin Evans,(*) , Tuomo
Uusitalo, p; Steve Whipple,
b; Reggie Quinerly, d.
12/5&6/2015. Brooklyn, NY.

James Minter Knepper is probably the most interesting slide trombonist one has never heard. Although he played with a plethora of well-known names much of his time was stuck in major big bands where he seldom got to display his musical wares. Of all this large aggregations he gained his most recognition with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra and the big band of Maynard Ferguson. The most press he garnered was his notorious spats with the mercurial Charles Mingus. In the tender recollections that comprise her liner notes his daughter tells of his beloved Bach Stradivarius 36 that was bequeathed to one of his biggest fans, slideman Reggie Watkins. Subtitled THE JIMMY KNEPPER PROJECT this is an overdue salute to a overlooked player that was a rugged individual in the best tradition of jazzdom. Fronting a crack quintet (with the piano chair split) Watkins surveys eight Knepper charts and the ending standard “Goodbye”. Many of Kneppers few leadership dates are out of print but his most famous one is still available and three titles from it are covered; “Figment Fragment”, the title tune “Cunningbird” and “Noche Triste”. Another selection, “Primrose Path” can be found on the first album “Pepper-Knepper Quintet” these ears were initiated to and is fortunately still in print. Over the years whenever I mentioned my admiration for Jimmy Knepper that statement was met with blank stares and head scratching even from musicians. Maybe this thoughtful release will remedy that to some extent.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



MIKE JONES TRIO, ROARING,

CAPRI RECORDS 74142.

YES SIR, THAT'S MY BABY / IF
I HAD YOU / I'LL SEE YOU IN

CUBA / HOME / MEAN TO ME / I
FOUND A NEW BABY / ME AND
MY SHADOW / WHAT'LL I DO / I
CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE IN LOVE
WITH ME / AM I BLUE. 61:52.
Jones, p; Katie Thiroux, b; Matt
Witek. 7/21/2015. New York
City.

ILHAN ERSAHIN, ISTANBUL SESSIONS, NUBLU NO #.

FALLING / SARIYER / THE
CALLING / LONDRES / MCCOY
/ SENIN ICIN GELDİM / SEX,
DRUGS AND JAZZ / STUDIO
54 / PRA GATO / 1981 /
TARZANCA. 47:41.

Ersahin, sax; Alp Ersonmez, b;
Turgut Alp Bekoglu, d; Izzet
Kizil, perc. No dates given.
Istanbul, Turkey.

This review is going to be like the recording session, short and sweet. Reportedly around four hours with a lunch break thrown in, this is an enjoyable piano trio date by Mike Jones. The title should give the concept away, a salute to the twenties with ten fairly recognizable standards (save for "Home" & the 1920 Irving Berlin rarity "I'll See You In Cuba" which, come to think of it, is current once again. Lots of brush work even on some of the up-tempo items like "I Found A New Baby" & "I Can't Believe..." and Harold Arlen's "Mean To Me" gets bluesified. The pianist takes Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do" from 1924 as a florid solo spot and there's some Garner stroll on the opener. " As longtime musical director for Penn and Teller, Jones seems to have the best of both worlds.

Larry Hollis

Here's one out of the ordinary; a Swedish/Turkish tenor man who spent time in Greenwich Village playing straight ahead jazz, briefly attended Berklee and studied with heavyweights John Purcell & Joe Lovano. This guy has more fingers in different pies (bands) than can be counted. This particular group is made up of Turkish musicians that were on a previous album with guest trumpeter Erik Truffaz. These men have backgrounds in the Pop scene and they call the sounds they produce Rock/Dance. I guess that will work for want of a more definitive term. Whatever it is, it ain't jazz to these ears. Most of the tunes are vamps with the sax playing over thunderous percussion/drum barrages that made me turn down my big Acoustic Research speakers for fear of them being blown. Often times one can barely hear the horn player over the din of the background racket. Some might be able to get into this, but for me, this disc was mercifully short.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**CHICO FREEMAN/
HEIRI KAENZIG
THE ARRIVAL
INTAKT RECORDS 251**

/ONE FOR EDDIE WHO 2/
EARLY SNOW/THE ESSENCE
OF SILENCE/ANCIENT
DANCER/WILL I SEE YOU IN
THE MORNING/DAT DERE/
SONG FOR THE SUN/JUST
PLAY/EYE OF THE FLY/
AFTER THE RAIN/TO HEAR
A TEARDROP IN THE RAIN/
CHAMBER'S ROOM/61
MINUTES

Freeman, ts; Kaenzig, b;
Zurich/SUI; December 2014

The Arrival as a title is a little misleading. Chico Freeman has been a mainstay on the Chicago jazz scene for many years. Kaenzig is also firmly established having played with many household names in jazz. With an album entitled The Arrival I was expecting some young hotshot making a statement that she is here, and she plans to stay. The liner notes do not give much insight as to why the title is The Arrival, but it is not of much consequence as the album's focus is clearly more about the quality of the music rather than its approach to marketing.

Jazz duo albums are difficult to pull off. It is hard to keep a listener's attention after a few tunes with just two soloists. I believe it is especially challenging when neither of instrumentalists in the duo are harmonic instruments, as is the case with The Arrival. Freeman and Kaenzig succeed in propelling the music forward the entire length of the record. At no time does the record's energy sag. They chose good tunes to keep the approach fresh, and they even threw in a few surprises here and there to keep things interesting. One would not normally expect a tune like "Dat Dere" to appear on a tenor sax and bass duo album because so much of that tune is rooted in the hard bop tradition which demands drums. They take it a little slower than normal, and play the melody in unison. This treatment evokes a somber mood that begs the listener to lean in and hear what they have to say. "Dat Dere" is also the first tune on the album that Kaenzig walks on the bass and the tune is six tracks into the album! I think this is indicative of the approach that Kaenzig and Freeman chose to pursue. It is distinctly a jazz duo album, but there is a lot of creativity from beginning to end. The solos are interesting, the rhythm is compelling, and the emotional depth is painstakingly clear. If I had to pick on something it would be that Kaenzig's intonation is not always perfect, and there were a few little "time" things when he was improvising on his own. But who cares? It is definitely worth a listen.

Ryan Meagher

New Issues



**WILLIAM PARKER
QUARTET
LIVE IN WROCLOVE**
FORTUNE 0002-002

KALAPARUSHA DANCING ON
THE EDGE OF THE HORIZON/
ONE FOR HORACE/ THEME
FOR RONDO HATTON
73:21

William Parker, b; Rob Brown
as; Lewis Barnes, tpt; Hamid
Drake, d.
June 23, 2012; Wroclaw,
Poland.

As bassist William Parker enters his 64th year, he is showing no signs of slowing down. In fact, he is more prolific than ever and may be entering a period where his creativity and masterful performances are speeding toward a zenith. Parker's profile seems to be growing as well and his outreach includes social media, world tours, poetry, and books. At the time of this writing, Parker is advertising on his Facebook page the need for an intern to work on his branding and social media outreach (What a fascinating gig that will be!). Parker began his career in New York's experimental jazz scene, performing with the likes of Cecil Taylor and David S. Ware. Parker has continued to stay relevant and has recorded with current artists like Craig Taborn and Matthew Shipp. Without comparing Parker to his mentors, suffice it to say that his contribution to the music is engaging an increasingly wider swath of music listeners. Parker's quartet, which gave us masterpieces like Sound Unity, resumes their work here with a live recording from Poland. The opening piece is a long-form composition that runs over 47 minutes in length. The performance begins with the full band, but Parker quickly breaks the piece into six distinct sections: "Twirling on the Shore" (trumpet solo), "Eyes Before Elusive" (unison riff), "Subtle T" (alto sax solo), "All Lonely" (bass solo), "Roof of the Sky" (drum solo), and "All Together." The bass solo and Parker's interactions with Drake alone are worth the price of admission. "One for Horace" is a Latin-feel that is dedicated not to Horace Silver as one might guess, but rather to Horace Tapscott, the founder of the Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra. Tapscott was a performer who worked with musicians like Don Cherry, David Murray, and Billy Higgins. That influence shines through in this performance. The album ends with a short performance of the Parker staple "Theme for Rondo Hatton." Parker's ode to the gentle giant of 1940s Universal films is, in his own words, a theme to "bring us back down to earth." It's a superb way to end a fabulous performance such as this one.

Dustin Mallory

New Issues

LUIGI MARTINALE TRIO,

FACE THE MUSIC, ABEAT RECORDS

ASK ME NOW / CARESS / IN
WALKED BUD / FOR ALL WE
KNOW / CHRISTMAS BONUS
/ BREATH / CEDAR SEED /
INDIAN TRICK / IT COULD
HAPPEN TO ME. 54:53.

Martinale, p; Reuben Rogers,
b; Paolo Franciscone, d.
1/15&16/2014. Brichrtasio,
Italy.

OIR QUARTET,

ABEAT RECORDS

A SUNNY DAY IN BERLIN
TOWN / LA DANZA
DELLALUNA / I FALL IN LOVE
TOO EASILY/
CONVERSATION WITH DAVE /
REBUILT / TERZO PIANO / ONE
FOR MAX / LOST IN A VIOLET
SKY. 60:04.

Giovanni Perin, vb; Giulio
Scaramella, p; Marco
Trabucco, b; Max Trabucco, d.;
Mirco Cisilino, tpt; Tommaso
Troncon, ts. 2/5&6/2015.
Milan, Italy.

MEZZA MILZOW PROJECT,

ABEAT RECORDS

LINEA DI FUGA BLUES / IN
TENSIONE / NAUFRAGIO SU
UN ISOLA DESERTA DEL MAR
MEDITERRANEO / SERA CHE
VIENE / YOUNIQUE / DEEP /
RUN, RUN, RUN / DREAMIN'
STORDUCKS / ATONEMENT.
58:50.

Vittorio Mezza, p, el p;
David Milzow, ss, ts;
Ettore Fioravanti, d, perc.
6/25&26/2012. Trevignano
Romano, RM, Italy.

FIVE ABEAT LABEL CD REVIEWS

It's unquestioned that Italy has had its fair share of high quality record labels, Black Saint/Soul Note, Horo, Splasch, Philology and Red are just a few that come to mind. We can probably add the Abeat name to that list since according to their online website these five cds are just the tip of the iceberg concerning their catalog.

The main point of interest in the Martinale Trio (1) will no doubt be the presence of celebrated bass player Reuben Rogers which is emphasized by the "featuring" line just below the title. Apparently he's cut with this same unit before since Martinale's self-penned annotation begins with "So here I am once again supported by the contagious energy of Reuben Rogers and by the percussive freshness of Paolo Franciscone". The booklet shows his writing style is somewhat similar to his playing style, at times long and flowing then at other times short and choppy. His spacious touch suggests many influences but this writer hears Alan Broadbent and Steve Kuhn at times. His descriptions of the tune titles will suffice with a pair of classics from Monk along with two standards supplemented with a half-dozen originals. Most impressive to these ears was "Christmas Bonus" and "Cedar Seed" inspired by the late Mr. Walton. Needless to say Rogers upright gets ample solo space throughout the program. It may be difficult for this music to get its fair share of attention due to the abundance of fine piano trio issues these days but one can hope.

Where the Martinale threesome warranted a hefty inner booklet the OIR Quartet (2) gets a mere page folded in half with a photo of the four protagonists. The players are identified under each image along with their instruments and three lines of instrument brand endorsements but that's it for the inside. Other than the Julie Styne evergreen all the selections stem from combo

New Issues

CIGALINI/
TESSAROLLO / DALLA
PORTA / ROCHE
QUARTET,
INITIATION,
ABEAT RECORDS
CARTOONS / R.C. FOR M.R.
/ TWO COLUMNS / JAZZ
SYNDROME / STAY QUIET
/ DECEMBER 10, 2013 –
CALYPSO JIM / THE GREEN
LINE / INITIATION / RAILWAYS.
55:16.

Mattia Cigalini, as; Luigi
Tessarollo, g; Paolino Dalla
Porta, b; Manhu Roche, d.
3/16/2014. Milan.

ATTILIO ZANCHI WITH
VARIOUS ARTISTS,
RAVEL'S WALTZ,
ABEAT RECORDS
(1) RAVEL'S WALTZ (2)
CHORINANDO (3) NERUDA
(4) AVE MARIA (5) L'ENIGMA
DIVERDI (6) POR ASTOR
(7) SECRET WHISPER (8)
HERMENTO (9) INSTINCTIVELY
(10) ROMANZA (11) LABIOS
DE FLORES (12) SOUND OF
LOVE. 60:46

Zanchi, b all tracks; (1) Paolo
Fresu Quintet=Fresu, tpt;
Tino Tracanna,sax; Roberto
Cipelli, p; Ettore Fioravanti,
d. Cavalicco,UD,Italy.
(2) ARS3=Mauro Grossi,
p; Mauro Castiglioni, d.
Uboldo,VA,Italy. (3) Inside
Jazz Quartet with Max De
Aloe=Aloe, hca; Tracanna,
sax; Massimo Colombo, p;
Tommy Bradascio, d. Same
as #2. (4) Tommaso Starace,
ss, Michele Di Toro,p; Ronco
Biellese,BI,Italy. (5)
Tommaso Starace

members with vibist Perin credited for four titles and one each from the remaining members. From the looks of it, Max and Marco Trabucco are probably brothers but that is just a guess. Trumpeter Cislino and tenor saxophonist Troncon appear on some cuts like the standard, "La Danza Della Lune" & Scaramella's "Terzo Piano" an up-tempo item like "Conversation With Dave". Otherwise it's a pretty sedate affair more on the John Lewis side of the MJQ than the bluesy swinging Milt Jackson bag.

It's back to the trio format for (3) the Mezza Milzow Project but with a twist of sorts. It's a reeds, keyboards and percussion instrumentation this time. Like the Martinale disc, there is a fairly thick front booklet written in both Italian and English with a glowing quote from Dave Liebman stating, in part, "These three musicians sound like double their number as a result of the compositions and instrumentation." Italian pianist Vittorio Mezza has two previous Abeat albums, one in a conventional trio setting and the other solo piano while David Milzow is a multi-reed player from Germany who concentrates here on both b-flat instruments, soprano and tenor. He has three of his writings heard, Mezza clocks in with six and "Storducks" is co-composed by both. Italian Floravanti on the trap kit and additional percussion is equally important to the overall sound of these ten numbers and the aforementioned definition of their sonics by Mr. Liebman sums up the soundscape of this work in a nutshell.

The foursome under the surnames of the participants makes up the quartet moniker of (4). Unlike the OIR Quartet the instrumentation consists of alto saxophone and guitar atop upright bass and drums.

Explained in the liners this project stems from a decade of musical collaboration between Tessarollo and Cigalini and joins the altoist with the guitarists trio. Judging from the book photos

New Issues

Quartet=Starace, ss, Di Toro, p; Bradascio, d. Same as #4.
(6) Same as #1. (7) Barbara Balzan Quartet=Balzan, vcl; Gregor Mujller, p; Tony Renold, d. Zurigo, Swiss.
(8) Same As #3. (9) Same as #7. (10) Carlo Guaitoli, p; Castiglioni, d. Same as #2. (11) Same as A#2. (12) Maria Patti, vcl; Giuseppe Emanuele, p; Castiglioni, d; Felice Reggio, Simone Ronzoni, tpt; Beppe Caruso, Giuseppe Cattano, tbn; Corrado Sambito, asx; Gilberto Tarocco, ts, bari s. Same as #2. No dates.

the fretman looks like he has graced many a gig while the alto players appears to be just a pup. Speaking of Cigalini, the shot of him playing shows his horn slightly to the left of his mouth which is not as near as radical as Milzow's embouchure which is pictured with just the tip of his metal mouthpiece at mouths side like Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis of yore. The nine number set list is the most collective of the batch with writing credits from all hands. Both leaders sport cutting tones, Cigalini's sharp alto sort of out of John Jenkins without the bebop references and Tessarollo's cutaway big box an extension of Jim Hall with a Grant Green edge. They certainly won't be mistaken for Desmond/Hall quartet of back in the day.

Attilio Zanchi's Ravel's Waltz is something of a puzzle. While it might be construed as a sampler for the Abeat label it is probably more accurate to say it is a retrospective of the veteran bass players work with various groups although there are no recording dates listed for the twelve sessions.

Zanchi is more celebrated as a composer of note than as a double bassist but his upright is heard on eleven of the dozen tracks herein ("Ave Maria" a soprano sax/piano duet). That title and four others not composed by Zanchi. In his two pages describing the repertoire he mentions many classical figures that inspired the writings but there is also a dedications to Astor Piazzolla, Hermeto Pascoal and Charles Mingus. His concise explanations cover this expansive overview better than I ever could.

Larry Hollis.

New Issues

NU BAND THE COSMOLOGICAL CONSTANT NOT TWO 923

Yuma / Listen To Dr.

Cornel West / Dark Dawn
In Aurora / 5 O'Clock
Follies / Paregmenon / The
Unnecessary Correction /
The Path / Time Table / The
Cosmological Constant.

68:50.

Thomas Heberer - cor; Mark
Whitecage - as, clt; Joe Fonda
- b; Lou Grassi - d. recorded
4/18/2014; Paramus, NJ.

MOSTLY OTHER PEOPLE DO THE KILLING MAUCH CHUNK HOT CUP 153

Mauch Chunk Is Jim Thorpe
/ West Bolivar / Obelisk /
Niagra / Herminie / Townville
/ Mehoopany. 45:00.

Jon Irabagon - as; Ron
Stabinsky - p; Moppa Elliott -
b; Kevin Shea - d. 5/23/2015.
Yonkers, NY

The Nu Band was formed in 2001 under the most casual of circumstances. It grew out of trumpeter Roy Campbell Jr and drummer Lou Grassi's desire to play with each other in a regular band. After some searching, they recruited bassist Joe Fonda and saxophonist/clarinetist Mark Whitecage and they had the Nu Band. It was considered a cooperative group. All four were leaders of their own bands and all four were composers. One wondered how long a group with players as busy as these would find time for this band. But they all made time for this group and it stayed together for the rest of the decade, releasing six superb albums over the next ten years. Anyone who saw this group live would realize how much these four enjoyed playing with each other. They created an ensemble that played interesting, sometimes very intricate compositions and were able to take the material in wide-open directions and swung like hell. It was only with the passing of Campbell in 2014 that the group's existence seemed tenuous.

But Thomas Heberer stepped in to help them fill some booked dates and he worked out so well that all members felt that the band could continue in this configuration. What does Heberer bring to the table? Campbell was irreplaceable both as a trumpeter and composer. But Heberer (a 20 year member of the ICP Orchestra) brings his own sound on cornet: just as exploratory as Campbell but with a brighter edge. And he brings a very different compositional style that fits in nicely with the rest of Nu Band.

As for The Cosmological Constant, all four members contribute compositions. The real surprise is the emergence of Lou Grassi as a composer. He contributes three pieces including a brooding elegy to mindless violence "Dark Dawn In Aurora". Fonda also contributes three compositions to the album. "Listen To Dr. Cornel West" (a polemical title if there ever was one) is a musical journey, starting out with a somber, purposeful

New Issues

BARRY ALTSCHUL'S 3DOM FACTOR TALES OF THE UNFORESEEN TUM 044

AS THE TALE BEGINS / A
TALE OF MONK: ASK ME
NOW / THE TALE CONTINUES
/ ANNETTE'S TALE OF
MIRACLES / A DRUMMER'S
TALE / AND THE TALE ENDS.

57:32.

Barry Altschul - d, perc; Jon
Irabagon - ts, ss, soprano
sax, flt; Joe Fonda - b. 2/11-
12/2014, New York City.

theme and ending up with Fonda and Grassi locking into a hip groove to take the piece out. Whitecage's sole contribution "5 O' Clock Follies" is a freebop piece, the kind of music in which this band excels.

The Cosmological Constant continues the narrative of the Nu Band with a significant change that points to a positive future. And best of all it's dedicated to their now deceased brother-in-music, the late, great Roy Campbell, Jr.

Another long running group that has seen recent changes is Mostly Other People Do The Killing. Originally a quartet with bassist Moppa Elliot, trumpeter Peter Evans, saxophonist Jon Irabagon and drummer Kevin Shea, they stayed together for over ten years through nine albums. But Evans has left and his place has been taken by pianist Ron Stabinsky who played the piano role in MOPDTK's rendition of Kind Of Blue (aptly titled Blue).

Evans is one of the best of the young trumpeters that has arisen in the past ten years and his loss is formidable. And replacing him with a pianist may seem like an odd idea. But ultimately it's a solid one. First of all Stabinsky won't be getting compared to Evans. And secondly, replacing trumpet with a piano gives the group a different sound which could point to new directions. Most importantly though, Stabinsky is very much in the spirit of the group and is just as likely to push the music down unexpected avenues (a hallmark of this band) as any of the other players.

MOPDTK's latest album is Mauch Chunk. (In keeping with a "tradition" Elliott titles the group's albums after obscure towns in Pennsylvania. But don't go looking for it. In 1953, Mauch Chunk changed its name to Jim Thorpe, PA.) All compositions are by Elliott and they're a diverse lot. "West Bolivar," dedicated to Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso starts out almost like a samba

New Issues

but soon develops outward to the fringes. (Veloso would like that.) "Niagra" (sic) is dedicated to the late alto sax /arranger Will Connell and contains a beautiful heartfelt solo by Irabagon. Throughout, Stabinsky's piano is both fluid and manic. While he occasionally functions as part of the rhythm section, he seems to be out front with Irabagon more often than not. Elliott and Shea are a telepathic rhythm section and Shea always seems to be ready to throw a spanner in the works. Mauch Chunk finds the band navigating the changes of losing a member well, pointing to some interesting new directions in the future.

Barry Altschul's contribution to jazz is significant and undeniable. He was an architect that established the drummer's role in Paul Bley's groundbreaking 60s piano trios. He eventually formed a dynamic rhythm section with bassist Dave Holland forming the backbone to the Corea/Braxton front-line in Circle. The two further added dimension in the groups of Anthony Braxton and Sam Rivers. In the late 70s/early 80s Altschul led his own groups, tapping on the best of the rising young players of the era: trombonists George Lewis and Ray Anderson, pianist Anthon Davis, bassist John Lindberg a/o. In the late 80s/early 90s he moved to France and recorded sporadically. It wasn't until he moved back to the U.S. in 2001 that he began recording more extensively. First, as a member of bassist Adam Lane's quartet. Then along with bassist Joe Fonda and violinist Billy Bang, they formed the popular co-op group, FAB Trio

Altschul's most recent group is the 3Dom Factor. Joe Fonda returns as the bass player (they work so well together) and out front is reed player Jon Irabagon from Mostly Other People Do The Killing. Tales Of The Unforeseen is the second album they've released and it shows a band firing on all cylinders. Altschul likes to keep things loose and this allows both Fonda and Irabagon to stretch. The opening, "As The Tale Begins" is a 26 minute free improvisation that explores a myriad of directions. They roam through the various sections (loping Coltrane-ish gait, free blowing, solo sections for Irabagon's soprano and Fonda) in a kaleidoscopic fashion with each part folding in on itself and evolving into another section. Altschul pulls out two tunes that strike his fancy. Monk's "Ask Me Now" gets a respectful treatment with Irabagon's alto evoking a bit of nostalgia in its tone. The biggest surprise is a version of Annette Peacock's "Miracles", obviously something he's carried over from his days of playing in Paul Bley's trios (although they never recorded it on an album). One never knows what to expect from Tales Of The Unforeseen but it's a story well worth hearing.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

MIKE OSBORNE DAWN

CUNEIFORM 392

SCOTCH PEARL / DAWN /
JACK RABBIT / TBC* / 1ST*
/ TBD*

OSBORNE – AS; HARRY
MILLER – B; LOUIS MOHOLO
– D. RECORDED 8/1970 AND
(*) 12/1970, LONDON, U.K.
SEVEN BY SEVEN / AND
NOW THE QUEEN / AN IDEA
/ AGGRESSION.

Osborne – as; John Surman
– bars, ss; Harry Miller – b;
Alan Jackson – d. recorded
6/9/1966, London, U.K. total
time: 71:00

Alto saxophonist Mike Osborne is not as well known to U.S. audiences as he should be. He was a bright hope modernist on the U.K. scene when establishing himself in the late-60s as a featured soloist in Mike Westbrook's Concert Band. And he delivered on that promise in the 70s: with his own solid trio and quartet records, playing in bands (Chris McGregor's Brotherhood Of Breath, Barry Guy's London Jazz Composer's Orchestra), forming S.O.S., a trio with fellow saxophonists John Surman and Alan Skidmore and through many other associations. But his mental stability began to deteriorate and a diagnosis of schizophrenia put halt to his career in the early 80s. He died in 2007 of lung cancer. Since then, a number of his 70s recordings have been re-released and a number of new titles have surfaced.

American label Cuneiform Records has done its part to keep Osborne's name circulating in America. They issued a 2 disc recording of previously unreleased tracks by co-op sax trio S.O.S. in 2013. Additionally they've issued albums by groups where Osborne was a member: John Surman, Harry Miller's Isipingo and the Brotherhood of Breath.

Dawn is a collection of 10 tracks performed by 2 different bands led by Osborne. The first six tracks are performed by the trio of Osborne, Harry Miller (bass) and Louis Moholo (drums) and stem from two different sessions from the end of 1970. They come charging out of the gate with "Scotch Pearl" and Osborne sounds like a man possessed. His tone recalls Jackie McLean but the ideas are all Osborne's. He coherently spits out phrase after phrase at a breakneck pace. Miller and Moholo are right there with him, with Moholo accenting the ends of Osborne's phrases with sharp cymbal strokes. The energy these three put out is nothing short of astonishing. Even on a ballad like "Dawn" there's a tension and intensity in Osborne's mournful lines accompanied by Miller's arco bass

New Issues

and Moholo's cymbal washes. The sound quality of this session is excellent. While the sound quality on the second set of tracks with this trio is a little hollow, the music is no less exciting. On this date the spirit of Ornette Coleman seems to be hovering over the trio. "TBC" starts out sounding like a jaunty tune until it switches into fast tempo with Osborne delivering a solo that shows he'd been absorbing Coleman's ideas on repetition which he applies to this solo. "1st" sounds like a Coleman dirge where all three players bring a mournful pathos the proceedings.

The final session is even more revelatory. It's a quartet session from 1966 and is among the earliest recordings of Osborne. He leads a quartet with baritone/soprano player John Surman, Miller on bass and Alan Jackson on drums. What's fascinating is the repertoire this band plays. The nattily bopping head of "Seven By Seven" is from Pharoah Sanders' first recording for ESP, released the previous year. "And Now The Queen" was a Carla Bley composition frequently performed by Paul Bley's groups. And "Agression" is a Booker Little composition that he performed with the quintet he shared with Eric Dolphy on the 5 Spot recordings. It shows these players were keeping abreast of the new music emerging from the U.S. (More so than the many tradition obsessed players in the U.S. were.) This quartet plays with a more measured approach (than the trio) and their format is circumscribed. No track is longer than six and a half minutes. But it's clear that, once again, these players are absorbing the music and it's good to hear these tunes performed by someone with a different perspective. "Agression" starts with a really slow reading of the theme, emphasizing a nice harmony in the horns before breaking out into uptempo.

Dawn is one of the more worthwhile historical issues of the year (2015). If the reader has not checked out Osborne this is a good place to start. If more this trio's music is needed, check out Osborne's best recording with them, All Night Long. And it's hoped there's more material available to be released to fill out this remarkable player's discography.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

1) FRED HERCH SOLO

PALMETTO 2180
OLHA MARIA - O GRANDE
AMOR / CARAVAN /
PASTORALE / WHIRL / THE
SONG IS YOU / IN WALKED
BUD / BOTH SIDES NOW.

60:23.

Hersch - p. 8/14/2014,
Windham, NY.

1) It's easy to see why Fred Hersch is one of the most popular pianists in jazz today. First of all, he's a melodist with a sense of adventure. He knows how to work an audience purely through his music. He knows how to put together a program with familiar but not overplayed standards, a few originals, a couple of quality jazz standards and a pop tune for good measure. But all of this is not calculated. It's obviously the way Hersch hears music.

Solo is his tenth album of solo piano and Hersch did not perform this live set from Windham, NY with the intention of releasing it. But he felt it was an occasion where he connected with the piano and the audience and decided to do so. It has everything one looks for in a Hersch solo piano performance (see previous paragraph). Highlights include a mysterious "Caravan", a lively version of Monk's "In Walked Bud" that goes off on some unique, un-Monkian variations and a rhapsodic "The Song Is You". It's always good to hear Hersch dig deeply into this material with his wonderful warm tone. Ultimately, one could pick up virtually any of the ten Hersch solo piano albums and be assured of an enjoyable set. And that includes this one.

2) KENNY WERNER THE MELODY PIROUET 3083

TRY TO REMEMBER / WHO? /
BALLOONS / 26-2 / VONCIFY
THE EMULYANS / IN YOUR
OWN SWEET WAY / BEAUTY
SECRETS. 56:48.

Werner - p; Johannes
Weidenmueller - b; Ari Hoenig
- d. 9/29-30/2014, New York
City.

2) Although a contemporary of Hersch's, Kenny Werner is perhaps not as well known to the general populace as Hersch. But he is highly regarded and well-respected in the jazz community. Not only for his piano and compositions but also as the author of *Effortless Mastery: Liberating The Master Musician Within*. Like Hersch, he has a highly developed melodic sense (hence, the title of this disc). He's perhaps a little more adventurous harmonically. And when playing with his trio (Johannes Weidenmueller - bass and Ari Hoenig - drums) he likes to stretch and toy with the material. The trio has been together since 2000 but this is their first recording since 2008.

The Melody is almost a statement of purpose

New Issues

3) MARIO PAVONE BLUE DIALECT

CLEAN FEED 319
SUITCASE IN SAVANNAH /
XAPO / REFLECTIONS / TWO
ONE / ZINES / SILVER PRINT /
LANGUAGE / TRIO DIALECT /
BLUE. 55:28.

Pavone - b; Matt Mitchell
- p; Tyshawn Sorey - d. 8/20-
21/2014, Brooklyn, NY

4) MICHAEL MCNEILL TRIO FLIGHT

SELF-PUBLISHED no #
Placid, Ruffled / Za /
Skies / No Dice / Picture
Window / Land / Wild
Geese Suite: Cloudburst
- Placid, Ruffled - Follow
Our Sun / In That
Number. 61:29.

McNeill - p; Ken Filiano
- b; Phil Haynes - d.
1/18/2014, Lewisburg,
PA.

as much as an album title. He explores a couple of his own compositions that he's done before: "Balloons", an attractive waltz, descriptive of its title and "Beauty Secrets" is one of the best demonstrations of how this trio effortlessly builds a performance. Of the standards, Brubeck's "In Your Own Sweet Way" gets a kaleidoscopic treatment with the trio constantly shifting tempo, veering off into strange interludes of dissonance, phrasing the theme in odd and oblique ways. "26-2" (a posthumously released Coltrane tune that has become a standard in its own right) is staggered rhythmically in its theme statement with the tempo speeding up and slowing down. This trio is a remarkable unit and all the more amazing for sounding so together in their first recording date in seven years.

3) As most Cadence readers probably know, Mario Pavone is a bassist not a pianist. But he got his recording start in the late 60s as a member of Paul Bley's trio. And while he's put out some excellent recordings with various sized ensembles in his discography, since 1990, Pavone has frequently turned to the piano trio as a group format. He even reunited with his former employer Bley in 2008 for Trio Arc. He's also used Craig Taborn and Peter Madsen in his piano trios.

For Blue Dialect, Pavone is using Matt Mitchell, one of the most creative pianists to emerge in the last decade. In the past few years, Mitchell has recorded with Tim Berne, Dave Douglas and Rudresh Mahanthappa, as well as releasing four albums under his own name. His presence (along with Tyshawn Sorey on drums) gives the album a creative, cutting edge newness, something Pavone was clearly looking for. Pavone composed all of the songs with the exception of "Trio Dialect" which is a free improvisation. Most of the pieces contain oblique, angular themes that point to every which

New Issues

way. Mitchell seems to relish them and the freedom they give him. Sorey (who proved his mettle in the piano trio format on his own Alloy release of 2014) is a perfect drummer for this trio. He gives the music an airy quality with spacious drumming, that accompanies and couches Mitchell's line in cymbal splashes and abrupt rhythmic flourishes. Pavone is the discreet force that holds the music together with subtle open phrasing, getting inside Mitchell's extemporizations and Sorey's subtle rhythmic forward momentum. The music is at its best when it is operating at the quieter end of the spectrum. "Zines" is a particularly effective subtle interlude. But this band can drive when the music calls for it. "Blue" "Xapo" and "Silver Print" build up and nice head of steam. It's ironic that what is perhaps the best piano trio album of the year is fronted by a bassist. Strongly recommended.

4) The least known among the four pianists featured here is Michael McNeill but he's definitely a pianist worth hearing. Based in Western New York, he studied with trumpeter Paul Smoker. His first release, *Passageways* was highly regarded by the fortunate few who got to hear it. *Flight* is a further demonstration of McNeill's abilities. Recorded with his trio of Ken Filiano on bass and Phil Haynes on drums (both of whom were on *Passageways*) they have developed an intimate form of communication that is heard in the best of contemporary piano trio music.

"Placid, Ruffled" opens the album with a thoughtful solo that uses space in a very Paul Bley-ish manner. The centerpiece of the album is "Wild Geese Suite" a three-part piece that seems to merge all of McNeill's ideas. "Land" which precedes the suite is so perfectly placed that it could be viewed as a prelude of sorts. Opening with a meditative theme played as a piano solo, the piece dissolves into abstraction with an incredible interlude by Haynes. The suite that follows contains three strong thematic pieces, among them an expansion on the opener "Placid, Ruffled", this time played as a trio with strongly defined parts for all three instruments. McNeill is definitely a player with technique and a composer with ideas. *Flight* is definitely well worth checking out.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

**STEVE SWELL
KANREKI:
REFLECTION AND
RENEWAL
NOT TWO 929**

Dragonfly Breath: Live At
Zebulon.

Swell - tbn; Paul Flaherty
- ts; C. Spenser Yeh - vln,
vcl; Weasel Walter - d, perc.
5/8/2012, Brooklyn, NY

Essakane

Swell - tbn; Magnus Broo -
tpt; Ken Vandermark - ts; Joe
Williams - b; Michael Vatcher
- d. 5/28/2011, Coimbra,
Portugal

Schemata And Heuristics For
Four Clarinets #1
Ned Rothenberg, Guillermo
Gregorio, Miguel Malla; Zara
Acosta-Chen - clt. 3/27/2014.

Brooklyn, NY

News From The Upper West
Side

Swell - tbn; Tom Buckner -
vcl. 1/28/2014. unidentified
location

Splitting Up Is Hard To Do
Swell - tbn solo. 9/25/2012.
unidentified location.

Live At The Hideout: #1 / #2
/ #3.

Swell - tbn; Guillermo
Gregorio - clt; Fred Lonberg-
Holm - cel, electronics.
8/29/2012, Chicago, IL

Composite #8

Swell - tbn; Darius Jones - as;
Omar Tamez - g; Jonathan
Golove - cel; James ilgenfritz -
b. 12/6/2012, Brooklyn, NY.

Trombonist Steve Swell was a bit of a late bloomer as far as his recording career was concerned. Although he was active during the 70s and early 80s, no recordings surfaced of his playing during this era. He was a member of various bands (Buddy Rich's, most notably) but was never recorded. His first work was as a member of Jaki Byard's Apollo Stompers during the late 80s. He started recording as members of several small groups including those of Tim Berne, Joey Barron as well as William Parker's big band. He didn't start recording under his own name until 1996 and he hasn't looked back since. Swell has amassed a large and diverse discography since that time and has turned in several classics including 2003's Suite For Players, Listeners And Other Dreamers, 2008's Planet Dream, a trio set with saxophonist Rob Brown and cellist Daniel Levin and last year's Turning Point, a set of duets with pianist Dave Burrell.

Probably due to his late start at recording, it's hard to believe that Swell has reached the ripe old age of 60. Poland's Not Two label is commemorating the event with the release of the double CD Kanreki: Reflection And Renewal. Kanreki is the Japanese name for the 60th birthday, a significant date in their culture. From the evidence on these two discs, Swell is reflecting back on his past but he is still an explorer and still a musician whose interests are wide and varied. The album consists of recordings done in the past five years. They present him in seven different settings with a variety of musicians and present a portrait of a multi-faceted musician who seems to be always looking for new and different ways to extend his art.

Two performances are free improvisations. The recording opens with the group "Dragonfly Breath" recorded live at Zebulon. It's a "take no prisoners" performance featuring Swell with saxophonist Paul Flaherty, violinist C. Spenser Yeh and drummer Weasel Walter. At over 31 minutes, it's a continuous

New Issues

piece that with wailing horns, omni-directional drumming and bass playing that sustains its intensity for almost the entire length. At one point it seems to end, only to revive itself for a five minute coda. The other free improvisation, "Live At The Hideout", is a trio with Fred Lonberg-Holm on cello and electronics and Guillermo Gregorio on clarinet. While a more measured performance (in 3 sections) and with a more spacious soundscape, it is no less intense than the previous track. Lonberg-Holm's electronics are particularly well-used on this set. Elsewhere Swell is well-represented as a composer for clarinet quartet on "Schemata And Heuristics". The quartet that includes Ned Rothenberg and Gregorio shows that Swell understands instruments other than the trombone. The composition, in two sections, puts the four clarinetists through their paces engaging them in jousting, massed choirs, slippery contrapuntal lines and using extended techniques. Elsewhere there's a bit of burly freebop "Essakane", an extract from a duet with singer Tom Buckner and a solo track of extended trombone technique (the humorously titled "Splitting Up Is Hard To Do") that gives an impressive demonstration of split tone technique on the trombone. The effect is almost trance-like.

Kanreki is an impressive program and each track offers a different facet of Swell's music. But those who have been following him since the mid-1990s shouldn't be surprised. This recording gives us seven unique tracks that present a nearly complete picture of one of the best trombonists working in improvised music today.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

1) STEPHAN CRUMP / MARY HALVORSON SECRET KEEPER

INTAKT 249

WHAT'LL I DO / EMERGE
/ IN TIME YOU YELL /
DISPROPORTIONATE
ENDINGS / A MUDDLE
OF HOPE / BRISGE LOSS
SEQUENCE / NAKATA /
TURNS TO WHITE GOLD /
ERIE.

Halvorson - g; Crump b.
6/16-18/2013, Brooklyn, NY.
49:28.

2) MARILYN CRISPELL / GERRY HEMINGWAY TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTAKT 246

SPIRINGS / WATERWISP
/ ROOFLESS / NIGHT
PASSING / WINDY CITY /
ASSEMBLY / EVERYTIME WE
SAY GOODBYE / TABLE OF
CHANGES. 65:52.

Crispell - p; Hemingway
- d, perc, m vb. recorded
5/5/2013, Ulrichsberg,
Austria; 5/14/2013, Arles,
Fr. 5/16/2013, Amsterdam,
Neth.; 5/12/2013, Le Mans, Fr.

3) IVO PERELMAN / MATTHEW SHIPP CALLAS

LEO 728/729

LUCIA / TOSCA / ROSINA /
MIMI / MEDEA / VIOLETTA
/ LEONORA . RECORDED
3/15/2015.

AMELIA / AIDA /
MADDALENA / TURANDOT

The improvised duo is the most intimate form of musical connection and when it works, it's a thing of beauty. Below are four duets of varying instrumentation and varying styles. And all achieve varying degrees of success.

1) With Emerge, Secret Keeper (the duo of guitarist Mary Halvorson and bassist Stephan Crump) is now two albums old. Halvorson is among the most interesting and adventurous guitarists to emerge in the past decade. She's put herself in a remarkable variety of improvising situations, each a bit different from the other. But despite the variety of contexts, she always sounds like herself (which means she sounds like nobody else.) Crump is probably best known as the bassist (and frequently anchor) of Vijay Iyer's trio. But he also has several of his own projects including the Rosetta Trio where he is surrounded by two guitarists. So Crump knows how to interact with fellow string players. And the work of these two as a duo is as good as the format can get.

The compositional chores are divided in half but the album begins with a pensive version of Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do". It slowly unfolds almost acting as an introduction to the album proper. The title track (by Crump) has a melancholy theme that gradually picks up steam until it becomes a dense web of lines crisscrossing each other. Crump's arco bass work is solid and figures in nicely on Halvorson's "Disproportionate Endings". The bass provides a deep, trenchant moan beneath Halvorson's hovering lines. And when Halvorson's fuzz kicks in (i.e. on "Bridge Loss Sequence") she delivers searing intense lines that gives the music an added dimension. But mostly, the emphasis is on thoughtful duo improvisation that shows there can be energy and intelligence even in the most quiet

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/ ABIGAILLE / NORMA /
ALCESTE / LOUISE / GIULIA.

REC. 2/27/2015,

Perelman - ts; Shipp - p. total
time: 79:00; Brooklyn, NY

4) LEE SHAW / RICH
SYRACUSE
LIVE AT CASPE
TERRACE
CADENCE 1253

LOTUS BLOSSOM / EAST
OF THE SUN / ISFAHAN /
RAINTHREADS / DAY DREAM
/ BLUE HYACINTH / SLEEPER
/ BLOSSOM / JOHNNY COME
LATELY / EASY WALKER /
SATIN DOLL / A FLOWER IS A
LOVESOME THING. 78:32.

Shaw - p. Syracuse - b. 2012,
Wauke, Iowa.

moments.

2) Pianist Marilyn Crispell and drummer Gerry Hemingway were 2/3 of the rhythm section for the now legendary Anthony Braxton quartet of the mid -80s. Since that band split, the two have periodically continued as a duo releasing two previous LPs before their current release, *Table Of Changes*.

The new disc is culled from live performances at four different venues but the entire disc plays almost as a suite. The first three tracks are from a sequence in Ulrichsberg, Austria and are a perfect illustration of how the two have an almost telepathic reading of each other. Consisting almost entirely of free improvisation (except for a lovely reading of the standard "Everytime We Say Goodbye") the music ebbs and flows with assured forward momentum. While they build up heady, intense sections, it's in the masterful way they release this tension that everything comes together. "Waterwisp" (which naturally develops from the active opener, "Spirings") consists of Hemingway on vibes and Crispell playing in the upper register of the piano. Although a "quieter" interlude, the intensity of the section matches any louder section (i.e. the subsequent section "Roofless"). The energy level never flags and that's the strength of this duo. "Night Passing" starts as an impressionistic interlude (Hemingway again on vibes) before developing into a more expressionistic vein with Crispell playing rich, dark chords before entering a lengthy solo interlude that almost becomes rhapsodic and carries the piece to its conclusion. Hemingway is an ideal duo partner. He knows when to lay out as when to take over and steer a piece. *Table Of Changes* is the sound of this duo working at the top of its game.

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3) Saxophonist Ivo Perelman and pianist Matthew Shipp have honed their musical partnership through a series of various group recordings and several duet albums since the mid-1990s. They, too, have an almost telepathic communication when playing as a duo. Each seems to anticipate the other's moves.

Callas, a set of 16 improvisations revolving around the output of operatic soprano Maria Callas. But, why Maria Callas? It seems the year before these recordings (February - March 2015) Perelman began having problems playing which were traced to his larynx which he was damaging due to the intensity of his upper register forays. During therapy, he discovered that this was a frequent problem for opera singers. He began taking voice lessons and learned different techniques for breathing while playing. He also began to listen to opera and became enamored with Callas' singing, and her combination of technique and emotionality. His medical problem began to resolve itself and he is quoted in the liner notes as saying "Now, I breathe as if I were a singer." What effect does this have on the music? Each section is named after a role Callas played in an opera. While Perelman and Shipp do not focus on the music of Bellini, Verdi etc., they try to achieve an emotional arc that would be demanded by the role. The net effect compared to their previous recordings is that there is a more lyrical focus in their playing. Shipp seems to draw on the expressive side of the classical palette (but his chords are more Berg than Bellini) but what he is doing is entirely appropriate considering the remit of the music. Perelman does seem to be phrasing differently and there is more of a vocal and lyrical quality to his lines. Whatever, it is clearly different from what has come before but it has the force, the power, the beauty and the fierceness that

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has characterized Perelman's and Shipp's music since his emergence in the U.S. in the early 90s. Callas is a well-considered set of duets from two contemporary masters.

4) Sadly, a little over two months prior to this writing, pianist Lee Shaw died at the age of 89. Shaw had a fascinating career. Born in Oklahoma, classically trained, she claims she discovered jazz through a chance encounter with Count Basie. She married Stan Shaw and for most of their time together, they maintained a trio that would play in New York (and elsewhere). But Lee Shaw never pursued a career for herself, instead performing in the trio and teaching. Among her most famous students was pianist John Medeski. Stan Shaw died in 2001 but Lee Shaw continued playing and teaching, forming a trio with bassist Rich Syracuse and drummer Jeff Siegel, based in Albany, NY. And it was during the ensuing decade that Shaw had several recordings released that garnered positive attention and appreciably raised her recognition level.

Live At Caspee Terrace (in Waukeg, Iowa), was recorded in a duet with Syracuse when Shaw was 86. Age plays no role in her music. She sounds vibrant and assured. The tempos never flag, the harmonic invention always front and center. On this night, she was obviously in a Strayhorn mood since half of the selections were composed by him. Shaw always considered Oscar Peterson her biggest influence but, refreshingly she developed an attractive style of her own with a rich harmonic resonance, deftly flowing lines and an unerring sense of how to approach a tune. However, the one misstep on this release is her version of "Isfahan". One of the most attractive tunes in the Ellington/Strayhorn canon, she handles it at mid-tempo which has a tendency to shortchange the melody and the beautiful harmonic palette contained in the song. But apart from that lapse (which isn't too severe), this disc is a solid 78 minutes of piano/bass duets on timeless material, played with grace and elan.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

EDSEL GOMEZ ROAD TO UDAIPUR

ZOHO 201505

TERTULIA SAMBA / UDAIPUR
/ HOMESICK NOSTALGIA
/ SEARCH AND BUILD
/ NINIBILO MAJULOLO
AND THE BRIDGE / FOUR
SEASONS AND A FIVE /
SPAIN-ISHED CUBES (FOR
CHICK COREA) / ON SECOND
THOUGHTS / CHARLES
CHAPLIN / SMILE ON /
BAHIA / BROTHERS / THE
CHANT. 51:47.

Edsel Gomez – p, perc;

Walmir Gil, Nahor Gomes

– tpt, flgh; Roberto Pitre

Vazquez – flt, picc, vcl;

Roberto Cassio Ferreira –

as; Felipe Lamoglia – ts;

Roberto Araujo – oboe;

Fabio Tagliaferri – vla; Edu

Martins – b; Alex Apolo Ayala

– b; Sizao Machado – el b;

Arismar Do Espirito Santo

– el b; Bruce Cox – d; Tuto

Ferraz – d; Douglas Alonso

– d; Felix Gibbons – conga;

Roberta Valente – Latin perc;

Chacalzinho – Latin perc.

recorded 7-8/2014, New York,

NY, Sao Paolo, Brazil.

Puerto Rican born, American resident, Edsel Gomez is a highly respected pianist working primarily in the Latin music vein but not exclusively. He's been a member of clarinetist Don Byron's groups (around the time of Tuskegee Experiment). And he lived and recorded in Brazil during the 90s for a number of years before returning to America. In 2006 he released his first American album *Cubist Music* which was well-received and even garnered a Grammy nomination.

Road To Udaipur is his first album since *Cubist Music*. It's surprising he's waited so long. But I'm sure his other gig as Dee Dee Bridgewater's music director/accompanist is a full-time job. But Gomez has finally delivered a follow up of sorts. It consists of 13 tracks, with varying personnel.

Gomez' piano is to the fore and that is the strength of this disc. Chick Corea's virtuosity is a point of reference and it's not surprising since Corea was an early advocate of Gomez. His other prime influence is the titan of Latin piano, Eddie Palmieri. He's felt in Gomez' dense piano chords and his explosive fills and commentary that seem to spring out of nowhere. But ultimately Gomez is his own player. "Spain-ished Cubes" dedicated to Corea, refers to not only Corea but Gomez' own "cubist" conception of his previous album. The tracks sounds like the elements of Corea's Spain are disassembled and then put together in multiple perspectives. It's a nice piece and Gomez's solo isn't beholding to Corea riffs, it's clearly coming from within himself. Another highlight is "Homesick Nostalgia", a melancholy ballad with lush piano work by Gomez. The rhythms throughout most of the disc are dense and complex. But with these multiple bands and personnel shifts from track to track, it's difficult to make a coherent statement out of the disc as a whole. And with recording in multiple studios from New York to Brazil there is a variance from track to track. Sometimes, on the tracks with horns, the horn section sounds grafted on (i.e. "Search And Build").

But throughout it all Gomez' piano shines through and some of his compositions are truly memorable.

Robert Iannapolo

New Issues

KATIE BULL GROUP
PROJECT
ALL HOT BODIES
RADIATE

ASHOKAN INDIE 001

THE CRAZY POET SONG /
VENUS ON A TRAIN / KOKO'S
CAN-DO BLUES / GHOST
SONATA / THE DRIVE TO
WOODSTOCK / IF I LOVED
YOU - WHAT IF? / TORCH
SONG TO THE SUN / LOVE
POEM FOR APOLLO / I
GUESS THIS ISN'T KANSAS
ANYMORE / SOME PERFUME
HOME / DING DONG THE
WITCH IS DEAD / RAPTURE
FOR THE DAVID / THE SEA IS
FULL OF SONG. 64:56.

Bull - vcl; Jeff Lederer - ts, ss;
Landon Knoblock - p, kybds,
electronics, vcl; Joe Fonda - b;
George Schuller - d. 4/2013,
Paramus, NJ.

We live in an era where jazz vocalists seem to be the coin of the realm, and a dime a dozen. They tend to be overbooked at jazz festivals, score high on the jazz charts and even make it onto TV. Unfortunately, much of the music these singers dish out is laced with rock, pop and country stylings and the true jazz content is a minimal factor, perhaps a solo for each of the accompanying players. It would be nice if someone who was truly a jazz vocalist backed by strong players would be given some credence. Someone like Fay Victor. Or someone like Katie Bull.

All Hot Bodies Radiate is Bull's sixth album and it's her best yet. The fact that she's still not as well known as she should be (she's been recording since 2003) is surprising. As has been the case on all of her albums, she's backed here by a crack band. Bassist Joe Fonda has been a collaborator with her since the first album. George Schuller, a frequent partner of Fonda in several group rhythm sections (Conference Call, guitarist Michael Mussilami's Trio) is on drums. Jeff Lederer's burly tenor and soprano saxes are an important component to the music. And keyboardist Landon Knoblock is a rich accompanist, going for the unpredictable, adding unexpected touches with electronics and backing vocals (on "Ghost Sonata".) This is truly a group music with Bull at the helm. She knows the value of a great band and she allows them ample space to make their own statements.

Bull has always been a strong singer with great phrasing. She handles standards well and uniquely and her originals are unlike anything else around. All of this is true of her most recent release. The originals here handle knotty topics such as (and I'm quoting the liner notes here) "Love. Nature. The Nature Of Love.". She handles these topics with stark frankness, a razor sharp wit and even a little wistfulness and melancholy. She delivers

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the material in an attractive voice that's flexible, never hitting the listener over the head with empty virtuosic displays even though it's clear she could (check out the little interlude on "KoKo's Can-Do Blues".) The two covers on display point to another aspect of Bull's individuality. "If I Loved You" is done in a medley with the original "What If". She handles "If I Loved You" with sensitivity in a free a cappella. Then she proceeds to expand on the lyrical theme with her original. It's a nice treatment. "Ding Dong The Witch Is Dead" is given an eerie cast with Lederer's soprano sax sounding a bit like an Armenian duduk and Fonda's arco bass and Knoblock's electronics adding to the eeriness. This is a track where Bull gets to stretch out as well. This is one of the strongest vocal albums in recent memory. It's a good place to start if the listener has never heard Katie Bull before. Then proceed from there.

Robert Iannapallo

MIKE HOLOBER, BALANCING ACT,

PALMETTO PALM-22058.

BOOK OF LIGHT / IDRIS /
LULLABY; GOODNIGHT MY
ANGEL / GRACE AT SEA / PIECE
OF MY HEART / CANYON / SIGHS
MATTER / WHEN THERE WERE
TRAINS. 39:13.

Holober, p; Kate McGarry, vcl;
Marvin Stamm, tpt, flgh; Dick
Oats, ss, as, flt; Jason Rigby, ts,
cl, b cl; Mark Patterson, tbn;
John Herbert, b; Brian Blade, d.
4/21&22/2914. NYC.

Pianist Mike Holober is an adroit juggler of musical moods on this disc. He masterfully mixes opposites throughout these mostly original eight compositions. His use of the female voice invigorates the textures of the other instruments and while not a pioneering or innovative effect, (think Norma Winstone, Shelia Jordan, Linda Sharrock, etc.) it retains a degree of tonal freshness. The remaining instrumentalists are pretty much an all star gathering with all hands contributing to a successful outcome. Tenor player Jason Rigby penned "Idris" while there are intelligent covers of a Billy Joel script ("Lullabye; Goodnight My Angel") and the golden oldie "Piece Of My Heart" which received its definitive reading from the great Irma Thomas. While Brian Blade is not my idea of a swinging drummer one can't go wrong with heavyweight veterans like Marv Stamm and Dick Oats. The title of this package says it all.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

ERIC PLAKS QUINTET SOME ONES

CADENCE 1223

42ND. STREET / MINIATURE

JALAPENO / MINIATURE

NISPERO / MINIATURE

GARLIC / MINIATURE

LASAGNA / ALL THE THINGS

YOU ARE / LECO'S BIG

IDEA / MINIATURE RAIN

/ MINIATURE BLIZZARD /

AFRICAN FLOWER / LAONI'S

TUNE / MINIATURE PERIL

/ CECILIAN MAFIA / MY

SHINIGS HOUR / LOVE THY

NEIGHBOR. 64:52.

Plaks - p; Don Chapman - ts,

ss; Alan Davis - ts; Leco Reis

- b; Jon Panikkar - d. 4/23-

24/2008.

Eric Plaks is a pianist with a broad sense of the history of the instrument. His quintet on *Some Ones* sounds right there with him. That's evident from the first notes of the opening track, the standard "42nd Street", a song usually taken at mid-tempo but here taken uptempo from the start. A blustery tenor courtesy of Don Chapman takes the lead, the rhythm section falls in and they're off. Plaks' comping is all over the place, starting fairly tame before blasting out in multiple directions. It's an invigorating opener and Plaks and his band deliver on the promise.

Of course all is not bluster and energy. There's a rather sweet rendition of "All The Things You Are" performed in 3/4 with a breezy solo by Plaks and some snappy brushwork from drummer Panikkar. There's also an unusual take on Duke Ellington's "African Flower". It's one of Ellington's later compositions and is usually performed as a flowing ballad. But here Plaks has re-arranged it so that rhythmically, it sounds like a distant cousin to Ellington's "Black And Tan Fantasy". Peppered throughout the program are little "miniature" pieces that are duets between Plaks and drummer Panikkar. Here one gets a sense of where Plaks is coming from. There's a strong influence of Cecil Taylor ca. early 1960s. This is especially true of "Miniature Rain". But Plaks is not merely aping Taylors lines. One can feel there's more, including the lineage stretching back from Taylor through Monk and back to Ellington as a piano player. This is especially evident in Plaks' unorthodox comping.

Some Ones is a solid recording and is well worth checking out. This is a strong quintet but the recording is from 2008. One wonders what they sound like now.

Robert Iannapollo

New Issues

MAX DE ALOE
QUARTET,
BORDERLINE,
ABEAT RECORDS AB JZ
141.

BORDERLINE / SMELLS
LIKE TEEN SPIRIT / LITTLE
MONKEY SMOKES A PIPE /
RUBY, MY DEAR / IN WALKED
BUD / DUE DI NOI / WOLFLI
/ ALL APOLOGIES / ATEA
PRECHIERA(*) / BLACK
AND WHITE / DI LEGEND
E ANIMA(*) / ANDANTE
CANTABILE / SEE EMILY PLAY
/ ATEA PREGHIERA—REPRISE.
59:01

De Aloe, hca, acc(*); Roberto
Olzer, p; Marco Mistrangelo,
b; Nicola Stranieri, d.
7/21&22/2014. No location
listed.

This Abeat (For Jazz) release differs from five others under the same logo this writer got for review mostly in presentation. Where that batch was all similar in packaging (black & white photo covers encased in jewel cases) Borderline is in a three-flap digi-pak festooned with artwork by Carlo Zinelli who De Aloe states in his self-penned liners was the main inspiration for this project (most notably #7,9&14), One of the five Abeat issues mentioned above (Ravel's Waltz by bassist Attilio Zanchi) has a pair of tracks with the harmonica player with the Inside Jazz Quartet. With close to an hours playing time and just four instruments there could be a risk of sameness to this disc but that is erased due to the cleverly varied tune selection containing covers of jazz classics, pop songs, a contribution from double-bassist Mistrangelo ("Black & White"), a classical piece by Robert Schumann and a half dozen numbers from the principal. The two Monk items are deftly placed together, the chromatic harp is replaced or overdubbed with a bass model on the two Nirvana titles and "Wolfi" one of the Zinelli dedications while pianoman Roberto Olzer switches to an organ for the stately reprise. The leader also plays accordion on his scripts "Atea Pregaiera" and "Di Legno E Anima". A nice little package if one is so inclined.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



MARY HALVORSON
TRIO
GHOST LOOP
FORTUNE 0010-010

INTO THE SEA INTO ME (NO.
36)/ THE CADENCE OF TEARS
(NO. 40)/ CRASHES LIKE
LIGHTS (NO. 39)/ EXISTENTIAL
TEARINGS (NO. 44)/ TO
THE MAN WHO BROUGHT
THE FLOWER (NO. 45)/ OF
COLORFUL WHITE FINDS (NO.
38)/ GHOST LOOP (NO. 43)/
FORGOTTEN MEN IN SILVER
(NO. 24)/ DEFORMED WEIGHT
OF HANDS (NO. 28)
62:02

Mary Halvorson, g; John
Hébert, b; Ches Smith, d.
September 27, 2012;
Chorzów, Poland.

Ghost Loop is a live release from Anthony Braxton-protégé Mary Halvorson that features her working trio. Halvorson is no longer the new kid on the block and this album serves as a testament to more than a decade of recording in what is becoming a very prolific career. Unfortunately for Halvorson, much of what has been written about her has engaged the obligatory “Is this jazz?” trope that seems to follow her around. I think this question has been raised with frequency due to the following: Despite her original style and wholly original approach to her instrument, this music expresses the traditional sound of the guitar/double bass/drums trio. Don’t let this fool you. The album’s opening track, “Into the Sea Into Me,” begins with the impression that the music will be a traditional trio tune before quickly taking a left turn as guitar effects and unorthodox compositional stylings begin to emerge. Halvorson’s pairing with her working rhythm section provides exceptional balance. Although Halvorson’s playing is unique and rarely suggests a tune-like melody, her approach is easy to listen to and may even be quite accessible to non-jazz/non-classical listeners. However, in the context of this rhythm section, Halvorson’s playing serves as an anchor for Hébert and Smith’s exceptionally-musical outreach. One of the major strengths of this album is its compositions. Not only do they keep the performance engaging, but the band serves the compositions brilliantly. A perfect example of this occurs during “Of Colorful White Finds.” The piece begins with some colorful melodic fragments that almost seem improvised before the group launches into an intertwining web of well-composed lines. Halvorson and Hébert connect and separate their lines as the piece moves forward. Eventually the band lands into an incredible section of improvisation, further obscuring the listeners’ ability to recognize what is improvised and what has been composed (an exceptional device in this reviewer’s opinion). The album also has some nice contrast between the previously mentioned compositions and the more exploratory pieces like “Ghost Loop” and “Deformed Weight of Hands.” As far as a live performance goes, it’s great that it was captured for an album release.

Dustin Mallory

New Issues

**SZILÁRD MEZEI
INTERNATIONAL
IMPROVISERS
ENSEMBLE
KARSZT**

SLAMCD 550

HEP 20/ KARSZT/ FROM
FOLIAGE OF TREES AND
SHRUBS/ CATS/ BARK/ IN
MEMORY OF CHOPIN/ HEP
57/ JUGOPLASTIKA

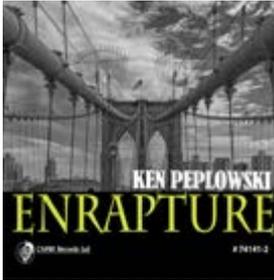
152:27

Szilard Mezei, vla; Bogdan Ranković, b cl, as; Péter Bede, ts, as, tarogato; Gergő Kováts, ts, ss; Béla Burány, bari s; Ádám Meggyes, tpt; Branislav Aksin, tbn; Jens Balder, tbn; Laura Lévy-Aksin, ftt, pic; Gergely Ittész, flt, pic; Andrea Berendika, flt, pic; Máté Pozsár, p; Jon Hemmersam, g; Tijana Stanković, vln; Albert Márkos, cel; Zoltán Csányi, b; Ervin Malina, b; Ernő Hock, b; Joel Grip, b; Ivan Burka, marimba; Jelena Rašković, vib; Hunor G.Szabó, d, perc; István Csík, d, perc.
January 28-29, 2012; Novi Sad, Serbia.

Led by director Szilárd Mezei, this album displays a large 23-piece ensemble in an improvisational setting. This two-disc release encapsulates over two-and-a-half hours of music! The first disc begins with the 56-minute grand opus titled “Hep 20,” which takes up the lion’s share of this recording, along with the nearly 20-minute title track “Karszt.” The second disc features six, much shorter (each piece being less than 17 minutes) improvisation-heavy compositions. The ensemble, although large, frequently gives the impression that they are a series of smaller groups that have banded together. For example, “From Foliage of Trees and Shrubs” begins with a with a small group of musicians performing for roughly eight minutes before the whole ensemble enters just briefly in declamatory fashion, which gives way to a percussion solo. This is followed by another entrance of a small group that works a melodic gesture to the end of the piece. The full ensemble consists of a percussion quartet, a saxophone quartet, a double-bass quartet, a flute/piccolo trio, a traditional piano trio, three brass players, a guitar, and the group’s leader on the viola. However, Mezei is not interested in traditional ensemble combinations. His writing explores many interesting sonorities through a series of varying orchestrations. The group pursues a succession of melodic fragments in each composition that often return and are developed throughout each performance. Mezei is truly an innovator as evidenced through his bringing together of this large group of diverse European musicians.

Dustin Mallory

New Issues



KEN PEPLOWSKI,
ENRAPTURE,
CAPRI

RECORDS-74141.2

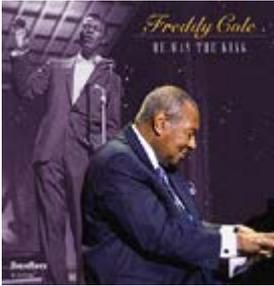
THE FLAMING SWORD /
AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER
(OUR LOVE AFFAIR) / OH, MY
LOVE / CHEER UP, CHARLIE
/ I'LL FOLLOW MY SECRET
HEART / ENRAPTURE /
TWELVE / VERTIGO SCENE
D'AMOUR=MADELEINE /
WHEN OCTOBER GOES /
WILLOW TREE. 53:34.

Peplowski, ts, cl; Ehud
Asherie, p; Martin Wind,
b; Matt Wilson, d, perc.
2/24/2015. No location
listed.

A thumbnail definition of the word “enrapture” could be “filling one with pleasure” and that certainly holds true of this eclectic offering from woodwind master Peplowski. He is one of those musicians that’s not hidebound to any specific avenue to travel down stylistically. Primarily known as a clarinetist he is equally qualified on the tenor saxophone. Joined by two members from his last Capri date, Martin Wind on bass and drummer Matt Wilson bolstered by piano whiz Ehud Asherie this is a killer quartet. Yet along with the top-of-the-mark playing of all hands the other hallmark is the adroit choice of material manifested here, talk about a varied composer pool= John Lennon, Herbie Nichols, Noel Coward, Peter Erskine, Duke Ellington, Bernard Herrmann & Anthony Newley. Around six of the selections feature the licorice stick while the remainder are tenor spots. The Lennon/Ono number is particularly effective as a duet between the leader and Wind’s authoritative upright. For further info I refer you to Peplowski’s liners. A good one for sure.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**FREDDY COLE,
HE WAS THE KING,
HIGHNOTE 7286,**

EASY TO REMEMBER /
EXACTLY LIKE YOU / FUNNY
(NOT MUCH) / THAT'S MY
GIRL / MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I
LOVE YOU TOO MUCH / THE
BEST MAN / SWEET LORRAINE
/ LOVE IS THE THING / JET
/ MONA LISA / IT'S ONLY A
PAPER MOON / HE WAS THE
KING.
52:14.

Collective performers: Cole,
vcl, p; Houston Person,
ts; John Di Martino, p;
Randy Napoleon, g; Elias
Bailey, b; Quentin Baxter,
d; Joe Magnarelli, tpt; Josh
Brown, tbn; Harry Allen, ts.
10/22&23/2015.
Teaneck, NJ.

Like his more celebrated brother Freddy Cole seems to have a fondness for sax players. While Nat is usually identified by his famous drummer-less trio he waxed some impressive in-concert sides (mostly JATP) and Dial recordings with the likes of Dexter Gordon, Illinois Jacquet and Lester Young in the early forties. That brother Freddy has employed Houston Person (as producer/player) on previous issues is something of a giveaway. The full-toned tenorist appears on the first three tracks of the singer/pianist's newest album and later on "Love Is The Thing" where he takes a riveting ride. This is a pair made in heaven. Regular John Di Martino heads up a sympathetic rhythm section and a three piece horn section is tastefully on "That's My Girl", "Jet" and the old standby "It's Only A Paper Moon" with Freddy sliding onto the piano bench the iconic "Sweet Lorraine" & "The Best Man". His feelings toward brother Nat are subtly summed up by the opening song and the concluding original which serves as the title tune. With both Nat and Natalie both no longer with us, this long overdue tribute hits the mark without question.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**DENA DEROSE,
UNITED,
HIGHNOTE 7279.**

UNITED(*)/ ONLY THE
LONELY(+)/ CLOCKWISE / SO
FAR AWAY / I'M GLAD THERE
IS YOU / SIMPLE SONG OF
LOVE / PEACE(*)/ SUNNY(+)/
NOT YOU AGAIN. 50:43.

DeRose, vcls, p; Ingrid Jensen,
tpt(*); Peter Bernstein,g(+);
Martin Wind, b; Matt Wilson,
d. 826&27/
2015. Paramus, NJ.

After three albums each for the Max Jazz and Sharp Nine imprints, singer/pianist Dena DeRose continues to deliver the goods on her sophomore offering under the Highnote logo. In the company of longtime compadres Martin Wind and Matt Wilson this multi-talented lady has invited two guests to add further spice to the nine selections heard herein. Although none of the titles are DeRose writings she has penned lyrics to three of the instrumentals; "Simple Song Of Love" by her bassist Martin Wind, from the late, great Cedar Walton "Clockwise" and the Wayne Shorter title number written while he was still in the Messenger ranks. That latter composition has a melody that hypnotized this writer the first time he heard it. This version has the added attraction of Ingrid Jensen's trumpeting which is also heard on the Horace Silver classic. Peter Bernstein contributes his string talents to the Old-Blue-Eyes associated "Only The Lonely" and breathes new life into Bobby Hebb's tired "Sunny". Don't know who thought up the title for this album but whoever did, they nailed it.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



(1) TRIO X LIVE AT KERRYTOWN

CIMPoL 5037

IMPROV # 1 / IMPROV # 2 /
IMPROV # 3 / IMPROV # 4 /
IMPROV # 5 / IMPROV # 6 /
JOE'S INTRO / IMPROV # 7 /
IMPROV # 8. 55:46.

Joe McPhee, tpt, as, ts;
Dominic Duval, b; Jay Rosen,
d. October 3, 2012, Ann Arbor,
MI.

(2) TRIO X LIVE IN GREEN BAY AND BUFFALO

CIMPoL 5040

McPhee, Duval, and Rosen.
October 4, 2012, Green Bay,
WI, and October 9, 2012,
Buffalo, NY.

SOLOCYCLE / HEAVY LIFTING
HEAVY VOICES / SWAHILI
NORTH / STOP, GO / BREAK,
NO RUSH / HALLWALLS
WELCOME / STRAWBERRIES
IN EVIDENCE / TRIO X 2 STEP.
67:34.

In October of 2012, Trio X embarked on a six-city tour beginning in Ann Arbor, Michigan, performing in five of the cities and conducting a student workshop in one of the two cities in Iowa visited by the group. These four CDs (1-4) consist of over 3 hours of the music recorded live on this tour of the trio, which has been performing creative and innovative improvised music since their formation in 1998. Their thirteen prior recordings, including four based on previous tours in 2001, 2006, 2008, and 2010, represent a small share of the background and complete work of artists involved. Joe McPhee, heard here on saxophones and trumpet, and bassist Dominic Duval are both significant long-time contributors to the avant guard/free jazz idiom, both with extensive performing and recording experience, while drummer/percussionist Jay Rosen has been a member since the outset and a consistent performer with Trio X and with many other groups. The music performed on this tour demonstrates the trio's consistent commitment to innovation and creativity, augmented by frequent demonstrations of the knowledge and jazz backgrounds of the three artists seen in the form of recognizable tunes, rhythmic figures, or other manifestations. For example, during the twenty minute "The Unknown" from (4), references to "While My Lady Sleeps" and "My Funny Valentine" are made and integrated into the piece, while other cuts on this recording (done at the group's first house party, at a home in Iowa) include whole or parts of "The Man I Love," "Going Home," and a bluesy 6/8 groove on "Jeanie's Romp." Segments of "Willow Weep for Me" are infused into the performance of "God Bless the Child" on (3), which took place at the Sugar Maple bar in Milwaukee. The total of 34 musical cuts documented on these four CDs range from 5 to 20 minutes, displaying many moods and notable moments, such as an ephemeral feeling evoked in "Barges in a Mist" on (3), a distinctive African groove on "Swahili North" on (2), and a remarkable recurring rhythmic figure

New Issues

(3) TRIO X LIVE AT THE SUGAR MAPLE

CIMPoL 5038

McPhee, Duval, and Rosen.
October 5, 2012, Milwaukee,
WI.

SUGAR MAPLE WELCOME /
SHOW US THE WAY JAY/ IN
THE MEANTIME / BARGES IN
A MIST / WILL YOU STILL BE
MINE OR WON'T YOU? / GOD
BLESS THE CHILD / SUGAR
MAPLE STOMP / ENCORE I /
ENCORE II. 74:59.

(4) TRIO X LIVE AT CRAIG KESSLER AND JANET LESSNER'S

CIMPoL 5039

McPhee, tpt, as, ss, saxello;
Duval and Rosen. October 7,
2012, Des Moines, Iowa.

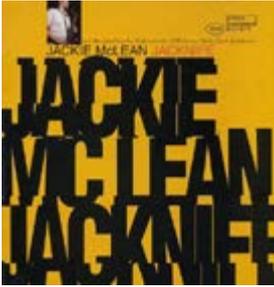
HOUSE PARTY WELCOME
/ THE MAN I LOVE / THE
UNKNOWN / OLD EYES
/ GOING HOME / HEAVY
LIFTING, HEAVY VOICES /
JEANIE'S ROMP / A STREAM
RUNS THROUGH IT / JEANIE'S
DANCE. 75:38.

begun by McPhee's alto and developed by the trio on "Improv #7" on (1). An inherent quality of Trio X is each member's ability to listen, respond, and develop in the group context, helping to create a dynamism and range of emotion in the music (for example, from reflective to frenetic). Having this often complex music in recorded form allows listeners to have different reactions on each hearing. As producer Robert Rusch suggests, "If you need more, replay the concert and hear things you didn't the first time."

Joe (in "Joe's Intro" on (1)) added some insights on the group's improvisatory character at their first performance on this tour at a club in Ann Arbor, Michigan, noting their approach of generally not thinking in advance about what to play, never playing the same thing twice, emphasizing the journey over the destination, and trusting each other in an idiom that can be "dangerous." Joe also paid tribute to prior jazz greats such as Max Roach, Mingus and others, considering himself and the other group members to be fortunate to stand "on their shoulders."

Don Lerman

New Issues



JACKKNIFE: THE MUSIC OF JACKIE MCLEAN, PRIMARY RECORDS NO#.

ON THE NILE / DAS DAT /
CONCELLATION / CLIMAX /
MELODY FOR MELONAE / HIP
STRUT. 40:54.

Steven Lugerner, as ; J.J.
Kirkpatrick, tpt; Richard Sears,
p; Garret Lang, b; Michael
Mitchell, d. No recording
dates given. Los Angeles, CA.

To many of us John Lenwood McLean was a jazz deity. As Jackie McLean he left his unmistakable sound in the corners of our minds with a tart-timed timbre that just screamed "New York!" to us poor unfortunates stuck out in the hinterlands. Like all great hornmen there was no mistaking him once he sounded his clarion call. Frisco wood-winder Lugerner is joined by four young rookies from the Stanford Jazz Workshop for a program of six tunes associated with Jackie Mac. That is my only problem with this album; only one-half of the selections were written by the honoree with two (On The Nile & Cancellation) from Charles Tolliver and "Climax" by Jack DeJohnette. So therefore the title of this album is somewhat misleading. Of the other three numbers, "Das Dat" & "Hip Strut" are fairly well-known and "Melody For Melonae" is a certified classic. All of the players acquit themselves well and Lugerner, to his credit, doesn't attempt to emulate McLean's trademarked sound. If this turns some young jazzheads on to this under-appreciated player then it will have served its purpose.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



**MATT KANE &
THE KANSAS CITY
GENERATIONS SEXTET,
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT,
BOUNCE-STEP RECORDS
NO#.**

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT /
TIMELINE (FOR ELVIN) / THE
BURNING SAND / ASR! /
AND THE BEAUTY OF IT ALL
/ WHEEL WITHIN A WHEEL /
MIDWESTERN NIGHTS DREAM
/ JEWEL / QUESTION AND
ANSWER. 64:18.

Kane, d; Herman Mehari,
tpt; Michael Shults, as; Steve
Lambert,ts; Andrew Oullette, p;
Ben Leifer, b.8/2014. Kansas.

It must be admitted up front that there's not much music that came or has come out of the legendary city of Kansas City that I can't get behind and this release is another edition to add to that long list. The title and the sub-title of "The Music Of Bobby Watson, Pat Metheny & Ahmad Alaadeen"

gives the potential listener a good indication of what to expect. The first two listed need no introduction to regular Cadence readers but Alaadeen may need a word or two. Formerly known as Sonny White he died in 2010 and was a longtime legend among the local KC musical community. One of his many students Logan Richardson name-checks him in the booklet for his Blue Note debut. He is represented by three compositions as are Metheny and Watson. The former's "Question And Answer" is one of his most celebrated works while Watson's "Wheel Within A Wheel" first showed up while the altoist was a member of the famed Jazz Messengers. One would be hard pressed to pick favorites among these and that holds true for the players as well. A good one aptly titled.

Larry Hollis

New Issues



LESLIE PINTCHIK, TRUE NORTH, PINTCH HARD 003.

Michael Sarin, d; Satoshi Takeishi, perc. Stamford, Connecticut. (*) Boston, Mass. No dates given.

JANE MONHEIT, SONGBOOK SESSIONS: ELLA FITZGERALD

EMERALD CITY RECORDS
ALL TOO SOON / SOMEBODY
LOVES ME / CHELSEA MOOD
/ SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE /
I WAS DOING ALL RIGHT-NOW
YOU KNOW / EV'RY TIME WE
SAY GOODBYE / WHERE OR
WHEN / ILL WIND (YOU'RE
BLOWING ME NO GOOD) /
ALL OF YOU / I USED TO BE
COLORBLIND / I'VE GOT YOU
UNDER MY SKIN / THIS TIME
THE DREAMS ON ME. 58:50.

Collective personnel:
Monheit, vcls; Nicholas
Payton, tpt, p, org; Michael
Kanan, p, el.p; Neal Miner, b;
Rick Montabano, d; Daniel
Sadownick, perc; Brandee
Younger, hp. 11/14-19/2015.

NYC.

Like Leslie Pintchik came to jazz, I came to her music late. Out of the handful of previous recordings she has made this was my introductory album. Her regular trio of husband/bassist Scott Hardy and trapster Michael Sarin are augmented by a pair of stellar hornmen and a percussionist. The always-interesting Steve Wilson is on board and brass ace Ron Horton, no stranger to these pages either make for a sympatico team to navigate Hardy's astute arrangements and offer up good solos. Ms. Pontchik writes some hum-able lines and sports a delicate touch on the 88's. Those who appreciate Bill Evans, Denny Zeitlin, etc. will enjoy her ruminations over the keys but as for me, being a Wynton Kelly man, found myself longing for something a little less sedate. Excellently executed but uniformly dull to these ears.

Larry Hollis

It never ceases to amaze me how people think they can improve upon perfection. Like why does Hollywood continue to remake classic films that can't possibly be made better? Around six decades ago the great Ella Fitzgerald teams with producer Norman Granz to make a series of timeless records now commonly known as "the songbook series". Now producer Nicholas Payton and singer Jane Monheit have set out to prove "everything old is new again" with a cherry-picked program also arranged mostly by Payton. Interesting twists in the charts department but what is a sam-ba-ized version of Amy Winehouse's "Know You Now" doing in the playlist? Close but no cigar.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

THE GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC ENSEMBLE, IT'S ALL IN THE GAME,

JAZZED MEDIA-1073.

IN THE MOOD / CAN'T HELP
LOVIN' THAT MAN OF MINE /
CLAP YO' HANDS / STARDUST
/ WHEN IT'S SLEEPY TIME

DOWN SOUTH / WEST END
BLUES / I'VE GOT THE WORLD
ON A STRING / I AM LOVED
/ SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN /
APRIL IN PARIS / CHEROKEE
/ THEY ALL LAUGHED / AIN'T
MISBEHAVIN' / EMBRACEBLE
YOU / BIRD BLUES. 76:32.

Collective personnel: Doug
Richards, dir/arr; Marty Nau,
as, ss, cl; Jim Nesbit, as, ss,
bari s, b cl, bsn, contra bsn,
basset horn; Skip Gailles, ts, ss,
as, cl, b cl; John Winn, ta, ss,
as, cl, b cl; Rob Holmes, bari
s, as, flt, b cl; Roy Muth, Bob
Ransom, Rob DeDominick,
John D'Earth, tpt. flgh; Jim
McFalls, tbn; Dean Englert,
tbn, euph; Lee Gause, b tbn;
Weldon Hill, p, el p; Victor
Dvoskin, b; Howard Curtis, d,
perc; Rene Marie, vcl; John
Faddis, tpt; Joe Kennedy,
Jr., vln. 6/11-14/2001.
Springfield, VA.

A perfunctory glance at the recording dates listed above might leave one to believe this is a reissue but in reality it is just now coming out on the market after over fourteen years. And don't be misled by the title which has nothing to do with the Tommy Edwards pop hit of some years ago that doesn't even appear in the tune list. Its past history is told in detail in Peter McElmquist and yes, this is another one of those big band dates with a much younger Rene Marie handling the vocal chores on more than a quarter of the sixteen cuts. The album heavily features trumpets with veteran John D'Earth

heard on several titles and guest John Faddis spotlighted on "Stardust" and "West End Blues" in an inventive arrangement from Richards. The reeds don't really come to fore until the last number, a Charlie Parker medley "Now's The Time," "Au Privave," "Blues For Alice" & "Billie's Bounce" with Nau, Winn, Holmes and Gailles respectively. The late Joe Kennedy, Jr. lends his violin to a pair of cuts. Nothing more need be said about this release except "It's About Time!"

Larry Hollis

New Issues



LASZLO GARDONY,
LIFE IN REAL TIME,
SUNNYSIDE SSC-4019,
BOURBON STREET BOOGIE
/ BREAKOUT / GEMSTONES
/ LULLABY OF BIRDLAND /
MOTHERLESS CHILD / NEW
SONG / THE OTHER ONE /
OUT ON TOP.
Gardony, p; Don Braden, Bill
Pierce, sax; Stan Strickland,
sax, b cl; John Lockwood, b;
Yoron Israel, d.
9/29/2014. Boston, MA.

This three tenor winner really took me back on a time trip. Back to the days of yore when labels like Prestige would issue albums with the likes of Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, Coleman Hawkins, King Curtis Ousley and Buddy Tate all jamming together. Not that it is dated in any way but it just has that “feel”, that ambiance. In fact, one of my top ten titles Triple Play by saxman Doug Webb in conjunction with Walt Weiskopf & Joel Frahm has a copyright date of 2015. Where most of those gatherings were captured in a studio setting this program was recorded in concert at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston circa late September 2014. And an exciting event it was.

Organized by pianist Laszlo Gardony it features a triad of fairly well-known reed masters tackling a half-dozen of his compositions plus George Shearing’s “Lullaby Of Birdland” along with the hymn-like “(Sometimes I Feel Like A) “Motherless Child”. Boston mainstay Bill Pierce is the elder statesman present here. An ex-Jazz Messenger and veteran of a thousand bandstands he has a strong tie to Don Braden who studied under him some and subbed for him in the last Tony Williams Quintet. Stan Strickland might be the younger of the tenorists but he plays as if unfazed and his bass clarinet provides needed color on “Motherless Child” and “New Song”. The kickoff track “Bourbon Street Boogie” is super infectious spurred on by the duo of Lockwood and Israel while two of the cuts, “Gemstones” & “Out On Top” have improvised endings. Through all this leader Gardony comps and solos with abandon but never gets in the way of the soloists and shares solo space generously. It would be fun to speculate what old Adolph Sax would think after hearing this concert. Just a few weeks shy of making my top ten list of last year.

Larry Hollis

New Issues

**HARVEY VALDES,
ROUNDAABOUT,
NO LABEL OR #.**

ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE
/ HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN
/ BLUE IN GREEN / STELLA
BY STARLIGHT / IN YOUR
OWN SWEET WAY / ALONE
TOGETHER / I'LL REMEMBER
APRIL /
INVITATION / YOU STEPPED
OUT OF A DREAM. 39:13.
Valdes, g. 1&2/2015, No
location listed.

Every medium to large size city probably has this type of guitarist. They play a variety of styles from light jazz to flamenco usually in intimate settings such as fern bars, libraries or vape shops. I know nothing about the background of Valdes but he sounds more adventurous than most with an advanced harmonic sense but his choice of material leaves much to be desired. With "Blue In Green" and "In Your Own Sweet Way" being the most modern compositions heard there is a sense of sameness about these nine tracks. Don't get me wrong, Valdes is a skilled musician but with only one instrument to be heard on familiar melodies (even with skimpy playing time), this listener found himself bored before the completion of this disc. It's main appeal will probably be to other guitarists.

Larry Hollis

**JERRY BERGONZI,
RIGAMAROLL,
SAVANT 2149.**

AWAKE / AN INTERNAL
AFFAIR / RISE UP / A
HANKERING / TIDLIG /
RIGAMAROLL / DO IT TO DO
IT / LUNAR ASPECTS. 61:40.
Bergonzi, ts; Phil Grenadier,
tp; Bruce Barth, p;
Dave Santoro, b; Andrea
Michelutti, d. 4/13-14/12,
Westwood, MA.

On his latest CD, tenor saxophonist Bergonzi works his way up from the trio and two saxophone groupings of his previous efforts to a tenor-trumpet front line. With Phil Grenadier joining him the music here leans towards the dark and turbulent sound of Wayne Shorter's Blue Note period. Conventional small group jazz melodies are constantly subverted by dark, agitated accents and solos. Everything sounds slightly on the edge. "A Hankering" is a bumpy, up-tempo ride with a sense of unease in the solos. "Tidlig" is a slow ballad interrupted by loud, sour bursts, the title track is an off-center waltz and "Lunar Aspects" is a samba with sinister undertones. Grenadier's trumpet is bright but blurred and an effective contrast to Bergonzi's hoarse tenor which often sounds on the edge of hysteria. The inner irritation in these deceptively smooth pieces hold your interest throughout. Jerry Bergonzi has been putting out strong, underrated discs on Savant for some time now. This is another fine entry in the series.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues

daybreak



**SIGURDUR
FLOSASON – KJELD
LAURITSEN,
DAYBREAK,**

STORYVILLE 1014295.

THE NIGHT WE CALLED

IT A DAY / BLUE MOON

/ DREAMSVILLE / YOU

STEPPED OUT OF A DREAM

/ IN THE WEE SMALL HOURS

OF THE MORNING / I LIKE

THE SUNRISE / SOFTLY, AS

IN A MORNING SUNRISE

/ MORNING GLORY /

OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL

MORNIN'. 55:29.

Flosason, as; Lauritsen, org;

Jacob Fischer, g; Kristian

Leth, d. 9/28-29/14, Arkus,

Denmark.

The concept here is a soundtrack for the period between bedtime and morning. This idea is fleshed out by an attractive set of organ-based jazz with saxophonist Flosason and organist Lauritsen taking turns in the lead.

Flosason's alto sound is in the soft-pitched Paul Desmond vein but with a more robust attack. Lauritsen's organ mostly broods attractively in the background but can also produce hard-swinging solos as on "You Stepped Out Of A Dream". Jacob Fischer's twangy guitar is also an important contributor to the overall group sound and gets a couple of mellow solo spots as well.

Ellington's "I Like The Sunrise" gets a warm and soulful treatment and "Softly As In A Morning Sunrise" sports Flosason's most Desmond-like alto over Spanish-tinged guitar. An obscure Ellington piece called "Morning Glory" and a simmering version of Henry Mancini's "Dreamsville" both have Flosason going into the high, leaping sound of Johnny Hodges. This is a very nice low-key session suited to be heard at the late evening hours it depicts.

Jerome Wilson

New Issues

1) JON IRABAGON, BEHIND THE SKY, IRABBAGAST 004.

ONE WISH / THE COST OF MODERN LIVING / MUSIC BOX SONG (FOR WHEN WE'RE APART) / STILL WATER* / OBELISK* / SPRITES / LOST SHIP AT THE EDGE OF THE SEA / MR. DAZZLER* / ETERNAL SPRINGS / 100 SUMMERS / BEHIND THE SKY (HAWKS AND SPARROWS). 76:35.
Irabagon, ts, sop s;
Tom Harrell*, tpt, fgh; Luis Perdomo, p; Yasushi Nakamura, b; Rudy Royston, d.
4/24/14.

2) JON IRABAGON, INACTION IS AN ACTION, IRABBAGAST 005. REVVVV / ACROBAT / WHAT HAVE WE HERE / THE BEST KIND OF SAD / HANG OUT A SHINGLE / AMBIWAXTROUS / LIQUID FIRE / ALPS. 37:54.
Irabagon, sop s.
12/29/14, Chicago, IL.

Saxophonist Jon Irabagon has a wide range of interests. On one hand he does extreme noise projects and is part of the Dadaist cut-up antics of the band Mostly Other People Do The Killing but on the other, he can play excellent straight-ahead jazz saxophone. These two CDs show both sides of his nature.

(1) is by a conventional jazz quintet that plays tuneful melodies all written by Irabagon but his friskier side constantly shows up in his soloing, which is likably irritable and cranky. Pieces like the loping shuffle "One Wish" and the fast Latin-tinged "Cost Of Modern Living" show Irabagon can do strong middle-of-the-road blowing with an edge and also points out the snap and cohesion of the rhythm section, especially the amazing Rudy Royston on the drums.

Trumpet player Tom Harrell joins the front line for a few tracks like the buzzy, uneasy "Obelisk" and the moody samba "Still Water", conversing smartly with the leader's long lines. "Lost Ship" is a spare and dark ballad duet for Irabagon and Luis Perdomo, "Mr. Dazzler" is a soulful showcase for the tenor to squawk and cry over a low down walking groove, and "100 Summers" and "Eternal Springs" ramp up the intensity to Coltrane-like proportions. This CD shows Jon Irabagon, the prize-winning saxophone heavyweight to great advantage.

2) features Jon Irabagon the explorer. Here he follows the example of such as Anthony Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell in doing a solo saxophone CD. On top of that he solely plays one of the lesser heard members of the saxophone family, the soprano.

For most of the CD's short duration he just seems to be exploring what kinds of sounds he can make. You hear hums, buzzes, whistles, burps, howls and grunts with only short periods of actual musical notes being played. Bits of melody show up in "Ambiwaxtrous", where slow, wavy dancing morphs into speeded up squeaks and squawks, and "The Best Kind Of Sad" which sustains a sad, graceful melody that soars and falls like a swan. Elsewhere you hear the bubbly, circular runs of "Liquid Fire" that sound like a giddy Evan Parker solo concert.

This CD is off-putting at first but you listen to it enough times and it grows on you. It's really as integral a part of Irabagon's art as the inside work of Behind The Sky.

Jerome Wilson

Dominic Duval 1944-2016

Dominic and I were friends for 20 years beginning almost from the time we first met. In 1995 Dominic approached me about a trio project for the CIMP label. To his own surprise, as well as to the surprise of the rest of trio, I accepted the proposal. We worked out the dates and other procedural matters during which Dominic said to make Mark Whitecage the leader; up until then I assumed Dominic was the leader—as the normal protocol is who ever gets the gig gets first billing. The trio left New York City later than advised and began the snowy 360 mile trip to the North country on January 18, 1996. In Utica, New York their car was side-swiped by a semi-truck, which wrecked the car. Fortunately passengers and instruments were unhurt except for some glass in Dominic's finger. At this point there was a question as to whether or not to continue this trip to "nowhere" as neither Dominic, nor drummer Jay Rosen, nor saxman Mark Whitecage knew anything about our operation much less about myself. They decided to persist (I'm sure at Dominic's insistence) and proceeded to drive the last 100 miles in a rented vehicle through heavy snow; it took them 7 hours. On arrival, in 20 below zero temperature, they were met by myself wearing shorts, t-shirt and sandals. I'm sure their unspoken thoughts included that this whole endeavor may have been a mistake and perhaps even wondered "is this guy nuts?". A nights rest and good food convinced them if nuts or not as least we knew how to make good food. As the recording progressed the music began to come together as did friendships. From that unforgettable moment Dominic came to trust me and I Dominic. We collaborated on almost 100 projects, many of them including talent scouted by Dominic. He played far reaching music with depth and he recognized a like-minded approach (with the chops to match) in others.

Dominic was a force and I could not imagine our labels without Dominic's presence anymore than I could imagine Colorado without the Rocky Mountains. Our relationship was symbiotic; he appreciated my directness and I enjoyed the forwardness of his personality and bass playing. With his creative gifts and our resources we were willing to stand forward against the general indifference (towards non-commercial art) and endure. Dominic was responsible for many of my highs of the past 20 years and he was supportive during my lows. I will miss Dominic in a book full of ways but I am fortunate to have known him and to hear his music which I am convinced will endure past my own time.

Robert D. Rusch—producer Cadence Jazz Records, CIMP and CIMPoL Records; 7/23/16.

Remembering Dominic



Dominic Duval
Photo credit: Ken Weiss



Ivo Perelman and Dominic Duval
Photo credit: Ken Weiss

Obituaries

- Alan Haven, organist, died January 7, 2016. He was 80.
- Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, trumpeter, died January 6, 2016. He was 87.
- Annie De Revere, vocalist, died January 1, 2016. She was 98.
- Bill Dunham, pianist, died January 11, 2016. He was 86.
- Dal Richards, big-band leader, saxophonist/clarinetist died Dec. 31, 2015. He was 97.
- Dan Hicks, guitarist and songwriter, died February 6, 2016. He was 74.
- Dave Hubbard, jazz saxophonist, has died in 2016.
- David Bowie, guitarist and songwriter, died January 10, 2016. He was 69.
- Delle Haench, saxophonist, died March 1, 2016. He was 89.
- Don Carter, jazz drummer, died December 26, 2015. He was 72.
- Eddie Baker, trumpeter and pianist, died February 2, 2016. He was 71.
- Edmund "Leon" Henderson, saxophonist, died February 5, 2016. He was 75.
- Ernestine Anderson, jazz and blues singer, died March 10, 2016. She was 87.
- Francis Wayne Sinatra, "Frank Sinatra, Jr."; singer, songwriter, and conductor; died March 16, 2016. He was 72.
- Frank Collett, pianist, died January 25, 2016. He was 74.
- George Robert, jazz saxophonist, died on March 14, 2016. He was 55.
- Gerald Borsuk, pianist and teacher, died January 30, 2016. He was 95.
- Hannes Beckmann, jazz violinist and composer, died March 17, 2016. He was 65.
- Hans Reffert, musician and composer, died February 22, 2016. He was 70.
- Harold Devold, saxophonist and flutist, died February 19, 2016. He was 51.
- Hugo Strasser, bandleader and clarinetist, died March 16, 2016. He was 93.
- Jack Feerman, trumpeter and conductor, died January 18, 2016. He was 91.
- Joe Ascione, drummer, died March 11, 2016. He was 54.
- John Chilton, trumpeter and writer, died February 25, 2016. He was 83.
- Judy Day, jazz and blues singer, died December 10, 2015. She was 71.
- Kathrin Lemke, saxophonist, died January 25, 2016. She was 44.
- Kira Payne, saxophonist, died January 2, 2016. She was 50.
- Kitty Kallen, vocalist, died January 8, 2016. She was 94.
- L. C. Ulmer, guitarist and multi-instrumentalist, died February 14, 2016. He was 87.
- La Velle Duggan, vocalist, died February 4, 2016. She was 71.
- Leon Francioli, composer, died March 9, 2016. He was 69.
- Lester "Rusty" Paul, musician, bandleader, and son of Les Paul, died January 31, 2015. He was 74.
- Long John Hunter, guitarist and vocalist, died January 4, 2016. He was 84.
- Lutz Büchner, saxophonist, died March 11, 2016. He was 47.
- Maurice White, drummer and vocalist, died February 4, 2016. He was 74.
- Mic Gillette, trumpeter, trombonist, and founding member of Tower of Power, died January 17, 2016. He was 64.
- Moe Wechsler, pianist, has died. He was 95.
- Nana Vasconcelos, percussionist, died March 9, 2016. He was 71.
- Natalie Maria Cole, singer-songwriter and actress, died Dec. 31, 2015. She was 65.
- O'Donel "Butch" Levy, funk and jazz guitarist, died March 14, 2016. He was 70.
- Otis Clay, R&B and soul singer, died January 8, 2016. He was 73.
- Ove Gunnar Johansson (Karl Ove Gunnar), tenor saxophonist and composer, has died. He was 79.
- Paul Bley, jazz pianist, died January 3, 2016. He was 83.
- Percy Hughes, jazz saxophonist, has died. He was 93.
- Roland Schneider, jazz pianist, died on December 25, 2015. He was 78.
- Signe Anderson, vocalist, died January 28, 2016. She was 73.
- Theodore "Ted" David Wald, bassist, died January 19, 2016. He was 86.
- Timmy Makaya, guitarist and co-founder of Jabavu Drive, has died in 2016. He was 67.
- Tommy Brown, blues singer, died February 12, 2016. He was 84.

Obituaries

- Manfred Burzloff, pianist, died around December 17, 2015.
- Joe Cavallaro, died on November 19, 2015 from a rare form of cancer. He was 75.
- Madhav Chari, pianist, died of a cardiac arrest in 2015. He was 48
- Don Doane, jazz trombonist, died, December 16, 2015.
- Sam Dockery, pianist, died 12/23/15 in Burlington NJ of Alzheimers. He was 86.
- Coleridge George Emerson Goode, musician, born on November 29, 1914; died on October 2, 2015. He was 100.
- David Hay, jazz pianist/bassist, died of cancer in Grand Rapids Mich. on December 30, 2015.
- Judith Hendricks, wife of internationally renowned jazz legend Jon Hendricks, 94, died on November 18, 2015 in a New York City hospital where she had been treated since Friday for a brain aneurysm. She was 78.
- Rev. Johnny L. 'Hurricane' Jones, 1936-2015.
- Rusty Jones, drummer, died on December 9, 2015. He was 73.
- Milton Kleeb [reeds] died on October 2, 2015. He was 96.
- Smokin' Joe Kubek guitarist, songwriter, and performer, died on October 11, 2015. He was 60.
- Norman Kubrin, jazz pianist, died on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015. He was 73.
- James "Hot Dog" Derrick Lewis died on October 23. He was 60.
- Monica Lewis, vocalist, died on December 6, 2015. She was 93.
- David Lifton, jazz programmer for KBOO, Portland, Oregon and long time supporter of jazz died on 12/23/15.
- Mack McCormick, blues field researcher/producer, died of esophageal cancer in Houston TX. He was 85.
- Bob Murphy [keybds] died on October 10, 2015 in Vancouver, Canada. He was about 70.
- Mark H. Murphy died on October 22, 2015 in Englewood, New Jersey. He was 83.
- Gene Norman, Los Angeles broadcaster died on Nov. 2, 2015. He was 93.
- Kjell Ingemar Ohman, Swedish jazz musician, died on November 5, 2015. Ohman appeared in more than 3000 albums. He was 82.
- Bill Pasquale, guitar, died on October 8, 2015 in Brookfield Mass. He was 78.
- Nat Peck, trombonist, died on October 24 2015. He was 90.
- Dave Pike [vibes] died from emphysema on October 3, 2015. He was 77.
- Don Rendell [reeds/flt] died on October 20, 2015 in England. He was 89.
- Cynthia Robinson [trt] died of cancer on November 23, 2015. She was 69.
- Larry Rosen, Jazz Roots producer, music executive died in 2015. He was 75.
- Ernie Santosuosso died on October 19, 2015. He was 93.
- Joel Scott [p] died around 10/4/15. He was about 60.
- Lee Shaw [p] died in Troy, NY. She was 89.
- Daniel Smith, bassoonist, died on December 18th, 2015.
- Joseph Torregano, clarinetist died on October 6, 2015. He was 63.
- Allen Toussaint, the legendary songwriter, producer, arranger and performer died November 10, 2015, while on tour in Europe. He was 77.
- Bengt-Arne Wallin [tpt] died on November 23, 2015, in Sweden. He was 89.
- Andy White [drm] died about in November, 2015 in Caldwell NJ. He was 85.
- Phil Woods [as] died on September 29, 2015. He was 83.

Obituaries

- Alfons Wurzi (clarinet) around April 6, 2016. He was 75.
- Aloisio Milanez Aguiar (piano, composer) died on June 8, 2016. He was 69.
- Bill Henderson (voc) died on April 3, 2016. He was 90.
- Billy Paul (voc/drm) died on April 24, 2016, in Blackwood, NJ. He was 81.
- Bryce Rhode (piano) died on January 26, 2016. He was 92.
- Buster Cooper (trombone) died on May 13, 2016. He was age 87.
- Chris Lachotta (bass) died on June 8, 2016. He was 57.
- David Nathaniel Baker Jr. (composer, band leader) died on 3/26, 2016. He was 85.
- Dennis Davis (drums) died on April 6, 2016. He was 64.
- Don Francks (voc, actor) died on April 3, 2016. He was 84.
- Don Terryl "Terry" Plumeri (musician, classical composer, orchestra conductor, double bassist, lecturer, producer, and film score composer) died on March 31, 2016. He was 71.
- Doug Raney (guitar) died in Copenhagen on May 1, 2016. He was 59.
- Gato Barbieri, (tenor sax, composer), died on April 2, 2016. He was 83.
- Gétatchew Mèkurya (sax) died on April 4, 2016. He was 81.
- Hannes Beckmann (bandleader and composer), died on March 17, 2016. He was 66.
- Hugo Strasser (bandleader) died on March 17, 2016. He was 93.
- James Jamerson, Jr., (bass) the son of renowned Motown/Funk Brothers bassist James Jamerson and an in-demand bass player himself for over forty years, died on March 23, 2016. He was 58.
- Jimmy Borges (voc) died on May 30, 2016. He was 80.
- João Palma (drums) died on May 9, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. Known as "The aristocrat from the drum world," he was 75.
- Joe Morello (drums) drummer, with Dave Brubeck, died on March 12, 2016 in Irvington, NJ. He was 82.
- Joe Shepley (trumpet) died on March 26, 2016. He was 85.
- Joe Temperley (sax) died on May 11, 2016. He was 86.
- Johannes Bauer (trombone) died on May 6, 2016. He was 61.
- Joseph "Joe" Temperley (sax) died on May 11, 2016. He was 86.
- Joseph Gattone, (piano) died on March 23, 2016. He was 86.
- Jeremy Steig (flute) died on April 13, 2016. He was 73.
- Julius La Rosa, (voc) died on May 12, 2016 in Crivitz, WI. He was 86.
- June Smith (voc) a key figure in the Perth jazz scene with her husband Lew for more than 40 years, has died at the age of 85.
- Jury Kuznetsov (piano) died. He was 63.
- Lonnie Mack (voc, guitar) died on April 21, 2016. He was 74.
- Marco Eneidi (alto sax) died on May 24, 2016 in Pleasanton, CA. He was 59.
- Michael S. Harper (Poet With a Jazz Pulse) died on May 7, 2016. He was 78.
- O'Donel (Butch) Levy died on March 14, 2016. He was 70.
- Paul Brown, founder of Hartford's Monday Night Jazz series recognized by the Library of Congress as the oldest continuously run jazz festival in the country, died in 2016
- Paul Smoker (trumpet) played the last years of his life with the aid of an artificial heart, died on May 14, 2016 at his home in Bushnell's Basin. He was 75.
- Pete Zorn (multi-instrumentalist) died on April 2016. He was 65.
- Peter "Pete" Michael Yellin (sax, woodwind doubler, studio musician and educator) died on April 13, 2016. He was 74.
- PRINCE Rogers Nelson (singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, record producer, and actor) died on April 21, 2016. He was 57.
- Remo Belli (drums) died on April 25, 2016, in Pasadena, CA He was 88.
- Rich 'Taste' Rajewski (trumpet) died in May, 2016. He was 70.
- Roger Marcel Cicero Ciceu (voc) was born on July 6, 1970, in Berlin, and died on March 24, 2016. He was 45.

Obituaries

- Bernie Worrell, P-Funk Keyboardist, died on June 24, 2016. He was 72.
- Bernd Titus, trumpet, died in August, 2016. He was 68.
- Bobby Hutcherson, vibraphone, died on August 15, 2016. He was 75.
- Bob Kindred, saxophone, clarinet, died on August 15. He was 76.
- Charles Davis, saxophone, died on July 15, 2016, He was 83.
- Chuck Berg, saxophone, teacher, died on July 26, 2016. He was 75.
- Claude Williamson, piano, died on July 16, 2016. He was 89.
- Connie Crothers, piano, died on August 13, 2016 in New York. She was 75.
- Derek Smith, piano, died on August 19, 2016. He was 85.
- Detlev Beier, bass, died on June 18, 2016, in Hamberg. He was 60.
- Doc DeHaven, trumpet, died on August 11, 2016. He was 85.
- Dominic Duval, bass, died on July 22, 2016, in Long Island, NY. He was 71.
- Don Friedman, piano, died on June 30, 2016. He was 81.
- Erich Tragout, trumpet, died on June 26, 2016 in Toronto, Canada. He was 88.
- George Reznik, piano, died on July 23, 2016. He was 86.
- January Christy, vocals, died on September 16, 2016. She was 58.
- Jean-Baptiste Frédéric Isidor, Baron Thielemans known professionally as Toots Thielemans, died on August 22, 2016. He was 92.
- John Fischer, piano, died on August 17, 2016. He was 85.
- Jürgen Müller, trumpet, died. He was 74.
- Ken Rhodes, piano, died on August 31, 2016. He was 71.
- Louis Smith, trumpet, died on August 20, 2016. He was 85.
- Louis Stewart, guitar, died on August 20, 2016. He was 72.
- Marco Enedie, saxophone, died in May, 2016. He was 59.
- Marni Nixon, vocals, died on July 24, 2016 in New York. She was 86.
- Mic Gillette, trumpet, trombone, died on January 17, 2016. He was 64.
- Michael DiPasqua, sax, died on August 29, 2016. He was 63.
- Pete Fountain, iconic traditional jazz clarinetist died on August 6, 2016
He was 86.
- Rick Stone, guitar, died on July 29, 2016 of brain cancer. He was 60.
- Ruby Wilson, vocals, "The Queen of Beale Street," died on August 12, 2016. She was 68.
- Rudolph "Rudy" Van Gelder was an American recording engineer who specialized in jazz, died on August 25, 2016.
- Sebastian Whittaker, drums, died in June, 2016.
- Steve Grover, drums, died on July 7, 2016. He was 60.
- Shelley Moore, jazz singer, died on June 23, 2016. She was 84