

JUNE 2021—ISSUE 230

YOUR FREE GUIDE TO THE NYC JAZZ SCENE

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EDITION



# THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

## ROBERT GLASPER

*MODERN(IZING) JAZZ*



PATIENCE  
HIGGINS

GREG  
LEWIS

ROBERTO  
MIRANDA

DEWEY  
JOHNSON



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Nearly 52 years ago, astronaut Neil Armstrong, alighting on the moon's surface, uttered his iconic quote, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Progress is measured in many ways but here at the gazette's offices, we take our own small step, publishing an Event Calendar for the first time since March 2020, and view it as a giant leap for New York City's art scene and the health of the world in general. While there are other jazz capitals, NYC being so relatively silent for so long just felt wrong; the isolation experienced by the world's greatest concentration of jazz musicians was palpable. Now, with the warm weather, there are outdoor concerts and, with COVID 19 infection rates dropping and vaccinations rising, we are starting to return to indoor performances. Certainly the density of concerts is far from what it was – one page versus several – but more will come and that is not just a step, it is a whole dance routine.

This month we have features on keyboard player Robert Glasper (On The Cover), who plays a week at the newly reopened Blue Note; saxophonist Patience Higgins (Interview), participating in some outdoor JazzMobile events; and organ player Greg Lewis (Artist Feature) appearing every weekend at Williamsburg Music Center, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary. And our Album Reviews mix the live-streams that have kept us going over the last year-plus with in-person events helping us heal after a long period of darkness and despair.

On The Cover: Robert Glasper (photo by Jason Todd Cooper)

Corrections: In last month's NY@Night on Philip Harper, the name of the series was omitted: it is Brooklyn Rooftop Series on the Soccerroof.

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# ROBERT GLASPER

## MODERN(IZING) JAZZ

BY JORDANNAH ELIZABETH



Grammy award-winning keyboardist and Black music aficionado Robert Glasper has never been afraid to speak his mind. The 47-year-old jazz musician has attained heights of acclaim many musicians 20 years his senior will never reach, but this is because Glasper cast his net wide and decisively chose to step away from traditionalism and mastering jazz standards for a living to chart new territory, creating hip-hop and R&B fusion, which, 10 years ago, had not been done on the scale in which he was working.

Since receiving his start as a traditional jazz musician under Christian McBride and other leaders right out of college, Glasper has been called upon to speak about the future of jazz, seen as a beacon of light with his hand on the pulse of musical youth culture and speaking freely about the disconnect between what is happening in jazz and postmodern popular culture. Still young in his own right, he feels a bit of frustration, wondering how jazz is going to survive without making efforts to connect with the new generation. "Name one jazz song that talks about a cell phone, name one jazz song that talks about Instagram or something that's happening in this decade. When people sing a jazz song it's something from 1940 and they're like, 'How come no one is listening to this?'" he expresses via phone from Los Angeles.

"It's because you're not singing anything [young people] can relate to," he continues. When asked what he would do if he were given a superpower to remake the entire international jazz scene, he replied as if he had already pondered the question years before. "I'd definitely put more female musicians in the scene. I'd put more Black musicians in the scene," he pauses then says, "I feel like most of the time, jazz is closed off to other styles of music. I hate that because it stunts the growth of the music. The music has grown from the 1920s to now because of the outside influence of music. Outside music defines the times. It's not that you have to work with a hip-hop group every time but I wish people would be more open to that and be open to what happens now."

Glasper has made these declarations before, but the repetition of his philosophy on the futuristic movement of jazz is one of the things that is keeping the concept of modern hip-hop and R&B jazz fusion alive. He's not beating a dead horse. He's trying to draw the horse to water to refresh and replenish an animal that is slower and aging. Nonetheless, jazz still has the capacity for vitality if nourished. Glasper wants to see jazz survive, so he expresses his sentiments continuously but he doesn't just speak. He makes tangible efforts to draw in new audiences and works with like-minded jazz musicians who are collaborating and updating the idea of the look and feel of jazz.

His most recent release *Live* (Blue Note) comes from his allstar band R+R = Now: multi-instrumentalist Terrace Martin, trumpeter Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, bassist Derrick Hodge, keyboard player Taylor McFerrin and drummer Justin Tyson. This followup to the 2018 studio album *Collagically Speaking* was recorded at Glasper's Blue Note Club residency in

2018 and released in early 2021.

So much has happened in the span of three years between the recording and release: a global pandemic and unprecedented international protests rallying against police brutality in the United States. "It's not that we were playing protest songs. There are people who, because of the times we're in, were like, 'Let's play protest songs' but there's another side of it that says, hey, people are hurting right now," says Glasper. "Music is healing. It's medicine and I was happy that R+R=NOW *Live* came out at that particular time because people were not able to go to live shows. We made it so that the live concert actually feels live. You can hear glasses clinking. You hear the audience. I wanted to make people feel like they were there. To give that experience right now, I think it was something that was needed."

These insights into the daily plight of humanity are what keeps Glasper hip to the pulse of culture. He looks around for inspiration and has a knack for timing. He uses morsels of his private reality to name and create compositions that stand out, even if the inspiration comes from painful experiences. He spoke about the title of *Live's* opening track "Resting Warrior": "Right before we did the album, my little cousin passed away and I watched her take her last breath. I was in Houston sitting with her in the hospital for the last three days [of her life] and the doctor came in and told us [she's going to pass away] tomorrow. We all just gathered around the bed and watched her fight to breathe. Then she took her last breath and then was at rest. After that, we went into the studio to do *Live* and that reminded me of that."

The album reflects a pre-pandemic era when the world was open and jazz clubs were buzzing with life and enthusiastic fanfare. But during the pandemic, Glasper took the time to make changes in his life, moving from New York to Los Angeles to pursue film scoring after winning a Grammy for his work on Don Cheadle's Miles Davis biopic *Miles Ahead* and composing the entire score for *The Photograph* starring Issa Rae, which was released on Valentine's Day 2020. "I've said you should come out of the pandemic being better at something than you were before the pandemic. I've gotten better at recording and I've delved into film scoring."

But before Glasper established his new creative path of film scoring he had to overcome controversy due to his explanation of a term he coined called the "Musical Clitoris" while candidly speaking in an interview with fellow pianist Ethan Iverson. Women in the jazz community were angered and taken aback at his comments where he expressed that he believed that women didn't like jazz solos but drawn-out rhythmic patterns instead. This generalization led to accusations of sexism. "I wasn't saying all women. If I said it that way, that was a mistake. If someone would have asked me, I would have said that I was trying to say was a lot of women don't want to hear solos for 30 minutes. I can tell you that because of my experience. I have more women at my shows than any other jazz musician, period. It's not even close. So, this subject, I can speak on it." Glasper defended himself, "I've

been in the business for so long I've never had anybody call me sexist. I'm not sexist. Any woman that knows me would tell you I'm not sexist. People looked at one interview and took that now you're saying I'm sexist."

Whether or not women in the jazz community believe Glasper to be sexist, or believe that he was creating a term that he felt fit his live music performances, which are constructed through the observation and the energy of his crowds, doesn't mean a powerful man should not be questioned when commenting on women's sexual body parts. He may see it as a way to express himself but Glasper is not a woman nor does he have a clitoris. Nonetheless, he chose to use the term for describing his artistic ideology, which for some seemed problematic. "The Music Clitoris is a term I use because [jazz] musicians don't like to get on a groove, they like to solo [too much] and it annoys me. I say, 'Hey, this groove feels so good. Let's stay there' and the more you stay there the better the groove feels. I'll stay on a groove for 10 minutes and I call it the Music Clitoris. It's talking about sex but it's not downing women. I'm grown. I can talk about sex. To me, that's the best way to describe it. Jazz musicians hit a groove and it feels good, then they fuck it up and put a solo in the middle."

When Glasper speaks his mind, it is not always for the faint of heart, "To put it in a less vulgar way, I like to supply the room and you can move your own furniture in. When I get a groove, I leave it open so there are no solos on top so there's room for your thoughts. The groove can be therapy, it can be for prayer. This is another way of saying it. That's something I've always said and it makes sense to me."

When listening to his albums, seeing him perform or hearing him speak, it is always up to the observer to take their stance on the relevance of his work as much as any other artist but, because of Glasper's talent and experience, which is vast, he keeps himself in the top tier of modern jazz musicians. No one should be shamed for their opinion of his perspective and contributions and no apologies should be made for him for the words he speaks. Glasper is going to live his life and make music that continues to define the culture. He has a responsibility and is future-minded so, one hopes, his words and presence will bring people together while keeping himself accountable for what is happening with him, his music, the jazz world and beyond. ❖

For more information, visit [robertglasper.com](http://robertglasper.com). Glasper is at Blue Note Jun. 15th-20th. See Calendar.

#### Recommended Listening:

- Robert Glasper Trio — *Mood* (Fresh Sound-New Talent, 2002)
- Robert Glasper — *Canvases* (Blue Note, 2005)
- Robert Glasper — *In My Element* (Blue Note, 2006)
- Robert Glasper — *Covered* (Blue Note, 2014)
- Blue Note All-Stars — *Our Point Of View* (Blue Note, 2015)
- Robert Glasper — *Fuck Yo Feelings (Instrumental)* (Loma Vista, 2019)





**DAHVEED BEHROOZI**  
**ECHOS**

SSC 1618  
AVAILABLE 6/4/21

—Behroozi's rhapsodic, wide-screen pianism, is as inspired by such jazz masters as Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock and Gonzalo Rubalcaba as its classical exemplars Maurizio Pollini, Martha Argerich and Glenn Gould.

**DAHVEED BEHROOZI** piano  
**THOMAS MORGAN** bass  
**BILLY MINTZ** drums



**TODD COCHRAN**  
**TC3**  
**THEN AND AGAIN**  
**HERE AND NOW**

SSC 1608  
AVAILABLE 6/11/21

—Pianist Todd Cochran emphatically marks his acoustic reincarnation after nearly a half century solo recording hiatus.

**TODD COCHRAN** piano  
**JOHN LEFTWICH** bass  
**MICHAEL CARVIN** drums



**DENNY ZEITLIN**  
**GEORGE MARSH**  
**TELEPATHY**

SSC 1620  
AVAILABLE 6/25/21

—Denny Zeitlin and George Marsh were already together on the soundtrack of the 1978 remake of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* whose electro-acoustic-symphonic score Denny Zeitlin wrote.

—We often feel like we are some kind of galactic orchestra. —Denny Zeitlin

**DENNY ZEITLIN** piano, keyboards, synthesizers  
**GEORGE MARSH** drums, percussion



Sunnyside

www.sunnysiderecords.com

It felt more like a Baghdad *gahwat* (coffeehouse) than a jazz concert. About ten people sat in a close circle paying rapt attention as singer **Hamid Al-Saadi**, a preeminent *qari'*, or reciter, of Iraqi maqam music, santur (zither) player **Amir ElSaffar** and violinist/percussionist **Zafir Tawil** performed an inspired set of modal compositions/improvisations on a rainy evening (May 9th) in the cozy backroom of Barbès in Brooklyn's Park Slope. It was during the last few days of Ramadan and the ensemble hadn't performed in over a year, so there was a sense of expectancy, followed by relief to be playing live again, followed by outright joy, the smiles on and off stage growing wider as the deeply spiritual music worked its magic. Al-Saadi's voice, both potent and supple, sounded like a sleepy bear emerging from hibernation, testing the new season, finding its footing, expanding into a formidable presence, evoking cries of "Allah!" from audience members who felt his spirit. When he wasn't improvising on the violin, Tawil provided rhythmic impetus on the *doumbek* (goblet drum) or *daf* (frame drum) while ElSaffar's wooden hammers danced over the santur strings, devising intricate sequences, cuing the others through sinuous transitions. Beginning with maqam *Bayat*, moving from the main theme to secondary melodies, developing climaxes and cadences, the music was both highly structured and highly improvised and, like jazz, blossomed through the unique personality of each artist. —Tom Greenland



Zafir Tawil/Hamid Al-Saadi/Amir ElSaffar @ Barbès

It felt more like a Prohibition-era speakeasy than a jazz concert. Drinkers at the bar and diners at the tables were yakking away through the entire set, their voices rising as the liquor took effect, with maybe only a half-dozen people in the whole room watching as the onstage quartet ran through a set of swing/bop standards. Somewhat surprisingly, however, the end of each number was greeted with a burst of applause, that distinctively warm sounding applause that tells you people have been touched. It was Saturday night (May 8th) at The Django in the cellar of the Roxy Hotel in TriBeCa and clearly guitarist **Pasquale Grasso** was getting his musical message across to the otherwise distracted crowd. Though known among jazz connoisseurs for his prodigious ability to make a single guitar sound like an orchestra, here, accompanied by bass clarinetist Stefano Doglioni, bassist Ari Roland and drummer Keith Balla, Grasso had the chance to show what he can do with a rhythm section to bolster him and room to stretch out. On standards like "April in Paris", "Ghost of a Chance", "Spring Is Here", "Fine and Dandy", Charlie Parker's "Quasimodo" and "Now's the Time" and less common tunes like Fats Navarro's "Fats Flats" and Bud Powell's "Crossing the Channel", Grasso stretched his nimble, spider-like hands across the fret-board to spin delicate, finely crafted lines into an intricate melodic web, sending out seductive vibrations to ensnare the unsuspecting revelers, all without raising his volume. (TG)

Given **Lakecia Benjamin**'s own tilt toward soulfulness and spirituality, it's natural that she'd gravitate to and plumb the depths of saxophone icon John Coltrane, and, as she notes, his oft under-appreciated other half, Alice Coltrane. Drawing from her recent album, *Pursuance: The Coltranes* (Ropeadope), her live-stream at Dizzy's Club (May 13th) paid homage to the pair with demonstrable thoughtfulness, sensitivity and simpatico. Opener "Liberia", with its intense rhythmic introduction before a more melodic play-out, demonstrated her high level of dexterity and command of the alto, including an ability to create a fluttering dance of tones among solidly landed notes. "Syeeda's Song Flute" left no doubt about her articulate voicing and superior concentration. A short turn on "Amazing Grace" (she'd just lost several relatives to COVID-19) was a hymn to the deceased. Pianist Chris Rob, bassist Lonnie Plaxico and drummer EJ Strickland shone particularly on Alice's "Walk with Me", providing earthy counterpoint to Benjamin's high-flying and somewhat ethereal solo turns. But it was with John's "Alabama" that Benjamin and the trio made hairs stand on end. Each segment of the extended piece, composed in response to the 1963 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, evoked intense emotion, beginning with wailing saxophone crying out in anguish, moving to articulations of rage, outrage, beseeching and helplessness and ending with imperturbable determination. —Marilyn Lester



Lakecia Benjamin @ Dizzy's Club

**Gabrielle Stravelli**, whose star has risen over the last half decade, has the great good fortune of two sidemen completely in sync with her style and persona. Live-streaming from Soapbox Gallery (May 6th) the melodic Michael Kanan on piano and Pat O'Leary on bass were a perfect match for the singer's own musicianship and upbeat delivery. They supported her well in addition to shining in their own spotlight moments. In choice of material, Stravelli is a versatile performer, but in this outing she concentrated mostly on Great American Songbook standards. The overall impression, thus, was a very trad presentation. She was in an Ella Fitzgerald mode on a few tunes, such as "Lady Be Good", complete with accomplished scat, as well as a Gershwin medley. Original material, "Messin' Around" had a blues undertone within a toe-tapping tempo. The duo with Kanan, "In My Darkest Place", was dirge-like. More Broadway-style (think Andrew Lloyd Webber), it proved Stravelli's range and evocative abilities with a lyric. In that vein, a high point was the singer's interpretation of Cole Porter's "Get Out of Town"; not only did Stravelli excel at phrasing, but she captured the irony of the lyric perfectly, which eludes many lesser singers. A swing version of "I Could Have Danced All Night" pleasantly ended the sturdy set, with a beautifully phrased, swinging encore of "I'm Putting All My Eggs in One Basket", conjuring up images of the lithely dancing Fred Astaire. (ML)



In an effort to “to help kickstart the performing arts sector and New York City’s revival” Restart Stages at Lincoln Center began presenting outdoor concerts around its Upper West Side headquarters. A breezy performance by **Juilliard Jazz Orchestra** in Damrosch Park (May 20th) gave testament to the fact the city was returning to some normalcy. Conducted by eminent Ellington scholar David Berger, the polished young 17-piece ensemble proved that both music’s future and rich history were in good hands with more than a dozen mostly seldom-heard compositions from the maestro’s iconic canon. Throughout the night the group’s smooth section work and capable solo efforts confirmed the enduring significance of Ellington’s music. The band began by reaching way back to the early days of jazz, playing “East St. Louis Toodle-oo”, with plunger-muted trumpet and warbling clarinet sounding over strummed banjo and a slow sousaphone beat, conjuring the imagery of an early 20th Century cotillion. The classic sound of the Ellington Orchestra as a dance band came to life with a bouncy rendering of “Sepia Panorama” while its symphonic quality was evident on the imagistic “Apes and Peacocks”. The Duke’s status as a popular songwriter was confirmed on respective vocal performances by Olivia Chindamo and Mar Vilaseca of “I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart” and “So Far So Good”. The band swung like mad on “Red Hot Jazz” then pulled out all the stops with its closer, “Braggin’ In Brass”. —*Russ Musto*

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem regularly flows with events celebrating African American heritage and recently (May 4th) it presented the richest of traditions. So named for the utterly driven poem of the master Langston Hughes, **Jazzonia: The Marriage of Poetry and Jazz** demonstrated a living tradition birthed in the neighborhood. In this Part Two of a three-evening celebration (the first was a roundtable discussion), the Museum rang out with the sounds of contemporary spoken word, vocals and, of course, music. Poet Altovise Laster’s stirring segment was inspired by Nina Simone, offering a plethora of liberation statements. She worked, however, to bring the music into her own, avoiding the original lyrics and drawing on the emotion and esteem of Simone’s classics. Over and through the songs, Laster created and emoted, casting poetry affirmations such as “This ghost of a woman / has come back to life”. Next, Alabama poet/vocalist Lacreasha Berry presented an energetic (“poetry should walk your dog, baby”) segment, incorporating commanding alto vocals into recitation for a set inspired by Billie Holiday. Lifting blues cadences with leaps and rhythmic shifts, Berry said, “this is all about visibility...This ain’t about seeing; it’s about vision.” The City Love Band was featured on instrumentals including a dazzling “I Put a Spell on You”. Guitarist Kappa Tanabe shone throughout, supported in uptown style by pianist Andre Chez Lewis, bassist Kenji Tokunaga and drummer Alex Durant. —*John Pietaro*

## WHAT'S NEWS

In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of **Strata-East Records**, co-founder/trumpeter Charles Tolliver will headline a live-stream concert on Jun. 16th at 7:30 pm with Buster Williams, Lenny White, George Cables, Billy Harper and guests. For more information, visit [sonicly.com/Projects/Experience/661/1695](https://sonicly.com/Projects/Experience/661/1695).

**The Apollo Theater** will live-stream its spring fund-raiser, “Apollo Resounding”, Jun. 7th at 7:30 pm with performers including Stefon Harris. For more information, visit [apollotheater.org](https://apollotheater.org).

Winners of the fourth annual **Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition** have been named: the first place winner is Lucy Wijnands of Kansas City, Missouri; second place winner is Taisha Estrada of Washington, DC; and three third place winners are Atrin Madani (Berlin, Germany), Ariana Stefanidis (New York, NY) and Naledi Masilo (Cape Town, South Africa). For more information, visit [ellafitzgeraldcompetition.org](https://ellafitzgeraldcompetition.org).

Newly elected members to the **American Academy of Arts & Sciences** include trumpeter Terence Blanchard and drummer Teri Lyne Carrington. For more information, visit [amacad.org](https://amacad.org).

Guitarist Julian Lage, saxophonist Melissa Aldana and trombonist Marshall Gilkes will join the **New England Conservatory’s Jazz Studies Faculty** for the 2021-2022 academic year. For more information, visit [necmusic.edu](https://necmusic.edu).

Winners of the **2021 Jazz Journalists Association Awards** have been announced: bassist Ron Carter received the Lifetime Achievement Award; drummer Teri Lyne Carrington was named Musician of the Year; Maria Schneider’s *Data Lords* (ArtistShare) was named Record of the Year; Thelonious Monk—*Palo Alto* (Impulse) was named Historical Record of the Year; and Resonance won Record Label of the Year. For the complete list, visit [jjazzawards.org](https://jjazzawards.org).

**Jazz at Lincoln Center** has named Grand Seiko as “Official Timekeeper” of Jazz at Lincoln Center’s 2020-21/2021-22 season.

Guitarist Nate Knipscher has been named the third **John Abercrombie Jazz Scholarship** grant recipient. For more information, visit [johnabercrombiejazzfund.org](https://johnabercrombiejazzfund.org).

A new website devoted to the life and music of late pianist **Gil Coggins**, who worked with Miles Davis, Lester Young, Jackie McLean and others, has been created. For more information, visit [gilcoggins.com](https://gilcoggins.com).

Submit news to [ahenkin@nycjazzrecord.com](mailto:ahenkin@nycjazzrecord.com)



Juilliard Jazz Orchestra @ Damrosch Park



Jazzonia @ National Jazz Museum in Harlem

Harkening back to the ‘70s Loft scene, **Robby Ameen** has been hosting regular Thursday evening performances by his quartet in downtown Manhattan’s Poster Museum. Leading a band of longtime colleagues from the world of Latin jazz, Bob Franceschini (saxophones), Edsel Gomez (Fender Rhodes electric piano) and Lincoln Goines (acoustic bass), the veteran drummer got the second night (May 6th) of the series started by reaching back into his repertoire of originals with an updated rendition of his 2009 piece “Swiftboating”. Driven by multi-directional drumming—cowbell clanging and tambourine-topped sock cymbal rattling—Franceschini took off blowing bold tenor with palpable intensity over the jagged melodic line, his dark tone at times reminiscent of Archie Shepp and Gato Barbieri, before the song closed out with a climactic drum solo. The set continued with a piece from Ameen’s latest album, *Diluvio*, “Fast Eye”, a soulful outing with Gomez’ swirling upper-register notes dancing around an insistent left-hand bassline evoking the spirit of Herbie Hancock’s *Headhunters* and a drum solo over a zigzagging vamp recalling the Fort Apache Band’s arrangement of Thelonious Monk’s “Evidence”. Things got even funkier with “Cremant”, a feature for Goines. The set ended with he and Ameen dueting to kick off an extended version of Wayne Shorter’s “Footprints”, a staple from their decades with the late Dave Valentin, which had Franceschini wailing on soprano saxophone. (RM)

One Breath Rising (OBR) has been presenting monthly concerts by a diverse array of artists in the African American tradition, as per the organization’s mission statement, since April 2019. A year later, the organizers began live-streams bridging performance and education to a growing Zoom-generated community. **Lee Odom’s** set (May 16th) featured the saxophonist/clarinetist in a variety of settings, opening with a unique improvisatory trio with off-camera pianist and drummer, aged 11 and 14, respectively. Even with the distance and the sound quality of the children’s broadcast, the music flowed in a succinct, naturally communicative manner, well illustrating the OBR collaborative concept. Odom turned from soprano to alto for the second piece, “Bricks and Dead Ivies”, a stirring duo with poet Lydia Percy. “When I arrived in New York, she took me to the Blue Note to see Pharoah Sanders and this changed everything.” Percy’s spoken word was pre-recorded, as was the intermittent accompaniment, with Odom’s warm obbligato creating a spiraling melody over and through the poetry. Even when avoiding the timbre of a particular vintage, the young lioness has the uncanny ability to conjure the spirits: her clarinet cries of Johnny Dodds and her soprano Sidney Bechet. Maybe it’s her southern roots or maybe it’s Harlem, but the emotional impact is there, even when playing free. After the concert, Odom spoke with the viewers, adding a certain salon experience to the proceedings. (JP)



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



# PATIENCE HIGGINS

BY SYLVIA LEVINE

*Reedplayer Patience Higgins is one of those musicians everyone has heard and heard of but the extent of his talents and musical experience has stayed largely under the radar. From leading Monday night sessions at St. Nick's Pub for years and performing with numerous long-running Broadway shows to a chair in the Duke Ellington Orchestra and participating in at least 57 recordings (so far) and traveling the world with jazz and pop groups and shows, Higgins has fit into a broad range of musical situations. He is as comfortable playing with Lionel Hampton as with Hamiet Bluiett as with Bobby Watson as with...well, this reporter last saw him in the baritone chair with the Peter Leitch New Life Orchestra one afternoon pre-pandemic. And let's not forget to mention his affinity for tap and his long-running association with tap master Savion Glover. We recently spoke to Higgins by phone and he generously gave us an hour of his time to discuss his career.*

**The New York City Jazz Record:** Can we start at the beginning of this journey—coming to New York from Greenville, South Carolina?

**Patience Higgins:** I came to NY in 1978—just out of high school.

**TNYCJR:** You were already a musician at that point?

**PH:** Yes. I was already a musician when I came to the Big Apple.

**TNYCJR:** Did you have a great teacher back home in South Carolina? Like in Chicago, everybody studied with Captain Walter Dyett. Did you have somebody special teaching you like that?

**PH:** I did have a very very good teacher, Mr. Lewinson, back in South Carolina. And he was really a good woodwind teacher and player. That's where I got my foundation. Later, I had other private teachers along the way.

**TNYCJR:** He encouraged you to go to New York?

**PH:** Yes, he did and we kept in touch after I came here.

**TNYCJR:** A big move for a young man. Did you know anyone here to connect with?

**PH:** I knew three people.

**TNYCJR:** Hopefully they were glad to see you?

**PH:** Yes, they were. And I was also very fortunate. It was a lot of serendipity. I met a fellow musician at a jam session and we became fast friends. It turned out we both were looking for a residence, somewhere to live. We found a loft in Midtown, 7th Avenue and 50th Street. Being in that residence was a turning point. A lot of musicians had their rehearsal spaces or musical

offices there. And I met some gentlemen who became mentors and introduced me to the business of music.

**TNYCJR:** Would you care to name names?

**PH:** Yes, of course. There was Seldon Powell, Frank Wess and a little after that Dr. Barry Harris and then a little later George Coleman.

**TNYCJR:** Mr. Coleman probably made you play through the keys on every tune—he is known for doing that to young musicians.

**PH:** Through the keys!

**TNYCJR:** Were you already a multi-instrumentalist at that point? I mean you play all these instruments—you basically need a moving van to carry all your horns.

**PH:** This is true. I was playing saxophone and flute and clarinet and added on instruments as time went on, to all the saxophones, the clarinets, flutes and then double reed instruments—oboe, English horn...

**TNYCJR:** Being so versatile a musician probably was a big help in getting into shows—all that high-paying steady work!

**PH:** My association with Seldon Powell was my introduction into the world of Broadway. He was the saxophonist in the Broadway show called *Ain't Misbehavin'*. And he had a rehearsal space in the building where I was living. I met him just seeing him coming in and out of the building. He took me under his wing and eventually asked me to be a sub for him on that show.

**TNYCJR:** Beginner's luck!

**PH:** Exactly. That band was an incredible array of musicians, led by Hank Jones, who was the Musical Director. And it included Norris Turney and Arvell Shaw and Eddie Bert, Virgil Jones and it was a truly wonderful experience to be with these older musicians. I think it is one of the things that younger musicians should always be striving to do, to associate themselves with older musicians. And basically this taught me the aspects of music, not just music but also the social aspects that go along with being a professional musician: for example, things like better an hour early for an engagement than a minute late. Be early for every gig. Dress appropriately. Be well groomed.

**TNYCJR:** Clean your shoes.

**PH:** Right! Don't wait for the phone to ring to start practicing. Practice the things you need to work on more than the things you do well! Of course, always be cordial and respectful and be open to constructive

criticism. Don't take a gig that requires skills that you know you do not have! You could ruin your reputation. Develop yourself musically first to be ready when the opportunity comes again.

**TNYCJR:** They don't teach you those things in school now.

**PH:** No, they don't.

**TNYCJR:** I am pretty sure they don't when you see people on the bandstand that look like they just got out of bed.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



# GREG LEWIS

BY MICHAEL COBB

Greg Lewis is a highly regarded organ player, pianist and composer on New York City's jazz, blues and funk scenes, deeply committed to expanding his jazz roots and developing his own musical vocabulary. He was introduced to music by his late father's record collection. "My father and grandfather played piano. I grew up listening to Trane, Monk, Miles, Bud Powell, all the typical greats. Monk was my dad's favorite musician. Unfortunately, he was murdered at age 39; I didn't get a chance to talk to him as an adult." Lewis grew up in Long Island City, Queens and picked up piano by hearing music around the house and in his community. "My uncles were into jazz and hipped me to artists like Keith Jarrett. As kids we wondered why they listened to music without words. I was listening to piano players like Kenny Drew and Herbie Nichols and I was getting into all their trio piano albums. My uncles would let me copy them from vinyl to tape," he says.

Other music filtered in via his surroundings. "I really liked Sly Stone and Billy Preston, who I'm sure influenced me. The first record I bought as a kid was Funkadelic's '(Not Just) Knee Deep' [from *Uncle Jam Wants You*]. And growing up in the projects you couldn't not be into hip-hop, Grandmaster Flash and all that. When that came about, people started looking for other music to sample than James Brown. Sampling inspired artists to dig deeper." At 11, Lewis began studying piano and was playing professionally by the time he was a teenager. Early gigs included "a group called The Family when I was 18 and we began playing to convicts in prisons including Rahway in New Jersey. It was cool because they loved any kind of entertainment."

While Lewis was attending The New School, his mentor, pianist Gil Coggins, sent him as a sub to a gig one night. Lewis expected a piano but instead found a Hammond B-3. It was a defining moment: "I felt the power of the organ and thought, 'wow this is crazy.' The draw bars allow you to play a full chord with only one note; that's why it sounds so tremendous. When you play organ, you have to think like a bass player simultaneously. It's a different mindset than piano. There are things you can do on both instruments that are unique, but there's no sound like the Hammond."

Over the years Lewis studied with Jaki Byard at The New School and hung out with legends like Randy Weston. Lewis studied and absorbed the seminal works of ragtime pioneers Eubie Blake, Scott Joplin, jazz pianists Oscar Peterson, Art Tatum, Sonny Clark and organ players like Jimmy Smith, Larry Young, Chester Thompson, Santana's Gregg Alan Rolie and John Lord of Deep Purple.

Lewis feels connections between the different musical forms that made their way back and forth from Europe to America. "Everything is related from African to European piano, classical organ music, slaves moaning on the boats, working in the fields and church music. I pull from everything I hear. I don't say I'm a jazz musician. I love everything from Yngwie Malmsteen, whose technique I admire, to Monk."

Of the latter he says, "He was clearly a genius. Nobody taught him to write like that. A genius is someone who does what has never been done before. He was coming out of Art Tatum and Willie 'The Lion' Smith, but he had his own way. Monk's voicings using tritone and flat fives, dissonant minor second intervals were unique. Monk was known as the High Priest of Bebop. He'd hit dissonant chords that at the time might've sounded wrong to many, an ugly beauty, but now people appreciate it more."

When asked how his environment affected his music, Lewis says, "I think it's a cultural thing. The way your mama talks to you, the way you eat your food, the way it tastes. It's the church aspect, the way the rhythm gets revved up, the way a mother swings a baby in her arms. If in your culture everyone's clapping on two and four, it's a different feel from one and three. I don't know why that is, but in the Black community the swing is on two and four. There's nothing wrong with one and three, but if you're playing bebop, you'll get cursed out for that. I think it goes even deeper. Africans who were brought here as slaves weren't allowed to play drums, because that was a way to communicate. The masters didn't want that, but they still kept that culture and those rhythms," he adds.

Friends, family, teachers and community members all helped in his musical education. "I was lucky to meet a guy named Jim Harrison who hipped me to records by Elmo Hope, Freddie Redd, who did *The Connection* with Jackie McLean. The first person who made me believe I could play was Jaki Byard...He was a beast and the baddest stride pianist I ever saw play live...I also got a chance to study with Walter Davis, Jr. who reminded me that I had to learn with my ears. He told me, 'You gotta listen.' We'd just hang out more than anything. They spoke in riddles, a lot of those cats. It was like listening to a philosopher...And Gil Coggins, who had incredible comping. He played with Miles, who only let him comp, not solo."

Lewis' album *The Breathe Suite* includes a piece titled "Eric Garner", addressing police violence. "When I got the New Jazz Works Grant in 2014, it was around the time when Michael Brown was murdered, which blew my mind. I felt inspired to dedicate these songs to all the people who've suffered. I needed to write something because I thought this doesn't make any sense and it's still happening. I want people to remember these names. Who was Eric Garner? Who was Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old kid walking home with Skittles? Really, you shot him? And George Floyd? Oh man, come on! James Baldwin said, 'To be an educated Black person in this country is to be enraged.' I can't carry that anger around all the time, but when you think about it, it's been going on forever. Charles Mingus wrote 'Fables of Faubus', Nina Simone sang about it in 'Mississippi Goddam', Trane wrote about it in 'Alabama'. Why do we all have stories like this? It's because of the systemic racism in this country. So, I felt I had to say something too." ❖

For more information, visit [greglewismusic.com](http://greglewismusic.com). Lewis is at Williamsburg Music Center Fridays and Saturdays. See Calendar.

#### Recommended Listening:

- Sam Newsome's Groove Project – 24/7 (Satchmo Jazz, 2002)
- Greg Lewis – *Organ Monk* (s/r, 2010)
- Greg Lewis – *Organ Monk: Uwo In The Black* (s/r, 2012)
- Greg Lewis – *Organ Monk: American Standard* (s/r, 2012)
- Greg Lewis – *Organ Monk Blue* (s/r, 2016)
- Gregory Lewis – *Organ Monk: The Breathe Suite* (s/r, 2017)

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# ROBERTO MIRANDA

BY ANDERS GRIFFEN

Bassist Roberto Miranda has been on many musical adventures, performing and recording with his mentors—Horace Tapscott, John Carter and Bobby Bradford and later, Kenny Burrell—as well as artists like Charles Lloyd, Tim Berne, Vinny Golia, Michele Rosewoman and James Newton, among many others. This year Dark Tree Records released *Live at Bing Theatre* by Roberto Miranda's Home Music Ensemble, an apt name for that group, which had immediate family and his greater musical family performing with him. It was Miranda's Master's recital at U.S.C., recorded live on May 25th, 1985. His mentors Tapscott, Carter and Bradford are part of the band, but his father and brother are both in the fold as well. That was the only time anything like that happened. He also appears on one track from this year's celebrated box set of Julius Hemphill's archival recordings, *The Boyé Multi-National Crusade For Harmony* (New World Records). Over the course of almost 60 years, Miranda has established an international reach while his work has focused locally, in Los Angeles, where he has made his home.

"In between the ages of birth and just before my 8th birthday, I spent approximately half my time in Puerto Rico and half my time in New York City. Since then, I've been in Los Angeles," he says. Miranda's parents were from Puerto Rico. Louis Raphael, Sr., was a vocalist and percussionist from Ponce, Puerto Rico. As a young man, his voice was the first to be broadcast on the radio in that city. As a musician, he worked with Perez Prado, Joe Loco and Ruth Natal and he appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Miranda's father was his first music teacher. "My Dad sang and played congas, bongos and the smaller instruments, clave, guiro. He

played all those instruments and he taught those instruments to me and my brother. One of the favorite memories I have of my life is watching my parents dance to Latin music. Man! That still is an incredible memory."

Years later in school, his brother played percussion in concert band and Miranda asked for a trumpet. All those chairs were taken, he was told, so he requested a guitar, but was told that was not a band instrument. They did need bass players, however, so that's when he first played bass but gave it up after the semester. The brothers had formed a band together in which Louis played drum set and Roberto played congas. As teenagers they started a social club and held dances. "Almost everybody in the club was a musician. We would actually throw dances. We did one dance at a lodge or something in Echo Park and hundreds of people came. I remember being on the bandstand and looking out and just seeing hundreds of teenagers doing a dance that was popular at that time called 'the stroll'. It was really cool." When their bass player was no longer permitted by his parents to play with the social club band, Miranda picked up the bass again. This time he never put it down again and it wasn't long before he met his musical mentors.

"The Underground Musicians Association and the Pan-African Peoples Arkestra were both underway by the time I got to them. Underground Musicians Association changed its name to The Union of God's Musicians' and Artists' Ascension, UGMAA. I met my three mentors—Horace Tapscott, Bobby Bradford and John Carter—I met all three of them when I was 19 years old. I played with Horace and John from the time I was 19 until they died. Every once in a while, I still play with Bobby. They just really accepted me and loved me and nurtured me. They weren't that much older than me. Maybe somewhere between 10 and 15 years older. I loved all three of them. Those were the guys who really taught me. Even though I ended up going to school and getting an undergraduate and graduate degree in music, at least with relationship to really playing the music professionally and, I want to say at the street level, or... I can't think of another word for it right now, but those were the guys that really

taught me."

Miranda recalls that he made his first recording at age 21 with pianist Larry Nash and drummer Woody "Sonship" Theus, who were both just 16 at the time. The name of the album was *The Beginning* and it also featured saxophonists Herman Riley and Pony Poindexter and trumpeter Luis Gasca (who, under contract elsewhere, used a pseudonym). The drummer became a dear friend and was instrumental in Miranda ending up on a record with Charles Lloyd (*Waves*, A&M, 1972), even though, as it was happening, Miranda didn't even know he was being recorded.

"Sonship Theus was a very close friend of mine. Both of us shared a love for the Lord. And we shared a love for this music. I would get together with Sonship, he was a wonderful practicer. He would practice a roll—just a roll—for a solid hour. And then I would walk. And we would do that for a solid hour, man, just walking bass, roll, bass foot and hi-hat. And then we would begin to stretch out. We did a lot of playing together. Another good, close friend of mine at the time was a guitar player by the name of Tommy Trujillo. [He] and Sonship were both playing with Charles Lloyd. The bass player in the band at that time was a wonderful bass player by the name of Wolfgang Melz. Tommy and Sonship just asked me to come by the recording, they were doing a record and I met Charles. I brought my bass, so he stuck me into a bass booth and just asked me to play along with them. So, I was listening to the music that they were playing with headphones on, playing bass in this isolated room. The next thing I know, I'm playing bass on the album and I was touring with the group."

Miranda's own education coincided with his career as an educator. Besides attending UCLA he went to California State University Dominguez Hills, where he earned his Bachelor's degree and simultaneously taught at Compton Community College. He was also gigging and teaching privately and then got an invitation from the Jazz Department head, Thomas David Mason. In exchange for being his teaching assistant and playing in his big band, he worked toward his Master's degree tuition-free. He also

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)

## LEST WE FORGET



# DEWEY JOHNSON

BY ERIC WENDELL

When trumpeter Dewey Johnson recorded with saxophonist John Coltrane on the free-jazz masterpiece *Ascension*, Johnson countered Coltrane's soul-searching barks with brisk billows beyond his 25 years. While not as experienced as many others on the sessions, his soul nonetheless spoke the truth on a career that was not well documented but left an indelible mark on those with whom he spoke the truth.

Unfortunately, the trappings of missed opportunities and difficulties of modern life deprived jazz history of his enormous talents. The little musical output that remains showcases a player who was both resourceful and unbridled, revered by his peers. Collaborator pianist Mary Anne Driscoll described him as "kind, generous, introspective."

Johnson was born on Nov. 6th, 1939 in Philadelphia. Coming from a musical family, he took up the trumpet and began to perform with his brothers. Johnson eventually dropped out of high school and began to

take lessons at the Granoff School of Music, whose alumni include Coltrane, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and saxophonist Sonny Fortune. In 1960, Johnson traveled out to Los Angeles where he joined his brother Fred and acted as a mentor and teacher to saxophonist Noah Howard. Not long after, Johnson moved to San Francisco where he lived in a musician's commune that acted as a meeting place for musicians coming through including Coltrane, bassist Jimmy Garrison and saxophonists Ornette Coleman and Sonny Simmons.

In 1963, Johnson moved to New York City where he started a band with saxophonist Giuseppi Logan, bassist Reggie Johnson and drummer Rashied Ali. Johnson was a workhorse willing to put the necessary time and effort to creating beautiful art with Driscoll extolling, "in work he was concentrated, attentive, willing to rehearse for unlimited time."

In 1964, Johnson appeared on pianist Paul Bley's ESP-Disk' album *Barrage*. Perhaps the best record of his talents, Johnson's interplay with alto saxophonist Marshall Allen is at times adversarial; a competition of immense force that brings listeners to their knees, as is evident on "Around Again" where the sonic assault of the main melody is brief yet effective. Johnson's solo from 1:37-2:22 is an unrestrained bundle of notes just waiting to pop.

Johnson received a big bump in his profile when Coltrane invited him to participate in the recording sessions that would result in *Ascension*. Still fresh off of

the success of *A Love Supreme*, *Ascension* serves as a transcendent moment in Coltrane's career and a beautiful example of Johnson's prowess, who had the prime aural real estate on both sides of the recording, taking the first solo after Coltrane. Johnson settles nicely into a cluster of informal notes that both mirror Coltrane's soul-embarking heights while traversing brilliantly through the ensemble.

Not long after Coltrane's death in 1967, Johnson suffered a nervous breakdown, his mental health keeping him away from the scene for periods of time. The same year, Johnson played the concert that would, in 2020, be released as *First Time Out: Live at Slugs 1967* with drummer Rashied Ali, tenor saxophonist Ramon Morris and pianist Stanley Cowell. The two-track album showcases a more tender side to Johnson's playing; "Ballade" showcases a beautiful and mellow tone, which, when paired against his work on *Ascension*, sounds like that of two different musicians.

After subsequent stretches of time where he was homeless or working a succession of day jobs, Johnson participated on the sessions for drummer Paul Murphy's recording *Cloudburst*, which also included Driscoll. Driscoll shared one of Johnson's philosophies on improvisation: "You can create an improvisation and form easily. Start on A, freely improvise and end on an A. That way you cannot be lost, you always know where you are going." Driscoll elaborates on this

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 29)



# OUTSIDE IN MUSIC

BY JOHN PIETARO

“Outside In grew organically,” Nick Finzer explained. “And, today, it’s not only a label but an artist-focused media company.” The trombonist chose to develop his company, birthed initially as a vehicle to release his own recordings, another way. Finzer became a New Yorker some 11 years ago after relocating for graduate studies at Juilliard. The move proved fruitful: he began playing with the Maria Schneider Orchestra, Anat Cohen Tentet and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, among others, as well as embarking on any number of jazz education ventures. But it was as a bandleader that he came to know the struggles of getting his music recorded and much more so, heard. “I never expected to have my own label, but this just developed.”

Upon closer inspection it’s obvious that this is not just another musician-run indie. Outside In has a unique approach to producing and distributing wherein the artist retains full ownership of intellectual property rights. Similar to grassroots book publishers that fit no specific category, Outside In partners with its artists to develop projects; the artist pays the initial cost but retains 80% of the proceeds. “We work closely with every artist to give as much support as we can on development, distribution and marketing,” he added. The label has several imprints geared toward the needs of clients, from youth to mid-level and career musicians, but in each case offering variously-priced options.

Outside In has grown consistently during its

relatively brief existence, particularly attracting those seeking independence with backing, as well as the rising voices desperately in need of global exposure. Currently, Finzer and company are releasing between 30 and 40 albums per year for a roster of artists that’s varied and ever-expanding: Roxy Coss has been working with the label as of late and the celebrated saxophonist and feminist-activist’s most recent album *Quintet* is one highlight; the preview cut from Andrew Gutauskas’ latest shows the baritone saxophonist’s quite hip quartet recording a piece evocative of Gerry Mulligan’s progressive catalog of the late ‘50s; and drummer Ulysses Owens, Jr.’s tenaciously swinging big band’s new single “Harlem, Harlem, Harlem” was recorded live at Dizzy’s Club and carries with it utterly classic uptown drive and authenticity.

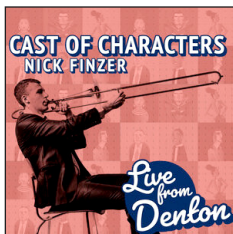
Another associated artist is Min Xiao-Fen, Chinese pipa virtuoso and vocalist who has brought the traditional instrument full-throttle into the West, having performed with Wadada Leo Smith, Derek Bailey and more. Her album *White Lotus* is out this month and features not only her stunning artistry but also that of guitarist Rez Abbasi. And then there’s vibraphonist Simon Moullier, hailing from France, who released his *Spirit Song* last fall. Deemed a singular voice on the instrument by Herbie Hancock and “the best vibes player” by Quincy Jones, Moullier is a young lion, surely soon to claim every major accolade. Another artist is Hailey Brinnel, a swing music double-threat: trombonist and vocalist whose debut, *I’m Forever Blowing Bubbles*, is an homage to the great, often undersung artists and bands of the 1920s-40s.

Outside In is far from shy about use of marketing campaigns not normally associated with the music

industry, jazz in particular. “We really push artists to become involved in their own publicity, both via traditional press and social media,” says Finzer. “Some embrace this idea more than others, but we allow them to take it where they want it to go. We also have agreements with multiple podcasters and vendors. Younger listeners have responded well to this. They may not always buy the records, but they are downloading and engaging in the brand collaboration we have established. Currently, we’re not only working with music brands for endorsement deals, but lifestyle brands including clothing, sunglasses, sneakers and many other items.” As a result, Outside In has established distinctive business partnerships: “It’s a vital way for the artist to sustain him or herself.”

Further, the label is building a veritable community among its artists with a series of collaborative efforts, creative company picnics, if you will, minus the BBQ. “So far we’ve had three projects to get various bandleaders into the studio and do audio/visual recordings of each other’s music and are already aiming for more. The label sponsors these gatherings and helps to cross-pollinate the artists and their releases.” Given Finzer’s background, it’s no surprise that Outside In has also sponsored numerous educational events, inspiring and possibly grooming the next generation to take the step forward. “It’s so hard to do it on your own and our philosophy is all about working in a close relationship with our artists.” ❖

For more information, visit [outsideinmusic.com](http://outsideinmusic.com). Artists performing this month include Philippe Lemm at Little Island Jun. 24th (See Calendar) and Min Xiao-Fen live-streaming Jun. 29th at [iamavl.com](http://iamavl.com).



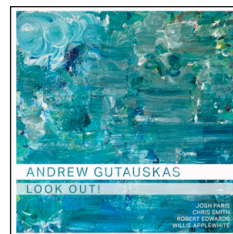
Live from Denton  
Nick Finzer Cast of Characters



Soul Conversations  
Ulysses Owens, Jr. Big Band



First Step  
Philippe Lemm Trio



Look Out!  
Andrew Gutauskas



White Lotus (featuring Rez Abbasi)  
Min Xiao-Fen

## VOXNEWS

# FACES UNMASKED

BY SUZANNE LORGE

When the Blue Note reopens with its much-anticipated festival this month, British composer/arranger **Jacob Collier** will be the only headlining vocalist in the lineup. A teenaged Collier surprised the music world almost a decade ago with precocious arrangements of various pop tunes, released via YouTube videos of himself, collarbone up, singing all the parts a cappella. Since then Collier has worked with musicians both inside and outside the jazz world, including Quincy Jones, Herbie Hancock, Dr. Dre, Snarky Puppy and the WDR Big Band. His debut jazz album, *In My Room* (Membran), with the latter group, won him two Grammys for arranging and his second, *Djesse Vol. I* (Hajanga), with Metropole Orkest, went on to solidify his reputation as a jazz trailblazer for his generation. But it would be a mistake to tag him as a jazz singer. Collier followed the first release *Djesse*—an ambitious four-installment opus—with two others, *Djesse Vol. II* and *Djesse Vol. III*, original forays into the many musical worlds that first inspired Collier’s capacious musicianship. His melody-rich, deeply layered compositions on these records favor his warm baritone and the vocal contributions of more than a dozen up-and-coming guest singers, most of

whom defy ready classification—just like Collier. So when he plays Blue Note (Jun. 21st), better to think of him as a musician who sings jazz and release all expectations except one: how glorious it will be to hear live music in a club again.

Downtown Brooklyn’s Roulette, one of the few premier spaces for concertizing during the pandemic, will also be one of the first to open its doors to audiences. Among the ensembles on offer there this month is **Amirtha Kidambi** (vocals, harmonium, synth, electronics, compositions), who will play with her trio Elder Ones (Jun. 10th). If their new work is anything like their 2019 release *From Untruth* (Northern Spy), the room will reverberate with a visceral mix of sounds, unmitigated emotion and societal soul searching.

For the most part, however, business as usual still means remote performing. Fact is, as the pandemic wanes without disappearing completely, it’s getting harder to remember a past or to imagine a future without live-streamed concerts. For singer/composers **Jen Shyu** and **Sara Serpa** and writer Jordannah Elizabeth, online collaborations only expand their already extensive creative reach. Together these three jazz leaders have formed Mutual Mentorship for Musicians (M<sup>3</sup>), an organization that engenders creative partnerships among womxn musicians from around the globe. This month the National Jazz Museum in Harlem will host their virtual M3 festival (Jun. 12th-13th), with six world premieres featuring

Fay Victor, Ganavya Doraiswamy, Shanta Nurullah, Miriam Elhajli, Richie Seivwright, Monnette Sudler, Michele Rosewoman and Malika Zarra.

With all postponements in the past, The Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, too, will embrace remote performance with a Facebook broadcast of the contest from NJPAC’s Prudential Hall. The four U.S.-based finalists—**Hailey Brinnel**, **Tawanda Suessbrich-Joaquim**, **Benny Benack III** and **Gabrielle Cavassa**—will compete via live-stream (Jun. 6th), joined by 2019 winner **Samara Joy McLendon**. (This gig is just a preview for McLendon, whose career next month picks up where it left off pre-pandemic, with the release of her debut album and a full roster of high-profile dates.) Two days later, singers **Cécile McLorin Salvant** and **Angélique Kidjo**, both multiple Grammy winners, will share their thoughts on how to remain open and expressive during challenging times. Their free joint lecture, “Creativity Cannot Be Locked Down”, will stream on the NJPAC Facebook page (Jun. 8th).

The Blues Alley Jazz Society also found it expeditious to conduct the Ella Fitzgerald Competition virtually this year. Though newly inaugurated, this competition draws contestants from around the world; Kansas City native **Lucy Wijnands** took the top spot on April 24 against finalists from as far away as Germany and South Africa. (Coincidentally, both Wijnands and McLendon were named Ella Fitzgerald Scholars at SUNY Purchase, where each studied with vocalist/educator **Alexis Cole**.) ❖



# SONNY SIMMONS

BY ANDREY HENKIN



Alto and tenor saxophonist and oboe and English horn player Sonny Simmons, among the original proponents of The New Thing, who worked under Eric Dolphy and Elvin Jones/Jimmy Garrison, alongside Prince Lasha and on his own albums since the mid '60s, died Apr. 6th at 87.

Simmons was born in Sicily Island, LA on Aug. 4th, 1933 but grew up in Oakland, CA. Talking to Clifford Allen for this gazette in 2004, Simmons recalled his time in Louisiana: "The most beautiful music I heard on the island was from the birds and the singing cranes and all those beautiful creatures on the island. The whole island sounded like a symphony in the spring and the summer—it was so beautiful, and I think about that to this day how beautiful my childhood was. Music was in my soul and so that was my background." Simmons started studying music seriously while in high school, beginning with English horn and then moving to saxophones.

Simmons' first recording was with future longterm partner Prince Lasha on the latter's *The Cry!* (Contemporary, 1962). The next year the two moved to New York where they would work with Don Cherry, Dolphy (*Conversations*, FM) and Jones/Garrison (*Illumination!*, Impulse). Of his work with Dolphy, Simmons recalled to Allen, "I had just composed a new piece called 'Music Matador'...Dolphy fell in love with it...I was blown away because these cats were my heroes and I couldn't even tie up their shoelaces! For some reason they really dug me, so he said, 'man, I love that composition you wrote; I want to record you and I'm taking you on a record date.'" In 1966, Simmons debuted as a leader for ESP-Disk' with *Staying On The Watch*, the first of several albums through the beginning of the '70s on Arhoolie and Contemporary.

Despite this auspicious beginning, the '70s-80s were fallow times for Simmons, who even spent a long period homeless in San Francisco. ("There was a strong rumor in the '80s that I was dead, and that affected my career worldwide.") He had a career resurgence in the early '90s though, recording a pair of albums for Qwest: *Ancient Ritual* (1992) and *American Jungle* (1995). This was followed by albums on CIMP, both of which included younger fellow reedplayer Michael Marcus. It was with him that Simmons established The Cosmosomatics, which made several albums in the new millennium for Boxholder, Bleu Regard, Not Two, Soul Note and Saptak Jazz. Concurrently, Simmons had his own albums for Parallactic, Marge, Arhoolie once more, Jazzaway, Hello World!, Ayler, Improvising Beings and Svart. Speaking of his second act to Allen, Simmons said, "It's a goddamn battlefield now, nothing like it was back in the Golden Era, the '60s and '70s. It's nothing like that, when all the cats were alive. I'm one of the few buffalo that's left from that era."



**SÉRGIO BRANDÃO** (Mar. 16th, 1956 - Apr. 2nd, 2021) The Brazilian electric bassist worked with Kip Hanrahan, Flora Purim, Aírto Moreira, Paquito D'Rivera, Nana Vasconcelos, Carlos Franzetti, Tania Marie, Hiram Bullock, Herbie Mann, Toninho Horta, Cyro Baptista, Dave Pietro, Andrei Kondakov, Roger Davidson and Romero Lubambo. Brandão died Apr. 2nd at 65.



**WILLIAM A. BROWER** (May 9th, 1948 - Apr. 12th, 2021) The author, journalist, producer and jazz activist wrote liner notes for various albums, contributed reviews to *DownBeat* and *JazzTimes*, co-founded the Capital City Jazz Festival, stage-managed the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, presented concerts for decades for the Congressional Black Caucus and undertook oral histories for Howard University and The Smithsonian Institute. Brower died Apr. 12th at 72.



**EULIS CATHEY** (Jun. 13th, 1953 - Apr. 27th, 2021) The radio personality and producer worked on albums for Verve, Novus, Atlantic and N-Coded from the '90s through the new millennium and had programs on WBGO and SiriusXM. Cathey died Apr. 27th at 67.



**ISLA ECKINGER** (May 6th, 1939 - Apr. 8th, 2021) The Swiss bassist was most notable for making, as part of Mal Waldron's trio, the first album on ECM Records in 1969 but got his start a decade earlier as a trombonist with Bruno Spoerri then, on bass, worked with visiting Americans like Buck Clayton, Benny Bailey, Hank Jones, Philly Joe Jones, Horace Parlan, Jon Hendricks, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Clark Terry and Waldron, fellow Europeans Dusko Goykovich, Joe Haider, Oscar Klein, Leszek Żądło, Fritz Pauer, Albert Mangelsdorff, Zbigniew Seifert, Gianni Basso, Cees Slinger and Stéphane Grappelli, international players like Makaya Ntshoko and bands like Four For Jazz, Tremble Kids and Hot Mallets and who released a handful of albums since the '90s on TCB and Enja. Eckinger died Apr. 7th at 81.



**KLAUS MÜMPFER** (Apr. 20th, 1942 - Apr. 17th, 2021) The German's photos appeared on albums by Vocal Summit, John Tchicai, Gregor Huebner, Peter Erskine and Iro Haarla on Moers Music, Taso Music Production, ACT and TUM. Mümpfer died Apr. 17th at 78.



**ERIK NILSSON** (1935 - Apr. 4th, 2021) The Swedish reedplayer worked with Georg Riedel, Bengt-Arne Wallin, Jan Johansson, Alice Babs, Lennart Åberg, Nils Lindberg, Arne Domnérus, George Russell, Eje Thelin, Mike Westbrook, Terje Rypdal and others, plus had a decades-long membership in the Swedish Radio Jazz Group. Nilsson died Apr. 4th at 85.



**VICTOR PAZ** (Aug. 30th, 1932 - Apr. 3rd, 2021) The Panamanian trumpeter was active since the mid '60s with Celia Cruz, Dizzy Gillespie, Eddie Palmieri, Grant Green, Houston Person, Cal Tjader, Charles Earland, Deodato, Fania All Stars, Gato Barbieri, Bill Evans, Bob James, Mongo Santamaria, Buddy Rich, Lionel Hampton, Joe Farrell, Harold Vick, Jimmy Owens, Stanley Turrentine and others. Paz died Apr. 3rd at 88.



**BOB PORTER** (Jun. 20th, 1940 - Apr. 10th, 2021) The producer and liner notes writer worked on hundreds of albums—both new and reissues in both capacities—since the mid '60s for Prestige, Cadet, Muse, Savoy, Palo Alto, Epic, Milestone, Verve, Columbia, Atlantic, Bee Hive, Blue Note, Bluebird, BGP, Rhino and 32Jazz and was a fixture on WBGO since its inception with such programs as *Portraits in Blue*, *Saturday Morning Function* and *Swing Party*. Porter died Apr. 10th at 80.



**AL SCHMITT** (Apr. 17th, 1930 - Apr. 26th, 2021) The Grammy-winning engineer and producer worked on albums by Chris Connor, Shorty Rogers, Lena Horne, Marty Paich, Paul Horn, Hugo Montenegro, Neal Hefti, Peter Nero, George Benson, João Gilberto, Claus Ogerman, Sam Rivers, Sonny Rollins, Casiopea, Yellowjackets, Larry Carlton, Bill Watrous, Miles Davis, Diane Schuur, Mark Whitfield, Bob James, Sal Marquez, Joe Sample, Chick Corea, Diana Krall, Arturo Sandoval, Eric Reed, Danilo Pérez, Carmen Lundy, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Herbie Hancock, Jane Monheit, Kat Edmonson, Chris Botti, Taylor Eigsti, Lisa Hilton, Norah Jones, Paul Kuhn and many others. Schmitt died Apr. 26th at 91.



**BOSSE SKOGLUND** (Apr. 10th, 1936 - Apr. 10th, 2021) The Swedish drummer had an impossibly rare 1963 album on Bird Notes with Bengt Nordström and Don Cherry to go along with credits under Lars Gullin, Staffan Abeleen, Arnold Johansson, Åke Persson, Gunnar Lindqvist, Bernt Rosengren, Bengt Berger, Johnny Dyani and Christer Bothén. Skoglund died Apr. 10th at 85.



**AMEDEO TOMMASI** (Dec. 1st, 1935 - Apr. 14th, 2021) The Italian pianist had well over a dozen albums since the late '60s on Cetra, Canopo, Cenacolo, Cardium, Costanza and Cinedelic after early credits with Chet Baker, René Thomas, Bobby Jaspar, Conte Candoli and Jacques Peltzer. Tommasi died Apr. 14th at 85.



**SUNAO WADA** (Jan. 13th, 1934 - Apr. 29th, 2021) The Japanese guitarist worked with Tsuyoshi Yamamoto, Ushio Sakai and others and released several albums as a leader in the '70s on Three Blind Mice. Wada died Apr. 29th at 87. ❖

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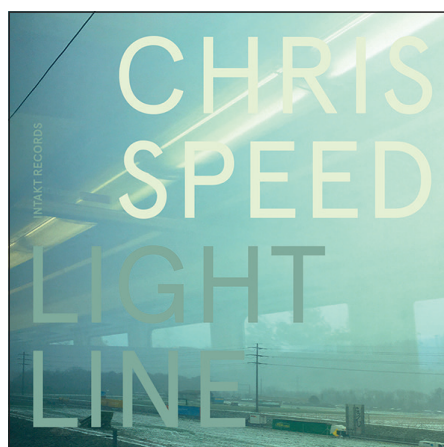
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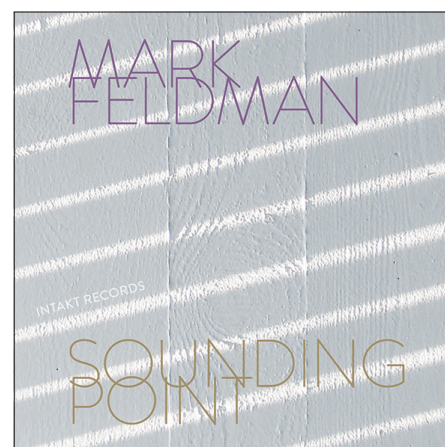
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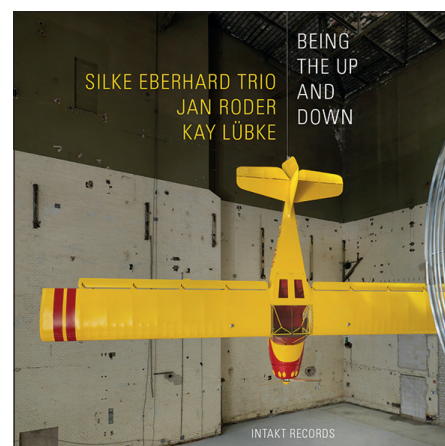
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**Eponymous  
Nortonk (Biophilia)**  
by Dan Bilawsky

The eponymous debut from this chordless quartet is a wild yet well-mapped ride. Overflowing with feisty and freewheeling action, the music projects a certain disregard for order. But that's not to say it embraces chaos. Quite the contrary, since virtually everything Nortonk builds is architecturally sound in some way, shape or form. With clear direction, this forward-thinking foursome creates intricate, rhythmically savvy compositions stressing their own structures. Brazen blowing may suggest a brash form of slack-style expressionism, but when you dig below the surface there are concrete foundations supporting this work.

Alto saxophonist Gideon Forbes, trumpeter Thomas Killackey, bassist Stephen Pale and drummer Steven Crammer contend with obvious touchstones in their choice of format—the Ornette Coleman Quartet, to mention a prime example—but in tipping their collective hat to history, these young experimentalists make no grand concessions. This is original music through and through. Kicking things off with Forbes' tortuous "Chutes and Ladders", Nortonk shows great regard for off-kilter engagement and arrangement. The saxophonist's "Spiders" follows, opening with tremulous unease, showcasing the Pale-Crammer partnership and arriving at a place where hornlines cross and finally coalesce.

With only six tracks on the program, a fondness for evolutionary movement and no run-on performances to speak of, this album seems made for impact. Killackey's "Duuzh" puts driving ambitions to the test. Crammer's "GLaDOS", introduced with frayed minimalism before alternately developing and diving into the unknown, comes off like a quick-shifting character study intent on pointing out both wickedness and wit. And Pale's "Quat" disorients and delights as it bumps, grooves and snakes along.

By the time Killackey's "Herzog" brings things to a close, something as paradoxical as its formation of a cathartic calm seems perfectly normal. Nortonk just has a way of making anything and everything fit together. Some of these pieces came into being early on when the group formed in 2017 and others were developed closer to the recording of this album in February 2020, but all of them highlight a dynamic artistry boding well for this outfit's present and future.

For more information, visit [biophilarecords.com](http://biophilarecords.com). This band live-streams Jun. 1st at [fb.me/e/2miiSk4ZG](https://fb.me/e/2miiSk4ZG).



**Lost**  
Adam Kolker (Sunnyside)  
by Marco Cangiano

For his fourth album on Sunnyside, tenor/soprano saxophonist Adam Kolker has assembled a simpatico quartet—Bruce Barth (piano), Ugonna Okegwo (bass)

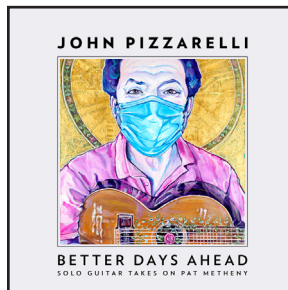
and Billy Hart (drums)—to reinterpret some of Wayne Shorter's gems. Kolker's return to a standard quartet is particularly welcome as it provides ample room for his lead voice. His tenor sound is a unique mix of Shorter and Stan Getz whereas his soprano is less derivative. The CD is consistent and consequential in its choice of material and overall mood, including the two standards.

Even if only two of the compositions are by Shorter, all the others tunes, including Kolker's two originals, have featured or been inspired by him. The best example is Gil Evans' "The Time of the Barracudas", a composition very rarely executed these days. The quartet, thanks mainly to repeated piano chords, aptly reproduces the sound of the original 1963 orchestra. Kolker's solo is very inspired and develops slowly at first, then proceeds assertively over the nimble support provided by warm bass and tasteful drumming. Kolker seems to have a knack for storytelling and ballads: his soprano-based interpretation of Jimmy Van Heusen-Eddie DeLange's "Darn That Dream" is among the most heartfelt and original one will hear whereas Bronislaw Kaper-Gus Kahn's "While My Lady Sleeps" proceeds slowly with soprano meandering around the theme.

Shorter's sense of mystery and suspense is well captured in his title track and "Dance Cadaverous", both of them executed at a slightly slower pace than the originals, the latter featuring somewhat angular soprano. This is also heard on Kolker's "Flips", where shades of Thelonious Monk are present as is the inevitable reference to Steve Lacy.

Throughout the CD Hart provides a clinic on the use of brushes, exemplified in Kolker's "Hidden Treasure", and Okegwo's lines explain why he is one of the most sought-after players on the New York scene but the relative surprise is Barth's rather complex and yet supple comping (as on "The Time of the Barracudas" and "Hidden Treasure") and restrained solos (listen for instance to "Darn That Dream" and the title track), which contribute to one of the most peaceful and balanced quartet CDs of the year so far.

For more information, visit [sunnysiderecords.com](http://sunnysiderecords.com). Kolker live-streams Jun. 2nd at [barbayeux.com](https://barbayeux.com).



**Better Days Ahead (Solo Guitar Takes on Pat Metheny)**  
John Pizzarelli (Ghostlight)  
by Jim Motavalli

Like his late father Bucky, John Pizzarelli epitomizes swing music and jazzy interpretations of the Great American Songbook. In a long career, he's recorded every possible take on that repertoire. But it was always obvious—sometimes in the live parodies and medleys he did—that other forms of music had bubbled up into his consciousness.

But *Better Days* is not Pizzarelli's rock album. It's something rather more welcome. Call it the master guitarist's Jim Hall move. In the wake of both his parents dying of COVID (within a week of each other), Pizzarelli canceled his live dates, took out his seven-string guitar and recorded solo interpretations of Pat Metheny tunes, some of which he'd known since he was a teenager. The result is pure magic, on par with a classic like Chick Corea/Gary Burton's *Crystal Silence*. Does it sound anything like the swinging Pizzarelli you know and love? Not at all.

Metheny's "Better Days Ahead", on the *Letter From Home* album, is, for instance, an AfroBrazilian type of thing with a bright melody line and burbling

hand percussion. Pizzarelli's version is—like the whole project—introspective and spare and lovely, reminiscent of Baden Powell and other masters of delicate feelings.

By contrast, Metheny recorded "September Fifteenth" in a meditative duet with recently departed keyboard player Lyle Mays, who brought a lot of synthesizer wizardry to his work. There's a live take of the two of them on YouTube, with Mays synthesizing strings as he uses the other hand to pick out the melody. Pizzarelli has said he figured out a way to reproduce Mays' sustained keyboard lines in his solo context and that work is in the grooves.

The respect these two musicians have for each other is palpable. "To say it was flattering to have John address these tunes is an understatement," Metheny says in the press materials. He sent Pizzarelli some much-needed lead sheets to help the project along.

Pizzarelli took his father to see Metheny's group and dad, a master of understatement, came away saying, "The guy is good." Both Pizzarelli and Metheny have roots in the swing tradition, but Metheny chose to stretch out in a number of unexpected and inspiring directions. Pizzarelli has been absorbing that influence, but the evidence was—until now—not readily apparent on his CDs. Am I forgetting that he made an album called *Meets the Beatles*? No, that one was a swinger, too.

The *Better Days* album is of a piece. It would be pointless to dissect it tune by tune. The best experience is had by just putting it on and relaxing. Totally. It's a balm you can apply, proof that there are indeed better days ahead.

For more information, visit [ghostlightrecords.com](http://ghostlightrecords.com). Pizzarelli live-streams Thursdays at [facebook.com/JohnPizzarelliOfficial](https://facebook.com/JohnPizzarelliOfficial).

RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES

- Barry Altschul's 3Dom Factor — *Long Tall Sunshine (Not Two)*
  - Dahveed Behroozi — *Echos (Sunnyside)*
  - Jaimie Branch — *FLY or DIE LIVE (International Anthem)*
  - Fire! — *Defeat (Rune Grammofon)*
  - Girls In Airports x Aarhus Jazz Orchestra — *Leap (Kaja)*
  - Michael Marcus, Joe McPhee, Jay Rosen, Warren Smith — *Blue Reality Quartet (Mahakala Music)*
  - Wadada Leo Smith — *Trumpet (TUM)*
  - Martial Solal — *Coming Yesterday: Live at Salle Gaveau 2019 (Challenge)*
  - Sons of Kemet — *Black To The Future (Impulse)*
  - Three-Layer Cake — *Stove Top (RareNoise)*
- Laurence Donohue-Greene, Managing Editor

- Chris Abrahams/Mark Wastell — *A Thousand Sacred Steps (Confront)*
- Barry Altschul's 3Dom Factor — *Long Tall Sunshine (Not Two)*
- Zach Brock — *Light Shines Through (Soapbox Sessions, Vol. 1) (s/r)*
- Instant Composers Pool — *Incipient ICP (1966-71) (Corbett vs. Dempsey)*
- Michael Gregory Jackson — *Frequency Equilibrium Koan (Golden)*
- James Brandon Lewis Red Lily Quintet — *Jesup Wagon (TAO Forms)*
- Johan Lindström Septett — *On The Asylum (Moserobie)*
- Roberto Miranda's Home Music Ensemble — *Live at Bing Theatre—Los Angeles (1985) (Dark Tree)*
- Red Trio & Celebration Band — *Suite 10 Years Anniversary (NoBusiness)*
- Paul Van Gysegem Quintet — *Square Talks (El Negocito)*

Andrey Henkin, Editorial Director





**Pandemic Duets**

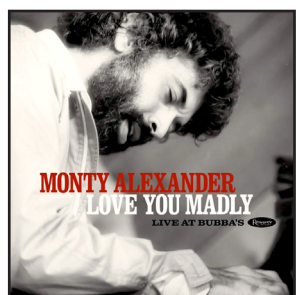
**Mara Rosenbloom/Stephen Gauci (Gaucimusic)**  
by John Sharpe

When everything shut down in March 2020 due to COVID, New York City native tenor saxophonist Stephen Gauci initiated what he thought would be a set of five duet recordings in a refusal to be cowed by the lack of performance opportunities. In fact, the digital-only collection mushroomed to some 19 entries since that summer, with the encounter with pianist Mara Rosenbloom, of just over 35-minute duration, among the first. With her jostling rhythmic drive and muscular lyricism, Rosenbloom is an astute choice to partner with Gauci's similarly forceful tenor saxophone conception on ten freewheeling exchanges.

Reflecting mentors who include esteemed pianists Cooper-Moore and the late Connie Crothers, Rosenbloom uses inside virtues to inform an outside sensibility, with a stream of repeated motifs welded into a flexible responsive line. While Gauci's accomplished mix of overtone manipulation and multiphonics remains a key element of his singular approach, he realigns normally oblique phrasing to connect with emphatic chording, so much so that he's just about in the pocket on the earthy "#1" and nears the outskirts of melody with breathy vibrato-laden skirl on the ballad tempo "#2".

Such empathetic dialogue arises elsewhere too: contemplative, almost mournful "#4" and extended journey of "#6", which roves far from its tuneful beginnings, picking up locomotive energy from Rosenbloom to fuel Gauci's ascent from gruff squawk to querulous falsetto. On "#9" Gauci paraphrases Rosenbloom's reiterations as the basis for a fast moving call and response in which the pianist even evokes stride stylings. But the listening also manifests in the effective contrasts found on "#5" when piano answers altissimo squeals with a thunderous bottom-end rumble. Brevity imparts weight to each of the improvisations, testament to a focused and well-matched pairing.

For more information, visit [gaucimusic.bandcamp.com](http://gaucimusic.bandcamp.com). Rosenbloom live-streams Jun. 3rd at [artsforart.org](http://artsforart.org).



**Love You Madly: Live at Bubba's**  
**Monty Alexander (Resonance)**  
by Pierre Giroux

Not unlike the traveler in the ancient land Shelley describes in the sonnet *Ozymandias*, producers George Klabin and Zev Feldman of Resonance keep unearthing musical treasures. One of the most recent, recorded in 1982 at Bubba's in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, had been buried in the collection of pianist Monty Alexander.

In this joyous two-disc romp, Alexander revels in his forcefulness as bassist Paul Berner, percussionist Robert Thomas Jr. and drummer Duffy Jackson deliver on the cohesiveness and give-and-take of small-group jazz. Jackson, who died last March, came from a musical family, his father prominent bassist Chubby

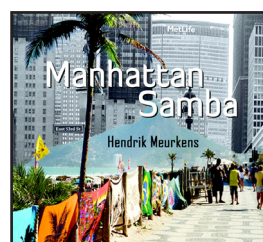
Jackson. The younger Jackson was a swinging stylist informed by the likes of Don Lamond, Louie Bellson, Buddy Rich and Alan Dawson. This brilliant live set was wonderfully recorded by Mack Emerman (Miami's Criteria Recording Studio) and offers a panoply of musical touchstones from jazz, pop and reggae to samba and originals, all of which benefit from Alexander's immeasurable technique and pianistic flair.

Disc 1 opens with "Arthur's Theme", from the popular 1981 movie. The theme is readily identifiable and establishes the structure upon which Alexander hangs his interpretation. Humming along at a brisk tempo supported by an expressive rhythm section, this tune acquires a new and interesting personality. The title track is a Duke Ellington standard taken at a leisurely swinging pace. Jackson's stirring brushwork gives Alexander the road map to explore the mood and structure of the composition. The interpretation of Brazilian guitarist Luiz Bonfá's classic bossa nova number "Samba De Orfeu" finds the samba beat kept intact but the tempo taken up a notch with Alexander showing a dexterous left hand. Thomas carries some weight with a nimble-fingered hand drum solo.

Disc 2 starts out in a funky blues fashion with the Milt Jackson composition "Blues For Edith". Alexander uses his Jamaican roots to give a soulful reading to the number. Richard Evans' "Montevideo" may not be well known, but is worth consideration given Alexander's full-speed-ahead rendition, bursting with South American rhythm and authoritative attack by Thomas and especially Jackson in crisp solo interjections. Johnny Green-Edward Heyman ballad "Body And Soul" is given a respectful treatment: after a straightforward run-through of the melody, Alexander settles into tasteful tempo for fluent phrases and thoughtful lines, all the while leaning on the solid bassline. The side ends as it began with another Milt Jackson tune, "SKJ"; taken at a brisk clip, it has a linear framework allowing the band to scamper through the number with suppleness.

In addition to quality music, the packaging contains a 41-page booklet filled with stories, pictures, interviews and appreciations from piano contemporaries and heirs such as Kenny Barron, Benny Green, Emmet Cohen and Christian Sands.

For more information, visit [resonancerecords.org](http://resonancerecords.org). Alexander is at Jazz Forum Arts Jun. 4th-5th. Visit [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org).



**Strollin'**

**Tony Monaco, Hendrik Meurkens, Reid Hoyson,  
Mark Lucas (Reid Hoyson Productions)**  
**Manhattan Samba**  
**Hendrik Meurkens (Height Advantage)**  
by Scott Yanow

The history of jazz harmonica can be divided into three parts. First came Larry Adler (1914-2001), probably the instrument's first virtuoso. Although he played a wide variety of settings ranging from symphony orchestras to small cabaret groups, his occasional jazz forays (including the John Kirby Sextet and Django Reinhardt/Stéphane Grappelli Quintet of the Hot Club of France) put him at the top. Starting in the '50s, Toots Thielemans (1922-2016) was the king for 60 years, holding his own with the likes of Oscar Peterson and Dizzy Gillespie while also being a very skilled guitarist and whistler. With his passing, several jazz harmonica players have helped to fill the gap. Hendrik Meurkens, who started out as a vibraphonist (which he still plays), has been a major force for the

past 25 years. His love of bebop and Brazilian music is similar to Thielemans' but he has his own sound as he has shown on a couple dozen albums as a leader.

Meurkens is generally the lead voice on drummer Reid Hoyson's *Strollin'*. He and organ player Tony Monaco had long wanted to record together; this was their first opportunity, a band completed by guitarist Mark Lucas and sometimes George Jones on congas. The set includes such standards as "Yardbird Suite", Horace Silver's "Strollin'", "You Don't Know What Love Is" and a sensitive version of "A Child Is Born", plus three originals apiece from Meurkens and Monaco and one from Lucas. The playing is relaxed and melodic with concise solos. Hoyson, very much in a supportive role (just taking a few breaks on the only cooker, "Aglie E Olio"), is the producer, a Pittsburgh fixture who formerly worked with the late Richie Cole. Most notable is the blend between harmonica and organ. While nothing startling takes place, the music is quite pleasing.

*Manhattan Samba* gives one an opportunity to hear the other musical side of Meurkens. His rhythm section (pianist Helio Alves, either Gustavo Amarante or Fernando Huargo on bass and drummer Portinho) plays infectious modern samba rhythms throughout most of the eight numbers, five of which Meurkens composed. Among the more memorable performances are the title track (a second cousin of "Giant Steps"), which has a heated harmonica-piano tradeoff; catchy "One For Manfredo"; Meurkens' haunting playing on Ivan Lins' "Dona Palmeira"; and the delightful "Frenzelosa (Choro No. 2)" with its tongue-twister theme the leader plays flawlessly in unison with Alves.

For more information, visit [reidhoyson.bandcamp.com](http://reidhoyson.bandcamp.com) and [hendrikmeurkens.com](http://hendrikmeurkens.com). Meurkens is at Jazz Forum Arts Jun. 13th. Visit [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org).

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## GLOBE UNITY



### Puros

Liudas Mockūnas/Arvydas Kazlauskas (Jersika)  
*The Father, the Sons & The Junnu*  
 Juhani Aaltonen, Jonas Kullhammar, Christian Meaas Svendsen, Ilmari Heikinheimo (Moserobie)  
*Rebellion(s)*  
 Sylvain Rifflet, Jon Irabagon, Sébastien Boisseau, Jim Black (BMC Records)  
 by Tom Greenland

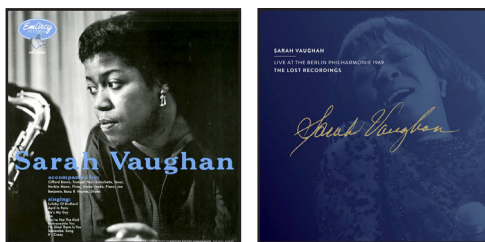
Next to the human voice, saxophone is arguably the most expressive instrument in jazz, so when creative saxophonists pair up emotive possibilities are myriad. New projects suggest two horns are better than one.

Lithuanian saxophonists Liudas Mockūnas and Arvydas Kazlauskas have conservatory backgrounds, so when they apply their imaginations to improv, as on *Puros*, a duo album recorded in a Latvian peat bog (Disc 1) and a peat amphitheater (Disc 2), the variety of tones and timbres is considerable. Most of the 14 tracks feature Mockūnas on bass saxophone, Kazlauskas on baritone, so the prevailing ambitus is low-pitched, but Mockūnas also plays soprano, soprano (both at the same time on “Gyvatyne”), tenor and keyless overtone saxophones while Kazlauskas doubles on soprano and tenor. Half the fun is figuring out who’s playing what when, a task made harder by the fact that both negotiate the extreme ranges of their horns so deftly that the low-pitched horns sound like high-pitched ones and vice versa. Consistently excellent, the second set nudges the first for its superior energy, thanks to a live audience.

*The Father, the Sons & The Junnu* is a collaboration between saxophonists Juhani Aaltonen (tenor, flute) and Jonas Kullhammar (tenor and baritone), bassist Christian Meaas Svendsen and drummer Ilmari Heikinheimo, recorded in Helsinki. “Junnu”, a pivotal figure in Finnish improv, now in his mid 80s, is remarkably vital, particularly on flute, pacing the younger men (Swede Kullhammar is in his mid 40s, the other two in their mid 30s) like a seasoned thoroughbred. “Il Ju Jo Christ”, featuring tenor and baritone at full strength, and “Sorrow Wave”, featuring two tenors, blend rock, swing and skronk with ease and power, though some of the most attractive moments occur when Aaltonen opts for flute, lithely slipping in and out of harmony in counterpoint to Kullhammar’s turbulence. “Kiirohige” has a particularly fine moment when tenor, flute and bass all entwine.

*Rebellion(s)*, saxophonists Sylvain Rifflet (France, tenor) and Jon Irabagon (mezzo-soprano, soprano) with French bassist Sébastien Boisseau and drummer Jim Black, is an overtly political project inspired by activists who voiced their opposition to political, racial and sexual repression, climate change and gun control. Irabagon’s horns—mezzo-soprano pitched just above an alto, soprano pitched a fourth above a soprano—govern the upper register, Rifflet occupying the middle, the reeds separate but simpatico, together creating a snug balance of structure and freedom as they navigate the fluid song forms marked by a floating backbeat. Standouts include “The Adults in the Room”, which begins as an accompaniment to a recording of Emma Gonzalèz’ notorious anti-N.R.A. rant, but later ‘de-quantizes’ the groove (à la J Dilla), and “America: Daybreak”, an Ornette Coleman-esque freebop workout rife with uncanny rhythmic modulations and spiky interplay.

For more information, visit [jersikarecords.com](http://jersikarecords.com), [moserobie.com](http://moserobie.com) and [bmcrecords.hu](http://bmcrecords.hu)



*Sarah Vaughan (with Clifford Brown)*  
*Sarah Vaughan (Verve/UME Acoustic Sounds Series)*  
*Live at The Berlin Philharmonie 1969*  
*Sarah Vaughan (The Lost Recordings)*  
 by George Kanzler

The albums here portray singer Sarah Vaughan at very different moments in her four-decade-plus career. Captured with an allstar sextet on *Sarah Vaughan* at 30, she was a singer possessed of incredible vocal and musical gifts, interacting effortlessly and often playfully, with the musicians. On *Live at the Berlin Philharmonie 1969*, Vaughan at 45 was a very self-conscious diva, exploiting the richness of her voice to impress in performances that were tour de force extravaganzas.

On the earlier album, Vaughan interacts with the members of the sextet as if one of them. On “Lullaby of Birdland” she wordlessly sings along with the horns on arranger Ernie Wilkins’ boppish intro and trades fours, scatting, with trumpeter Clifford Brown, tenor saxophonist Paul Quinichette and flutist Herbie Mann (this was the only time she recorded with the horn players). The rhythm section was her working trio: Jimmy Jones (piano), Joe Benjamin (bass) and Roy Haynes (drums). The arrangements are simple, leaving plenty of space for horn solos as well as obbligati behind vocals. For instance, “Jim” begins with a four-bar intro combining wordless vocals and flute, followed by Vaughan singing the lyrics as Mann and Quinichette alternate playing obbligati, Brown’s open trumpet taking a chorus before the lyrics are reprised, again with flute and sax obbligati. Tempos vary—from slow ballad “Embraceable You”, the only track without horns—to uptempo swing, “It’s Crazy”, but most fall in the middle, easy swing. Even “September Song” picks up after a slow introductory verse. Vaughan is often playful, altering harmonies or swooping down or up from the melody. She can be jaunty (“He’s My Guy”) or adventurous (“You’re Not the Kind”) but she’s always fully engaged and fully aware of what the musicians around her are doing.

*Live at the Berlin Philharmonie 1969* album consists of two different concerts performed on Nov. 9th, 1969. The second one has been released before, but the first is debuted here. Vaughan was no longer signed to a label and was into her transition from singing in clubs to doing stage concerts, presenting herself as a diva; she would continue as mainly a concert stage performer, with occasional club appearances, for the rest of her career (she died in 1990). Presenting herself as a diva was still a work-in-progress in 1969. These recordings emphasize the rich tones and textures of her voice, often in long legato phrasing and predominately at slow, or even semi-rubato, tempos. The second CD is full of such moments; even “Fly Me To the Moon” is done at a snail’s pace. The CD also gives (too much) prominence to the melodramatic songs of Jimmy Webb, “By the Time I Get To Phoenix” and “Didn’t We”. The three uptempo songs are all dealt with in about two minutes apiece, with the bulk of the CD featuring vocal pyrotechnics. The first and newly released CD has better balanced repertoire and is a fine addition to Vaughan’s discography. It includes a bossa-tinged “And I Love Him”; slow, smoldering “Alfie”; gorgeously unhurried “Misty”; and lush “My Funny Valentine”. She also reprises and infuses with rich vocal magic songs she recorded early in her career: “Passing Strangers” and “Tenderly”.

For more information, visit [umgcatalog.com](http://umgcatalog.com) and [thelostrecordings.store](http://thelostrecordings.store). The Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition live-streams Jun. 6th at [njpac.org](http://njpac.org).



*Stringers & Struts*  
 Dave Rempis/Jeff Parker/Ingebrigt Håker Flaten/  
 Jeremy Cunningham (Aerophonic)  
*Closed For Safety Reasons*  
 TOC & Dave Rempis (Circum-Disc)  
*Sud des Alpes*  
 Rempis Percussion Quartet (Aerophonic)  
 by Steven Loewy

The startling intensity of saxophonist Dave Rempis is often the first thing you think of when hearing his music. But while he is, in part, a flamethrower, he also has total control of his horn and is a curator, organizer of concerts and participant in a large number of independent projects, often documented on his Aerophonic label.

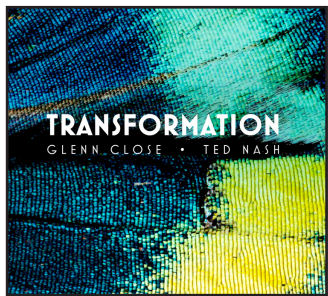
On *Stringers & Struts*, Rempis is joined by longtime collaborators Jeff Parker (guitar), Ingebrigt Håker Flaten (bass) and Jeremy Cunningham (drums). Of the three pieces, only “Caviste” is under 20 minutes, but Rempis has no difficulty with lengthy outings, as he plays with an unrelenting fervor and paces his solos well. “Cutwater” opens gently and takes some time to build, Rempis improvising beautifully over the rhythm section, complemented by engaging solos by Parker and Håker Flaten. The guitarist whirls, slides and bursts outside, sometimes reminiscent of guitarist Derek Bailey in his seeming randomness. On “Harmony”, which lasts more than 25 minutes, nuance is the word, rhythm members joining and dropping out, Rempis gradually building his solo, saxophone and guitar dominating. Similarly, closer “Caviste” starts slowly then features extended techniques, including flutter tonguing and twisted stretched notes, and some lovely boppish lines from baritone saxophone.

Rempis traveled to France in late 2019, following a short North American tour, to record *Closed For Safety Reasons* with the brilliantly eclectic TOC: Jérémie Ternoy (Fender Rhodes), Peter Orins (drums) and Ivan Cruz (guitar). TOC is less jazz-oriented than what Rempis often records, so he adjusts his style just slightly to fit, immersing himself in the rollicking collective. Opening “No Sleep at LaZone” has Rempis blowing relentlessly and “Snow Storm in Saillans” finds him in the midst of a major conflagration. The title piece changes colors, but retains the off-balance scorched earth ruminations, changing directions throughout, with Rempis in a phantasmagoria of sound. On closer “Temporary Lease”, tenor saxophonist Sakina Abdou is added, with stunning consequences; he and Rempis blend with the hard-driving, almost trancelike rhythms, with greater focus on the collective, leading to exciting results that never wane.

Recorded live in Switzerland in 2019, *Sud des Alpes* is the tenth release of The Rempis Percussion Quartet: Rempis and Håker Flaten with drummers Tim Daisy and Frank Rosaly. The pieces are long, but exciting, with variations in volume, tempo and density. “There’s a Jam on the Line” begins quietly enough: drums and bass setting the stage for Rempis; the pace a bit less urgent; the lines from Rempis jazzier than usual. But by the end, he is pounding with usual blasts and wild forays. 20-minute-plus “Theme de Yoyo/Evacuation” starts with the Art Ensemble of Chicago piece, slowly building to another blustery finale while strong drums and muscular bass devastate. “Late Arrival” is the quartet in full bloom, drums and bass pushing hard. These four have been together for years and it shows in their performance. The titles of the first and third pieces correspond to the considerable delays they experienced in arriving by train to Switzerland for the concert, perhaps spurring them to a great performance.

For more information, visit [aerophonicrecords.com](http://aerophonicrecords.com) and [circum-disc.com](http://circum-disc.com). Rempis live-streams Wednesdays at [twitch.tv/daverempis](http://twitch.tv/daverempis).





**Transformation: Personal Stories of Change, Acceptance, and Evolution**  
Glenn Close/Ted Nash (Tiger Turn)  
by Marilyn Lester

Tony Award-winning actress Glenn Close and Grammy winner Ted Nash have collaborated on a concept album that ambitiously—and successfully—captures the joy and angst of human existence. The two close friends had decided to address change thematically, further inspired by Nash's daughter transitioning successfully to male. Music by Nash, played by the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis (JLCO), coupled with texts curated by Close, prove equally literate. The narratives, keenly delivered by Close, Wayne Brady, Amy Irving, Matthew Stevenson, Eli Nash and others include work by Ted Hughes, Conrad Aiken, Edward O. Wilson, Tony Kushner and Judith Clark.

Nash is no stranger to thematic suites. In *Transformation* he's composed a strong, evocative score, executed by the consummate playing of JLCO members, including standouts like Sherman Irby (woodwinds), Ryan Kisor (trumpet), Vincent Gardner (trombone) and Dan Nimmer (piano). Total immersion begins with "Creation, Part 1", a thundering, jolting verbal and musical rendering of the chaos of creation, followed by a dive into an instrumental "Creation, Part II", which announces the jubilation of what's just come into being.

One of the most affecting pieces is "A Piece by the Angriest Black Man in America (or, How I Learned to Forgive Myself for Being a Black Man in America)" with text and narration by Brady. The narrative is exceedingly raw, with accompaniment primarily by bassist Carlos Henriques and drummer Obed Calvaire, adding an intensity that cuts forcefully to the core.

As effective as the stunning beginning is the last track, "Reaching the Tropopause", with text from Kushner's *Angels in America*. With tenor saxophone (Victor Goines) and trumpet (Marsalis) out front, exultant, dramatic voicings of hope fade into the quietude of peace. The sum total of *Transformation: Personal Stories of Change, Acceptance, and Evolution* is a musical ride through the human condition, astutely represented, compactly delivered and absolutely worth experiencing.

For more information, visit [tednash.com](http://tednash.com). Nash live-streams Jun. 8th at [soapboxgallery.org](http://soapboxgallery.org).



**Zero Grasses: Ritual for the Losses**  
Jen Shyu & Jade Tongue (Pi)



**Recognition**  
Sara Serpa (Biophilia)  
by Tom Greenland

In March 2020, vocalists/composers Jen Shyu and Sara Serpa (along with Jordannah Elizabeth) conceived of the Mutual Mentorship for Musicians (M<sup>3</sup>), an initiative fostering international collaboration between female artists, both performing at the organization's

inaugural concert held last December. Each has recently released an album that together offer an intriguing comparison of these highly distinctive artists.

*Zero Grasses: Ritual for the Losses* is a high-water mark in Jen Shyu's eclectic oeuvre, even as it suggests there may be better to come, if future work finds a way to focus and unify her disparate visions. After a challenging year of quarantine, racial turmoil and, above all, the sudden loss of her father, Shyu had a lot about which to think and compose. Here she enlists Jade Tongue, an empathetic ensemble comprised of trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, violist Mat Maneri, bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Dan Weiss.

The opening four-part suite, "Living's a Gift", uses lyrics written by local middle school students to juxtapose the joy of Spring with the less joyous realities of quarantined living, Shyu interpreting the children's words in a free-form melodic style reminiscent of Joni Mitchell, overdubbing her vocals to create harmonic echoes as Akinmusire weaves subtle contrapuntal lines in the background. "Lament for Breonna Taylor", an elegy based on Taylor's mother's public statements about the tragic shooting of her daughter by police in 2020, directly segues to "The Human Color", a remake of an earlier version recorded with Jade Tongue, containing the ever-relevant lines: "Skin rubs off and what remains? The human color of our veins". Several pieces draw on Shyu's fieldwork in Southeast Asia—"A Cure for the Heart's Longing" and "When I Have Power" based on the Javanese and Resuk (from East Timor) languages, respectively—while "Body of Tears" is a translation into Indonesian of the email she received announcing her father's death, all interpreted in her highly flexible vocal style and laced with instrumental commentary.

Two more songs are played on biwa (a short-necked lute), sung in traditional yodeling Japanese style, a product of Shyu's most recent fieldwork, followed by two originals that contain some of her most impressive singing, with English lyrics addressing difficult choices, life and death, concluding with a (wo)manifesto to carry on.

Like Shyu, Sara Serpa has a well-trained, pure-toned voice seemingly capable of almost anything, though she has often eschewed lyrics in favor of an overtly instrumental approach to her music. *Recognition* is the soundtrack to a silent film she constructed from her grandfather's Super 8 home movies made in 1961 of Angola in the grip of Portuguese colonial rule. Having grown up in Lisbon, she is concerned to redress the lack of public recognition of Portugal's role in human rights violations, hence the album's title.

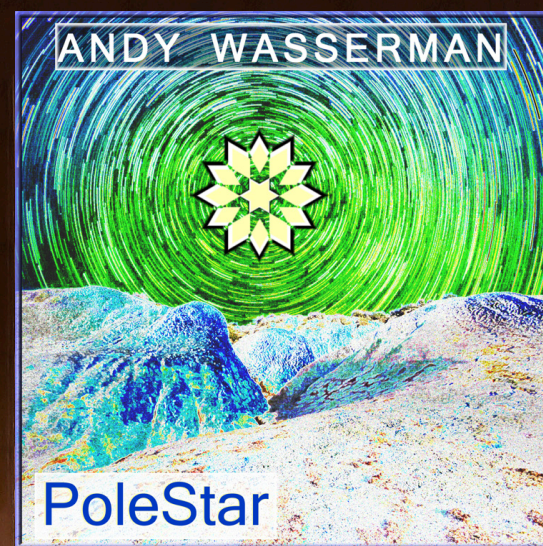
To flesh out her atmospheric themes and intricate contrapuntal arrangements she recruited harpist Zeena Parkins, tenor saxophonist Mark Turner and pianist David Virelles. Many of the pieces are adroitly arranged, employing the tenor as a unison, harmony or contrary melody; the piano as a more free-flowing accompaniment, adding basslines, vamps and reactive flourishes spanning the keyboard; the harp as a subtler but no less potent presence, which thickens and colors.

Most of the time Serpa's dulcet mezzo-soprano functions as the lead horn, sounding with classical purity even as her improvisations become more adventurous—a great example of this musical "multilingualism" is heard on "Control and Oppression"—but on "Beautiful Gardens" and "Queen Nzinga" she delivers spoken word, the latter to bluesy improvised accompaniment.

The final piece, "Unity and Struggle", uses vocal overdubs to evoke a madrigal texture, set in 5/4 time with lyrics by Bissau-Guinean revolutionary Amílcar Cabral, capped by a strangely lyrical tenor solo.

For more information, visit [pirecordings.com](http://pirecordings.com) and [biophilarecords.com](http://biophilarecords.com). Shyu and Serpa present the Mutual Mentorship for Musicians (M<sup>3</sup>) Festival live-stream Jun. 12th-13th at [jazzmuseuminharlem.org](http://jazzmuseuminharlem.org).

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*Purest Form*  
James Francies (Blue Note)  
by Russ Musto

The sophomore Blue Note release by James Francies finds the young keyboard wizard melding both contemporary and jazz-fusion with hip-hop, R&B and electronica in starkly original compositions.

The date opens with atmospheric keyboards amblytically accompanying a solemn recitation by his wife Brenda Francies of her poem "Adoration". Fellow Houston natives bassist Burniss Travis III and drummer Jeremy Dutton feature on the dynamically rhythmic "Levitate". Saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins, Blue Note labelmate and another Houstonian, joins the fray on "Transfiguration", choir-like keyboards and fluid piano undergirding soaring alto. Houston-based vocalist Peyton sings her lyric to Francies' "Blown Away", a slowly grooving ballad, followed by Elliott Skinner intoning his words to Francies' yearning "Rose Water".

The instrumental group expands to a sextet with the addition of guitarist Mike Moreno and vibraphonist Joel Ross on a high-flying arrangement of Richard Rodgers-Oscar Hammerstein's "My Favorite Things". Francies' classical training is evident on his "Stratus" in the company of a string quartet. "713" (Houston's area code) is a soulful tribute performed by the trio. Francies'

vocals augment his piano and keyboards on "Melting", a stirring duet with drum programmer DJ Dahi.

The quintet with Wilkins and Ross lets loose on "Where We Stand", after which James Francies, Sr., accompanied by the trio, reads from his memoir on "Freedmen's Town", detailing his upbringing in Houston's Fourth Ward. Vocalist Bilal makes an appearance on "Eyes Wide Shut", an otherworldly outing that also features strident guitar. The voices of Francies and late mother Shawana are heard with the string quartet on the terse interlude "Still Here" before he closes things out alone with his mournful "Oasis".

For more information, visit [bluenote.com](http://bluenote.com). Francies live-streams Jun. 2nd with Jeff "Tain" Watts at [barbayeux.com](http://barbayeux.com).



*Aging*  
Lucie Vítková/James Ilgenfritz (Infrequent Seams)  
by Tyran Grillo

Even in moments of clarity, one comes across rough spots that won't seem to go away. Similarly, in times of chaos, glimpses of lucidity stand out like meteors against the night sky. In both circumstances, those anomalies often prove to be highly instructive—each a learning moment that may be cultivated only through years of introspection. Such is the humbling

opportunity of opening one's ears to the sonic constellations of *Aging*. This collaboration between Lucie Vítková and James Ilgenfritz places the latter's contrabass in the former's compositional matrix.

Across seven parts, nominally distinguished only by a consecutive Roman numeral, the experience unfolds fractally: the closer one gets to an intriguing detail, the more one recognizes the supporting patterns that gave it context in the first place. And while Ilgenfritz plays his instrument with fingers and bow, Vítková's meticulous preparations and electronic integrations allow the digital soul of its acoustic body to breathe beyond its cage. Hints of sirens resound like voices struggling against a historical silencing, as if the very weight of the past were cause for emergency. And yet, within that tautness is also hope and, perhaps, victory over the tectonic shifts of human error, made palpable when Ilgenfritz sheds his technological clothing (as in "IV"), standing naked before the mirror of time and singing for no other honor than the act itself. But then, there are passages (as in "V") during which the bass seems barely to breathe the stasis of self-awareness. And if the more jagged figurations articulated in "VI" jump out with contrast, it's only because being given something to wield and interpret is a tradition to which we've become socially averse.

This is, perhaps, why one cannot help but hear in this grinding a way of speaking that feels even more organic to us in 2021 than when it was recorded in 2016. Wandering inside this veritable hurdy-gurdy of introspection, we cling not to the promise of escape but to the reality of knowing how much work needs to be done to listen.

For more information, visit [infrequentseams.com](http://infrequentseams.com). This duo live-streams Jun. 18th at [infrequentseamsstreamfest.com](http://infrequentseamsstreamfest.com).



# JAZZ IN JUNE

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Soundtrack

Dmitry Baevsky Quartet (Fresh Sound-New Talent)  
by Ken Dryden

A native of Saint Petersburg, Russia, alto saxophonist Dmitry Baevsky showed promise at a young age, earning a full scholarship to The New School. Flourishing in the tough environment of New York City, Baevsky's mastery of his instrument, plus his knack of seeking out the best available players has contributed to his success. For his latest CD, he recruited pianist Jeb Patton (a seasoned veteran championed by Jimmy Heath), bassist David Wong (like Patton, an in-demand Heath alum) and drummer Pete Van Nostrand, who also has a lengthy resumé.

Baevsky avoids the pitfalls of leaders who overwhelm the listener with new compositions that are rarely memorable or a setlist filled with predictable warhorses everyone plays. Instead he draws from music of several continents, genres and styles, focusing primarily on songs that are likely unfamiliar or jazz gems that aren't played all that often.

One thing that stands out is that Baevsky is confident enough that he doesn't automatically take the initial solo, putting the spotlight first on the talented Patton. The unusual opening track, "Evening Song", was written by Vasily Solovyov-Sedoi, a 20th

Century Soviet songwriter. The lilting melody seems so familiar and Baevsky's full tone and brisk setting make it an obvious highlight.

There are works by jazz greats, including a hip treatment of Sonny Rollins' "Grand Street" with an impeccable groove set by Wong and strong choruses by Patton and Baevsky. The leader's swaggering rendition of Ahmad Jamal's "Tranquility" reveals another obscurity deserving greater recognition. The best known piece is Vernon Duke's "Autumn In New York", lush alto saxophone savoring every note. Among the originals, Baevsky's rapid-fire, constantly twisting "Over And Out" is a brilliant salute to the many saxophone greats who preceded him.

For more information, visit [freshsoundrecords.com](http://freshsoundrecords.com). Baevsky live-streams Jun. 19th at [gmfjazzsummit.com](http://gmfjazzsummit.com).



First Steps

Philippe Lemm Trio (Outside In Music)  
by Elliott Simon

Sobering statistics have rightly been daily headlines this past year with over 33 million reported cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. However, during that same period another 44 million adults experienced mental illness. In 2020 it claimed pianist Angelo Di Loreto at

age 30, a member of drummer Phillippe Lemm's trio. The trio began about a decade ago at the Manhattan School of Music, completed by bassist Jeff Koch.

*First Steps* is the group's third release and showcases a mature trio functioning as an impeccable unit. From opening "The Kiln", a melodic portrait with vibraphonist Simon Moullier artfully decorating the lines, to the mélange of emotions captured in closer "Caffeinated Souls" the session is full of life and exquisitely propulsive. The program is meant to be a reflection of Lemm's background in dance and despite a few missteps he, Koch and Di Loreto are in sync across ten cuts for an inspired rhythmic journey. "Malambo" and "Elysian Voices" are from Di Loreto, the former a Latin-tinged adventure illustrating his technical and stylistic command across multiple genres and the latter a pensive observation flaunting delicate touch and ensemble playing.

Moullier returns for "Kalief", a timely and sweeping examination of the tragic story of Kalief Browder who died by his own hand two years after his incarceration at Rikers Island after a massive criminal justice system failure. Earlier interpretations of pop tunes such as Simon and Garfunkel's "Scarborough Fair" (*City Birds*, Outside In Music, 2018) and Kansas' "Dust in the Wind" (*New Amsterdam*, Outside In Music, 2016) are now joined by a powerful version of Peter Gabriel's inspirational "Don't Give Up", which takes on new meaning given its current context. A vivacious offering, *First Steps* is tragically the last from this trio, which, through captivating polyrhythms, engaging compositions and expert musicianship, produced a stylish and crystal clear sound.

For more information, visit [outsideinmusic.com](http://outsideinmusic.com). Lemm is at Little Island Jun. 24th. See Calendar.

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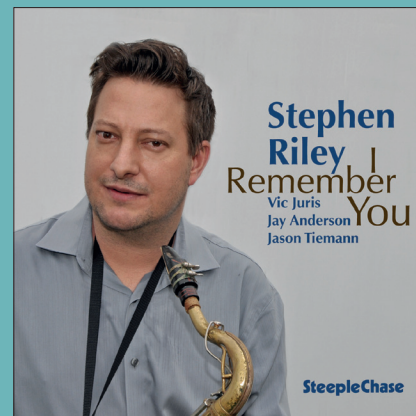


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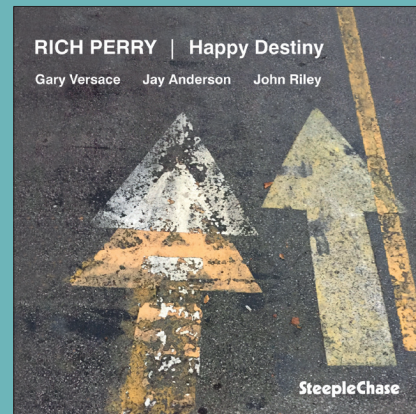
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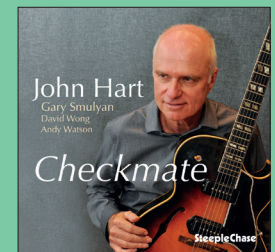


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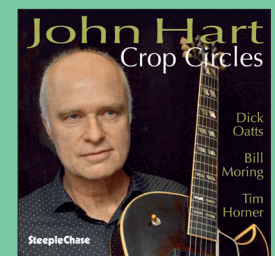
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Pictured: Wayne Tucker  
Photographer: Matt Ellis



Vol. 1: *Sonar* | Vol. 2: *The Middle Playfield* | Vol. 3: *After Life Playfield* (577 Records-Orbit)  
by John Pietaro

The overzealous critic may refer to Daniel Carter's enduring career renewals as "nine lives", but the multi-instrumentalist's work has actually been contained in the current one. For these three Playfield volumes, Carter's plenitude of winds—saxophones, clarinet, trumpet and flute—as well as his poetry, braved the worst of COVID among new company. The ensemble features Luisa Muhr, a self-described "multi-lingual vocal & movement performer/improvisor/installation artist/sound artist/director/theater maker", the proper antagonist for the guy who has performed with damned near everyone. It is unfortunate that her impact is only heard (re: vocals), as during the sessions Muhr's visceral theatrics must have been a major aspect. Playfield is completed by pianist Eric Plaks, drummer Jon Panikkar, saxophonist Ayumi Ishito, bassist Zachary Swanson and guitarists Aron Namenwirth and contemporary music composer Yutaka Takahashi.

*Volume 1's "Sonar"*, a 28+ minute foray, quickly establishes the communal nature of the band: no one seems to be in the lead and everyone's voice is vital. The piece refutes star soloist cult-of-personality avant garde for the genre's collective heart and "Sonar" is an amalgam of its forces. Carter offers a level of leadership only during the latter two minutes wherein his tenor's crafted melody signals the way home. Throughout, the work is free and open, sans emotional ruptures of any kind, with cascading dynamics, pianissimo to mezzo forte. Further, the rhythm of Plaks, Swanson and Panikkar are subtle throughout, painting color commentary rather than forcing drive.

For "The Middle", *Volume 2* of this triptych, the music opens with Carter's trumpet lead, riding near tandem with flowing voice, complemented by tenor saxophone and fleeting guitars. The ensemble responded to Carter's poetry declaring "a pen won a gloss the sky - skis summery ran other in these waves of beaming life, disorientations kind of severe clarity without ever having sensed any beginning to know an inkling of birth of the whole..." Yet, the whole is all that seemed to matter. This work begins where the last volume closed yet moves much further into the concept of ensemble. Listen for the improv-composed dual leads and various harmonic groupings around Carter or Ishito's horns. Muhr often takes on the role of secondary or tertiary 'horn', the ensemble dancing as joyously as Prime Time within this realm of free music and contemporary mores. And while there are lovely, soaring flights in voice, winds or the other instruments, the concept becomes clear that the collective sound's relevance was in direct response to a society in separation.

*Volume 3, "After Life"*, opens with a moving duo of Muhr and Carter's alto saxophone, joined fluidly by the rest. Among the three, this is the ultimate ensemble-created work, one so well threaded as almost to appear through-composed in completion. Shades of electric Miles bubble up throughout, the ghost of Pete Cosey split evenly between Namenwirth and Takahashi's drizzling of effects while Plaks' Rhodes-like Nord piano colors the outer edges of shadow. The voodoo permeates on every corner as Playfield carves mystic space between the amplified journey of then and just now. Listen carefully as Playfield wordlessly casts Carter's verse: "under myriad influences ultimately hyper-natural after wall said do one remaining field of play", riding and whispering against the harmonies of any given moment.

For more information, visit [577records.com](https://577records.com). Luisa Muhr is at Roulette Jun. 24th. See Calendar.





*Phylum*  
**Nazareno Caputo (AUT)**  
*Maquishti*  
**Patricia Brennan (Valley Of Search)**  
 by Thomas Conrad

There are those in the jazz community who are vibraphone-averse, but there are more of us (it is here asserted without evidence) who love the instrument, who revel in the sheer voluptuousness of its sonorities. With the sustain pedal down, those throbbing round notes might hang forever in the air. When played on the vibraphone, any melody sounds more romantic, as it resonates with the human heart.

But it is a specialty instrument with relatively few practitioners. It always feels like vibraphonists are in short supply. Therefore these two debut recordings are newsworthy events, especially because Nazareno Caputo, from Italy, and Patricia Brennan, from Mexico, are rethinking how to communicate on their chosen vehicle. Caputo's *Phylum* is a trio date with bass (Ferdinando Romano) and drums (Mattia Galeotti). Vibraphone trios are surprisingly uncommon (groups with vibraphone usually contain another chording instrument, piano or guitar). Brennan's *Maquishti* presents an even less common ensemble format: solo vibraphone albums are all but unknown (Brennan does add marimba and electronic effects to her toolkit).

Caputo has college degrees in two fields: music and architecture. He thinks of them as closely related. He has said, "In architecture, structure is an element that is often hidden, distinct from the envelope." He has called *Phylum* "research focused on the structural, timbric, melodic elements of music." The description sounds dry and academic. The music does not, but its initial challenges are intellectual. Caputo's structures are not entirely hidden, but they are sublimated and elusive. In pieces like "Adi" and "Dulce", triads and fugues and canons can be glimpsed, flying by. "Abside" is even described as a "compositional game" dedicated to Bach that starts from a four-note motif (B-A-C-H). Such structural elements, atypical for jazz, give *Phylum* a fresh context.

But Caputo's interest in these forms is to either transfigure or dissolve them. *Phylum* succeeds because aesthetic spontaneity always prevails over cerebral theory. Whatever its starting hypothesis, every piece is quickly swept away in improvisational invention, sometimes for 13 or 16 minutes. No vibraphonist in jazz has more interesting new ideas per minute than Caputo. The stark trio setting allows the space and time for those ideas to flower and spread outward and to incorporate illuminating new content from his two collaborators.

If *Phylum* requires a creative listener, *Maquishti* needs a listener both creative and supremely patient. In some ensembles, the vibraphone functions as a piano surrogate. But the vibraphone, with its three octaves, is much more limited as a stand-alone instrument. On some tracks, Brennan's use of electronic effects enables her to accompany herself. But most often she proceeds with only occasional and minimal enhancements, moving haltingly and carefully, marking out patterns as she becomes conscious of them. This music evolves so quietly and gradually that it often feels ponderous and even static. It contains so little dynamic contrast and so few clear climaxes, Brennan constantly risks lulling listeners into inattention.

The most viable pieces, like "Improvisation III", access the full range of stimuli at Brennan's disposal,

from thick deep chords to delicate treble chimings, with washes of effects as background. At such moments Brennan becomes a sound conjurer, presiding over arcane ceremonies, creating mysterious sonorous landscapes, orchestral in scale. The rapt atmospheres justify a claim on the CD's wrapper, that she "uses mallet percussion as a vessel". Yet *Maquishti* always feels more random and gestural than thematic or developmental. Brennan's habit of obsessively repeating every idea she comes across slows this music to a crawl.

Both of these albums will be of special interest to vibraphone lovers: *Phylum* because it introduces the most promising vibraphonist to enter jazz since Joel Ross, *Maquishti* because it is a bold, brave, failed vibraphone experiment.

For more information, visit [autrecords.com](http://autrecords.com) and [valleyofsearch.com](http://valleyofsearch.com). Brennan is at Roulette Jun. 24th with Luisa Muhr. See Calendar.



*White Lotus (featuring Rez Abbasi)*  
**Min Xiao-Fen (Outside In Music)**  
 by Kurt Gottschalk

Jazz/Asian fusion is almost as common as using food metaphors to describe such musical meetings. *White Lotus*, the new album by pipa player Min Xiao-Fen with guitarist Rez Abbasi, is not quite fusion, however. Sadly, though, this review will nevertheless employ a food metaphor.

*White Lotus* is a soundtrack Xiao-Fen composed for the 1934 silent film *The Goddess* by acclaimed Chinese director Wu Yonggang (1907-82). The score, for strings—pipa, sanxian, guqin, ruan, acoustic and electric guitars—and Xiao-Fen's voice, doesn't seem to follow strict cuing of action. It may, but the music stretches out beyond simple cues enough that the music stands on its own.

The score leans toward Chinese tradition at times, feels jazzy at other moments and recalls cinema themes at times; the boldness of Ennio Morricone could well come to the listener's mind at passing moments.

But Xiao-Fen and Abbasi never seek common ground in the music. They're not melding traditions. They're at the same table, they're having the same conversation, they're breaking bread and sharing wine, but they don't lose their separate identities. The Karachi, Pakistan-born guitarist certainly knows a thing or two about bridging cultures, but here he's mostly playing to the jazzy side of the equation, only occasionally delving into some amplified layers and loops. Xiao-Fen is always a wonder and the rich sound of Abbasi suits her well.

Wu's film concerns a young mother who turns to prostitution to support her son in Shanghai, providing plenty of pathos for the music. Xiao-Fen wrote themes for each of the characters, using Buddhist chants for the young mother. It's there that her evocative singing is the most surprising: a guttural voice emanates from deep in her throat, nestled within more vocal tracks. Even without the film, it's a powerful effect.

There are plenty of subtle surprises within *White Lotus*. By never quite meeting in the middle, Xiao-Fen and Abbasi leave a comfortable open space in which the music can move.

For more information, visit [outsideinmusic.com](http://outsideinmusic.com). This project live-streams Jun. 29th at [iamavl.com](http://iamavl.com).



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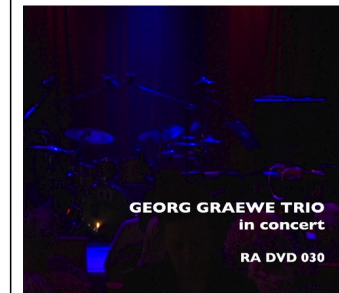
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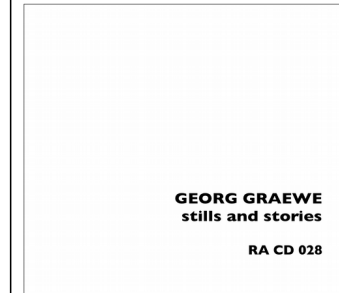
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 Kent Kessler - db  
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**Path of Seven Colors**  
**Ches Smith's We All Break (Pyroclastic)**  
 by Robert Bush

Drummer Ches Smith has consistently raised interest with singular projects and worthy collaborators. According to the liner notes for *Path of Seven Colors*, Smith became enamored of the music of Haitian Vodou after being called to accompany a Haitian dance class in 2000. He much kept this fascination under wraps for the next 15 years as he slowly began to assimilate his knowledge of this complex world of rhythms and polyrhythms before assembling the band We All Break to record an eponymously titled disc in 2015. Last year, he expanded We All Break to include bass (Nick Dunston), saxophone (Miguel Zenón), lead vocals (Sirene Dantor Rene) and another percussionist (Fanfan Jean-Guy Rene) to augment Matt Mitchell (piano), Daniel Brevil and Markus Schwartz (tanbou and vocals) from the previous album. *Path of Seven Colors* is nothing short of stunning. Featuring a mix of original material and traditional Haitian rhythms, each selection springs forward with a true sense of spiritual ebullience.

From the opening "Woule Pou Mwen", it's clear that something special is happening. An early highlight, "Here's the Light" leans on the traditional *Yanvalou* rhythm and the intricate interlocking of the piano, bass and four drummers give Zenón and the vocalists a prime vehicle to ornament. The vibe is highly infectious and doesn't let up. Rene comes to the forefront leading the band's call and response on "Leaves Arrive", and, at about the six-minute mark Dunston unwinds with a nasty solo. There are some tunes that seem more closely related to jazz than others—"Women of Iron" features excellent extended solos from Zenón and Mitchell—but mostly the album succeeds on its own singular fusion of the two traditions. "Lord of Healing" combines four different *Petwo* rhythms and is the magnum opus of the disc, clocking in at more than 14 minutes and taking the listener on a distinct journey while ratcheting the excitement quotient ever higher.

The earlier effort is wonderful on its own terms, but *Path of Seven Colors* delivers on the initial premise in an exponential package. It would be a shame if it does not end up on multiple "Best Of" lists for 2021.

For more information, visit [pyroclasticrecords.com](http://pyroclasticrecords.com). Smith is at *The Sultan Room* Jun. 10th with Marc Ribot and *Roulette* Jun. 25th with Sonya Belaya. See Calendar.



**Reciprocity**  
**María Grand (Biophilia)**  
 by Philip Freeman

Tenor saxophonist María Grand's third record as a leader is also the studio debut of a new trio with bassist Kanoa Mendenhall and drummer Savannah Harris. The first thing we hear is their three voices, reciting the phrase, "The joy of being exactly who you are",

overlapping like they're singing a round. The composition they play afterward, "Creation: The Joy Of Being", begins as a rubato ballad, not free but pulsing and shifting as though the music is a living thing, slowly rising from the earth and stretching its limbs. By the halfway mark, it comes together and Harris' sharp, cracking snare creates a dervish-like dancing feel.

The women sing again on "Fundamental Pt. I", chanting about "the fundamental power" in an almost religious manner over a deep bowed bass drone. "Fundamental Pt. II" is the exact opposite of its hushed, reverent predecessor; bass and drums set up a bouncing, ticking rhythm as quick and fragile as a hummingbird's heart and Grand leaps forward, using them like a trampoline. As it winds down, though, she sings the lyrics from the first part again, linking the two pieces.

Grand's rich tone is immediately, obviously part of the jazz tradition. She has the muscularity and resonance of JD Allen, though her nods to the blues are more oblique and melodic lines longer and more winding. Her voice has a Björk-ian false fragility; she reaches for thin, upper-register notes, but when she drops back down into a more natural range you know it's a feint. Mendenhall and Harris mostly recite rather than sing their parts and on "Creation: Interlude" there's humming over a swinging, stop-start bass-and-drum groove.

*Reciprocity* was written and recorded while Grand was pregnant; the final track, "Creation: Welcome, Starseed", lives up to its title, beginning with barely audible bass scrapes and gently exhaled half-notes from the saxophone, before slowly taking shape as a kind of embracing, womb-like sound world.

For more information, visit [biophilia.com](http://biophilia.com). Grand is at *Roulette* Jun. 25th with Sonya Belaya. See Calendar.



**Musa**  
**Lauren Henderson (Brontosaurus)**  
 by Alex Henderson

Although English is its primary vehicle, vocal jazz has also worked well in a variety of languages. Singer Lauren Henderson favors a bilingual approach on *Musa*, performing in English and Spanish, expressive in both on an album combining post-bop with elements of Latin music and R&B.

Henderson, a Massachusetts native active on the New York City scene, is subtle and understated and she favors a dusky, noir-ish approach whether performing in English on Cole Porter's "I Concentrate on You", Richard Rodgers' "The Sweetest Sounds" and Dimitri Tiomkin-Ned Washington's "Wild Is the Wind" or Spanish on "La Marejada", "Corazón, No Llores" ("Heart, Don't Cry"), "Ahora" ("Now") and "Luz" ("Light"). If Shirley Horn or Julie London had performed in Spanish extensively and incorporated a strong R&B influence, the results could have sounded like *Musa*.

Opener "I Concentrate on You", among the English-language offerings, establishes a Latin feel right away thanks to its Cuban-tinged arrangement. Henderson maintains that aesthetic with the help of her cohesive trio: pianist Sullivan Fortner (who assists with the arrangements), bassist Eric Wheeler and drummer Joe Dyson. Other musicians featured on *Musa* include trumpeter Marquis Hill and Spanish guitarist Paco Soto, yet the trio is the core of Henderson's backing. The haunting "Wild Is the Wind", unveiled in the 1957 film of the same name, has been performed by a long list of vocalists over the

years but Henderson doesn't emulate famous recordings of the past but, rather, turns the song into a sort of Latin bolero. Henderson offers two arrangements of her dreamy original "Leeward", which has a strong quiet storm appeal and isn't unlike something singer Sade would record. Both versions find Hill channeling Miles Davis and one features rapper Daniel J. Watts on spoken word, generating an introspective mood.

Latin music has been having a positive influence on jazz for generations, and Henderson helps keep that time-honored tradition going on *Musa*.

For more information, visit [laurenhendersonmusic.com](http://laurenhendersonmusic.com). Henderson live-streams Jun. 30th at [soapboxgallery.org](http://soapboxgallery.org).

## IN PRINT



**This Uncontainable Feeling of Freedom**  
**Christian Broecking (Intakt)**  
 by Kurt Gottschalk

In a 1980 profile of Irène Schweizer, who turns 80 this month, in the East German magazine *Melodie*, journalist Bert Noglik describes the pianist as "friendly, reserved, modest—a woman who doesn't need to draw attention to herself, because her playing speaks for itself." That portrayal of Schweizer, then just approaching 40, might run deeper than Noglik intended. *This Uncontainable Feeling of Freedom* reveals an artist committed to social causes and to building structures to support the music, even if it's not often apparent in her work or she hasn't often felt compelled to draw attention to the fact that she's doing it. The main line through Christian Broecking's detailed biography is, of course, Schweizer's long career in music, but in the course of its 471 pages we discover an almost stoic commitment to feminism, anti-racism and gay rights issues and to establishing performing and recording opportunities (and compensation) for artists.

Biographies often work through painstaking details of heritage and upbringing before getting to the life worth writing about, but Broecking quickly establishes Schweizer's musical and political influences; early awareness that she was lesbian; lifelong impact of meeting musicians from South Africa (including Abdullah Ibrahim and The Blue Notes) when she was just beginning to work; years of playing only with men; and subsequent fostering of female improvisers in Europe. The book reads almost like an oral history, the story largely pushed by published reports and the many musicians interviewed like Han Bennink, Peter Brötzmann, Hamid Drake, Jøelle Léandre, George Lewis, Louis Moholo-Moholo, Maggie Nicols, Evan Parker and Alexander von Schlippenbach. Schweizer herself often recedes into modesty.

As such, it's not a terribly personal biography. The narrative is set by a chronology of gigs, recordings and responses. By virtue of her involvement, we gain firsthand insight into the Feminist Improvising Group, Zurich's Workshop for Improvised Music, Taktlos festival and Fabrikjazz, Intakt and Ohr labels. It's a valuable and very readable history of the emergence of jazz in Switzerland and the connections forged through Europe, Africa and America by charting the course taken by a woman who was there from the beginning.

For more information, visit [intaktrec.ch](http://intaktrec.ch)





*This Bitter Earth*  
Veronica Swift (Mack Avenue)  
by Dan Bilawsky

Vocalist Veronica Swift doesn't shy away from weighty matters on *This Bitter Earth*. Instead, she uses this platform to address societal ills that beset women and humankind as a whole. Nothing is off limits, both in terms of subject and source material, and a significant number of these selections deal in hard truths that need to be said and deserve to be heard.

With Swift's status as one of her generation's finest vocalists already secured, she now ascends to even greater heights as one of its moral compasses. Backed by an ace trio of pianist Emmet Cohen, bassist Yasushi Nakamura and drummer Bryan Carter and borrowing judiciously from Broadway, jazz singer-songwriter territory, R&B and other spaces, she sings and soars with absolute integrity. Sarcasm and humor assist in properly framing sexism in "How Lovely to Be a Woman" (from *Bye Bye Birdie*). A menacing take on "You've Got to Be Carefully Taught" magnifies that *South Pacific* classic's message about ingrained racism. The Gerry Goffin-Carole King-penned "He Hit Me (And It Felt Like a Kiss)" moves away from The Crystals' classic arrangement and uses a stripped-down sound to represent the battered impacted by

domestic violence. And a trip across Dave Frishberg's "The Sports Page" pushes wit and full-voiced verities about subjective standpoints and fake news.

Mixing the aforementioned material with music from *The Jungle Book*, the Gershwins, The Dresden Dolls and Bob Dorough (among others), Swift shows serious breadth while exhibiting a gift for binding dissimilar gems. Her team, completely in step, brilliantly amplifies her actions. The Cohen-fronted trio does exemplary work, both with understatement and in unreserved environments; guests like alto saxophonist (and flutist) Aaron Johnson and guitarist Armand Hirsch make their respective marks with class; and a polished string quartet, giving life to several Steven Feifke arrangements, adds another layer of sophistication to the proceedings. Everybody involved works in true service of these songs, assisting Swift in crafting a program that resonates on so many different levels. As unflinchingly frank yet eminently listenable albums go, it really doesn't get much better than *This Bitter Earth*.

For more information, visit [mackavenue.com](http://mackavenue.com)



*Light Shines Through (Soapbox Sessions, Vol. 1)*  
Zach Brock (s/r)  
by Marco Cangiano

Zach Brock has rapidly become a point of reference for modern violin. The natural influence is Jean-Luc Ponty but all jazz violinists of the last half-century can be heard one way or the other in Brock's synthesis; it is striking and very welcome to hear traces of the late Zbigniew Seifert. Brock's discography documents evolution in terms of his partners, formations and repertoire, from jazz standards to free forms.

*Light Shines Through* marks an apex, a solo performance recorded during a recent monthly residency at Brooklyn's Soapbox Gallery, touching and expanding on all Brock's influences and inspirations. It is described as a "musical meditation on 2020" via acoustic violin with some sparse use of electronics. Conceived as a suite, which can reference in the five segment titles—"Reckoning", "Desolation", "Compassion", "(Re)invention" and "Resolve"—to *A Love Supreme*, it is a very personal reaction to the *annus horribilis* we just left behind and hope for what lies ahead.

Each note within each of the sequences is carved out as a quest for its very essence. "Compassion" aptly synthesizes this approach—it is also sort of a turning point right in the middle of the performance: a repeated dramatic pattern of two chords upon which the violin cries by keeping the musical phrasing to a minimum in favor of long held notes. The initial "Reckoning" is in itself a mini-suite with evolving moods and a few nods to Ponty and also occasional blue notes reminiscent of SugaCane Harris. "(Re)invention" is a pizzicato showcase marking a shift from the gravity predominant in the first two segments to a sense of levity and hopefulness culminating in the final "Resolve". This segment is the most complex, different musical experiences coming together on an insistent drone shifting into a rock-imbued riff not far from certain Hendrix effects. It all disappears toward the end, leaving room in the last couple of minutes for a celebratory dirge dissolving into silence.

For more information, visit [zachbrock.com](http://zachbrock.com). Brock is at Rockwood Music Hall Stage 2 Jun. 15th and Soapbox Gallery Jun. 23rd

## ON SCREEN



*The United States vs. Billie Holiday*  
Directed by Lee Daniels  
by Kevin Canfield

It's better than many Hollywood biopics, but *The United States vs. Billie Holiday* bears flaws common to the genre, one that has yielded two previous films about the matchless vocalist. The actress in the title role (Oscar-nominated Andra Day) delivers a terrific, multi-dimensional performance; some of those playing her antagonists aren't so great. Celebrated songs are played with verve, but few can be heard in full. The screenplay is effective—except when characters are obliged to deliver dialogue laden with thumbnail history lessons and awkward exposition.

Directed by Lee Daniels, co-creator of the popular music-industry soap opera *Empire*, the film covers two of the best-known chapters from Holiday's biography: her gallant performance of the Abel Meeropol-written "Strange Fruit", a heartrending song about the lynching of African Americans (performed in previous Holiday biopics by Diana Ross and Audra McDonald); and the drug-related arrests that coincided with her growing fame. Suzan-Lori Parks' script, based on a book by journalist Johann Hari, intertwines the storylines, depicting a campaign by federal agents to prevent Holiday from denouncing the racist murders of Black people. "She keeps singing this 'Strange Fruit' song and it's causing a lot of people to think the wrong things," seethes Federal Bureau of Narcotics Commissioner Harry Anslinger (Garrett Hedlund). He can't arrest her for performing, so Anslinger and fellow investigators torment Holiday, repeatedly arresting—and sometimes framing—her for drug possession; the persecution hastens her death at 44. It's a patent oversimplification of Holiday's story, but given what passes for truth in some biopics, it's not an egregious one. Like countless others, Holiday was victimized by paired evils: bigotry and harsh drug laws.

Trevante Rhodes gives a nuanced performance as an undercover Fed who comes to regret his infiltration of Holiday's band, but, as played by Hedlund and a roster of lesser-knowns, most of his officemates are mediocre. Pair a so-so actor with a bit of stilted dialogue—"People are calling the song a musical starting gun for the so-called Civil Rights movement"—and the results aren't good. Meanwhile, Daniels does what every director of a music biopic must, omitting scores of songs and shortening others, making way for as much offstage action as possible. This doesn't diminish the power of Day's performance. Late in the film while touring the South, she comes upon the aftermath of a lynching that has destroyed a Black family; she nearly collapses, then starts running, sickened by the brutal crime. Soon thereafter, she sings "Strange Fruit" in its entirety. Impeccably shot by cinematographer Andrew Dunn, the scene is composed of long closeups that capture the pain and resolve in Day's face and voice. In her autobiography, Holiday called the song "my personal protest". If her version is unrivaled, Day's is an impressive tribute.

For more information, visit [hulu.com](http://hulu.com)

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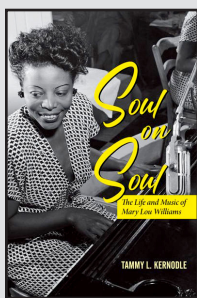


Emmet Cohen  
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## IN PRINT



***Soul on Soul: The Life and Music of Mary Lou Williams***  
**Tammy K. Kernodle (University of Illinois Press)**  
 by Monique Ngozi Nri

16 years after it was published, this revised edition, a holistic view of the “life and music” of Mary Lou Williams, who died 40 years ago, will perhaps find a different and more discerning audience, arriving as it does on the heels of the “#MeToo” movement and a feminist insistence on being heard, recognized and believed. Tammy K. Kernodle couches her exploration in a spiritual space, her experience of *Mary Lou’s Mass*, what she calls “worship music with a progressive social consciousness”, bringing her to explore Williams’ work at the “intersection of her faith and her love of jazz music.”

The first chapter sets the scene: Jim Crow south with a mother who played the pump organ and sang in church; a father who abandoned them; and a stepfather and grandfather who encouraged her amazing ability to play what she heard by ear. A life of poverty was to haunt Williams for most of her life, but it was also one rich with family and music.

In 1915, her family moved to Pittsburgh where she began formal education in music. She progressed to playing in Union bands, soaking up the atmosphere at rent parties and clubs her stepfather would sneak her into to play. Kernodle is careful to describe the way in which male support from her family gave her a level of self-esteem, allowing her to play confidently as an instrumentalist and stay away from the feminine roles so many other Black women musicians were forced to play. It is said that throughout her life she did not smile during performances and made little attempt to engage with her audience. Williams traveled on her own at an early age on the Theatre Owners Booking Association circuit, the breadwinner for her family.

In addition to the strength as a player, Williams was sought after as a composer and arranger. The book discusses comparisons with other female musicians of the time, Hazel Scott in particular, who was seemingly a far more activist figure. Williams’ love life and marriages are intertwined with the story of her music. Of her marriages to John Williams and trumpeter Harold “Shorty” Baker, she said “[I] didn’t marry men, I married horns. After about two weeks of marriage, I was ready to get up and write some music.” She traveled extensively in Europe but also faced many periods with little money and without steady companionship. The latter part of the book deals with her spiritual conversion; work to help drug addicts, for whom she established the Bel Canto Foundation; and, in the last year of her life, The Mary Lou Williams Foundation, providing music scholarships for gifted children.

The preface to this edition tracks Williams’ legacy from Geri Allen’s leadership of the Mary Lou Williams Collective to Dr. Billy Taylor’s founding of the Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival at the Kennedy Center. The book contains a short discography as well as a photo section, showing a stunningly attractive woman as she ages.

For more information, visit [press.uillinois.edu](http://press.uillinois.edu)



***Transcendence***  
**Luke Stewart/Devin Brahja Waldman/  
 Jarvis Earnshaw (Syrinx-Cassette)**  
 by John Pietaro

The linking of free improvisation and world music was a given. From the moment this wide category of the non-Western, lost and little known was ‘collected’ by musicologists, performance practice became fully realized. In the folk and classical music of lands east, south and north of the U.S. and Western Europe, as well as the cultures scattered by war, empire and pestilence, it became ordained that music breathes with improvisation. When global sounds became accessible in the ‘50s, then wholly available in the ‘80s, jazz artists absorbed it with a passion. But this trio isn’t just another in the phalanx of world improvisers; here are sounds as far from “New Age” as the discerning listener would hope.

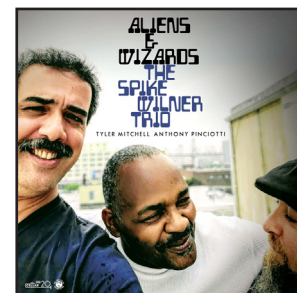
Devin Brahja Waldman’s alto saxophone carries the sculpted, pointed tone of the soprano, even when removed from the forum of global sounds. Here, that oboe-like quality, almost akin to the Indian pungi (the snake charmer woodwind), is particularly evident in his solo piece. Listen for the saxophonist improvising against his own spacious reverberation and the modal twists and turns of phrase he paints over imaginary South Asian ruins. Haunting is a term often used by critics, but it’s difficult to find a more fitting description in this case. Especially when this quality is sustained through much of the album, reminiscent of ‘80s ECM releases with staples such as Jan Garbarek and L. Shankar. One big difference, however, is the addition of the musicians’ voices, plus tape loops and effects woven neatly into the acoustic soundscape.

The tape loops (which slowly increase as the album proceeds) are manipulated by sitar player Jarvis Earnshaw, a global traveler who grew up in Japan, moved to India to study music and then landed in New York. A visual artist as well as musician, Earnshaw makes apparent his art schooling in both Tokyo and Brooklyn via the conceptual approach to his instrument and the ensemble itself. His performance background ranges from new music perennial Daniel Carter and Warhol violinist Walter Steding to poet Anne Waldman and The Cockettes. Mystical, yes, but never at the expense of artistry or technique, the ingredients missing from far too many attempts in this camp. On “Until Tomorrow” his sitar blends with its own sympathetic strings, Waldman’s horn and an echoey tenor vocal to create a beautiful tapestry soon splintered by delightfully conflicting rhythms and a tonal center well beyond mode or key. Tape loops and arco bass effects become the storm center, countering the rest and building the work in intensity with Ornette Coleman-reminiscent saxophone runs over the insistent vocal, now agitated by the repetition of its own tape loop.

Bassist Luke Stewart has been developing a reputation over several years as an improviser for most any setting, on either the upright or bass guitar. His fluid, integrated lines, boldly working from the widest swath of influences, are themselves a statement of the growth of new music. Here, on upright, his instrument is both a lead and accompanying voice, usually simultaneously. When sitar becomes prominent on the title cut, the instrument almost seems extended by the upper reaches of the bass, so interconnected is this trio. Stewart is seemingly everywhere these days, with a CV

including Archie Shepp, Daniel Carter, Heroes Are Gangleaders, Wadada Leo Smith and Anthony Pirog as well as leading his own ensembles and composing new works. The opportunities for a new new music seem strident if this trio soon hits performance stages. Not since CoDoNa has world music been so pleasantly upended.

For more information, visit [jarvisearnshaw.bandcamp.com/album/syrinx-cassette-transcendence](http://jarvisearnshaw.bandcamp.com/album/syrinx-cassette-transcendence). Stewart live-streams Jun. 18th with Jaimie Branch and Jun. 24th with Luisa Muhr, both at roulette.org.



***Aliens & Wizards***  
**Spike Wilner (Cellar Music Group)**  
 by Dan Bilawsky

Spike Wilner’s prowess as a pianist is often eclipsed by his work as one of jazz’ greatest advocates. And that’s not surprising, given the fact that his tireless efforts to get musicians gigging are practically unrivaled. In the best of times it’s hard not to marvel at how Wilner drives an entire scene as the proprietor and operator of two venerated venues—Smalls and Mezzrow, both in New York’s Greenwich Village—and in the age of COVID-19 he’s damn near earned sainthood in trying to keep the doors open, lights on and music flowing.

With all of the time and energy this altruist gives to the jazz community, his playing, beyond regular performances at those aforementioned clubs, frequently takes a back seat. So every now and then a statement like this is necessary to remind the wider world of this man’s musical standing.

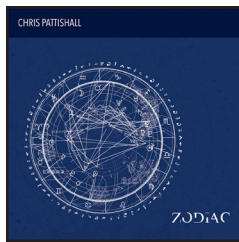
*Aliens & Wizards*, with Wilner’s long-running trio of bassist Tyler Mitchell and drummer Anthony Pinciotti (the same band had a 2017 release on Cellar Live, *Odalisque*), is a clear testament to creative determination. Much of its music came about through explorations on the 88s during the early months of the pandemic pause and it was recorded in August of 2020, when uncertainty still clouded most every moment. But there’s absolutely nothing dour about this program. It actually cuts against the grain of the times. Opening with the late Johnny Ellis’ “Righty-O!”, the mood is bright as can be. Then there’s a pair of classically-inspired originals: “Non Troppo”, nodding to Beethoven in buoyant fashion, and “Adagio”, a wondrous reverie that the pianist wrote in tribute to his wife and daughter.

Four additional Wilner compositions appear across the playlist: spirit-seeking “Mindset”; free-willed title track; soulful and pure-hearted “Prayer for Peace”; and solidly swinging “Trick Baby”. Sterling interpretations of classics “Blue Gardenia” (Lee and Bob Russell) and “Stella by Starlight” (Victor Young) rest near the center of the set.

While this album presents obvious assertions about artistry, it also speaks clearly to outreach and support. *Aliens & Wizards* marks the beginning of a partnership between Cellar Music Group and the SmallsLIVE Foundation, paving the way for future releases from other artists commissioned by the latter entity. Even in recording and collaborating on the release of his own music, Spike Wilner can’t help but consider new ways to champion the greater good.

For more information, visit [cellarlive.com](http://cellarlive.com). Wilner is at Mezzrow Jun. 10th. See Calendar.





*Charity and Love*  
Frank Carlberg/Gabriel Bolaños (Red Piano)  
*Zodiac*  
Chris Pattishall (s/r)  
by George Grella

Mary Lou Williams, who died 40 years ago, released her classic *Zodiac Suite* 76 years ago, not a traditional duration for ceremonial honors but, nevertheless, this spring we have these two albums, one an explicit response to Williams' piece, the other a personal and expressionistic exploration of the mysteries of inspiration and influence. Though the two albums share electronic elements (one of the credits on Chris Pattishall's *Zodiac* goes to Rafiq Bhatia for "sound design, programming"), these records are about as far apart as it gets on the jazz spectrum while still being loosely connected.

*Charity and Love* is almost completely off that spectrum, the only elements of jazz language the occasional rich chord that pianist Frank Carlberg lays down and one of the only links to Williams one will hear is the sound of her voice, captured from an interview and heavily chopped and processed by electronic music composer Gabriel Bolaños. There's a snippet of Williams talking about why music gets labeled "jazz", but otherwise her voice is reduced to pure sound and molded into sonic bricks for an intriguing soundscape through which piano dips and darts. The results are beguiling, in the most abstract sense this is a fine acousmatic album, with a blend of electronic and acoustic sound, which is balanced and well shaped by the two artists.

Carlberg improvises to the extent that predetermined material can be hard to identify, though he works in a couple of quotes from Williams' "Taurus" into the opening title track. This album is less about the individual tracks than the overall form. By the second title, "Mary Lou, May Blue", the two players have left jazz behind and are experimenting with using musical phrases and simple events to weave together acoustic and electronic textures. This is a sensual experience for the ear and steps out of the usual frames of song form and even audible beats into complex and thrilling processes. Carlberg and Bolaños subvert the usual jazz tribute album by making something more like a kind of daydream about how one could feel hearing Williams play. Carlberg said this is not a tribute album, more a celebratory one, and all the music is distilled down to the impetus of pure passion.

Despite the electronic treatments, pianist Pattishall's *Zodiac* is very much in the standard vein. He's not enthralled by the *Zodiac Suite*—which means he plays "Taurus" to start, when Williams opens with "Aries"—but he does return to the original music again and again, especially "Gemini" and "Aries", to weave together his arrangements of the *Zodiac Suite* and the solo turns that the members of the band take. The playing is fine, but there's something uneasy about the listening experience. We're a long way from Williams' mix of boogie-woogie and Debussy, which is too bad, because as style and compositional quality, the two remain some of the freshest and most fulfilling innovations in music in the past 150 years.

Pattishall and band seem a little too knowing, not in any condescending way but in the sense that musicians these days are so well schooled and have such extensive knowledge of the historical musical landscape. They know how everything goes and a lot of the playing shows off what they know, but the understanding, or live quality, is not as deep. Under

Williams' hands, "Taurus" is slippery and insinuating, the march "Leo" is a marvelous set of transitions between parade ground, Satie and Bix Beiderbecke. But here "Taurus" sounds like a respectful reading of a page of sheet music and "Leo" is heavy and pounding, exceedingly vertical and without any swing. What's more, the electronic treatment gives the music a video game aesthetic, which may be a quick, sugar-like rush for some, but leaves a bad taste of commerce and materialism.

Perhaps the issue is tribute. Pattishall made a tribute album and he shows he's listened to Williams by playing her back to us. Carlberg did not make a tribute album and he shows he's listened to Williams by playing what she means to him to us. The former is notable, the latter is memorable.

For more information, visit [redpianorecords.com](http://redpianorecords.com) and [chrispattishall.com](http://chrispattishall.com)



*Celebration*  
Irène Schweizer/Hamid Drake (Intakt)  
by John Sharpe

Swiss pianist Irène Schweizer is one of the pioneers of European free jazz. Celebrating her 80th birthday this month, she remains an active and vibrant presence as evidenced by *Celebration*, which not only marks her own milestone, but also the 40th edition of Austria's Nickelsdorf Jazz Konfrontationen—one of the world's premier creative music festivals—where it was recorded in 2019. Longtime collaborator drummer Hamid Drake joins Schweizer for the festivities in a sparkling set overflowing with snappy interchange and good humor.

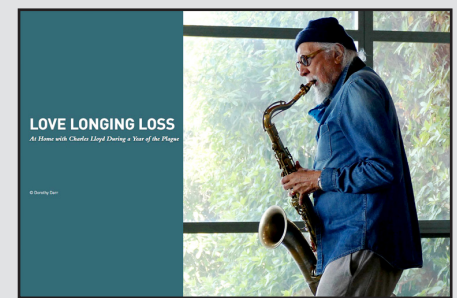
Schweizer allies a percussive approach, informed by Cecil Taylor, to a strong sense of time, founded on her love of the South African grooves of Abdullah Ibrahim and Johnny Dyani. As a consequence throughout her career she has enjoyed a particular affinity with drummers who are liberated to ornament and embellish, as attested by recordings with countryman Pierre Favre, South African Louis Moholo-Moholo, Dutch Han Bennink, German Günter Sommer and Andrew Cyrille. She first encountered Drake, 14 years her junior, in 1995 and the pair has renewed the bond regularly ever since, leading to an almost telepathic understanding. Although the liners confirm that there was no discussion prior to taking the stage, you wouldn't realize that from the breathtaking rapport that ensues.

Drake's talent for on-the-fly syncopation manifests from the off as he matches Schweizer in a headlong staccato dash on "A Former Dialogue". But another of the pianist's traits is also on display here: a predilection for deftly inserting tuneful motifs amid the abstraction to suggest song form and the feeling of structure. Drake responds by calling on the breadth of the tradition, with bursts of crisp rhythmic ingenuity repurposed for the moment at hand, which give wings to Schweizer's playful inventions.

But whether on the patterned textures of "Stringfever", where the pianist beats the innards, the impulsive "Twister", which alternates solo and accompanied sections, or the rolling vamp of the rootsy "Blues For Crelier", the conversation between the principals is suitably receptive, joyous and exuberant.

For more information, visit [intaktrec.ch](http://intaktrec.ch)

## ON SCREEN



*Love Longing Loss*  
Directed by Dorothy Darr  
by Kevin Canfield

One day last spring, Charles Lloyd picked up a saxophone and walked into the woods near his California home, where he played some ruminative notes for an audience of one: his wife Dorothy Darr, an artist and filmmaker who's been chronicling Lloyd's career for decades. Lloyd, a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master who has recorded dozens of albums as a leader, had planned to conclude 2020 with two shows at Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin. Instead, the pandemic forced him to stay home in Santa Barbara, playing and writing music on the piano, the tenor saxophone, the bass flute and the tarogato.

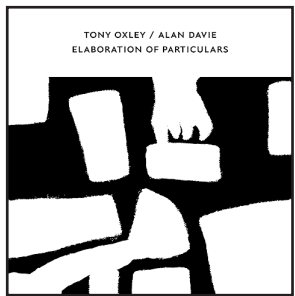
Darr took the opportunity to make another in her series of documentaries about Lloyd. Shooting on a smartphone and other devices, she's fashioned an appealing film about creativity amid crisis, as embodied by her 83-year-old husband.

Commissioned by Pierre Boulez Saal, *Love Longing Loss: At Home with Charles Lloyd During a Year of the Plague* is a profoundly personal response to a significant moment in human history—and a movie with delightful footage of a robe-clad old-timer annotating sheet music. "The plague is upon us," Lloyd says. He misses friends, fellow artists. He replenishes himself by writing and playing pieces that celebrate his ancestors. As a Black man who's "also a copper man"—some of his forbears were Choctaw—Lloyd is moved to compose laments. Standing before a large painting of musicians and animals, he performs a powerful threnody on bass flute and maracas, strands of white hair poking out from beneath a knit cap. It's a captivating scene, sonically and visually. Darr amplifies the theme with archival photos of racist crimes and segregated schools, interspersing the appalling images with footage of Marian Anderson, Rosa Parks and others who refused to let the bigots win. The segment gives way to footage of the Pacific lapping against a rocky shore, apt imagery given the eternal resolve demonstrated by those who've sought equal rights.

Darr's winning nature scenes—along with the briny edge of the continent, she takes us to grassy meadows, sun-flecked hillsides and woodland glades—speak to Lloyd's reverence for the outdoors and his engagement with other timeless sources of inspiration, among them the music from his Memphis childhood. "In our Black schools, every morning in assembly we would sing 'Lift Every Voice and Sing,'" he recalls before giving an impromptu vocal rendition of the James Weldon Johnson composition. He stops after a few lines, then changes his mind and finishes the first verse, singing about the "rising sun" and the "new day". He leans gently from side to side. His voice is hushed. It's a wonderful sequence. Just an hour long, this documentary has more than its share of such moments.

For more information, visit [boulezsaal.de](http://boulezsaal.de). This film streams through Jun. 11th.





*Elaboration of Particulars*  
Tony Oxley/Alan Davie (Confront)  
by Marc Medwin

There's nothing better than the delicious contradictions of a duo with a multivalently singular vision. While percussionist Tony Oxley, who turns 83 this month, has been active on what might be called the Euro-free improvised music scene since the mid '60s, even that designation does little to delineate the place long-fostered innovation and a stunning ear have secured for him. The sounds of his radically configured kit mirror the enthusiasm with which he has played music from various and overlapping traditions well beyond any preconceived conventions associated with improvisation or composition. The late painter, writer and musician Alan Davie's similarly inclusive approaches to freedom transgressed many boundaries, blurring form in ways it would be unjustly narrow to call abstract. A common approach to diversity led him and Oxley to form a duo in 1970. Now, Confront adds an entire disc of unreleased music, taped in 1977-78 in Davie's home studio, to a slim but absolutely fascinating discography.

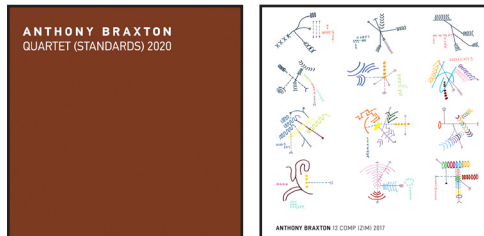
At the time and since 1969, Oxley incorporated electronics into his already transparent and crystalline non-repetitive approach to the assemblage of sound carriers with which he'd expanded notions of what a drummer could accomplish. For these sessions, Davie, often heard on saxophone, played piano, various percussion and is credited with ring modulation. This double dose of electronic manipulation ensures sonic unity, even as acoustic sounds swirl and bubble toward a surface they don't always reach. If the second particular in this eight-part suite evokes passages from Carla Bley's *Escalator Over The Hill*, with its rawly ring-modulated genre-bending, there is also, ironically, a simultaneous clarity and obfuscation of each texture as piano and drums swim in a liquification of their own making, emanating and then transformed just as quickly. Contrast that density in diversity with the opening of the fourth particular. There, traditional timbre, dispatched with the stereotypical rapidity and pointillism of early-generation London 'free' improvisers, is altered with a subtlety almost beyond cognition but with only a bit of delay and perhaps reverb heightening awareness of tone and overtone.

That hallowed but deftly controlled whirlwind of near-instantaneous communication is prevalent without exclusivity and the third particular drives the point home. It's a six-minute voyage, much of it through dark but spare regions and even a tempo and density increase does nothing to dispel a sense of calm exploration. The electronics here are a revelation, as they take on a multiphonic melody of their own, residing in a nebulous space between homophony and polyphony; it is precisely these instances that make the release of these performances so unique and integral to an understanding of the music's evolution. The same is true with Davie's piano and percussion simultaneities, as heard from the first particular. When first hearing them, it seemed that a composition was being performed, an indication of the complete and complex communication throughout and of Davie's creative spirit in this particular manifestation.

The final piece of the puzzle, or icing on the cake, is the sessions' recorded sound, which is breathtaking. Each overtone is captured in a vast spatial environment and even Davie's piano and percussion fill entirely

different sections of the soundstage. Again, the spaces created highlight and obscure each occurrence, each varied iteration a treasure of vague but palpable allusion that unifies the whole, as the titles suggest. Each cymbal and drum stroke, piano sonority and attendant electronic exhortation thrums with the excitement of discovery and rings with the satisfaction of event in fruition. Music such as this exists within and transcends its time, each audition a multivalent glance at the creative histories and microhistories caught, enshrined and discarded by those brave souls who created them.

For more information, visit [confrontrecordings.com](http://confrontrecordings.com)



*Quartet (Standards) 2020*  
Anthony Braxton  
(Tri-Centric Foundation/New Braxton House)  
*12 COMP (ZIM) 2017*  
Anthony Braxton (Firehouse 12)  
by Kurt Gottschalk

If it's Tuesday, Anthony Braxton, who turns 76 this month, must have a new, radical rethinking of Western musical traditions to offer. Two new sets, comprising some 22 hours of music in total, present the master composer/conceptualist's new ZIM system and a new standards quartet while representing some of the most approachable yet uncompromising music he's made.

Braxton has had other bands dedicated to playing the repertoire, most intriguingly the early '90s group in which he played piano. Hearing his approach to known compositions on a very different instrument allowed for an abstract triangulation on his musical mind. Attack (it seemed) wasn't about mood and reverence wasn't about revival. *Quartet (Standards) 2020*, a 67-track set, has him back on saxophone with the wonderful Alexander Hawkins on the piano. The song selection skews from Cole Porter and Antônio Carlos Jobim to John Coltrane, Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk to Paul Simon, Burt Bacharach and the end theme from *The Carol Burnett Show*. The latter tunes aren't played for laughs but treated with the same level of reverence, suggesting the older and mellowed Rahsaan Roland Kirk we never got to have. That said, Simon's ballads don't seem to provide the same traction that tunes like "Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard" or "Late in the Evening" could have provided for the quartet, although "Old Friends" (from the 1968 Simon and Garfunkel album *Bookends*) does provide for a lovely duet between Braxton and Hawkins. And their take on "Alfie" is unforgettable. From the classics to the pop, this is familiar music, a highly enjoyable and slightly adventurous afternoon in the park.

Braxton's work doesn't often inspire thoughts about arrangement. There are simply too many other issues to deal with and he's often more an architect of possible outcomes than an arranger—even if, in a much broader sense, he's arranging (and presumably encouraging) the direction(s) of the work. In all likelihood, Braxton would credit the band—Hawkins, bassist Neil Charles and drummer Stephen Davis—the process and the particular time-space continuum for the arrangements. But there's a certain sensibility to the way this standards band works. There are, of course, extended forays into variations on themes and variations on those variations. There's the requisite level of vamping and soloing; that, in fact, constitutes much of the collection. But within the standards, there are sections of fantastic newness.

Which sets up the possibility of talking about

Braxton not just as composer but as arranger of the 10 hours of music on *12 Comp (ZIM) 2017*, because Braxton didn't just devise the mechanisms, he drives them: he's the engineer. He set into motion the wheels in which each musician makes decisions that lend toward the greater good. He wrote the rules that give them freedom to act.

As is often the case, Braxton's own notes on this new aspect of his lifelong explorations are as illuminating as they are obfuscating, but one point to take away from the liner notes to the ZIM set is that this is music that exists in space (which, of course, all music does, but let's set that aside). He describes the "tri-universe state of sonic and visual movement (including system/recognition) extending into a world of architecture and spatial-design holism - as a utility, as a code and as memory." He suggests that ZIM could also be explored by means of a video of a golf tournament, likens it to "a glider airplane that circles in a downward and/or upward spiral" and notes that "the musicians are literally 'skiing' in the notated musics." This isn't music that exists in Braxton's mind (as do the internal musical monologues of, say, Laurie Anderson), or in the mind of the listener (like a Sam Cooke song) or within a community consciousness (like a Bach cantata). ZIM is music that could exist in a public space, with people coming and going. This may be an oversimplified reading of his comments but, like the pictograms in some of his composition titles, his text while less than crystalline, does help to create a sonic picture.

The previous system Echo Mirror House seemed to be a city space, busy with people doing their own things, many wearing headphones playing their own soundtracks. ZIM is far less chaotic, far less multidirectional (arguably nondirectional, even). It could still be off-putting to those who expect regular meters and clearly repeated themes in their music—it would be, safe to say, a bit of an odd public park—but it's decidedly less obtrusive and in that regard is among some of the most plainly beautiful music of which Braxton has conceived. Without a rhythm section, it drifts in lovely and ambiguous ways.

Put in another way, this isn't antisocial music, or asocial music. This is social music for passing strangers. I imagine this as the realization of the sound-park discussed (literally discussed, by a speaking pianist) in Braxton's Composition No. 171. The space is now open to the public and we're free to look (or listen) around. This is likely wildly inaccurate within the immense structural systems that Braxton (patiently and painstakingly, it seems) is trying to release from his magnificent mind, but it's what I see when I listen around.

For the players, ZIM—like all of Braxton's systems—is a communal effort. There is notated material which (again, it seems) is there not just for the performers to read, but to explore. I have in the past described Braxton's group compositions as being like classical anarchy: it's not mayhem and reckless abandon, it's not Mad Max free jazz, it's an effort wherein participants enjoy greater freedom by adhering to a system of rules designed for the benefit of the whole. There are passages of fiery playing in the ZIM set, notably on Compositions 412 and 415, but overall it's actually quite lovely in a brainiac kind of way. The set is performed by two sextets, two septets and a nonet, with slightly varying personnel and instrumentation, but built around brass (including tuba) and strings (violin, cello and two harps). There's no rhythm section and the only saxophonist other than Braxton is Ingrid Laubrock on the four nonet pieces. Adam Matlock's accordion (technically another woodwind) in all but one of the configurations often proves to be an asset, not quite connecting the dots but coloring some of the space between them. It may not be easy, but it isn't cacophony and rewards repeat listens.

For more information, visit [newbraxtonhouse.bandcamp.com](http://newbraxtonhouse.bandcamp.com) and [firehouse12.com/label](http://firehouse12.com/label)





*Fortschritt und Vergnügen*  
Georg Graewe & Sonic Fiction Orchestra  
(Random Acoustics)  
by Stuart Broomer

In his liner note to *Fortschritt und Vergnügen* (“Progress and Pleasure”), German pianist/composer Georg Graewe, who turns 65 this month, provides a brief history of the 11-member Sonic Fiction Orchestra: initially assembled for the 2006 Konfrontationen festival, the group went through long periods of dormancy and personnel changes. Following that 12-year elision, the group performed nine concerts at Porgy & Bess in Vienna in 2018-19, then spent nine months, including time off for the COVID lockdown, doing studio sessions. A few minutes spent listening to the resultant 72-minute CD suggests why it could have taken so long.

Graewe’s music is challenging in multiple ways, for players and listeners alike, and the scores often require conducting. The ensemble combines a chamber ensemble (clarinet, bassoon, harp, string trio) with instruments more typically associated with idiomatic or improvised music (electric guitar, pizzicato bass, drumkit). These varied textures often alternate in a strange dialogue of forms as well as timbres. The prevailing Dadaist aesthetic – Anton Webern and Spike Jones are climbing the family tree – delights in collisions: passages of icily abstracted beauty may be deeply felt, but they’re temporary, as is every other incidental texture. Standardized styles blur as well as crash, with Graewe at the piano sometimes sounding like a Second School of Vienna Duke Ellington. The shortest track lasts a minute, the longest 35. Graewe is scrupulous about time. The appearances of guest musicians are listed with exactitude: drummer Didi Kern appears on “Semaphore# 8” from 00’48” – 01’02”.

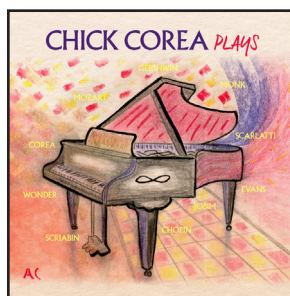
That opening track, “from a collection of miniatures sketched out for piano”, is a mad explosion of disconnected bits collaged together, some of them hyperkinetic keyboard passages (harpichord, clavichord or altered piano), sudden vocal or violin intrusions, a chaos of electronics possibly traceable only to the engineer. “LichtTanz” (Light Dance) is a moody sequence of contrasting textures: composed sequences incorporate a string trio (violinist Joanna Lewis, violist Laura Strobl and cellist Asja Valcic) while there’s an extended improvised passage of piano trio (Graewe, bassist Peter Herbert, drummer Wolfgang Reisinger). Other bits include a couple of seconds of unaccompanied laughter and a burst of Martin Siewert’s fuzz-tone guitar accompanied by bassist Wilbert de Joode and drummer Michael Vatcher, the latter two otherwise unheard here.

The longest work, 35-minute “Reshift E / Sections 1 – 17”, is based on a 12-tone row and its harmonic derivatives. It makes frequent use of the full ensemble and the range of Graewe’s musical palette, including passages of such fluent and idiomatic ease that they sound improvised, yet integrate seamlessly with composed components. Frank Gratkowski goes from liquid-toned ‘classical’ clarinet to skronk sopranino saxophone on adjoining segments. Siewert plays both classical and distorted electric guitars. There’s also a sudden conducted passage of dissonant sustained chords and a plaintively abstract viola solo.

The brief concluding piece further extends the musical range with a satire on lieder by an unnamed singer. “Song of the Beautiful Mouth” includes lyrics like

“come and taste the melodies” before concluding with a fitting burst of seemingly stifled, snorting laughter. Graewe serves up an anarchist banquet in which the clash of tastes take precedence over the parts themselves.

For more information, visit [randomacoustics.net](http://randomacoustics.net)



*Plays*  
Chick Corea (Concord)  
by Robert Bush

Since he turned professional in the early ‘60s, Armando “Chick” Corea blazed a luminous path, which found him collaborating with everyone from Blue Mitchell to Miles Davis before striking out as a leader for far more groups and projects than can be recounted here. He became one of the most significant models of the post-McCoy Tyner aesthetic, along with Keith Jarrett and Herbie Hancock.

His sudden death last February came as a shock to the jazz community – mostly because he seemed to be the picture of health and energetic activity in the period leading up to his passing (he would have turned 80 this month). For anyone looking to understand the wide scope of Corea’s interests, *Plays* is a great place to start. For those who’ve been following him for years, this live (mostly solo piano) two-disc document is still a compelling send-off.

Most of the first disc consists of Corea playing homage to a variety of legendary musicians/composers, mostly from the classical music realm, although he also plays tribute to Bill Evans, Antônio Carlos Jobim and Thelonious Monk. Corea has a relaxed and endearing stage manner and throughout this effort, he reaches out to the audience as if they were gathered in his living room. Early on, he even gets them to commit to a sing-along, testing their ability to follow his lead before launching into a rendition of Mozart’s “Piano Sonata in F (part 2 Adagio)”. His “Improvisation on Scarlatti” features bright, staccato phrases that intersect at odd angles.

Corea’s sumptuous sense of harmony and melodic structure make his version of Jerome Kern’s “Yesterdays” an instant highlight and, like most of the memorable pieces on this album, it seems to fit the pianist like a glove. The fit with other composers, however, especially the three Monk interpretations, doesn’t fare as well. It would be hard to imagine a pianist/composer more radically removed from Corea than Monk. That was made perfectly clear on the second disc of *Trio Music* (ECM, 1982). That’s no knock on Corea, just a testament to Monk’s singular originality.

Disc 2 contains a variety of tributes and dedications to composers and players in Corea’s peer group. He begins Stevie Wonder’s “Pastime Paradise” with a series of wicked ornaments before lighting on the familiar melody about two minutes in. Next up is an homage to Paco de Lucía, “Yellow Nimbus”, which toggles between passages of pastel beauty and darker, more pugilistic material.

The rest of the second disc capitalizes on Corea’s comfort level with the audience, whereby he invites people up onto the stage to compose a portrait of them, or engage in a duet. According to the notes, Corea was unaware that both audience members he called up (Yaron Herman and Charles Heisser) were professional musicians who acquitted themselves well.

For more information, visit [concord.com](http://concord.com).

## UNEARTHED GEM



*The Summer House Sessions*  
Don Cherry (Blank Forms)  
by Andrey Henkin

In a cultural reverse of Vikings streaming down into primordial Europe for pillage, American jazz musicians, centuries later, came to Scandinavia and left an indelible positive impact on the local players. In Denmark, it was Dexter Gordon. Norway, George Russell. And trumpeter Don Cherry may have had left the greatest mark of all, living in Sweden and inspiring a generation who followed.

Cherry is the focus of an expansive exhibition curated by Blank Forms (running through Jul. 16th). Entitled “Organic Music Societies: Don and Moki Cherry”, it examines the decade-long collaboration between Cherry and Swedish visual artist Moki (née Monika Marianne Karlsson) and the time that Cherry spent in Sweden, a period that led to recordings like *Organic Music Society* (Caprice, 1972, lending its title to the exhibition) and *Eternal Now* (Sonet, 1973). Along with the exhibition catalogue, a nearly-500-page tome with interviews, essays, photographs and reproductions of ephemera, Blank Forms has also released this previously unheard performance from Jul. 20th, 1968, recorded at Cherry’s summer house in Nacka, Sweden.

The album, released as an LP (cover art by Moki), or CD with additional tracks from the same day (some with and some without Cherry), finds the trumpeter, also on flute and percussion, leading an international ensemble mostly of his generation in a loose setting closer to a drum circle in a Grateful Dead show parking lot than a club date (children playing can be heard in the quieter moments). Swedes Bernt Rosengren (tenor saxophone, flute, clarinet), Tommy Koverhult (tenor saxophone, flute), Torbjörn Hultkrantz (bass) and Leif Wennerström (drums) had worked with Cherry before, appearing on LPs like the aforementioned *Eternal Now* and some later-released archival dates. American bassist Kent Carter had recorded alongside Cherry on Giorgio Gaslini’s *Nuovi Sentimenti* (La Voce Del Padrone, 1966) and French drummer Jacques Thollot was on Cherry’s 1968 MPS album *Eternal Rhythm* (as was Rosengren) while this appears to be the only document of Cherry with Turkish drummer Bülent Ateş who was based in Germany.

The 46-minute piece is percussive without being overwhelming. Things are at their sparsest when flutes dominate, recreating the sound of songbirds chirping happily away in a tree. But these moments of confluence do give way to more fire-music segments when trumpet and reeds do battle. Themes from earlier Cherry albums appear and the group coalesces around them, creating structural pillars among the freer moments. The bonus tracks on the CD—4 pieces between 6 and 17 minutes—are notable for the inclusion of two other significant Swedes: drummer Sune Spångberg (veteran of the ‘50s bands of Lars Gullin and part of the rhythm section, alongside Hultkrantz, on Albert Ayler’s first album in 1962) and reedplayer Gunnar Lindqvist, leader of the short-lived G.L. Unit.

For more information, visit [blankforms.org](http://blankforms.org)







## BOXED SET



*The Complete Joe Henderson Blue Note Studio Sessions*  
**Joe Henderson (Mosaic)**  
 by Stuart Broomer

As a sideman, Joe Henderson defined Blue Note's mid '60s sound, his relaxed precision and hard-edged warmth marking jukebox hits and free jazz alike, from Horace Silver's "Song for My Father" and Lee Morgan's "Sidewinder" to Andrew Hill's *Black Fire*, with Grant Green's epic *Idle Moments* in the middle.

Meanwhile the saxophonist's own sessions defined a forceful personal language. This five-CD set chronicles both Henderson's own recordings and his partnership with bop trumpeter Kenny Dorham, the former ascendant, the latter making his last records. The set documents seven LPs, two under Dorham's name and five under Henderson's, the first three of which were also quintets with Dorham.

Henderson debuted on Dorham's *Una Mas (One More Time)*, a 1963 recording inspired by a 1960 encounter with bossa nova in Brazil. It's a fascinating facet of the era that a music strongly associated with the feathery textures of Stan Getz and the singing

Gilbertos influenced Dorham and Henderson's hardbop quintet, but their muscular take on the genre made the title track a jazz hit.

The same pattern shaped Henderson's first LP, *Page One*. Dorham generously contributed his own "Blue Bossa", a certain hit following *Una Mas*, while Henderson's "Recorda Me" showed his own knack with the form. The saxophonist was developing rapidly, his playfulness mated to sheer command; a certain droll funk phrase can slip into a rapid bop line, harmonic and rhythmic puzzles are insinuated into a down-home blues.

Dorham's subtle introspection—the concentrated lyricism, the flutter tonguing, the strange split-tone melodies—provide a distinct contrast to Henderson's momentum. Other partnerships emerge with the supporting players: drummer Pete LaRoca, as adept at Latin as free jazz, appears here and on the next Henderson LP, *Our Thing* while pianist McCoy Tyner turns up on two later Henderson Blue Note titles. The latter, the third session in little more than five months, may be the high point of the collaboration, with pianist Hill's loose, exploratory lines providing optimum inspiration for Henderson, pressing his quicksilver harmonic and rhythmic invention a step further.

1964 would also produce three of the LPs here, beginning with Henderson's *In 'n Out*, in which Henderson and Dorham are paired with the most aggressive rhythm section heard here: Tyner; drummer Elvin Jones, then, too, in the John Coltrane quartet; and bassist Richard Davis, an aggressively virtuosic accompanist. The three bring a welling insistence to the music: if Henderson could always make expressive use of split-tone wails and honks in

his solos, here Jones makes it inevitable; the intensity lowers during Tyner's solo and stays there for Dorham, but Henderson returns to raise the pressure before the final theme statement.

Dorham's *Trompeta Toccata*, a final collaboration, restored the Latin emphasis of *Una Mas* while pianist Tommy Flanagan and drummer Albert Heath were likely more comfortable fits for Dorham. As Henderson pours out repeating coils of rapid, overheated notes on his own "Mamacita", the rhythm section maintains form rather than feeding the fire.

Henderson's final Blue Note sessions reflect his evolution. *Inner Urge*, a quartet date with Tyner, Jones and bassist Bob Cranshaw, is a personal statement filled with different energies. "El Barrio" begins with a honking reverie before Henderson improvises a melody over minimal underpinnings while "Isotope" suggests Thelonious Monk.

*Mode for Joe*, from 1966, was another departure for Henderson, leading a septet with trumpeter Lee Morgan, trombonist Curtis Fuller and vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson contributing to an orchestral richness. The ultimate effect is a different view of Henderson than *Inner Urge*, an equally compelling but more complex, broader musical vision.

The set also includes three previously unreleased takes and five tunes that Henderson contributed to sideman dates, among them "Step Lightly" with Blue Mitchell; "The Kicker" with Hutcherson; "Mo' Joe" with Silver; and "If" with Larry Young. None is a throwaway. When Henderson recorded *The Kicker* for Milestone in 1967, he reclaimed them, along with "Mamacita" from *Trompeta Toccata*.

For more information, visit [mosaicrecords.com](http://mosaicrecords.com)





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# CALENDAR

## Tuesday, June 1

- ★ Slavic Soul Party Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ David Colding Bronx Boro Hall Greenmarket 11 am
- ★ Todd Robbins Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Sarah Hanahan Trio; Mark Turner Quintet with Jason Palmer, Joe Martin, Marcus Gilmore, Jonathan Pinson Central Park Seneca Village 1, 3 pm
- ★ Jamile Trio Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ David Gibson Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Wednesday, June 2

- ★ Sandcatchers: Yoshi Fruchter, Myk Freedman, Michael Bates, Tim Keiper and guest Erik Friedlander Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Todd Robbins Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Mar Vilaseca; Charles Turner The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Ray Gallon Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ C. Spencer Yeh Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Mike Clark Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Thursday, June 3

- ★ Gyan Riley solo Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Todd Robbins Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Ed Cherry Trio; Freddy Deboe The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Bill Frisell and Okwui Okpokwasili The Greens on The Rooftop at Pier 17 7 pm
- ★ Trina Basu, Arun Ramamurthy, Damon Banks, Dan Kurfirst The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★ Mara Rosenbloom, Melanie Dyer, Sean Conly Open Source Gallery 6:30 pm
- ★ Chris Speed Trio with Chris Tordini, Dave King SEEDS 8:30 pm \$15
- ★ Davis Whitfield Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Friday, June 4

- ★ Todd Robbins Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ David Gibson Quartet; Ken Fowser Quartet The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Craig Harris Harlem Nightsongs with guest Helga Davis Greater Calvary Baptist Church 7 pm \$20
- ★ Tide Pools: Alfredo Colon, Hannah Marks, Connor Parks The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$15
- ★ Alan Broadbent Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Wayne Escoffery Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Bruce Barth Trio with Vicente Archer, Kush Abadey Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Neil Clarke's Mongo Jazz Sunset Park 6 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Saturday, June 5

- ★ Arnt Amtzen Trio with Vince Giordano, Danny Tobias Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Anton Kot and Friends; Ed Cherry Trio Bronx River Art Center 4, 7 pm \$10
- ★ Aaron Kimmel Trio; Evan Sherman Quintet The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Or Bareket Quartet Morgan Guerin, Jeremy Corren, Savannah Harris The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$15
- ★ Gene Pritsker's Sound Liberation with Todd Rewoldt, Franz Hackl, Charles Coleman, Jose Moura, Damien Bassman, Chad Harper, Erik T. Johnson, Robert C. Ford; Dan Cooper Quartet with Itai Kriss, Alon Nechushtan, John Ferrari Jim Kempner Fine Art Gallery 6:30 pm \$20
- ★ Peter Zak Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Amirtha Kidambi/Lea Bertucci; Lele Dai; Sam Weinberg/Jason Nazary Oliver Coffee 2 pm
- ★ Behn Gillice Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Claudia Acuña/Jon Cowherd Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Sunday, June 6

- ★ George Braith Domino Park 11 am
- ★ Stephane Wrembel's The Django Experiment with Thor Jensen, Daisy Castro, Nick Driscoll, Ari Folman-Cohen, Nick Anderson Drom 7:30 pm \$35
- ★ Andy Statman with Jay Gandhi, Ehren Hanson, David Ellenbogen Jalopy 5:30, 7:30 pm \$25
- ★ Benny Benack III Minton's 7, 9 pm \$10
- ★ Chris Byars Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Monday, June 7

- ★ Armen Donelian Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Jim Campilongo 4-TET with Luca Benedetti, Dan Rieser, Andy Hess Rockwood Music Hall Stage 2 7 pm \$20

## Tuesday, June 8

- ★ Art Baron and Friends Astor Place Greenmarket 11 am
- ★ Slavic Soul Party Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Armen Donelian Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Michael Flythe Elmhurst Greenmarket 11 am
- ★ Naama Gheber Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Annette A. Aguilar Parkchester Greenmarket 11 am
- ★ Ben Allison, Ted Nash, Steve Cardenas Soapbox Gallery 8 pm

## Wednesday, June 9

- ★ Armen Donelian Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Lucy Yeghiazaryan; Vanisha Gould The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Cyrille Aimee Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Susie Ibarra Talking Gong with Claire Chase, Alex Peh Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Peter Slavov Soapbox Gallery 8 pm

## Thursday, June 10

- ★ Michaël Aftias Lumisong Quartet with Santiago Liebson, Matt Pavolka, Mark Ferber Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Armen Donelian Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Tribute to Wayne Shorter: Esperanza Spalding, Terri Lynne Carrington, Leo Genovese Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center 7:30 pm
- ★ Andrew Latona; Bruce Harris The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Lex Kortzen Trio with Adam Olszewski, Kayvon Gordon The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$15
- ★ Spike Wilner Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Amirtha Kidambi's Elder Ones with Matt Nelson, Max Jaffe, Eva Lawitts Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Alex Norris Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Marc Ribot's Ceramic Dog with Shahzad Ismaili, Ches Smith The Sultan Room 7:30 pm \$30

## Friday, June 11

- ★ Curtis Hasselbring Curhachestra with Raphael McGregor, Adam Minkoff, Dan Rieser Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Armen Donelian Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Santi Debriano Flash of the Spirit Clove Lakes Park 6 pm
- ★ Joe Saylor Quartet; Ken Fowser Quintet The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Craig Harris Harlem Nightsongs with guest Jay Rodriguez Greater Calvary Baptist Church 7 pm \$20
- ★ Victor Gould Trio with Tamir Shmerling, Anwar Marshall The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★ Ken Peplowski Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Rafik Willamson Quartet St. Albans Park 6:30 pm
- ★ Jared Gold Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Saturday, June 12

- ★ Sunny Jain A.G.E.S. with Adam O'Farrill, Greg McMurray, Eva Lawitts Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Global Praise and Deliverance; Alegba Jahyile and Friends Bronx River Art Center 4, 7 pm \$10
- ★ Jerry Weldon; Emmet Cohen The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Nicola Caminiti with Lex Kortzen, Ben Tiberio, Evan Hyde The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$15
- ★ Ken Peplowski Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Sound House: Bill Stevens, Doug Cuomo, Gary Fogel Prince George Gallery 4 pm
- ★ Tony Middleton Quartet with Jon Weber, Marco Panascia, Dwayne "Cook" Broadnax The Roxy Lounge at Roxy Hotel 8, 9:30 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Sunday, June 13

- ★ Stephane Wrembel/Sara L'Abriola Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ JazzMobile: Patience Higgins Riverside Park 7 pm
- ★ Bruce Harris Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Monday, June 14

- ★ Larry Ham Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Ari Hoenig Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Tuesday, June 15

- ★ Slavic Soul Party Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ Larry Ham Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Lucy Wijnands Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Bob Lanzetti, Zach Brock, Keita Ogawa Rockwood Music Hall Stage 2 7 pm \$15
- ★ Eric Alexander Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Paul Jost Quartet Soapbox Gallery 8 pm

## Wednesday, June 16

- ★ Marco Cappelli's 3 Card Trick with Brandon Seabrook, Stomu Takeishi Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ Larry Ham Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Champion Fulton; Johnny O'Neal The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Tardo Hammer Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Jim Ridd Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Annette St. John Soundview Park 1 pm

## Thursday, June 17

- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ Larry Ham Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Sean Mason; Ian Hendrickson-Smith The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Dezron Douglas Quartet with Emilio Modeste, George Burton, Joe Dyson The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★ Joel Frahm Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Roberta Piket Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Roseanna Vitro Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Kenny Barron, Buster Williams, Lenny White Soccerof 7:30 pm \$25
- ★ Pedro Giraudo Tango Quartet with Nick Danielson, Rodolfo Zanetti, Ahmed Alom Terraza 7 7 pm

## Friday, June 18

- ★ Pedro Giraudo Tango Quartet with Nick Danielson, Rodolfo Zanetti, Ahmed Alom Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ Larry Ham Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Joe Magnarelli Quartet; Ken Fowser Quintet The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Craig Harris Harlem Nightsongs with guest Darius Jones Greater Calvary Baptist Church 7 pm \$20
- ★ Angelica Sanchez Trio with Michael Formanek, Billy Hart The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$20
- ★ George Cables Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Jaimie Branch Birthday Show: Anteloper with Jason Nazary; Jamie Branch Trio with Luke Stewart, Mike Pride Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Hayes Greenfield/Dean Johnson Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Saturday, June 19

- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ Jerome Harris Quartet; Wayne Tucker and The Bad Mothas Bronx River Art Center 4, 7 pm \$10
- ★ David Hazeltine Trio; Dannya Jonokuchi and The Revisionists The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Tomas Fujiwara, Mary Halvorson, Taylor Ho Bynum The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$25
- ★ Mark Soskin Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Joaquin Pozo y La Clave Suena Poe Park 1 pm
- ★ Anaïs Maviel and The Rhythm Method with Leah Asher, Marina Kifferstein, Carrie Frey, Meaghan Burke Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Tulivu's Seasoned Elegance St. John's Recreation Center 2 pm
- ★ Chris Potter/Ari Hoenig Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Sunday, June 20

- ★ Stephane Wrembel/Thor Jensen Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Robert Glasper Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$65
- ★ The Hudson Horns Minton's 7, 9 pm \$10
- ★ Joe Magnarelli Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Thomas Heberer, Joe Fonda, Joe Hertenstein Soapbox Gallery 8 pm

## Monday, June 21

- ★ Gottfried Stöger's Dreamhunter with Walter Fischbacher, Marcos Varela, Peter Kronreif Austrian Cultural Forum 2 pm
- ★ Deanna Witkowski Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Joe Farnsworth Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Tuesday, June 22

- ★ Slavic Soul Party Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Ghost-Note Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Deanna Witkowski Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Samara Joy Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Steve Nelson Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Spin Cycle: Scott Neumann, Tom Christensen, Pete McCann, Phil Palombi Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Sungazer: Adam Neely/Shawn Crowder The Sultan Room 7 pm \$25

## Wednesday, June 23

- ★ Tony Malaby's Sabino with Ben Monder, Michael Formanek, Tom Rainey Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Ghost-Note Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Deanna Witkowski Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Tahira Clayton; Sasha Dobson The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ JazzMobile: Patience Higgins Grant's Tomb 7 pm
- ★ Greg Murphy Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Akiko Tsuruga Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Zack Brock Quartet Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Sungazer: Adam Neely/Shawn Crowder The Sultan Room 7 pm \$25
- ★ Tablatun: David Rothenberg, Matthew Aidelman, Mike Lukshis Zürcher Gallery 8 pm \$15

## Thursday, June 24

- ★ Danny Walsh Quintet Asser Levy Recreation Center 5 pm
- ★ Ravi Coltrane Quartet with Orrin Evans, Dezron Douglas, Johnathan Blake Evans, Dezron Douglas, Johnathan Blake Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Deanna Witkowski Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Craig Holiday Haynes Bushwick Inlet Park 6 pm
- ★ Mike Ledonne; Mark Whitfield The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Peter Evans Being & Becoming with Joel Ross, Nick Jozwiak, Savannah Harris The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$20
- ★ Philippe Lemm Trio with Addison Frei, Jeff Koch Little Island 12 pm
- ★ Luisa Muhr's Babal with Jen Anaya, Trina Basu, Judith Berkson, Patricia Brennan, Wendy Eisenberg, Rebecca El-Saleh, Tamrin Goldberg, Luke Stewart Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Lew Tabackin Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Friday, June 25

- ★ Ravi Coltrane Quartet with Orrin Evans, Dezron Douglas, Johnathan Blake Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Deanna Witkowski Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Anthony Wonsey Trio; Ken Fowser Quintet The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Craig Harris Harlem Nightsongs with guest TK Blue Greater Calvary Baptist Church 7 pm \$20
- ★ Luke Carlos O'Reilly Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Huntertones Rockwood Music Hall Stage 2 10:45 pm \$15
- ★ Sonya Belaya's Cognitive Distortions, Ancestral Patterns with Grey McMurray, Maria Grand, Tyrone Allen, Ches Smith, Bergamot Quartet: Ledah Finck, Sarah Thomas, Amy Huimei Tan, Irène Han Roulette 8 pm \$25
- ★ Joel Frahm Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Saturday, June 26

- ★ Charlie Burnham Trio with Marvin Sewell, Fred Cash Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Ravi Coltrane Quartet with Orrin Evans, Dezron Douglas, Johnathan Blake Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Josh Bruneau Quartet; Joe Farnsworth The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Kris Davis Capricorn Climber with Mat Maneri, Ingrid Laubrock, Trevor Dunn, Tom Rainey The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$30
- ★ Lawrence Fields Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Patience Higgins Minton's 7, 9 pm \$10
- ★ David Weiss Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Jamie Baum Trio with Andy Milne, Joe Martin Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Gerry Eastman Ensemble with Greg Lewis, Taru Alexander Williamsburg Music Center 9:30 pm \$10

## Sunday, June 27

- ★ Nicole Henry 54 Below 7 pm \$55-105
- ★ Stephane Wrembel/Josh Kaye Barbès 7, 9 pm \$25
- ★ Ravi Coltrane Quartet with Orrin Evans, Dezron Douglas, Johnathan Blake Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$45
- ★ Charu Suri Raga Jazz with Umer Piracha Drom 7 pm \$15
- ★ Kris Davis Capricorn Climber with Mat Maneri, Ingrid Laubrock, Trevor Dunn, Tom Rainey The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm \$30
- ★ Charles Ruggiero Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Monday, June 28

- ★ Joel Ross Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$25
- ★ Daryl Sherman Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Victor Lewis Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20

## Tuesday, June 29

- ★ Slavic Soul Party Barbès 7, 9 pm \$20
- ★ Eric Krasno Trio with Eric Finland, Eric Kalb Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$55
- ★ Daryl Sherman Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Vanessa Perea Mezzrow 7:30, 9 pm \$20

## Wednesday, June 30

- ★ Rick Fiori 92nd Street Greenmarket 11 am
- ★ Eric Krasno Trio with Eric Finland, Eric Kalb Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm \$55
- ★ Daryl Sherman Bryant Park 12:30 pm
- ★ Marina Dasilva; Michael Stephenson The Django at Roxy Hotel 7, 9 pm
- ★ Mike Freeman ZonaVibe with Guido Gonzalez, Ruben Rodriguez, Roberto Quintero, Joel Mateo and guests Jose Mangual, Jr., JR DeJesus, Luis Soto Pier 84 7 pm
- ★ Isiah Collier Smalls 7, 8:30 pm \$20
- ★ Lauren Henderson Trio Soapbox Gallery 8 pm
- ★ Ari Hoenig Trio with Gabriel Chakarji, Edward Perez Terraza 7 7 pm



(INTERVIEW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

**PH:** I know! It's true. Another one is, be sensitive to the audience you are playing for and let them know you appreciate them. Again, all things they don't teach you in school.

**TNYCJR:** I'd like to hear about the different musical situations you are in. Some people call you the King of Harlem because you have done and continue to do every gig in Harlem! Been on every bandstand in Harlem. Talk to me about uptown.

**PH:** My association with the Harlem scene or uptown scene came through a tenure at St. Nick's Pub at 149th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue, which, way before I got there, had been a hangout of Billy Strayhorn and The Copasetics, the great ensemble of tap dance people, and not too far from Duke Ellington's residence when he lived in Harlem. The Copasetics would rehearse there but it was not called St. Nick's at that time. It was Luckey's Rendezvous. A piano player named Luckey Roberts owned it. Then later I had a residency at this club and from there just began to perform at just about every place in Harlem.

There was a tap dancing group that hung there too after I had come to New York. A few of them were in the show *Black and Blue*, which I was also in. Opened in 1989. That is where I met Savion Glover who I still work with a lot. I met that whole crew from that show. Buster Brown and Lon Chaney, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde... It was a social hang too. That became my hang. Savion was the young phenom in that show. We got to be friends. It was such a wonderful experience—the music and the dance. I became enamored with it.

**TNYCJR:** How did that happen that you got the steady Monday nights at St. Nick's? You were there a long time, right, I guess from the early '90s?

**PH:** That came about through a lady by the name of Roberta Alloway, who was looking to have music in her neighborhood because she was tired of going downtown and coming back uptown. So she knew this musician and asked them to put together a group. And she went to the owner of St. Nick's Pub and said she wanted to bring music there... And from there it blossomed. I was there a good dozen years. That was the genesis of the Sugar Hill Quartet. St. Nick's Pub.

**TNYCJR:** Who else was in the band?

**PH:** The original band was the late great Andy McCloud on bass and Eli Fontaine on drums and we had rotating piano players, but finally settled on Marcus Persiani. People sat in all the time. This was during the time, you know, when I was doing many many other things.

**TNYCJR:** Broadway was dark on Mondays.

**PH:** Exactly. I did a lot of Broadway shows, but I was also a member of the Ellington Orchestra [under Mercer Ellington] for a long period of time. That came about through my association with a member of the band, [trombonist] Raymond Harris. We had done a gig together with Archie Shepp's band, his big band.

**TNYCJR:** Although you spent a lot of time uptown, you didn't actually live there, right?

**PH:** I didn't live up there but I spent a lot of time uptown. Uptown, downtown, all around the town.

**TNYCJR:** You have done some teaching.

**PH:** I teach with the JazzMobile program—been associated with that program at least 10 years.

**TNYCJR:** You have just the one album as a leader, although you have been on many others.

**PH:** Yes, on the Mapleshade label. It was done live at St. Nick's Pub with my Sugar Hill Quartet—called *Live in Harlem*. The recording included some of the guests who sat in with us. It was kind of a document of the band's time there.

**TNYCJR:** What do you have coming up? Of course, with the pandemic, no one has much coming up but do you have some potential gigs?

**PH:** Specifically, I do have JazzMobile's Jazz Fest coming up this summer. They will be doing outdoor events—Grant's Tomb, Central Park. Everything will be outside, of course. Broadway will be opening again in September, I hear. The last Broadway show I was doing before the lockdown was *Avenue Q*, which was a three Tony-award winning show. It ran for six years!

**TNYCJR:** Your philosophy—you have played such a broad spectrum of music. Do you have a philosophy that you could put into words that would allow you to be the best you can be with both the Ellington Orchestra and Aretha and more out players like David Murray, Muhal Richard Abrams, Hamiet Bluiett.

**PH:** Basically, my outlook is to have respect for the music and respect for the people that think that I am capable and qualified to be part of their endeavors. As Duke Ellington said, "There are only two kinds of music, good and the other kind." And I just approach it as, first of all, I love music and the vast array of the musical spectrum. There is no best, there is only different. That is basically my approach. I try and approach the music on the highest level that I can do it. I have been fortunate to experience and be a part of all types of music. ❖

For more information, visit [facebook.com/CountGigula](https://facebook.com/CountGigula). Higgins is at Riverside Park Jun. 13th and Grant's Tomb Jun. 23rd, both as part of JazzMobile, and Minton's Jun. 26th. See Calendar.

**Recommended Listening:**

- Gary Saracho—*En Medio* (ABC Impulse!, 1973)
- Sam Rivers Winds of Manhattan—*Colours* (Black Saint, 1982)
- Muhal Richard Abrams Orchestra—*Blu Blu Blu* (Black Saint, 1990)
- Errol Parker Tentet—*A Night in Tunisia* (Sahara, 1991)
- Patience Higgins' Sugar Hill Quartet—*Live in Harlem* (Mapleshade, 1996)
- Bluiett Baritone Nation—*Blueblack* (Justin Time, 2001)

(ENCORE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

received permission to start a class called AfroLatin-American-Jazz-Ensemble, which is still going today. After earning his Master's degree, he started teaching for Los Angeles Unified School District.

"I actually started teaching elementary school. I taught in Spanish to kids that didn't speak any English at all. After nine years of teaching elementary school, I decided to just stop doing that and just teach music as an independent contractor. I was teaching kids who had had some difficulties and were in detention centers. I would go to those places and teach music. I actually taught a form of composition that I devised to elementary school children. I taught in Inglewood School District for a while and then I decided to go back to L.A. Unified because I realized that, as an independent contractor, I was actually paying [more in taxes than I was] taking home. I got a

job as a middle school music teacher where I was teaching nothing but music at the middle school level close to my home. So, I ended up altogether teaching 24 years with L.A. Unified and all of that time I was also teaching at UCLA."

Teaching at UCLA, Miranda was deeply influenced and became very close to its Jazz Department head, Kenny Burrell. They both have very practical guidance for their students. "Kenny really loves this music. He is one of the true legends of the music and he's a very honest and forthright educator and passionate in a real quiet kind of way. I got a chance to really see Kenny teach really closely and I've been part of that jazz studies program, I think this is my 26th year. So, I was there when Kenny started the actual jazz studies program. So, I got a chance to really watch him and see how he went about sharing this music with the students who expressed interest. He made it clear that some of you may be performers, some of you are going to be composers, some be arrangers, some of you may do music copying, editing, some of you may do film music, some of you will be teachers, educators in different levels of education from primary school all the way up to the advanced college [and] university levels. There's also the thing about being an author and writing. I don't know that many people know that Stanley Crouch was a really good drummer. So, you need to really understand that there are many careers, or many different ways for you to share this music, be honest with yourself and figure out what it is you want to do."

Miranda continues to teach at UCLA, gigs when possible and is focused on composing. "I'm working on a project now where I'm trying to write music based upon Old Testament characters, Biblical characters. I'm also trying to write something that might end up being for classical guitar. I don't know what it wants to be yet. I'd also like to do a Latin album. Just straight, flat out, stone cold, Latin jazz album. I try to practice every day. Sometimes it's not possible because I might just get more into composition or doing other things. I like to do a lot of yard work. We like to grow food at my home and I like to hang out with my family. That's my life." ❖

For more information, visit [robertomirandamusic.com](https://robertomirandamusic.com)

**Recommended Listening:**

- Vinny Golia—*Spirits in Fellowship* (Nine Winds, 1977)
- Roberto Miguel Miranda—*The Creator's Musician* (Nimbus West, 1980)
- John Carter Quintet—*Night Fire* (Black Saint, 1980)
- Horace Tapscott—*Live at Lobero (Vol. I & II)* (Nimbus West, 1981)
- Roberto Miranda's Home Music Ensemble—*Live at Bing Theatre - Los Angeles* (Dark Tree, 1985)
- Bobby Bradford/Hafez Modirzadeh—*Live at the Blue Whale* (NoBusiness, 2017)

(LEST WE FORGET CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

by stating, "He preferred for himself short, intense solos. He listened carefully and was always very supportive."

Johnson passed on three years ago this month on Jun. 27th, 2018. What little remains is a true sonic force who was never given his due. Obscurity aside, what we do have is the work of a musician that was loved, admired and will live on forever. ❖

**Recommended Listening:**

- Paul Bley Quintet—*Barrage* (ESP-Disk', 1964)
- John Coltrane—*Ascension* (Impulse!, 1965)
- Rashied Ali—*First Time Out: Live at Slugs 1967* (Survival, 1967)
- Paul Murphy—*Red Snapper: Paul Murphy at CBS* (Cadence Jazz, 1982)
- Paul Murphy—*Cloudburst* (Mad Murphy, 1983)



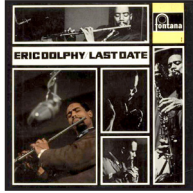
ON THIS DAY

by Andrey Henkin



*Shades of Jelly Roll*  
Merle Koch (Carnival)  
June 2nd, 1959

Pianist Jelly Roll Morton died in Los Angeles in 1941, 18 years before this date waxed in his hometown of New Orleans, one of two releases by the local Carnival label owned by Mina Lea and Bill Crais. Pianist Merle Koch of Lexington, Nebraska was in the midst of his tenure with clarinetist Pete Fountain and for much of the LP plays solo on pieces by Morton, such as "The Pearls", or other early jazz fare. For four tunes, including "Buddy Bolden's Blues", "Doc" Souchon joins on vocals, the nickname no joke for a top New Orleans surgeon at the time.



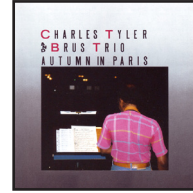
*Last Date*  
Eric Dolphy (Fontana)  
June 2nd, 1964

When released in 1964, this album was accurately titled, that is until a live recording from Paris nine days later surfaced, released in 1988. So let's split the difference and call this alto saxophonist/bass clarinetist/flutist Eric Dolphy's last studio date, made in Holland with the local trio of Misha Mengelberg (piano), Jacques Schols (bass) and Han Bennink (drums) at the end of the famed 1964 Charles Mingus European tour, 28 days before Dolphy's death at 36. The set is tunes by Dolphy, Mengelberg, Monk and Gene de Paul-Don Raye.



*Clay*  
Yosuke Yamashita (Enja)  
June 2nd, 1974

Pianist Yosuke Yamashita's trio of tenor saxophonist Seiichi Nakamura and drummer Takeo Moriyama was founded in 1969. It made or appeared on 10 albums through 1972. In 1973-75, alto saxophonist Akira Sakata replaced Nakamura, Moriyama leaving in 1976. This was the band's first full-length album after one piece on the *Inspiration & Power 14 Free Jazz Festival 1* omnibus. Both that Tokyo recording and this set from Germany's Moers Festival contain the Moriyama-titled title track, the other tune Yamashita's "Mina's Second Theme".



*Autumn in Paris*  
Charles Tyler/Brus Trio (Silkheart)  
June 2nd, 1988

Brus Trio were Swedish pianist Arne Forsén and bassist Ulf Åkerhielm and late South African expat drummer Gilbert Mathews, active from the early '80s-early '10s. Only three of their seven releases were in trio, the others with guest horns like Roscoe Mitchell, John Tchicai or, here, alto saxophonist Charles Tyler four years before his death at 50. This Stockholm set is two tunes each by Forsén and Åkerhielm plus the title track from Tyler's 1976 Nessa LP *Saga of the Outlaws*. The concurrent CD edition had two additional Tyler songs.



*Jazz For Thousand Oaks*  
Buddy Collette (UFO-BASS)  
June 2nd, 1996

Tenor/alto saxophonist/clarinetist/flutist Buddy Collette worked with fellow Watts-ian Charles Mingus in the late '40s and taught another son of Watts in Eric Dolphy, outliving both by decades. He made a handful of recordings in the last 15 years of his life, an era when he was known more as an educator and composer. For this concert of his music (plus Ronnell Bright and Duke Ellington) at L.A. suburb Thousand Oaks, Collette's band is Bright, Al Aarons, George Bohanon, Ndugu Chanler, Sam Most, Richard Simon and Al Viola.

BIRTHDAYS

**June 1**  
†Nelson Riddle 1921-85  
†Herbie Lovelle 1924-2009  
†Hal McKusick 1924-2012  
†Lennie Niehaus 1929-2020  
Rossano Sportiello b.1974

**June 2**  
†Ernie Hood 1923-91  
†Gildo Mahones 1929-2018  
John Pisano b.1931  
Pierre Favre b.1937  
Irene Schweizer b.1941  
Matthew Garrison b.1970  
Noah Preminger b.1986

**June 3**  
†Carl Pruitt 1918-1977  
†Al Harewood 1923-2014  
Phil Nimmons b.1923  
†Dakota Staton 1932-2007  
†Bob Wallis 1934-91  
†Ted Curson 1935-2012  
Grachan Moncur III b.1937  
Corey Wilkes b.1979

**June 4**  
†Teddy Kotick 1928-86  
†Oliver Nelson 1932-75  
†Alan Branscombe 1936-86  
†Mark Whitecage 1937-2021  
Ted Daniel b.1943  
Anthony Braxton b.1945  
Paquito D'Rivera b.1948  
Winard Harper b.1962

**June 5**  
†Kurt Edelhagen 1920-82  
†Specs Powell 1922-2007  
†Pete Jolly 1932-2004  
†Misha Mengelberg 1935-2017  
†Jerry Gonzalez 1949-2018

**June 6**  
†Jimmie Lunceford 1902-47  
†Raymond Burke 1904-86  
†Gil Cuppini 1924-96  
†Grant Green 1931-79  
Monty Alexander b.1944  
†Zbigniew Seifert 1946-79  
Paul Lovens b.1949  
G. Calvin Weston b.1959

**June 7**  
†Gene Porter 1910-1993  
†Tal Farlow 1921-98  
†Tina Brooks 1932-74  
Norberto Tamburrino b.1964  
Devin Gray b.1983

**June 8**  
†Billie Pierce 1907-74  
†Erwin Lehn 1919-2010  
†Kenny Clare 1929-85  
†Bill Watrous 1939-2018  
Julie Tippetts b.1947  
Uri Caine b.1956

**June 9**  
†Les Paul 1915-2009  
†Jimmy Gourley 1926-2008  
†Eje Thelin 1938-90  
Kenny Barron b.1943  
Mick Goodrick b.1945

**June 10**  
†Chink Martin 1886-1981  
†Willie Lewis 1905-71  
†Dicky Wells 1907-85  
†Guy Pedersen 1930-2005  
†John Stevens 1940-94  
Gary Thomas b.1961  
Charnett Moffett b.1967  
Jonathan Kreisberg b.1972  
Ben Holmes b.1979

**June 11**  
†Clarence "Pine Top" Smith 1904-29  
†Shelly Manne 1920-84  
†Hazel Scott 1920-81  
†Bob Gordon 1928-55  
Nils Lindberg b.1933  
Bernard "Pretty" Purdie b.1939  
Jamaaladeen Tacuma b.1956  
Alex Sipagiin b.1967  
Assif Tsahar b.1969

**June 12**  
†Marcus Belgrave 1936-2015  
Kent Carter b.1939  
†Chick Corea 1941-2021  
Jesper Lundgaard b.1954  
†Geri Allen 1957-2017  
Oscar Feldman b.1961  
Christian Munthe b.1962  
Peter Beets b.1971

**June 13**  
†Charlie Elgar 1885-1973  
†Doc Cheatham 1905-97  
†Eddie Beal 1910-84  
†Phil Bodner 1919-2008  
†Attila Zoller 1927-98  
†Buddy Catlett 1933-2014  
Frank Strozier b.1937  
Harold Danko b.1947  
Mike Khoury b.1969

**June 14**  
†John Simmons 1918-79  
Burton Greene b.1937  
Pete Lemer b.1942  
Marcus Miller b.1959  
Gary Husband b.1960  
Diallo House b.1977  
Loren Stillman b.1980  
Ben Syversen b.1983

**June 15**  
†Allan Reuss 1915-1988  
†Erroll Garner 1921-77  
†Jaki Byard 1922-99  
†Mel Moore 1923-89  
Tony Oxley b.1938

**June 16**  
†"Lucky" Thompson 1924-2005  
†Clarence Shaw 1926-73  
†Joe Thomas 1933-2017  
Tom Harrell b.1946  
Fredy Studer b.1948  
Mike Baggetta b.1979  
Ryan Kerber b.1980

**June 17**  
†Lorenzo Holden 1924-87  
†Frank E. Jackson, Sr. 1924-2013  
Chuck Rainey b.1940  
Tom Varner b.1957

**June 18**  
†Sammy Cahn 1913-93  
William Hooker b.1946

**June 19**  
†Joe Thomas 1909-86  
†Jerry Jerome 1912-2001  
†Al Kiger 1932-2013  
Chuck Berghofer b.1937  
Paul Nieman b.1950  
Billy Drummond b.1959  
John Hollenbeck b.1968

**June 20**  
†Doc Evans 1907-77  
†Lamar Wright 1907-73  
†Thomas Jefferson 1920-86  
†Eric Dolphy 1928-64  
†Joe Venuto 1929-2019  
Anders Nilsson b.1974

**June 21**  
†Dewey Jackson 1900-94  
†Jamil Nasser 1932-2010  
Lalo Schifrin b.1932  
†Jon Hiseman 1944-2018  
Chuck Anderson b.1947  
Eric Reed b.1970

**June 22**  
†Ray Mantilla 1934-2020  
Hermeto Pascoal b.1936  
Heikki Sarmanto b.1939  
Eddie Prevost b.1942  
Ed "Milko" Wilson b.1944

**June 23**  
†Eli Robinson 1908-72  
†Milt Hinton 1910-2000  
†Eddie Miller 1911-91  
†Helen Humes 1913-81  
†Lance Harrison 1920-2000  
†George Russell 1923-2009  
†Sahib Shihab 1925-89  
†Hank Shaw 1926-2006  
Donald Harrison b.1960

**June 24**  
†Charlie Margulis 1903-67  
†Manny Albam 1922-2001  
†George Gruntz 1932-2013  
†Frank Lowe 1943-2003  
†Clint Houston 1946-2000  
Greg Burk b.1969  
†Bernardo Sasseti 1970-2012

**June 25**  
†Johnny Smith 1922-2013  
†Bill Russo 1928-2003  
Joe Chambers b.1942  
Bobby Naughton b.1944  
Marian Petrescu b.1970  
John Yao b.1977

**June 26**  
†Teddy Grace 1905-92  
†Don Lanphere 1928-2003  
†Jimmy Deuchar 1930-93  
Dave Grusin b.1934  
Reggie Workman b.1937  
Joey Baron b.1955  
Bill Cunliffe b.1956  
Mathias Eick b.1979

**June 27**  
†Elmo Hope 1923-67  
George Braith b.1939  
Todd Herbert b.1970

**June 28**  
†Jimmy Mundy 1907-83  
†Arnold Shaw 1909-89  
†Gene Traxler 1913-91  
†Pete Candoli 1923-2008  
Bobby White b.1926  
John Lee b.1952  
Tierney Sutton b.1963  
Aaron Alexander b.1966  
Jesse Stacken b.1978

**June 29**  
†Mousey Alexander 1922-88  
†Ralph Burns 1922-2001  
†Ove Lind 1926-1991  
Julian Priester b.1935  
Ike Sturm b.1978

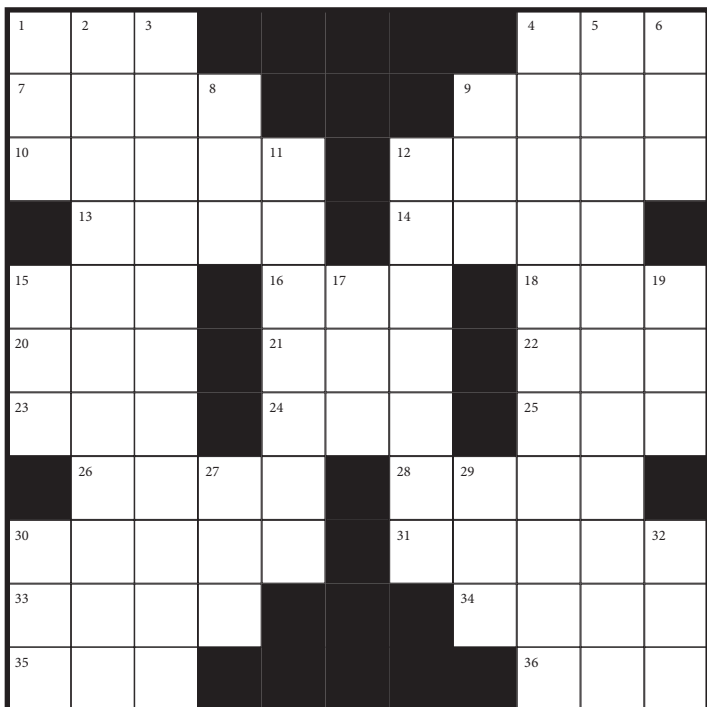
**June 30**  
†Harry Shields 1899-1971  
†Grady Watts 1908-86  
†Lena Horne 1917-2010  
†Andrew Hill 1937-2007  
Chris Hinze b.1938  
Jasper Van't Hof b.1947  
Stanley Clarke b.1951  
Ken Fowser b.1982



**BOBBY NAUGHTON**  
June 25th, 1944

Vibraphonist/pianist Bobby Naughton's OTIC label, though small in output, is the home of some significant recordings. From 1969-81, it featured early appearances by Mark Whitecage and Mario Pavone (sadly both recently deceased) and Naughton's collaborations with Leo Smith and Perry Robinson, plus a rare solo vibraphone session. Naughton went on to record in the bands of Smith, Pavone, Anthony Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell and was a founding member of the Creative Improvisors Orchestra before leaving music for a few decades. In the new millennium he returned, reviving OTIC with archival releases and a new trio with Joe Fonda and old collaborator Laurence Cook and reforming his trio with Smith and Dwight Andrews. (AH)

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Animal on the cover of 1969-70 EMI Odeon album by Sweden's G.L. Unit
- 1970 Albert Mangelsdorff MPS album *Never Let It* \_\_\_\_
- Tristano acolyte Ronnie
- The Five \_\_\_\_
- Albert or Don
- Bassist Billy, drummer Dae and percussionist Frederick
- You need this to count off a tune in Germany
- Saxophonist Domnérus
- Dolphy's Miss
- Early Megadeth drummer Samuelson who started his musical career in jazz fusion
- Latin jazz exotica singer Sumac
- Legendary engineering monogram
- Threadgill/Hopkins/McCall
- He and Thad founded what became the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra
- Billy Bang wrote a song for this offensive on his *Vietnam: The Aftermath* album
- Traveling musicians are very aware of this org.
- Bassist who worked with both Monk and Sun Ra
- '70s jazz venue
- Doubled, a Swiss Dixieland Jazz Five
- Calisthenic bassist Joe?
- Coleman Hawkins, Bud Powell, Oscar Pettiford and Kenny Clarke were All Stars at this 1960 German festival

- What an LP does
- Jazz hands is when the fingers of the hand deviate away from this
- 2003 Nik Bärtsch's Mobile Tonus-Music album
- The Isotope Ensemble devoted an album to this element (abbr.)

DOWN

- Simplest song form
- It comes at the end of the gig
- Noble study?
- How many a debut album is released
- Opposite of a 1969 Tony Williams album?
- "Jazz Hands" also means this
- Recently passed bassist Skeat
- 19th Century Spanish classical guitarist Fernando whose music was covered by Laurindo Almeida, Christopher Hinze and others
- Notable Boston jazz bar
- 1964 Paul Bley ESP-Disk' album
- Vienna \_\_\_\_ Orchestra
- Terp Records catalogue prefix
- Brother Thelonious was one
- Like the JFA
- Stanton Moore is an artist-in-residence at this univ.
- Fresh Sound Records catalogue prefixes
- He shares DNA with Cannonball

By Andrey Henkin

visit nycjazzrecord.com for answers