There has been a lot of talk over the past couple of years about coal miners and how their noble lifestyle needs to be preserved, how their hard work must be appreciated and supported. Well, let us tell you, dear reader, that sometimes being half-mile underground seems preferable to compiling our annual Best Of lists. We have to dig through thousands of recordings received over the past judging period to unearth the most precious gems and there is no canary watching out for us overdoing it and asphyxiating musically. But we do it for you and we hope that you discover some new treasures among our Best of 2019 centerfold (pgs. 28-29). And don’t forget to take a moment to remember all those who we lost this past year; a complete list is on pg. 12.

But 2019 and the whole second decade of the 21st century is behind us. Look forward to the future, taking a lesson from trumpeter Steven Bernstein (On The Cover), whose Millennial Territory Orchestra celebrates its 20th anniversary this month with a concert as part of Winter Jazzfest. Saxophonist Donald Harrison (Interview) and drummer Ronnie Burrage (Artist Feature) also respect the jazz tradition while pushing it forward; see both around town this month, just a few of many recommended concerts in a packed Event Calendar.

On The Cover: Steven Bernstein (Peter Gannushkin/DOWNTOWNMUSIC.NET)

Corrections: In last month’s NY@Night, Patricia Nicholson-Parker is the sole founder of Arts for Art. In last month’s Artist Feature, Jaimie Branch grew up on Long Island.

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MAURICE “MOBETTA” BROWN
BIRTHDAY VIBES SESSION
JANUARY 6 - 8

PHILLY REUNION:
JOEY DEFrancesco, KURT ROSENWINKEL,
CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE & LIL JOHN ROBERTS
JANUARY 9 - 12

MACEO PARKER
JANUARY 14 - 19

DIZZY GILLESPIE
ALL-STARS
JANUARY 21 - 26

ANTONIO SANCHEZ
& MIGRATION
JANUARY 28-29

IGOR BUTMAN & THE
MOSCOW JAZZ ORCHESTRA
JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 2

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It was a bit like watching My Dinner with Andre, a rambling but riveting colloquy between two old friends, only this one occurred between saxophonist/trumpeter Scott Robinson, resplendent in a custom shirt and hat made of saxophone reeds, and pianist Frank Kimbrough during an early set at Mezzrow (Dec. 8th). They’ve been talking, musically, for almost 40 years now, primarily in the context of standard repertoire, recently that of Thelonious Monk. From the first proud tenor call, rattling the open-lid piano’s sympathetic strings as it introduced “Monk’s Mood”, those sitting quietly crowded together in the narrow subterranean room sensed we were in for an engaging dialogue. Kimbrough hit all the composer’s signature fills, segueing into “Sweet and Lovely” after Robinson’s buzzy finish, setting a new mood both urbane and earthy; Robinson debuted his rare Kuhlisch (a horizontally-held flugelhorn), comically ending with a coarse, out-of-tune tone. “I was doing OK until I went for that low note,” he quipped. Monk’s “Played Twice” showed the duo’s top side, Kimbrough chuckling out loud at an unexpectedly synchronous accent. After he’d set up “You Took Advantage of Me,” a beautiful ballad, Robinson took over, playing trumpet on 8 sections (taking an effective solo on the second), finishing with a tender understated coda. Kimbrough’s masterful harmonies undergirded “You Took Advantage of Me” before the set closed with “You Don’t Know What Love Is.”

—Tom Greenland

Jazz is fascinating in how one day a musician is a young lion and then, almost before realizing, head of the pride. While drummer Johnathan Blake has played the Village Vanguard numerous times over the decade—Ravi Coltrane, Kenny Barron, Tom Harrell—and led bands around town, fronting his own group at the august venue was a career checkbox. His Pentad was players whose names, once unfamiliar, are now ubiquitous and, soon, too, will be inextricably woven into the jazz fabric: Immanuel Wilkins (alto saxophone), Joel Ross (vibraphone), David Virelles (piano) and Dezron Douglas (bass). Simply put, it is a hell of a group and one flush with connections; Wilkins and Ross are all over each other’s projects while Virelles, Douglas and Blake are three-fourths of the Ravi Coltrane Quartet. The latter even came to see his charges during the run, just one of a full house all the way to the back wall (Dec. 5th). The nearly 75-minute set was wondrous, starting off by Blake making fun of the bomber jacket Wilkins was wearing (“Top Gun?”) and included Blake tributes to his wife (“Rio’s Dreams”) and his elders/peers (“Rivers and Parks”) plus, Art Blakey-style, pieces by Blake’s bandmates. The music called for a neologism: ‘crefficiency’, as everyone did exactly what the music called for in the most inventive way possible. While things were humming along nicely, they peaked by the pairing of a short South African lullaby with a transcendental take on Joe Jackson’s “Steppin’ Out”.

—Andrey Henkin
A first-call sideman with a long list of credits, including stints with Michael and Randy Brecker, Roy Haynes, Billy Hart, Jeff “Tain” Watts and Mingus Big Band, among others, Dave Kikoski, despite a voluminous discography of more than 20 leader dates, seldom gets the opportunity to step into the spotlight like atmosphere. The mood calmed with Cohen’s impressionistic “Nocturnal”. Salvant then returned to sing a powerful rendering of Kurt Weill-Bertolt Brecht’s impressionistic “Nocturnal”. Salvant then returned to sing a powerful rendering of Kurt Weill-Bertolt Brecht’s impressionistic “Nocturnal”. The show. The crowd erupted when Shaw played two-note repetitions reminiscent of what musicians once labeled “chicken sax” due to the picking away of odd, warm December night (52 degrees and rising) under whirling, science-fictitious oceans of sound. Lopez responded in kind, casting depths of blackness streams and broiling industrialism. The closer, Steve Dalachinsky, one bearing darkly draped word emcee James Keepnews dedicated to the memory of Carter, drummer Federico Ughi (co-founder of Rudin Jazz Championship, one of this gazette’s Best Jazz Books of 2019, Mark Stryker, author of Jazz From Detroit (University of Michigan Press), one of this gazette’s Best Jazz Books of 2019, will speak about the book on Jan. 12th at Le Poisson Rouge, preceding the From Detroit to the World—Honoring Marcus Belgrave concert presented by Winter Jazzfest (one of several jazz festival talks as part of this year’s program; for a complete list visit winterjazzfest.com/talks-2020) and at Smalls Jan. 16th preceding a concert by Detroit-born drummer Gerald Cleaver.

Brooklyn’s The Sultan Room will present Cocktails & Crock Pots: An Evening with Ethan Iverson & Chris Biskie join at the January 2020 Jazz Congress, taking place at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Rose Hall (Dec. 12th-14th), has announced its Keynote session: “The Legacy of Betty Carter” moderated by Renée Marie with panelists Dee Dee Bridgewater, Benny Green, Gregory Hutchinson, Christian McBride and Kenny Washington. Other panels during the two-day event include: in Jazz Town Hall; Vocal Jazz Summit; Stage Presence: A Master Class, Talking Trumpets: Conversation & Music About, and Adams’ Ammonia: Building & Marketing Your Brand Through Social Media; We Insist: Speaking Truth to Power; Wellness for Jazz Musicians; Africa: The Past & Future of Jazz; Perfect Pitch: Jazz Video Challenge; Musician: Book Thysell; “Bird” and Beyond: Celebrating Charlie Parker at 100; Building Buzz for Gigs in the Post-Listing Era; The Balance of Art & Commerce in the Business of Jazz Recording; Jazz Radio’s Role in an Era of Music Abundance; Jukebox Jury; Case Studies: Building Digital Archives; Filling and Nurturing your Jazz Ecosystem: Roundtable Discussions; Jazz Road: Funding Opportunities for Touring & Residencies; Ask the Pros One-on-One sessions. For more information and to register, visit jazzcongress.org.

2019 recipients of the Instant Award in Improvised Music, “underwritten by an anonymous patron and musical devotee... presented to two outstanding improvisations, both of whom receive an unrestricted award of $50,000”, have been named: Evan Parker and Iuee Moti. For more information, visit cornerback.com/2019/12/17/instant-award-improvised-music-2019-recipients.

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When alto saxophonist Donald Harrison made a name for himself in the early ‘80s as a member of drummer Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers and co-leader of a quintet with trumpeter Terence Blanchard, he was hailed as one of the Young Lions: musicians who grew up in the rock ’n’ roll era yet committed to playing straightahead jazz. But as time passed, it became obvious that Harrison was also interested in playing everything from fusion, soul, funk, blues and hip-hop to classical music and his associations have ranged from alto saxophonist Benny Carter and trumpeter Miles Davis to the late rapper The Notorious B.I.G. During an in-depth interview, Harrison (now 59) discussed some of his recent projects as well as highlights of his long career.

The New York City Jazz Record: In what ways have you evolved as a musician over the years?

Donald Harrison: It’s so much different from when I first started and was just studying the sounds from the records. I got a chance to play with jazz musicians of every era: the Duke’s men, the beboppers, Miles Davis, Ron Carter and everybody in between. Many people taught me the concepts in funk music and classical music, hip-hop, everything. I had the experience of playing with many of the people who innovated—in American music, in particular, but also, Caribbean music with Eddie Palmieri. Brazilian musicians. So now, I think I have the highest level of authenticity because I got it from the masters. I read something Charlie Parker said that touched me: he said that if you didn’t live it, it wouldn’t come out of your horn. So I wanted to live it. I wanted to live playing with blues musicians, funk musicians, New Orleans soul artists, everything.

TNYCJR: What are some of the most valuable lessons you learned as part of Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers in the ‘80s and how have you applied those lessons?

DH: Art Blakey used to say, “Let the punishment fit the crime in terms of music. If you’re playing the blues, understand how to play the blues.” He used to say, “Find the essence of each song and then, tell your story from that perspective. You don’t have anything to prove, but play what comes naturally to you.” Art had a wealth of experience playing with a lot of people and I was able to talk to him about my hero Charlie Parker and the things that Art and Bird discussed and played on the bandstand.

TNYCJR: Art knew how to push musicians to excel, whether it was Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Jackie McLean or Cedar Walton.

DH: Benny Golson talks about how after you’ve played with Art Blakey, it’s hard to play with other drummers. There was so much support with Art. His beat was wide. He was the most swinging human being on the planet.

TNYCJR: With Blakey, the Jazz Messengers certainly got a real sense of history.

DH: Oh, of course. Art Blakey played with everybody. And he shared his knowledge with us. He had his own way of looking at things; he spent time in Africa and brought that to jazz. He had a soulful touch. And Art Blakey was very open-minded. I remember: we brought some synthesizers and Art said, “Bring them onto the bandstand.” Art was into whatever we were thinking about. Art would come up with a drum orchestration for each song; he would listen to it one time, then he would have—in my estimation—the perfect drum orchestration to make it sound incredible.

He played like a composer on the drums to fit all of the nuances of how the song was put together. Art would ask me what I was hearing on my song and I would say, “What you’re hearing is way better than what I’m hearing. So let’s keep what you came up with.”

TNYCJR: You’ve certainly played a wide range of music over the years, from hardbop to fusion to hip-hop to AfroCuban jazz to funk.

DH: Yeah, I mean, I grew up listening to funk music and soul music and going to second lines in New Orleans. I’m part of AfroNew Orleans culture and what comes out of Congo Square, basically, and I grew up dancing to a lot of different music. So, I put all of those elements together to find who I am. I grew up with gospel music, the blues. [Saxophonist] Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson took me aside when I was in my 20s and showed me what I call his blues matrix. One of the things Eddie told me was, “Find the blues in everything and keep that essence in what you do.” I’m very fortunate that so many great alto players have mentored me: Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson, Benny Carter—I played on a tribute to Benny with a bunch of saxophone players when he turned 90 [in 1997]. Benny was 90 years old and he was still playing great.

TNYCJR: Over the years, you’ve worked with so many greats who have since passed away, from Lena Horne to Miles Davis.

DH: Those people all impart a certain wisdom if you listen. You have to listen; that’s the key. The first thing, even as an audience member and not a musician, is you listen—and then, you become a student of the music. When you’re listening, you’re studying as well. I have a thing I tell students: if a sponge doesn’t take in water when you squeeze it, nothing will come out. So take in as much as you can and the more you take in, the more that can come out.

TNYCJR: What are some of your fondest memories of playing with Eddie Palmieri?

DH: One of the things that Eddie does is give you a CD or tape of important music from Cuba or Puerto Rico—AfroCaribbean music in general—and then, you study it and try to decipher it. For me, Eddie is like the Charlie Parker of AfroCuban, AfroCuban, AfroPuerto Rican music or whatever you want to call it. And he gives you the freedom to explore. It’s music of the people that they can dance to and love to dance to, but it’s also music for the musicians where you’re free to stretch. I’m very content to have played with Eddie and he has influenced what I’ve done with jazz music.

TNYCJR: You have found the jazz possibilities in so many different types of music.

(Continued on page 54)
Ronnie Burrage is the kind of drummer bandleaders crave. In addition to masterful skills and innate musicality, his resume reads like post-modern jazz history, from McCoy Tyner to Defunkt to the World Saxophone Quartet. Also wielding formidable piano skills, Burrage can be seen playing right-handed chords on a keyboard while maintaining a torrential rhythmic onslaught across his other three limbs.

Hailing from St. Louis, Burrage came of age during the height of the Black Artists Group (BAG) as jazz ventured into the struggle for liberation. “My paternal grandfather was Allen David Mahr, a rather unknown literary giant who was widely published in his day,” Burrage explains. Mahr, a pioneering poet of color, was an associate of Amiri Baraka and Shirley LeFlore. “My new album includes ‘God’s Only Black Man’, a poem he wrote 90 years ago. It’s in the archives of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, President John F. Kennedy and Winston Churchill. It’s become a mantra for me.” Burrage’s family influences also included his mother, a pianist and five musician uncles. The lineage extends to great uncle John Sanders, a saxophonist with Bessie Smith. Jam sessions were regular in the family home. “As a toddler, I banged on pots and pans, then before age ten, began picking out melodies on the piano.” Several years of piano lessons predated Burrage’s foray into the local drum corp. He gravitated to drumset, primarily learning by watching many of St. Louis’ great drummers up close. By 13, Burrage was leading a youth band.

Through BAG, St. Louis developed a highly active scene in which Burrage became innately involved. “Guys like Julius Hemphill would come into town and there would be cultural presentations. My family brought me to poetry readings and concerts and my uncles were often playing with them too. These were community events” and so it wasn’t long before the young drummer found his way onstage. “At one point, one of the guys said, ‘Let Squirt sit in’ and after a while I became a regular.” BAG had an array of master musicians, poets and theater artists on hand as performers and teachers, alongside community organizers and cultural educators. Such guidance inspired a flurry of creative activism. “Floyd LeFlure was an important trumpet player; he and JD Parran, Baikida Carroll, Lester and Joe Bowie and Kelvyn Bell had a band. At 14, I began playing with them.”

In 1978, Burrage moved to the South Bronx where he experienced the then burnt-out landscape and concurrent rise of hip-hop. “I would take my drums out and jam with the rappers. This saved me several times when I was almost jacked in the neighborhood.” Still, he was drawn to Manhattan’s nightlife, seeking out Sonny Fortune, Sir Roland Hanna, Billy Hart, Freddie Waits and Dannie Richmond, among other notables. “But I was also hanging out with Charles Bobo Shaw, then running the La Mama Theatre in the East Village. La Mama was a creative hub hosting underground cutting-edge arts. Burrage and his drumset traveled into Manhattan by subway, leaving off the bottom heads to stack the drums in duffle bags. When guitarist Bell relocated to New York, Burrage and he moved into an upper floor of La Mama and were recruited by Arthur Blythe. Jobs with Fortune, Michelle Rosewoman, Big Nick Nicholas and Frank Wright followed. With Bell, Burrage became a founding member of Defunkt, an original Downtown band fusing improvisation with funk, rock and no wave. “In 1978, Defunkt was a collective. Joe [Bowie] has had many iterations since then, but we wrote the songs on that first album collectively. Joe began to dictate a certain sound, but the initial concept was to be free.” Frustrated, Burrage left Defunkt to join Tyner’s band. Simultaneously, he began a close association with revolutionary poet Baraka and, as a result, Archie Shepp, with whom he has continued to collaborate.

Burrage became a regular at Seventh Ave South, the legendary club run by the Brecker Brothers, gigging frequently with either or both and also playing S.O.B.s, Lush Life, The Bottom Line and Studio RivBea when not on the road. His performances with the likes of Wayne Shorter, Jaco Pastorius (“double drumming with Rashied Ali”), Jackie McLean, Sonny Rollins and Pat Metheny remain deeply memorable and the drummer was also leading his own bands, including Third Kind of Blue in 1983, which immediately embarked on tour and Burrage “started getting the buzz that I was going to be in Weather Report after Peter Erskine left. Jaco wanted me, Wayne too, but Joe wanted Omar Hakim (laughs). I understand that it was because he liked his name!” Regardless, opportunities abounded: Richard Davis, Mingus Dynasty, Epitaph and Big Band, Courtney Pine, Joanne Brackeen, Jack Walrath and a trio of Stanley Cowell and Cecil McBee. In the ‘90s, Burrage worked with Eddie Gomez, Billy Bang, Hamiet Bluiett, Bobby Watson, David Murray, Carlos Ward, Joe Zawinul, World Saxophone Quartet and Reggie Workman’s Coltrane Legacy. He also taught at JazzMobile and the New School. But burn-out ultimately led Burrage toward a hard stop. Following a divorce, he left his East Village flat for Florida, living as a single father and engaging in deep soul-searching. Within a few years, he relocated his family to Pennsylvania (for a Penn State teaching position) where he met his current wife, Chanda, a science professor. World Rhythm Academy, the non-profit the two founded, serves people with addictions and children at risk through expressive arts: “We are striving for social change, bridging the gap between youth and elders, through justice and activism.”

Burrage the bandleader, now based in Brooklyn, continues to break new ground while celebrating the forbearers. His latest album, Dance of the Great Spirit, features Holographic Principle trio with bassist Nimrod Speaks and Polish pianist Michal Wierba. “We share a passion for changing the world through music, promoting the commonalities of diverse cultures and telling our stories of truth.”

Recommended Listening:
- Defunkt—Eponymous (Hannibal/Island, 1980)
- John Parcell/Anthony Cox/Ronnie Burrage—Third Kind of Blue (Minor Music, 1985)
- Jack Walrath and The Masters of Suspense—Out Of The Tradition (Muse, 1990)
- Billy Bang—Bang On! (Justin Time, 1997)
- Ronnie Burrage—Just Natural (with Eric Person, Terence Conley) (West Wind, 2000)
- Ronnie Burrage—In It (RB Music/Mimikalana, 2004)

For more information, visit ronnieburrage.biz. Burrage is at Sugarhill Jan. 5th and Small’s Jan. 29th. See Calendar.
BERNSTEIN said. “Some music is technically advanced, of such as, ‘My wife likes it’ and there’s no shame in that,” and others, but the new one doesn’t have a home yet. 

percussion more to the fore,” Bernstein said. “I love the latest recordings I’ve been pushing drums and a fertile imagination and incorporates everyone from vintage, but the source material comes out of Bernstein’s Midwestern multitudes in the ‘30s-40s. The sound is other major outlet. It’s a nine-piece band, the kind that over them. It doesn’t even have a name yet.”

soundscapes. We took beats he had created and played a master of manipulating music and creating with them,” Bernstein said. “I’m in a fertile writing now. “All that music is inside me from having worked with many others. What those people have in common is they’re not with us anymore, but the manifold lessons they taught him are there in the cathedrals of music he makes now. “All that music is inside me from having worked with them,” Bernstein said. “I’m in a fertile writing period and what’s coming out is a mixture of all that stuff. I’ll always be coming from Lester [ Bowie] and Don [Cherry]—those two were my biggest influences as a young musician—but what I’m doing now isn’t strictly jazz, it isn’t New Orleans music, it isn’t rock, but a

Bernstein’s skills as an arranger have been apparent since 1983, when he was asked to come up with some horn arrangements for Latin gigs. “I wrote the music on the subway and it came out OK. I heard some of it recently and it stands up. You could say I’m not a virtuoso trumpet player—I have a good tone—but I’ve put together a natural arranger.” Those skills went mainstream when, via Hal Wilner, Bernstein worked on Robert Altman’s Kansas City movie in 1997. Bernstein got a reputation as an arranger who could work fast, was good with musicians and could get the best performances out of them under pressure. “Letting musicians do what they do best is one of the secrets of arranging,” he said.

Beyond MTO and Sexmob, Bernstein is working with the Town Hall Ensemble, conceived by MA Papper, Artistic Director of Town Hall. With musicians including Nels Cline, Pedrito Martinez, Marc Cary and Lakecia Benjamin, the group explores what Bernstein as Music Director calls “the entire history of music played while Town Hall was in New York. There is so much potential there. It’s one band that is all races, genders and ages. They play everything from Machito and Ellington to Philip Glass and Grand Master Flash. I think it could be a giant force for good and good music, too. I love having a band that represents New York City and celebrates its musical heritage.”

Bernstein, ever the workaholic, is also a member of Ray Anderson’s Pocket Brass Band (“Ray has always been a hero of mine and it’s a very dynamic partnership”), has revived Spanish Fly with David Tronzo (slide guitar) and Marcus Rojas (tuba) and is Artistic Director of the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, founded in 1971 by Karl Berger, Ingrid Sertso and Ornette Coleman. “With Creative we are working on partnering with The New School,” he said, “keeping the flame alive for artists who passed through there, including Don Cherry, Cecil Taylor and the Art Ensemble of Chicago.”

How did Bernstein get so eclectic? Let’s spin the clock back a ways. His family was from the East Coast, but his doctor father paid for medical school at Howard via the Navy and they stationed him in Berkeley, California. It was 1969, the height of the counter-culture. He was eight and got sent to the Black Panther Party’s summer camp. His mother gave him a copy of Abbie Hoffman’s Steal This Book and they had a signed copy of Eldridge Cleaver’s Soul on Ice. Music was in the air, everything from his parents’ swing records to Bob Dylan, Jefferson Airplane and Big Brother and the Honking Company. Back in Boston for fourth grade, Bernstein had been wooed by Louis Armstrong on TV and so chose the trumpet when it was time to pick an instrument for band. The next year, having returned to Berkeley, he happily fell into Dr. Herb Wong’s legendary jazz education program for elementary kids run out of Berkeley High and met his lifelong friend, multi-instrumentalist Peter Apfelbaum. “I’d go home and try to learn ‘Basin Street Blues’,” Bernstein said. He and Apfelbaum immediately started a band, which by the time they got to high school was modeling itself on the Art Ensemble of Chicago.

Bernstein arrived in New York in 1979 to study at Columbia and never left. “I caught the tail end of the Loft Jazz scene,” he said. One of those lofts was Rivers’ Studio RivBea and in time he and Bernstein would make the cantorial-derived Diaspora Blues (2012).

Growing up, Bernstein heard Parliament/ Funkadelic, the Ohio Players and Stevie Wonder and he gravitated to city groups that incorporated funk into their sound. “That was our social music,” he said. He heard and was inspired by Joseph Bowie’s groundbreaking group Defunkt, graduated (from NYU, not Columbia) and in 1985 went on the road with the Flying Karamazov Brothers. A stint with John Lurie and The Lounge Lizards beginning in 1990 helped Bernstein’s visibility. Bernstein was heard with Sting, Courtney Love, Aretha Franklin, Linda Ronstadt and he arranged for Bill Frisell, Rufus Wainwright, Marianne Faithfull and Elton John. He worked with eclectic producer Wilner on several projects. He has a close relationship with composer John Zorn and recorded four albums for his Tzadik label. Another project, perhaps a development of Diaspora Blues, will be further exploring his heritage with Jewish cantorial music.

Oh, and about that slide trumpet. He and Apfelbaum came across a pair of them for $25 each at a little music shop tucked in Woodstock circa 1977. “I messed around with it for a while and then [fellow trumpeter] Dave Douglas said to me, ‘Why don’t you practice it?’ So I did and then decided to put together a band where I only played slide trumpet—and that’s how Sexmob got started.” That was 1995, so Sexmob is 24 years old and MTO is 20 in 2020. That more or less brings us up to the present. There’s a lot of music behind Bernstein and probably just as much up ahead.

For more information, visit stevenberstein.net. Bernstein’s MTO is at Le Poisson Rouge Jan. 10th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
JIM BLACK TRIO
RECKON
Elias Stemeseder: Piano | Thomas Morgan: Bass | Jim Black: Drums

ALY KEİTA – JAN GALEGA BRÖNNIMANN – LUCAS NIGGLI
KALAN TEBAN

MICHAEL FORMANEK VERY PRACTICAL TRIO
EVEN BETTER
Michael Formanek: Bass, Composition | Tim Berne: Saxophone
Mary Halvorson: Guitar

CHRIS SPEED TRIO
RESPECT FOR YOUR TOUGHNESS
Chris Speed: Tenor Saxophone | Chris Tordini: Bass | Dave King: Drums

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INGRID LAUBROCK – AKI TAKASE
KASUMI
Ingrid Laubrock: Saxophone | Aki Takase: Piano

SYLVIE COURVOISIER – MARK FELDMAN
TIME GONE OUT
Sylvie Courvoisier: Piano | Mark Feldman: Violin
DUSKO GOYKOVICH

BY MARK KERESMAN

While hardly a household name in the U.S. (except in Yugoslavia), trumpeter Dusko Goykovich (b. Oct. 14th, 1931 in Montenegro) is a major figure in Eastern European jazz history. While inspired by American jazz, Goykovich expanded his scope to play music reflecting the history of his environment, not merely its classical American roots. As with many performers, he made jazz his own while sharing it with Europe and, ultimately, the world.

The first jazz recording Goykovich can remember is “Roy Eldridge, ‘Little Jazz’,” he says. “We could borrow records and music at the American Embassy in Belgrade [former capital of Yugoslavia and current capital of Serbia], play the music, learn it and bring it back after a few days. Also, there was The Jazz Hour on Voice of America [a radio broadcast from the West] which I listened to one hour daily at midnight.”

American culture snuck into the Eastern Bloc countries in the most covert, or occasionally overt, ways. What made Goykovich decide to be a professional musician was, perhaps ironically, the Hollywood film Young Man With A Horn (1950) starring Kirk Douglas as a somewhat tragic, Bix Beiderbecke-like trumpeter. “Though he was, of course, not a musician, he [Douglas] was trained so well that I thought, ‘Wow! That is exactly what I want to do in my life!’ After many years, I had the chance to meet Kirk Douglas personally in New York in the 60s when we played the Ed Sullivan Show with Woody Herman’s Big Band. So I told him that it was his fault that I became a professional trumpet player. He had to laugh hard!” In addition, Goykovich got encouragement from Miles Davis (“I first met him in the early 60s when he played in Munich”) to move to the States. The move was a success, Goykovich finding work with American icons Sonny Rollins, Gerry Mulligan, Slide Hampton and Duke Jordan. He had a steady stint with the very prestigious Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland Big Band from 1963-73.

A truism in jazz is that playing ballads really demonstrates a musician’s ability. Listen to Goykovich’s version of the standard “I’ll Close My Eyes” on his 1993 album Soul Connection (Enja). One can hear snatches of Miles Davis and Harry “Sweets” Edison in his style, that delicate but-not-excessively-muted sound. He’s got the earnest soulfulness of those legends but the lyrical style is his own—it’s clear he grew from those roots but there’s nothing imitative in Goykovich’s approach. As other items in his discography demonstrate, Goykovich strove to infuse the brass music of the Balkan region into his approach. Also from his Soul Connection album is the Davis tribute “Ballad for Miles”; as Davis channeled the old-school lyricism of Bobby Hackett (everything comes from somewhere), so too does Goykovich channel Davis’ acoustic epoch and makes it his own.

If this sounds cozily familiar, remember Goykovich grew up under the shadow Communism cast over nearly all Eastern Europe. “Roy Eldridge, ‘Little Jazz,’ he says. “We could listen to music if we were careful, which we were. Those Communist days jazz was forbidden in Yugoslavia,” Goykovich remembers. “You had to listen to the music in secret. The Communists called it ‘music from the jungle’ or ‘Western Capitalist crap’ and all these propaganda terms. My fellow musicians in the Radio Belgrade Big Band were cool, but we had to call the music ‘entertaining’ music – never mentioned the word ‘jazz’.”

Goykovich’s recently released album Sketches of Yugoslavia is a venture wherein folk strains of Yugoslavia commingle with large ensemble jazz. Recorded in 1973-74 but unreleased until now, the album finds Goykovich’s small group supported by a near-symphonic backdrop from the NDR Radio Orchestra Hannover. “Haze on the Danube” is virtually the sound and feeling of forlorn translated into music. Goykovich’s horn cries demonstratively over swinging, Gil Evans-tinged orchestral textures. “Shumadya” evokes something from another section of the continent—with its minor-key Spanish-flavored dramatic swirls it sounds like a bullfighter squaring off against his archenemy. “Bosna Calling” has more drama, Goykovich’s quartet engaging with the large band arrangements, the former’s volatile interplay lent savor and contrast by the latter’s near-cinematic grandeur. Things get even more dramatic with “East of Montenegro,” a surging, somewhat bleating, pulsating motif in contrast with smart, swaggering trumpet; it would be right at home in one of those ’60s international intrigue movie thrillers. The aptly-titled “Finale” brings together nearly all the elements heard before in a relaxed, genial yet winning batch of tunes with a small group of simpatico hepatics.

Goykovich is, because of jazz, truly a citizen of the world and the world, it’s safe to say, is better for it.

For more information, visit duskoogykovic.com

Recommended Listening:
- Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland and Company – The Golden 8 (Blue Note, 1961)
- Bob Brookmeyer/Kenny Wheeler – Swingin’ Macedonia (Philips, Enja, 1966)
- Dusko Goykovich Quartet – Ten To Two Blues [After Hours] (Ensayo-Enja Yellowbird, 1971)
- Dusko Goykovich – Sketches of Yugoslavia (Enja, 1973–74)
- Alvin Queen/Dusko Goykovich – A Day in Holland (Nilva, 1983)

Bob Brookmeyer (1929-2011) was one of the top valve trombonists in jazz history and an innovative composer and arranger, along with being an accomplished pianist. The Kansas City native first played piano in dance bands before joining Stan Getz as a trombonist in 1952. He spent three years in Gerry Mulligan’s small groups and served several roles in his Concert Jazz Band, contributing originals and arrangements, playing both trombone and piano. Brookmeyer described the year he spent with Jimmy Giuffre (1958) as one of the happiest of his life. He moved to Europe to launch a jazz program in Rotterdam and led several others while there. He also taught through the BMI Workshop and at Manhattan School of Music, though he made his biggest impact at New England Conservatory [NEC], where his prized students included Maria Schneider, Ryan Truesdell and Ayn Inserto.

Brookmeyer benefited from increased opportunities to hear his large ensemble music, performed and recorded by the Stockholm Jazz Orchestra, the Big Band Graz and others. But it was his founding of the New Art Orchestra in 1994 that gave him the greatest pleasure, as his hand-picked musicians worked hard to bring his challenging music to life. “It became a love affair between us, we found a language while we worked,” Mulligan recalled. “Gerry was our first guest, we did the ‘Celebration’ piece that was written for him,” he told this author in a 1999 interview. Clark Terry was the special guest the year after. “We helped him celebrate his 75th birthday and I wrote a suite for him and we toured. We traveled, we played, in July 1997, it had to be done because it was time to take a step forward to become a functioning, working, recording band.” Two more critically acclaimed CDs would follow. Brookmeyer, remaining active to the end of his life, was named an NEA Jazz Master in 2006. He died on Dec. 15th, 2011.

Truesdell explained Brookmeyer’s influence on him: “When I studied with him at NEC, I began to understand the depth of composition that he approached each work with and the level of development that was involved. Bob’s music, as a trombonist and composer/arranger, changed my life and stretched my understanding of what is possible within the definition of ‘jazz’ composition.”

For more information, visit bobbrookmeyer.com. A tribute to Brookmeyer by Ryan Truesdell is at Jazz Standard Jan. 7th-8th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
- Gerry Mulligan – At Storyville (Pacific Jazz, 1956)
- Jimmy Giuffre Trio – Western Suite (Atlantic, 1958)
- Clark Terry/Bob Brookmeyer – Gingerbread Men (Mainstream, 1966)
- Mel Lewis & The Jazz Orchestra – Live At The Village Vanguard (Featuring The Music Of Bob Brookmeyer) (Red Baron, 1982)
- Bob Brookmeyer New Art Orchestra – New Works Celebration (Challenge, 1997)
Jazz, as a term, is fluid in how people use it. It is a genre, attitude, adjective and just about every kind of descriptor one can imagine. For the Austin-based label Destiny, the word is just the starting point for a deep exploration of musical characteristics. During its six-year existence, Destiny has released over 20 albums demonstrating a commitment to new, creative voices. Whether it's the AfroCuban flair of trumpeter Pete Rodriguez, ethereal ambience of the group sum(titles) or chamber-jazz leanings of Kenneth Salters Haven, Destiny is a label ready, willing and able to clear the field for a new foundation of jazz exploration.

The genesis began with Michael Shields and George Shalda. The former grew up in Austin, TX in a musical family. Shalda’s mother was an opera singer and his father played violin. Shields began playing the trumpet when he was nine and his interest in jazz began soon after, courtesy of Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis records. This brought him to the University of North Texas where he eventually earned a Master’s in Jazz Studies. Studies first came across Shalda in 2001 after Shalda relocated to Austin. “He [Shalda] developed into an expert recording engineer through recording his group Cuentuegos, a traditional Cuban group in which he plays trumpet, percussion, guitars and sings,” says Shields. “In the spirit of Buena Vista Social Club, he developed an approach based on acoustic environment, classic recording equipment and techniques that lend well to the acoustic setting. This of course led him to recording jazz as well around the Austin scene.”

During this time, Shields and Shalda loosely discussed the idea of starting a label. After recording Rodriguez’ album Caminando Con Papi (which would become Destiny’s first release), Shields was researching online about how best to release the record and came across a few articles written by his University of North Texas classmate, guitarist Cameron Mizell. “He [Shields] came across some articles that outlined the entire process and then realized they were authored by me, his old college roommate!” He reached out and asked if I could help out. Although we hadn’t spoken much since 2005, both he and Shalda are very authentic people whom I trusted from day one, so of course I wanted to help out some old friends. My involvement grew as the label grew from there,” says Mizell.

With the trillecta in place of Shalda as owner, Shalda as producer and Mizell as manager, they set their sights on creating a sustainable musical economy that is as artist friendly as possible while balancing the realities of the current music business climate. Shields states, “I told Cam that I wanted to find a way so that everybody can benefit from their work in some form from the beginning and that I did not want to cut the artist out of all control of their ability to participate and benefit from the exploitation of their music. I feel that we achieved that goal.”

Like many small labels, Destiny has to balance their ambitions with what they can realistically achieve. “We turn down things constantly that we would love to do because of bad timing. We are a small label that can only do so much in a given year and if our timeline doesn’t line up with the artists, we just can’t afford to do an album. We always have great discussions with artists we have to turn down—often artists we’ve already released an album with—and we hope to be able to possibly do something in the future,” says Shields. Mizell contextualizes by stating, “I think the biggest downfall of making jazz records these days is making the artist feel rushed and I do what I can to help the artist feel prepared and relaxed leading up to and during their session so they can have a positive, productive experience.”

Destiny tries to balance the needs of both the business and artistic sides. Shields says, “One that is related to the art, the music and keeping all of that alive rather than allowing it to die because individuals are too focused on what they deserve and what is being taken from them. I believe that there is a fair reality and I don’t know that I have come across a label that fits this exactly but rather feel like I am always searching for ways to make the model work for the music that the people create and I hold on to the assumption that the selfless efforts toward this singular unifying goal will benefit the people involved automatically.” Mizell states, “The biggest challenge is time management and setting priorities. When people ask me why we don’t do this or that, what they don’t often realize is that I’m the one doing it all and I simply can’t do everything. There are a lot of great ideas out there and creative things we could implement for our releases, but budgets and my time is limited and I can only do so much. I try to coordinate efforts with the artist to maximize everyone’s efforts, which is another reason we have to work with artists that understand the need for their own involvement.”

(Continued on Page 54)
Jan Erik Kongshaug, the Norwegian engineer and producer of thousands of recordings sessions, died Nov. 5th at 77, the same month that ECM Records, the label with which he is most associated, celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Kongshaug was born in Trondheim on Jul. 4th, 1944, a little under a year after ECM label head Manfred Eicher. He trained in electronics at the Trondheim Technical School and found work in the Oslo-based Arne Bendiksen and Talent Studios.

At the same time, Kongshaug could be found on the other side of the studio glass, playing guitar or bass on jazz, folk and pop albums by Svend Asmussen, Sven Nyhus, Jan Eggeum, Bjarne Nerem, Carl Hjalmby, Frode Thranes, Kåre Korneliussen, Asmund Bjerken and others, sometimes doing double-duty as engineer of the session. He also released a couple of albums under his own name in the late ‘60s-early ‘70s for ACT and Hot Club Records.

In 1970-71, while working at Arne Bendiksen Studio, Kongshaug engineered sessions for Eicher’s fledgling imprint: Jan Garbarek Quartet - Afric (ECM 1007); Bobo Stenson/Arild Andersen - Eponymous (ECM 1015); Terje Rypdal - Facing You (ECM 1018); Chick Corea - Underwear (ECM 1012); Gary Burton, Bennie Maupin, Edward Vesala, Steve Lacy, Jeff Berlin, and John Novacek.

This would begin a momentous partnership, Eicher finding in Kongshaug an engineer who could capture what has reductively been dubbed the “ECM Sound”, often imitated but never bested. The ‘70s would see other Eicher-Kongshaug productions by an astonishing array of players from all over the world: Paul Bley, Gary Burton, Benjie Maupin, Edward Vesala, Steve Lacy, Jeff Berlin, and John Novacek. Kongshaug would found Rainbow Studio in Oslo in 1984. There he would engineer hundreds more ECM dates through the present day (and, one assumes, albums yet to be released). This is not to say that Kongshaug only worked with ECM as his resume has hundreds of jazz albums engineered for other labels as well as just as many in the rock, classical, electronic and pop fields. But it was that special partnership with Eicher that has had the most profound effect, not only on Kongshaug’s career but on the international world of jazz for five decades. With almost Eicherian understatement, Kongshaug described the relationship as such in a 2010 interview with AllAboutJazz.com’s John Kelman: “We had the same attitude towards working, and it sounded nice.”
Clarinetist Sol Yaged’s passing last May at 96 leaves a large void in the NYC musical landscape. A master of the live gig, he amazedly played 7 nights a week for about 60 years. However, save for It Might As Well Be Swing (Herald, 1956), a superb studio session rereleased in 2018 (Pine Hill), his few other recordings are live dates with saxophonist Coleman Hawkins and trumpet players Phil Napoleon and Red Allen. About two years ago, Yaged and punk rocker Tino Valpa discovered a common musical passion resulting in Your Wish Is My Command, which includes an unreleased 1972 Yaged performance and four newly recorded “tribute” tunes.

The new studio work, in addition to Yaged (who adds a few signature lines) and Valpa (who overdubs vocals, bass, guitar and drums), features vibraphonist Harry Sheppard (who at 91 is still going strong) plus pianist Marc McElroy and a four-piece horn section. Opener “Takin’ A Swing” is a campy sendup that namechecks former NYC jazz signifiers while the instrumental “Whirlwind” is a punky Balkan brass pastiche. The title track’s horns, beat and self-deprecatory lyrics turns into a Madness-inspired treatise before the standard “As Time Goes By” is mockingly presented as a sardonic reflection.

The remainder is a welcome expansion of Yaged’s scatography. In his own element, he easily flows between registers with gorgeous tone. This band includes pianist Johnny Knapp, bassist Ray Carl, drummer Mousey Alexander and presumably Sheppard although he is uncredited. There is plenty of room to swing collectively and individually and the recording is a faithful transcription of a vintage Yaged club date, including the diners’ table conversations. “Sweet Georgia Brown” and “Stompin’ at the Savoy” are extended with luscious solo sections and closer “The World is Waiting for the Sunrise” is a forward-looking statement as one looks back on Yaged’s phenomenal career.

For more information, visit pinehillrecords.com

Black Case Volume I and II: Return From Exile
Joseph Jarman (Blank Forms Editions)

The Art Ensemble of Chicago was—and continues to be—much more than what was captured on record and occasional video. It was a top-notch jazz band but also an early integrator of African influence into Western music. It was, at times, a theater troupe, but it grew into both a spiritual and a business practice. And it was the highest profile distillation of the DIY theories and practices of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians.

The important history of the band has, in recent years, been well documented. But what we haven’t had is a telling from a primary source. Black Case Volume I & II: Return From Exile isn’t that, but it is a fascinating view into the times and one of the minds of the Art Ensemble in its early years.

Saxophonist Joseph Jarman—who passed last January at 81—self-published the two volumes in small runs in 1974, with a second edition by the band’s in-house publishing arm and record label in 1977. Long unavailable, the book has been given a welcome new printing by Blank Forms Editions. Essentially a collection of verse with a scattering of photos and scores, the book provides remarkable insight into Jarman’s mind through African American vernacular, poetics and politics at the height of the Black Power movement.

For the most part, Black Case functions as a continuous text. One work moves into the next without titles or clear delineation. Verses change in form but flow through concept and phraseology. Jarman states in the introduction that “no dates are given because they have no meaning in the ever-present flow of our lives” and yet it functions as a portrait in diary form. A transcribed dream that nearly dissolves into a police-composite lynching, is immediately followed by a prayer for healing through music.

As a writer and poet, Jarman is ever-present in his text. He put the fullness of his spirit into his writing and there is a palpable tension between the peace he desired and the anger instilled in him by the violence he saw in war, oppression, the inner city and his own mind. Jarman eventually found peace in Buddhist practice and channeled it through his art. Black Case marks the beginnings of that journey.

For more information, visit blankforms.org/publications
With Strings
Eric Alexander (HighNote)
by Alex Henderson

After alto saxophonist Charlie Parker recorded his With Strings sessions of 1949-50, myriad jazz players hoped to record albums emphasizing their lyrical sides by employing lush string orchestrations; unfortunately for most, jazz-with-strings projects were cost-prohibitive. In 2011-13 tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander enjoyed the backing of a string orchestra (with arranging and conducting by Dave Rivello), the fruits of the collaboration only now released. In addition to pianist David Hazeltine, bassist John Webers and drummer Joe Farnsworth, Alexander is accompanied by an orchestra of nine violins, two violas, two cellos, flute and French horn. While many jazz-with-strings projects consisted entirely of ballads, this album favors a combination of ballads and midtempo performances.


One thing separating With Strings from other jazz-with-strings efforts is that Alexander doesn’t rely entirely on ‘20s-30s Tin Pan Alley standards; the oldest material includes “Some Other Time” (from the 1944 musical On The Town) and “The Thrill Is Gone” along with tunes written during the ‘50s or beyond, such as the aforementioned Mancini and Silver gems. Despite being more arranged than his albums usually are, With Strings leaves the saxophonist sufficient room to stretch out. And he is no less compelling as an improviser as with tunes written during the ‘50s or beyond, such as the aforementioned Mancini and Silver gems. Despite being more arranged than his albums usually are, With Strings leaves the saxophonist sufficient room to stretch out. And he is no less compelling as an improviser.

For more information, visit rogueart.com. This project is at Whitney Museum Jan. 3rd-4th. See Calendar.

Map of Liberation
Tiger Trio (RogueArt)
by Marc Medwin

The track titles conjure shades of late Coltrane, but the music on Tiger Trio’s sophomore effort could even call the genre-bending interplay of Cream to mind. If the comparison seems trite, bask for a while in the heavy modality of the disc’s final piece to hear just one instance of these veteran improvisers getting down into some heavy post-blues, but the resemblance is deeper as the trio plumbs the depths of tone, tonal center and the places they merge.

Even were the names not gracing the cover, there would be no mistaking the individual voices cultivated by these musicians for several years: the unmistakably beautiful piano sonorities with which Myra Melford opens “Compassion”; the first notes of “Courage” for a taste of how integrated flute and voice are in Nicole Mitchell’s conception; or the harmonic soaked bass rumblings of Joelle Léandre slamming “Reflection” into high gear as points of individual reference. More often than not, however, it is a kind of melding, a spontaneous and lightning-fast merging of creative intuition, which propels this music beyond improvisational exercise into the moment of sublime but unbridled alacrity. Density increases as Léandre enters the pointillistic fray and her rapid repetitions, caught and augmented by Mitchell, lead to the clouds and sparks of tone and rhythm engulfing the music two and a half minutes in, just before everything collapses into shards and fragments still forming phrases that simply refuse to sputter out of existence. Then there is the absolutely exquisite, unified and miles-deep drone ending the disc, a shifting kaleidoscope of tone and color embracing all frequencies as it moves sweetly toward silence.

As with Cream or the Coltrane group of your choice, the music’s palpability results directly from staggering technique in the service of boundless imagination. If piano-innards explorations are momentarily confused with similar sounds emanating from Léandre’s gorgeous instrument and if the expertly tuned thirds Mitchell can conjure at will confound expectation, then expectation is in need of readjustment. As with every RogueArt release, the excellent recording renders it all clear and vibrant. Here is a supergroup if ever one existed, captured in full flight, or, given the group’s name, in purr, growl and roar.

For more information, visit tamirspirit.bpt.me. This project is at Smoke through Jan. 5th. See Calendar.

Recommended new releases

- Eric Alexander—With Strings (HighNote)
- Jaimie Branch—Fly Or Die It: Bird Dogs of Paradise (International Anthem)
- Nick Dunston—Atlantic Extraction (Out of Your Head)
- Abdullah Ibrahim—Dream Time (Solo Piano) (Enja)
- Bo Jacobsen—Northern Spirit (Gateways Music)
- Mike Nock/Bob Moses—Electric Organic Symphony (Ra Kalam)
- Evan Parke/Barry Guy/Paul Lytton—Concert in Vibes (NoBusiness)
- Stephen Riley—Olio (SteepleChase)
- Elliott Sharp/Traces-Marie Utti—Peregrinations (zOaR)
- Mars Williams—An Ayler Xmas, Volume 3: Live in Krakow (Not Two)

Laurence Donohue-Greene, Managing Editor

- Peter Brötzmann—Solo: I Surrender Dear (Trost)
- Brian Charette—Beyond Borderline (SteepleChase)
- Erroll Garner—Campus Concert (MGM- Mack Avenue/Octave Music)
- Per Texas Johansson—Struk på himlen och stora hus (Moserobie)
- Charles Lloyd Quartet—Montreux Festival 1967 (Swiss Radio Days Jazz Series 46) (TCB)
- Bobby Naughton—Solo (Otic)
- Aaron Novik—No Signal (Avant Laguardia)
- Sam Rivers Quintet—Archive Project, Volume 2: Zenith (NoBusiness)
- Pat Thomas/Dominic Lash/Tony Orrell—BleySchool (577 Records)
- Toh-Kichi (Satoko Fujii/Tatsuya Yoshida)—Batkunu (Libra)

Andrey Henkin, Editorial Director
Even an abbreviated list of tenor saxophonist/clarinetist Chris Speed’s regular projects (AlasNoAxis, Bloodcount, The Clarinets, Claudia Quintet, Endangered Blood, Human Feel, Pachora, SpEd Trio, Trio Iffy, Yeah No) and habitual collaborators (Tim Berne, Jim Black, Uri Caine, Andrew D’Angelo, Dave Douglas, John Hollenbeck, Dave King, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Jamie Saft, Skúli Sverrisson, Craig Taborn, Cuong Vu) gives an indication of his importance in the creative music scene. Three recent recordings provide a progress report of his prolific activities.

Respect For Your Toughness is Speed’s third album with his trio of bassist Chris Tordini (bandmate from Claudia Quintet) and drummer King (from The Bad Plus). The quintessential sideman, Speed is known for his chameleonic presence, blending in with the creative ambience, surreptitious and yet quietly subversive, revealing distinctive colors when riled, making his presence, if not seen, than at least felt. This setting, a chordless trio à la Sonny Rollins (or Albert Ayler), exposes him relatively unadorned, digging back into mainstream jazz roots, interpreting a standard (Kay Swift’s “Can This Be Love?”) and tuneful originals in an unhurried, open-ended fashion, favoring an intimate, breathy tenor tone that recalls the romantic balladeering of Ben Webster. Of course there’s a lot of messin’ about with meters; 21-beat time signatures abound, though their accent patterns are all different: “Helicopter Lineman” parses as 4×3×2×2, “Faint Time” as 2×2×2×2×3, “Taborn to Run” as 4×7 and “Case Aida”, a limping calypso, as 4×4×3. Sophisticated stuff, but Tordini and King’s jocular legendaire obviates any intellectualism. Speed’s organically developed ideas imbue and enliven the title track, “Strobe Dots” and “Transporter” with sober, undulating ecstasy.

Human Feel was born in Speed’s association with alto saxophonist D’Angelo and drummer Black in a Seattle high school; incubated in Boston, Seattle high school big band; and the latter with repetitive vibraphone gently confronting Hwang’s musings in a hypnotic trancelike universe, where quiet, space and unmitigated beauty steals the show with his low-key and strikingly sparse approach, a空气 of graceful sophistication. Speed plays clarinet while Noriega, panned right, switches textures with bass clarinet drones. Speed, panned left, imbues and enlivens the title track, “Human Feel”.

The album begins with “Prophecy”, the soft, delicate edifying sounds of Hwang’s majestic violin punctuated by Karl Berger’s gentle piano, perhaps a foetalling of less tumultuous times. Silhouettes follows, gorgeous shadings from Hwang, interspersed with Berger’s graceful vibraphone. Hwang absolutely steals the show with his low-key and strikingly sparse high notes. Close your eyes and travel to an alternate universe, where quiet, space and unmitigated beauty unfold soothingly, as pure sound resonates tenderly.

Beyond Reach continues along the same path, tranquilly and serenely, just above a whisper but with an angelic stillness. Berger lets it be, joining in only occasionally on both vibraphone and piano, lending an air of graceful sophistication.

Berger moves centerstage on “Vanishing Roots”, exalted, transcendent, pizzicato violin juxtaposed against lightly jagged piano. “Faith” could make a believer of anyone, Hwang’s deeply moving cello-like tones calling to the heavens, offering pleas for an ailing soul. Below Zero and Water Finds Water deviate somewhat, the former opening with soft rapidly fingered contributions from Berger while Hwang plays pizzicato and the latter with repetitive vibraphone gently confronting Hwang’s musings in a hypnotic trancelike exploration. Water, the longest and most adventurous track, sings with repetitive motion, evincing a sweet clarity, timeless and undiminished, in no rush to find its end. The finale, “Arise”, is a sumptuous on strings, interrupted by light piano spurs. A fitting end to a wonderful recording and one of Hwang’s best.

For more information, visit intaktrec.ch and skirlrecords.com.

Respect For Your Toughness
Chris Speed Trio (Intakt)
Gold
Human Feel (Intakt)
No Pressure
The Clarinets (Skirl)
by Tom Greenland
When, back in 1938, Jelly Roll Morton spoke of a “Spanish tinge” in his music, he was primarily referring to Cuban habanera and tresillo rhythms. Today, jazz’ South American tinges are manifold, as heard on three recent albums by artists from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela.

Brazilian-American vocalist Claudia Villaile is somewhat of a secret weapon, a musicians’ musician whose infrequent recordings and Santa Cruz homebase camouflage her world-class talents as an improvising vocalist. Encantada Live, only her sixth album since 1994’s Asa Verde, compiles choice live performances recorded in duo, quartet and septet formats. Her voice, agile and robust across a considerable range, varies in personality from low and gruff to nasal and pinched (almost like a berimbau), light and childlike to full and operatic, bright and horn-like to sharp and percussive.

Possibly her most amazing asset is the ability to improvise melody and Portuguese lyrics simultaneously, generating songs that sound pre-composed. Sterling examples include “Taina”: “Minas”, a duet with pianist Kenny Werner reminiscent of an Indian jugalbandi duet; and “Em Paz”, a duet with Santa Fe guitarist Bruce Dunlap.

Argentinian-Italian baritone saxophonist Javier Girotto was first moved by Tango Nuevo, Astor Piazzolla’s seminal 1974 collaboration with Gerry Mulligan, as a child of ten, so he welcomed ACT label Mulligan, as a child of ten, so he welcomed ACT label

The second release from this quartet, Geometry of Distance unfolds like an improvised deconstructed opera. It presents seriously abstract, unabashedly ‘out’ music put forward by improvising musicians at the height of their powers. There are many notable elements contributing to what likely will be seen as a lasting contribution to improvisatory music.

First, the instrumentation of cello (Tomeka Reid), voice (Kyoko Kitamura), trumpet (Taylor Ho Bynum) and guitar (Joe Morris) and absence of a traditional rhythmic anchor provides an unusual sound palette. Second, each member of the quartet is part of the larger Anthony Braxton constellation and thus the music reflects the Braxton school of thought, at least in regard to broad experimentation, fearless improvisation, rigorous musicianship and structural integrity.

Another way in which this band distinguishes itself is by avoiding descent into the amorphous cacophony that mars lesser quality free improvisation. Instead, it presents a respectful conversation offering myriad vistas of emotional space, devised by the quartet’s expert attunement to each other.

This is music that submerges listeners rather than overpowers them. Extensive use of silence creates a winter landscape of sound, crystalline and open, each detail discernible in the vastness. Melodies emerge and float by like creatures from the deep. Vocal effusions, from moans to operatic grissad to growls and trills, interweave with effervescent guitar and the plucked strings and bowed eruptions of cello. Trumpet blares, squawks, squalls and emits soft bursts of cryptic notes. No one is bound to the traditional limits of their instruments, none are restricted by the dictates of time, harmony or conventional melody. The result is music that flows with subtle beauty and seems to penetrate the subconscious to linger there.

For more information, visit relativepitchrecords.com. Reid, Morris and Kitamura are at SEEDS Jan. 7th. See Calendar.

Venezuelan guitarist Juanna Trujillo works in the interzone of composition and improvisation. Set It Up As Silence is the debut album of Sferso, a trio completed by Cuban saxophonist Hayri Paz and Korean drummer Dayeon Seok. Eschewing obvious rhythmic schemes for a more flexible approach to beat-keeping, his song structures nonetheless retain elements of melody and harmony, though these may not manifest immediately.

His most signature quality, however, lies in his handling of timbre: swelling attacks à la Bill Frisell, strange strumming techniques and an unusual tone colored by drawn-out echoes, layered distortion and loops. Paz and Trujillo coordinate like a pair of hands while Seok’s sparse, staggered phrasing recalls Paul Motian, inviting comparisons to his trio with Frisell and Joe Lovano. All of these aspects coalesce organically on “Bosque Verde”, the final track and a standout.

The Masada songbook is a gift that keeps on giving. Since Book 1 was introduced to the listening world through a coveted decalogue of CDs released in the ‘90s by DIW, John Zorn’s magnum opus has continued to grow. Like the city of Beijing, over the years it has added one ring after another as newer residents flock in search of an identifiable center. In this iteration we find two pianists—Craig Taborn and Vadim Neselovskyi—interpreting tunes in solo and duo configurations.

Taborn’s six unaccompanied tracks tell a wonderful range of stories, each more involved than the last. Generally, these fall into two modes, exemplified by the swirling motifs, colorful vistas and deeply personal riffs of “Peninxi” and dreamlike patience of “Kayam”, which works into denser and denser weaves, from gossamer to burlap. “Setumah” comes up for air from turgid surroundings with gentle persuasion, proof that this music requires virtuosity of an emotional register as much of a technical one.

Neselovskyi’s triptych of solo offerings explores different chambers of the same heart. His expressive palette, while monochromatic by comparison, is no less dynamic for its range of textures, moods and effects. The fibrillations of “Orot” are especially blood-rich. In duet with Taborn, he unleashes darkness and light in equal measure, guided by a mutual trust to follow wherever the music leads. Theirs is an act not only of communication, but also of deconstruction, whereby the very nature of language cowers at the feet of gestural vocabularies.

The final three tracks feature Neselovskyi’s trio with bassist Dan Loomis and drummer Ronen Itzik. Across reexaminations of “Bohu”, “Kayam” and “Peninxi”, they leap from the page with sentient assurance. The rhythm section, in combination with Neselovskyi’s colorful sensibility at the keyboard, makes for one of the most robust flares to come out of the Masada sun in quite some time. Turning these tunes like a facet, we find that each catches the sun just so, a signal for some future interpreter to spin as they feel moved.


Craig Taborn/Vadim Neselovskyi (Tzadik)

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NORMA WINSTONE & JOHN TAYLOR IN CONCERT
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The incredible relationship between legendary British musicians Norma Winston and John Taylor has been celebrated for nearly five decades. The vocalist and pianist have been inseparably linked from their early avant-garde work of the late 1960s through their genre-defying work with Kenny Wheeler and Aynsley.

The couple was also well-documented in duo performance; their affinity for each other and their unique abilities are readily comprehended. Winston and Taylor's In Concert is a remastered release of Enodoc Records' 1999 cassette tape release of a fascinating 1988 duo concert. Four years after the pianist's passing, this recording will remind listeners of the wonderful interplay and tenderness between Taylor and Winstone.

The performance presented on In Concert documents a quietly assembled concert that connected with the collaboration of Winstone and Taylor's performing residency at the Guildhall Music School in London in August 1988. Though they didn't have time to put together an ensemble or theme, the two were able to provide the listeners, including many of their students, with a wonderfully diverse and masterful performance.

JAY CLAYTON & JERRY GRANELLI
ALONE TOGETHER
SSC 1521 - AVAILABLE 11/16
There are relationships that always remain fruitful. Maybe it is because the discourse never laps or there is unfailing affection. Vocalist Jay Clayton and percussionist Jerry Granelli have been making music together for forty years and their musical connection continues to surprise as their affinities deepen. Their new recording, Alone Together, shows how the spark of creativity has only heightened over the duo's long affiliation.

The ten madly began to develop their language in Seattle. Meeting regularly in Granelli's basement multi-space room, the improvisers made a sound that would drive many future projects, including their group Quartet, featuring trombonist Julius Hemphill and bassist Gary Peacock. But it was their connection that was the heart of these endeavors. They were true musical soul mates.

They first began into recording was a duo recording entitled Sound Songs that was released in 1999. Thirty years later, Clayton and Granelli have released the second dual setting two perfectly as long-sighted. They reconvened along with trumpeter Darren Van Niekerk at the Sonic Temple Studio in Halifax, Nova Scotia for three hours in July 2014.

NORMA WINSTONE & JOHN TAYLOR
JAY CLAYTON & JERRY GRANELLI
IN CONCERT

Our Father Who Art Blakely: The Centennial
Valery Ponomarev (Summit)

For more information, visit relativeniptchrecords.com and audiographicrecords.com. Wooley is at Nublu 151 Jan. 10th as part of Winter Jazzfest and The Stone at The New School Jan. 18th. See Calendar.
As Spotify and other methods of electronic distribution begin to threaten the dominance of record labels, it may be tempting to think that we’re at the end of an era. But if that’s the case, then Chicago’s International Anthem never got the memo. Over the last several months, its cup has been running over, as the label has released album after album of truly exciting jazz. *Fly or Die II: Bird Dogs of Paradise* is the latest and best album from International Anthem and from multi-talented trumpeter Jaimie Branch. There is an embarrassment of riches—each one of the songs could be the lead single from its own record. There are seashanties, cowboy tunes, protest songs and god’s own free improvisation. On every track, Branch conjures up and explores one fully-formed sound, then burns it down to build something completely different, and just as good, in its place. Listening to this album is like watching a magician rapidly lifting and dropping a curtain to reveal: an elephant, a bottle of wine, a tank and so on. A succession of musical styles appear and disappear before your very ears, turning the passing moments into a minor psychedelic experience.

The great success of this album probably has something to do with the fact that Branch had a hand in every part of its creation. She operates as an auteur, wearing the hats of composer, lyricist, player, bandleader and producer. However, her band also deserves generous credit. Bassist Jason Ajemian, drummer Chad Taylor and cellist Lester St. Louis, who share composing credits on a handful of songs, achieve a powerful collaborative mind-meld. With Branch in command, they really fly.

For more information, visit intlanthem.com. This project is at The Dance Jan. 10th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.

On bassist/composer Petros Klampanis’ first trio recording he deftly accomplishes a synthesis of disparate elements into a brilliantly organic whole. He has put himself in the midst of an absolutely perfect set of musicians who hear him and his world of sound. This recording creatively suggests the difficulty of relocating (Klampanis lives in both Athens and New York), aging and more and finds what the composer calls “a dance with life”. That’s evident in the opening track as the gorgeous blend of bass, piano and drums join in complex unison passages. These find their way into beautifully executed solo passages by all three players as one. The sound of bass is intimately rich as are the percussive tinkling of both Kristjan Randalu on piano and Bodek Janke on drums and percussion.

“Seeing You Behind My Eyes” opens with a delicate and sentimental meeting of bass and piano based on a Greek dance called the *kalamatinio*, quietly and seamlessly gaining momentum as drums join in. “No Becomes Yes” has a 5/8 pulse and is a sparkling demonstration of how this trio works together. There are several “Temporary Secret” moments embedded in this group of tunes, comprising an electronically aural vignette about movement—in a New York subway station and in an airport. Hidden near the end is the third of these and its setting is the beach. It’s here that the music in beautiful colors overtakes the electronics.

The title track is the central work of the whole recording. It begins with some overdubbed, multi-layered staccato singing from Klampanis and out of that emerges beautiful solo exploration, first from elegantly beautiful piano, then smart pizzicato work from the leader. If there is “irrationality,” says the group, “we can and will embrace it.”

Klampanis finds the “dance” in the rolling rhythms of his “Easy Come, Easy Go” but also presents individual treatments of a classic Greek ballad by Manos Hadjidakis (Klampanis calls him the “Jobim of Greece”) and an American Songbook standard, Oscar Levant-Edward Heyman’s “Blame It On My Youth”, in which a Bulgarian rhythm called a *kopanitsa* transforms the ballad into more of, well, a dance. The emotional journey continues.

For more information, visit yellowbird-records.com. This project is at Zürcher Gallery Jan. 10th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
Sara Gazarek is possessed of a voice so warm that it can melt even the coldest of hearts. While she is relatively uncommon in jazz, her soprano saxophone is exquisitely sensitive on “Cocoon” and Gazarek’s vocal, which is even more remarkable given her wordy. The moody “Gaslight District” is the best of the bunch, with Mindeeman once again earning his pay.

Standards “Never Will I Marry” (Frank Loesser) and “I Get Along Without You Very Well” (Hoagy Carmichael) thankfully made the cut, though the latter isn’t on the Japanese version of the album. Gazarek is a great interpreter of the Great American Songbook and tends to sing them fairly straight, without much embellishment but lots of emotion. “Lonely Hours” by Hy Glaser and Jerry Solomon is the exception. It was the title cut on a 1964 Sarah Vaughan album on Roulette (with Benny Carter arrangements) that recently entered Gazarek’s record collection. It gets a midtempo reading, an adventurous treatment with lots of scat.

Thirsty Ghost is more a collection of songs than a unified work with singular intent and a step more downbeat than her previous records. It’s what happens when Kurt Elling tells you to “step into all of the depth, darkness and radiance of who you really are.”

For more information, visit saragazarek.com. Gazarek is at Birdland Jan. 11th. See Calendar.

Four Visions
Dave Liebman/Dave Binney/Donny McCaslin/Samuel Blais (SunnySide)
by Eric Wendell

While still relatively uncommon in jazz, the saxophone quartet has much to offer in its blend of the composed and the improvised. On Four Visions, Dave Liebman, David Binney, Donny McCaslin and Samuel Blais display a compelling collective musical camaraderie.

Blais-penned opener “Blaiizza” displays a deft mixture of counterpoint and postbop riffing. Partly inspired by Andante & Scherzo by composer Eugene Bozza (who himself incorporated jazz elements into his compositions), the piece is a strong indicator that the quartet understands one another’s approaches well enough to exist as both a new music ensemble and jazz quartet. McCaslin’s “Legions” is the standout of the album. He is a master of building dynamics to an ultimate climax and the piece swells with numerous peaks and valleys. Binney is the most playful of the quartet, as his “Technicolor Penguins” displays a natural ability to evoke strong, unison punches as well as break off into polyphony and ultimately settle on somber swells. Liebman’s “In Bach’s Studio” is the most sophisticated track, more of a suite than a singular piece of music. Clocking in at 16 minutes, it’s also the album’s longest and most meditative piece, Liebman gives each member a time to shine while featuring his beautiful sound on soprano saxophone.

One can only hope that there is more to come from this group of musicians, a fine new example of a format that deserves further exploration.


Nearly a decade after the first installment from the trio of pianist Thollem McDonas, bassist William Parker and guitarist Nels Cline, comes this tight improvisatory set. This volume seems formed with an LP in mind; there are two tracks, both just under 19 minutes and both a sense of contrast and continuation between the two. “Life in the world,” or “Side A,” is predominately probing, somewhat spare, the musicians offering each other nuggets to contemplate. Only in the last few minutes do things coalesce into any kind of homophony or ensemble playing.

“Side B.” “World in a Life,” is more active and denser at the start than any part of the previous track, but only at the start. The playing slows down and opens up in the middle, before the energy takes on a semblance of agitation about three minutes toward the end. The music indicates that the quasi-palindromic titles are no accident, as there is a flow between the two tracks, which makes them two halves of a closed circle, a finite circumference that can be traversed without ever stepping back into the same place.

The titles connect to the previous album, where some of that track titles made into a sentence, would read, “There are as many worlds in a life as there are lives in the world.” The point here is seamlessness—there is no resistance to external interpretation. The Drakes are the best, heard in medley with a musical treatment of Sara Teasdale’s poem “The River.” It works because Drakes’s sophisticated songs are inherently jazzy.

Thirsty Ghost is also a showcase for Gazarek’s own songs, three written with keyboard players (“Easy Love” and “Gaslight District” with Larry Goldberg and “Distant Storm” with Brad Mehldau). The former is down easy with a nice piano solo from Stu Mindeman (who’s upfront for most of the album) and Goldings himself comping on organ. “Distant Storm” benefits from a strong arrangement for the horns and a second voice in Kurt Elling. But the song itself is kind of wordy. The moody “Gaslight District” is the best of the bunch, with Mindeman once again earning his pay.

JHM 269
Lisa Hoppé’s Third Reality
The Mighty Unlikely

Lisa Hoppe’s Third Reality is more a collection of songs than a suite of compositions. This is improvisation without a lead voice.

On her first album, “The Mighty Unlikely” Lisa Hoppe, an outstanding German double bass player, creates trio ambience in chamber music format widening the borders of the so-called acoustic music of jazz, using elements from free jazz, improvised music as well as sounds and noises, speech and vocal structures.

For more information, visit espdisk.com. Parker is at Roulette Jan. 10th-11th and Jazz at Kitano Jan. 23rd with Steve Swell. Cline is at The Dance Jan. 11th as part of Winter Jazzfest. The Stone at The New School Jan. 15th and 23rd and Roulette Jan. 27th. See Calendar.

Gowanus Sessions II
Thollem/William Parker/Nels Cline (ESP-Disk’)
by George Grelia

Lisa Hoppe – b, comp
Tal Yahalom – g
David Leon – s
Thollem McDonas – p
William Parker – b
Nels Cline – g

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The Total Spectrum of Great Jazz
No less of a guitar authority than Pat Metheny has declared that Pasquale Grasso is “the best guitarist I’ve heard in maybe my entire life.” The folks at Sony Masterworks apparently agree and they have released three new solo guitar albums from the young Italian virtuoso, who seems to aspire to become the Art Tatum of the guitar.

Solo guitar in a straightahead jazz context is an inherently dangerous proposition. It hasn’t been attempted all that often and anyone who tries is bound to be judged against the looming shadow of the three Joe Pass Virtuoso albums on the Pablo label back in the late ’70s. On a purely technical basis, Grasso has surpassed what Pass was able to accomplish in nearly every metric. Grasso could be the fastest guitarist the world has ever known—especially because of the content he transmits and the devastating clarity with which he delivers it. He’s got a velvet tone and he doesn’t ever seem to evoke a ‘clam’ even at breakneck speed. But that breakneck speed can also be the Achilles heel for listener comprehension and it comes like so much of the material on these three discs, is too fast, with an “everything but the kitchen sink” aesthetic crammed in. Ultimately, one hardly remembers that the tune is a ballad.

Make no mistake about it, this guy is a fantastic guitar player, but the solo guitar album may not be the best idiom really to enjoy his artistry.

A double disc effort of epic proportions, the latest album from Terri Lyne Carrington brings the drummer’s well-documented political activism to the forefront. Within the context of a mélange deftly merging contemporary jazz with elements of rap, rock, hip hop, RB, soul, fusion and European classical music, the provocative messaging addresses an expansive array of social ills, including racism, police brutality, mass incarceration, gender and income inequality and homophobia. Performed by her working band Social Science, a multi-racial intergenerational aggregation of saxophonist Morgan Guerin, guitarist Matthew Stevens, keyboard player Aaron Parks, bassist Derrick Hodge, MC/DJ Kassa Overall and vocalist Debo Ray, along with a host of guests, the music delivers its messages with a palpable sense of urgency.

Beginning with Parks and Overall’s “Trapped In An American Dream” the music unfurls gradually, progressively escalating in intensity under the latter’s spoken and rapped words cataloging myriad injustices facing people of color in this country. Guest Malcolm Jamal Warner orates and Ray vocalizes on Carrington and Parks’ “Bells Ringing Loudly”, a prayerful ode that contrasts the sounds of chiming church bells and blaring sirens. Trumpeter Nicholas Payton and rapper Raydar Ellis join the band, augmented by a string quartet, additional keyboards and percussion, for “Pray The Gay Away”, a pulsating indictment of homophobia. Rapper Kokayi is heard intoning his lyric about the genocide of Native Americans on Stevens’ rocking “Purple Mountains” and Mark Kimble pleadingly sings “how long must we endure” on an a cappella take of the title track.

The music continues powerfully with guest rapper Rhapsody on “The Anthem”, an assertive declaration of female equality and sisterhood, which concludes with the emphatic pronouncement “I pledge allegiance to woman”. It’s a thesis. Ray’s beautiful rendering of Joni Mitchell’s “Love” with Esperanza Spalding on bass. “No Justice (For Political Prisoners)” has the spoken words of Meshell Ndegeocello and sampled voice of Mumia Abu Jamal speaking to the title’s subject matter. Stevens’ “Over And Sons” is a stirring instrumental featuring the composer’s guitar. Two more tracks, the funky “If Not Now”, with rapper Maimoune Youssef (Mumu Fresh), and a hymn-like reprise of “Waiting Game” featuring Ray’s calming vocal, close out the disc with messages of optimism and determination.

Hopefully the power of the date’s first disc, with the voices of its numerous guests, will not overshadow Disc Two’s superlative instrumental music performed by Carrington, Parks, Stevens, Guerin and Spalding with an overdubbed chamber ensemble under the direction of Edmar Colón. The four-movement suite titled “Dreams And Desperate Measures” is an expansive orchestral opus, demonstrating just how compellingly Carrington has understatedly flowing rhythmism steers ensembles into directions where their individual instrumental voices meld together into a singular group sound.

For more information, visit motenamusic.com. Carrington is at The Sutton Room Jan. 12th with Kris Davis as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
Michael Eaton is a Brooklyn-based saxophonist, educator and composer whose musical interests seem to have no boundaries. This is his second recording, following the highly praised *Individuation*, a complex, multilayered CD covering many different musical situations and groups of musicians. At the base is Eaton’s quartet of Brad Whiteley (piano), Daniel Ori (bass) and Shareef Taher (drums) augmented by a number of musicians and instruments, most notably Lionel Loueke on guitar and vocals, Cheryl Pyle on flute and Brittany Anjou on vibraphone.

The tunes tend to be quite structured, yet leave ample space for the soloists. The material is varied both in terms of instrumentation and inspiration. The pieces based on Eaton’s augmented quartet with Loueke draw from Latin America (“Juno”), Middle East (“Anthropocene”) and West Africa (the title track) to cyclical variations and a certain angularity à la Steve Coleman (“Aphoristic” but also “Cipher”).

Of note are Eaton’s solo on “Anthropocene”, in which rock-influenced and hard-swinging sections alternate effectively, and the many interventions by Loueke and Witheley’s work on “Juno”. “I and Thou” features first Ori’s gimbri—sort of a Moroccan lute—followed by another of Eaton’s projects, Tenor Triage consisting of James Brandon Lewis, Sean Sonderegger and Eaton himself, in a complex and varied tune based on Middle Eastern scales and modes. “Thanos and Eros” and “Machinic Eros” are intimate and impressionistic duets between soprano saxophone and flute. Finally, the “Temporalities” suite sees the basic quartet complemented by an additional piano and prepared piano, vibes, flute, trumpet and marimba. The source is evidently early minimalism à la Philip Glass and Steve Reich, with the fourth and final movement bordering on atonality. It is an engaging and rewarding piece of music requiring undivided attention. There is so much music condensed into this CD that it needs to be savored through repeated listens to appreciate its richness fully.

For more information, visit destinyrecordsmusic.com. Eaton is at Downtown Music Gallery Jan. 19th. See Calendar.

A native of Sweden, guitarist Tomas Janzon has a broad background in both classical music and jazz. While in California, he studied with master guitarist Joe Diorio and one can hear the influences of a number of artists in his playing, though he has long since found his own voice. The lack of filler in Janzon’s arrangements allows the music to breathe.

130th & Lenox consists of two separate bands, a West Coast trio with bassist Nedra Wheeler and drummer Donald Dean (who mostly sticks to brushes) and a New York quartet of vibraphonist Steve Nelson, bassist Hilliard Greene and drummer Chuck McPherson. The lack of a pianist or horn player is hardly a handicap for these engaging performances.

With his quartet, Janzon begins with a driving rendition of Sigmund Romberg-Oscar Hammerstein II’s “Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise”, alternating between spacious lines and intricate bop, Nelson’s quote-filled solo nearly stealing the show. The leader’s original “Somewhere Over Stockholm” is a tense affair with an understated solo. Kenny Dorham’s rarely performed “Prince Albert”, a snappy reworking of “All The Things You Are”, is loose and full of energy.

Janzon adds an infectious introductory descending vamp to the Bronislaw Kaper-Paul Francis Webster standard “Invitation” while the solos by the guitarist and vibraphonist provide a bit of contrast, the latter playing straight bop and the former incorporating a number of quotes into his feature. Interpretations of popular works like Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart’s “Have You Met Miss Jones” tend to be a bit predictable in jazz settings but the hip opening groove and indirect lead into its melody here signal a willingness to explore fresh territory.

The music by his West Coast trio is equally strong, though more reserved. Janzon’s “Latitude Longitude” is a quirky miniature with a playful flair while an easygoing, laidback take of Sam Rivers’ “Beatrice” suggests the influence of Jim Hall and Jimmy Raney. Janzon’s intimate treatment of Wayne Shorter’s “Iris” brings a new luster to this postbop standard.

For more information, visit tomasjanzon.com. Janzon’s NY Quartet is at Smalls Jan. 22nd. See Calendar.
"...THE COMBINED TALENTS OF EVERYBODY IN THE ENSEMBLE BOTH CAPTURES AND EXPANDS ON THE ESSENCE OF ONE OF JAZZ’S MOST EXUBERANT AND SHARP-WITTED PIANISTS.” - ALLABOUTJAZZ

"...A FULL-BODIED LATIN CELEBRATION" - AUDIOPHILE AUDITION

"...A BLEND OF VIGOUR AND SENSITIVITY REVEALING THE MUSIC’S POWER AND CONSTANT INGENUITY.” - LATIN JAZZ NETWORK

"ELECTRIC PSYCHOLOGY"
The newest album from New York’s sultry musical duo

ACUTE INFLECTIONS

"...an intimate, personal and seductive interpretation of standards, with flavorful originals."
Jazz Weekly

"The choice of repertoire and the provocative way they put it together make Acute Inflections memorable."
Hot House

www.acuteinflections.com
Fans had to wait 10 years for another leader album by bassist Massimo Biolcati. Persona, his debut, won him lots of praise. Incontro will follow suit.

A scholarship to Berklee College of Music brought Biolcati to Boston. Later he studied at the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. In New York since 2003, he has worked with Paquito D’ Rivera, Terence Blanchard and Ravi Coltrane and co-led the trio Gilfema with guitarist/vocalist Lionel Loueke and drummer Ferenc Nemeth. Their third album will be released this year.

Devotees of small jazz ensembles will enjoy this recording. The music is mellow and sensual. Biolcati composed four of the nine tracks. Dayna Stephens plays tenor, soprano and baritone saxophones, Sam Yahel piano and organ and Jongkuk Kim drums.

The slow songs are exceptional. Charlie Chaplin’s “Smile” has a deliberate rolling groove, the melody major key to minor to evoke the melancholy of the song and Stephens is at his most expressive. Yahel, a great lyrical improviser, demonstrates his talent in Charles Mingus’ “Duke Ellington’s Sound of Love”. Pop act Tears For Fears’ “Everybody Wants To Rule the World” succeeds in a fresh new arrangement, the melody flowing over a light bouncy rhythm.

Biolcati wrote the title track 20 years ago. The long incubation period clearly paid off as this is the best of his originals. The ensemble exhibits great chemistry: piano delicate, saxophone tender, bass soulful, drums spirited. Another original “Hello, I Lied”, was born from a baseline. The musicians delve into the rhythm with zest. “Fellini”, the quirkiest of Biolcati’s compositions, was inspired by memories watching TV growing up in Italy. Listeners can easily imagine a man sporting sunglasses, a cigarette between his lips, riding a Vespa on his way to meet Sophia Loren. What better way to enjoy a jazz tune!

For more information, visit sounderscore.com. This project is at The Jazz Gallery Jan. 23rd. See Calendar.

The Hot Sardines are a NY-based ensemble specializing in the hot jazz and swing styles of the ’20s-early ’30s, mostly forgoing heavy-handed or cutesy nostalgia as in their musical presentation. Welcome Home, Bon Voyage was recorded live at Joe’s Pub in NYC and Koerner Hall in Toronto. The Sardines serve up clutches of standards with the vibrancy the music deserves.

The setlists stick mostly to familiar standards, but as the old song goes, it’s how you chew that mouthful that can count for a lot. “Everybody Loves My Baby” has an almost baroque-like introduction from the horns before the rhythm section kicks in and the listener is treated to the ever-so-slightly bittersweet, sometimes husky vocalizing of Elizabeth Bougerol and the band’s curt, hearty solos, including the percussive tap-dancing of A.C. Lincoln. This track illustrates what separates the Sardines from the lesser fish of the seas: a snappy, potent sense of swing free of retro cheese. “Some of These Days” has short but electric solos and asides from trumpeter Noah Hocker and rollicking, very N’awlins-flavored keys from Evan Palazzo. “After You’ve Gone” gets a captivatingly Ellington-ian feel, essayed at an adherable languorous pace until winding up in a delightfully bravura closing.

The languorous take of “Exactly Like You” finds Bougerol especially coquettish. Ellington’s “Caravan” gets a lengthy workout with plenty of spunky solo passages—congas! tap dancing!—and bracing contrasts in tempo. The proceedings conclude with a lengthy workout on perhaps that hoariest of standards, “Won’t You Come Home Bill Bailey”. The Sardines give this their all—Bougerol making with some sass, plus assorted jaunty solos and rollicking ensemble work from the band. While it would’ve been nice to hear the Hot Sardines dip into the pool of lesser-known selections, what they do with the standards at hand is fresh, vivacious and fun. Bravo!

For more information, visit hotsardines.com. This band is at Birdland Jan. 28th-Feb. 1st. See Calendar.
soprano saxophone: 
Joel Frahm, Sam Newsome

alto saxophone: 
Billy Drewes, Chris Byars, Dave Pietro, Dick Oatts, Jim Snidero, 
Jon Gordon, Kris Allen, Loren Stillman, Mike DiRubbo, Steve Slagle, 
Vincent Herring
tenor saxophone: 
Ari Ambrose, Billy Drewes, Billy Mitchell, Charles Pillow, Chris Potter, 
Christian Wintner, Danny Walsh, Dave Schnitter, Dick Oatts, Don Braden, 
Gregory Tardy, Igor Butman, Jimme Greene, Joshua Douglas Smith, 
Larry Schneider, Mark Turner, Rich Perry, Rick Margitza, Stephen Riley, 
Tim Ries, Walt Weiskopf, Wayne Escoffery
baritone saxophone: 
Ed Xiques, Gary Smulyan, Jay Brandford
trompet: 
Alex Norris, Bred Goode, Charles Sullivan (Kamau), Dave Ballou, 
George Colligan, Greg Gisbert, Ingrid Jensen, Joe Magnarelli, John McNeil, 
Louis Smith, Marcus Printup, Ryan Kisor, Scott Wendholt, Tim Hagans
trombone: 
Andre Hayward, Conrad Herwig, Danny Kirkhum, Jim Pugh, Steve Davis, 
Vincent Gardner, Wycliffe Gordon
guitar: 
Dave Stryker, Doug Raney, Freddie Bryant, Tony Purrone, Vic Juris
piano: 
Andy LaVerne, George Colligan, Michael Weiss, Richard Doron Johnson
bass: 
David Ephross, David Finck, Doug Weiss, Essiet Essiet, Jay Anderson, 
Johannes Weidenmüller, Neil Caine, Ron McClure, Scott Colley, 
Steve LaSpina
drums: 
Adam Nussbaum, Ari Hoenig, Billy Drummond, Billy Hart, 
Darren Beckett, Jaz Sawyer, Jochen Rueckert, Joe Farnsworth, 
Keith Copeland, Matt Wilson, Sylvia Cuenca

“...SteepleChase’s series of jam sessions drawing together the cream of the contemporary jazz world makes a refreshing change these days .... highly recommended.”

(Rick Finlay – CD Review)
ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

JAIME BRANCH – Fly Or Die II: Bird Dogs of Paradise (Strut)
ALEX HARDING/LUCIAN BAN – Dark Blue (Sunnyside)
PER “TEXAS” JOHANSSON – Strid på himlen och stora hus (Moserobie)
MICHAEL LEONHART ORCHESTRA – Suite Extracts Vol. 1 (Sunnyside)
JAMES BRANDON LEWIS – An UnRuly Manifesto (Relative Pitch)
JOE LOVANO – Trio Tapestry (ECM)
RED KITE – Eponymous (RareNoise)
STEPH RICHARDS – Take The Neon Lights (Birdwatcher)
PHIL SLATER – The Dark Pattern (Earshift Music)
GEBHARD ULMANN/HANS LÜDEMANN/OLIVER POTRATZ/ERIC SCHAEFTER – mikroPULIS (Intuition)

— Laurence Donohue-Greene

SATOKO FUJI/TAYSUYA YOSHIDA – Baikamo (Libra)
VIJAY IYER/CRAG TABORN – The Transitory Poems (ECM)
ALEX HARDING/LUCIAN BAN – Dark Blue (Sunnyside)
KROKOFAINT WITH STALE STORLÖKEN/INGERSTJÄRT HAKER FLATEN – Q (Rune Grammofon)
JULIAN LAGE – Love Hurts (Mack Avenue)
MICHAEL LEONHART ORCHESTRA – Suite Extracts Vol. 1 (Sunnyside)
CHRIS LIGHTCAP – SagerBigmouth (Pyroclastic)
EVAN PARKER/BARRY GUY/PAUL LYTON – Concert in Vitruus (NoBusiness)
RED KITE – Eponymous (RareNoise)
STEPH WREMBEL – The Django Experiment IV (Water Is Life)

— Andrey Henkin

MUSICIANS OF THE YEAR

JAIME BRANCH (trumpet)
KRIS DAVIS (piano)
JOE LOVANO (saxophone)
EVAN PARKER (saxophone)
AKI TAKASE (piano)

VENUES OF THE YEAR

BIRDLAND THEATER (Holl’s Kitchen)
DIZZY’S CLUB (Upper West Side)
JAZZ STANDARD (Gramercy)
THE STONE AT THE NEW SCHOOL (West Village)
VILLAGE VANGUARD (West Village)

CONCERTS OF THE YEAR

GHOST TRAIN ORCHESTRA “PLAYS MOONDOG”
Bran Carpenter, Cassie Houlbridge, Andy Lester, Dennis Lichtman, Alex Spiegelman, Sara Schreiber, Maxi Senn, Brandon Seabrook, Chris Lightcap, Rob Garcia, David Cosin, Ben Shapps, Karen Walthar, Alex Monton, Gina Macabugi, Alex Viderman
January 5th, Winter Jazzfest, Le Poisson Rouge

GARY BARTZ “ANOTHER EARTH 50TH ANNIVERSARY”
Pharoah Sanders, Charles Tolliver, James King, Bruce Edwards, Nasheet Waits, Eric Berrian
January 10th, Winter Jazzfest, Le Poisson Rouge

AROJO AFTRAB/VIJAY IYER/SHAHZAD ISMAILY
April 28th, Joe’s Pub

BARRE PHILLIPS SOLO
May 20th, Zürcher Gallery

BROOKLYN RAGA MASSIVE
MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA PROJECT

—

NEUROSIS

—

STEVE LACY QUARTET
June 14th, Vision Festival, Roulette

PAT METHENY SIDE-EYE TRIO
James Francis, Marcus Gilmore
September 11th, Sony Hall

— Laurence Donohue-Greene

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Acre – Different Constellations (AUT) • Melissa Aldana – Visions (Motéma Music) • Eric Alexander – Leap of Faith (Giant Step Arte) • Eric Alexander – With Strid
Lucian Ban/Alex Simu – Free Fall (Sunnyside) • Bangkok Lingo – Smells | Colours | Noise (Losten) • Simon Barker/Scott Tinkler – Intersections (Kimmara)
Josh Berman/Paul Lytton/Jason Roebke – Trio Discrepancies (Astral Spirits) • Bones (Ziv Taubenfeld/Shay Hazan/Nir Sabag) – Reptiles (NoBusiness)
James Carter Organ Trio – Live from Newport Jazz (Blue Note) • Jimmy Cobb – This I Dig Of You (Smoke Sessions) • The Comet Is Coming
Harold Danko/Kirk Knuffke – Play Date (SteepleChase) • Kris Davis/Oratien Ribbons (Pyroclastic) • Whit Dickey Tao Quartets – Peace Planet/B/T/D
Avram Peter Quartet – Testament (Clean Feed) • Greg Foat – The Mage (Atlantic of the North) • Michael Formanek Very Practical Trio – Even Better (Intakt) • Bill Gu
Heinz Geisser Ensemble 5 – The Collective M litt (Leo) • Bill Henson – Ghost Epiphany (f/r) • Ben Goldberg – Dark Matter (Sunnyside)
Northern Spirit (Gateways Music) • Ahmad Jamal – Ballads (Jazzbook/Jazz Village) • Jamile – If You Could See Me Now (Jazz Club)
Vic Joachim Kühn – Piano Works XIII; Melodic Ornette Coleman (ACT Music) • Ingrid Laubrock/Sylvie Courvoisier/Mark Feldman/Tom Rainey – PSM (Rogut)
Mark Lotz Trio – The Wroclaw Sessions (Audioacive) • Denman Maroney – SoHo007 (f/r) • Hedvig Mollestad Trio – Smells Funny (Rune Grammofon)
Sam Newsome – Chaos Theory: Song Cycles for Prepared Saxophone (f/r) • Terkel Norgaard – The Sense of Man
Masanori Oishi – Smoke (Odraadek) • Henrik Olsson – Hand of Benediction (Barefoot) • Evan Parker/Paul G. Smyth – Causticity and Light Reeks (Weckert)
Ralph Peterson’s Gen-Next Big Band – Listen Up! (Onyx) • Ralph Peterson’s Messenger Legacy – Legacy Alive, Vol. 6 at The Side Door (G)
Dave Remps/Joshua Abrams/Avcayll Ra + Jim Baker – Apsis (Aerophonic) • Stephen Riley – Olo (SteepleChase)
Eve Risser – Après Un Rêve (Clean Feed)
Susa Santos Silva/Torbjorn Zetterberg/Hampus Lindwall – Hi, who are you? (Matiere Memoire) • Saxophone Summit – Street Talk (Enja) • Jenny Scheibe
Matthew Shipp Trio – Signature (ESP Disc) • Sonar (with David Torn) – Amodiation (Volume I) (RareNoise) • Aki Takase Japanic – Tokyo
Pat Thomas/Dominic Lash/Tony Orrell – BleySchool (577 Records) • David Torn/Tim Berne/Ches Smith – Sun of Goldfinger (ECM) • Gebhard Ullmann
Dan Weiss Trio Plus 1 – Utica Box (Sunnyside) • Mars Williams – An Ayler Xmas, Vol. 3 (Livein Krakau) (Not Two) • Nate Wooley – Battle Pieces 4 (Relative Pitch)

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD REPORT


LABELS OF THE YEAR

ASTRAL SPIRITS (astralspiritsrecords.com) • ECM (ecmrecords.com)
NOBUSINESS (nobusinessrecords.com)
STEEPLECHASE (steeplechase.dk)
SUNNYSIDE (sunnysiderecords.com)
MISCELLANEOUS CATEGORIES OF THE YEAR

BILLY DIXON/CECIL TAYLOR – Dusts 1992 (Triple Point)
ELLA FITZGERALD – Ella at the Shrine (Verve)
CHARLES LLOYD QUARTET – Monterey Jazz Festival 1967 (Verve)
SAM RIVERS QUINTET – Zenith (NoBusiness)
FRANÇOIS TUSQUES – Alons Nofrefatuna Combina Un Plan Ingenux (Finders Keepers)

LATIN RELEASES
MICHEL CAMILO – Essence (Resilience Music Alliance)
PRESENTATION HALL JAZZ BAND – A Tubo a Cuba (Sub Pop)
MICHELE ROSSOMO NEW YORK-USA – Hello Diva (Advance Dance Discs)
PONCHO SANCHEZ – Trane’s Delight (Concord Picante)
JIGGS WHIGHAM BUJAZZO – Cuban Fire (Doublemoon)

BOXED SETS
ANTHONY BRAXTON – Quartet (New Haunts) 2014 (Firehouse 12)
NAT “KING” COLE – Hittin’ The Ramp: The Early Years (1936-1943) (Resonance)
JOHN COULTRANE – 1963: New Directions (Impulse)
DKV TRIO & JOE MCPHEE – The Fire Each Time (Not Two)
ART PEPPER – Promise Kept: The Complete Artists House Recordings (Artists House-Omnivore)

ORIGINAL ALBUM ARTWORK
JAIMIE BRANCH – Fly Or Die II: Bird Dogs of Paradise (International Anthem)
DAVE LIEBMAN/DAVE BINNEY/ DONNY McCASLIN – BLAIS – Four Visions (Sunnyside)
MARK LOTZ TRIO – The Wreckless Sessions (Audiodisc)
CHRIS POTTER – Circuits (Edition)
KENDRICK SCOTT ORACLE – A Wall Becomes A Bridge (Blue Note)

LARGE ENSEMBLE RELEASES
JEAN DEROEUME – Soudouk pour Pogme lays (Amambiances Magiques)
WAYNE HORVITZ EUROPEAN ORCHESTRA – Live at the Bindus (Novara Jazz)
JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA
WITH WYNTON MARSALIS – Jazz and Art (Blue Engine)
MICHAEL LEONHART ORCHESTRA – Suite Extracts Vol. 1 (Sunnyside)
MAURICE LOUCA – Elephante (Northern Spy)

SOLO RECORDINGS
PETER BRÖTZMANN – Solo: I Surrender Dear (Trost)
BRIAN CHARETTE – Beyond Borderline (SteepleChase)
SATOKO FUJI – Stone (Solo Piano) (Libra)
LARRY GRENADEIR – The Gleaners (ECM)
ABDULLAH IBRAHIM – Dream Time (Enja)

TRIBUTES
PAUL DUNMALL SUN SHIP QUARTET – John Coltrane 50th Memorial Concert at Cafe Oto (Confront)
JOE FIEDLER – Open Sesame (Multiphonics Music)
IRO HAARKO/KOL KROKORS/BARRY ALTSCHUL – Around Again (The Music of Carla Bley) (TUM)
DICK HYMAN/KEN PEPLOWSKI – Counterpoint: Lerner & Loewe (Arbors)
DENNY ZEITLIN – Remembering Miles (Sunnyside)

DEBUTS
NICKY BARBATO – Every Day Is A Bad Hair Day (s/f)
NICK DUNSTON – Atlantic Extraction (Out of Your Head)
LARRY GRENADER – The Gleaners (ECM)
LISA HOPPE’S THIRD REALITY – The Mighty Unlikely (Jazzhaus Musik)
JUNIUS PAUL – Ism (International Anthem)

RE ISSUES
ERIC DOLPHY – Musical Prophet: The Expanded 1963 New York Studio Sessions (Resonance)
ERROLL GARNER – Campus Concert (MGM - Mack Avenue/Octave Music)
ICP TENTET – Tetterettet (ICP-Corbetts - Dempsey)
SUN RA – Monorails & Satellites (Works for Solo Piano, Vol. 1, 2, 3) (Cosmic Myth)
MAL WALDRON – Free At Last (Extended Edition) (ECM)

JAZZ BOOKS
Billie Holiday: The Last Interview and Other Conversations (Melville House)
Jason Moran (Walker Arts Center)
Jazz from Detroit by Mark Stryker (University of Michigan Press)
Rabbit’s Blues: The Life and Music of Johnny Hodges by Con Chapman (Oxford University Press)
Sweet Thunder: Duke Ellington’s Music in Nine Themes by Jack Chambers (Milestones Music & Art)

SONGS—NEW RELEASES
“HighNote” – Art Ensemble of Chicago – We Are On The Edge: A 50th Anniversary Celebration (HiNote)
“HighNote” – Michael Attias – échos la nuit (solo) (Out Of Your Head)
“HighNote” – Jon Batiste – Anatomy of Angels (Live at the Village Vanguard) (Verve)
“HighNote” – Matt Bauder/JP Schlegelmilch/Vinnie Sperrazza – Here’s Hitting Things (Yeggs) (HighNote)
“HighNote” – Boreeshaker – Fake Music (Soulwhaf) (HighNote)
“HighNote” – Bushman’s Revenge – Et Hân mot överklassen (Hubro)
“HighNote” – George Cables – I’m All Smiles (HighNote)
“HighNote” – Harold’s After the Deep of the Mystery (Impulse!)
“HighNote” – Chick Corea – Trilogy 2 (Concord)
“HighNote” – Myron Edison – Presents Kona Saxo (We Jazz)
“HighNote” – Ethan Iverson Quartet – With (Tom Harrell) – Common Practice (ECM)
“HighNote” – Juris Two Guitars (SteepleChase)
“HighNote” – Yoshio Takeda – 2 Bass Intensions (Soulpatch)
“HighNote” – Chase Israeli Necks – Bass Intensions (Soulpatch)
“HighNote” – Ethan Iverson Quartet (with Tom Harrell) – Common Practice (ECM)
“HighNote” – Yoni Kretzmer 2Bass Quartet – MisTake (OutNow)
“HighNote” – Billy Lester – From Scratch (Newvelle)
“HighNote” – Dave Lieberman/Adam Rudolph/Hamid Drake – Chi (RareNoise)
“HighNote” – Russ Lossing Trio – Aria (Ezz-Itethics)
“HighNote” – (in motion) – Michael Munson/Phat Thomas/Matthias Sanders – Shhha: Live at Cafe Oto (577 Records)
“HighNote” – Ed Neumeister – One and Only (Meistersound)
“HighNote” – With Ralph Alessi (We Jazz) – Alle Nymo – Solo for Trias (Loosen) – OGJB Quartet – Banaka (TUM)
“HighNote” – Linda May Han Oh – Adventurahan (Biophilia)
“HighNote” – Zeena Parkins/Ryan Sawyer/Ryan Ross Smith – Green Domic. Thinking in Stitches (Case Study)
“HighNote” – Ken Peplowski/Diego Figueiredo (Arbors)
“HighNote” – Tom Rainey Trio – Coombatedul (Intakt)
“HighNote” – Enrico Rava/Joe Lovano – Roma (ECM)
“HighNote” – Tomeka Reid Quartet – Old New (Cuneiform)
“HighNote” – Jamie Saft/Steve Swallow/Bobby Previte – You Don’t Know The Life (RareNoise)
“HighNote” – Akira Sakata/Joe Berthling/Paal Nilssen-Love – Arashi: Ikan (PPL)
“HighNote” – Allison Miller – Parlor Cafe – Royal Potato Family
“HighNote” – Louis Schavis Quartet – Characters On A Wall (ECM)
“HighNote” – Sensoaround – Heart/Noise (Hellos/Quadra)
“HighNote” – (MC Records) – Aki Takase – Hokusai (Piano Solo) (Intakt)
“HighNote” – Petter Eldh – Sensaround (s/r)
“HighNote” – Chris Potter – Be Known: Ancient/Future/Music
“HighNote” – The Transitory Poems (Trost)
“HighNote” – Peter Brötzmann/Solos (HighNote)
“HighNote” – Kensington/Torbjörn Zetterberg/Konrad Agnai – Orake (Moserabie)
“HighNote” – John Coltrane 50th Memorial Concert at Cafe Oto (Confront)
“HighNote” – Joe Fiedler – Open Sesame (Multiphonics Music)
“HighNote” – Iro Haarko/Ulf Krokors/Barry Altschul – Around Again (The Music of Carla Bley) (TUM)
“HighNote” – Dick Hyman/Ken Peplowski – Counterpoint: Lerner & Loewe (Arbors)
“HighNote” – Denny Zeitlin – Remembering Miles (Sunnyside)
In the summer of 1960, bassist Charles Mingus traveled to France with his Jazz Workshop to present the bold music realized in New York nightclubs, conceived to France with his Jazz Workshop to present the bold music realized in New York nightclubs, conceived.

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Buenos Aires native pianist Emilio Solla has been fusing jazz with tango for over a decade, leading groups of various sizes, including the 17-piece big band billed as the Tango Jazz Orchestra on Puertos: Music from International Waters. Solla also features five guest musicians: three percussionists (Samuel Torres, Arturo Prendez and Franco Pinna), pianist Arturo O’Farrill and harp player Edmar Castañeda.

The bandoneón of soloist Julien Labro often suggests the late tango innovator Astor Piazzolla as does Solla’s composing. However that isn’t the only Latin music influencing Solla as he draws on everything from AfroCuban music on “Llegará, Llegará, Llegará” and “Sol La, al Sol” to Colombian cumbia on “Allegrón” and Spanish flamenco on “Andan Luces”. The dusky “La Novena” gets inspiration from tango, Latin American boleros and the arranging of bandleader Gil Evans all at once; the Davis-flavored “Four for Miles” recalls Evans and Davis’ famous collaborations.

“Puertos” is the Spanish word for “ports” and the concept of this album is different cultures coming together musically. Solla’s willingness to take chances makes for a consistently intriguing listen.

For more information, visit avantango.com. This project is at Birdland Jan. 5th. See Calendar.
Lisa Hilton has good taste. The Malibu, California-based pianist and composer makes an album a year, typically alternating a solo or trio disc with one featuring horns and she picks superb rhythm sections and frontline partners. This is her eighth album to feature tenor saxophonist J.D. Allen since they began working together in 2009. The two are joined by bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Rudy Royston (himself a veteran of two previous Hilton sessions).

Though all the music is Hilton’s, save a version of Joni Mitchell’s “Blue Boy”, she gives her collaborators room to run. She lays out entirely during Allen’s solo on “Sympathy For Blues” and without her presence at the keyboard to anchor things, the others spark quite an intense flame. On the Mitchell tune, Allen’s horn is huge, like a mournful foghorn, perfectly complementing the piano, which sounds almost like an underwater as Hilton allows the melody to roll slowly off the keyboard. But again, she plays a short intro, then retreats, leaving the trio to do their thing. When she returns, just shy of 90 seconds into a four-and-a-half minute piece, her solo builds slowly out of the melody. It’s clear that Hilton has spent years listening to this song and that Mitchell’s voice is still in her head as she plays.

The compositions play with a variety of forms. In addition to the aforementioned blues, there’s a tango, a waltz and a few other tracks exploring Latin rhythms and her attack is confident each time. She knows where she’s going and gets there. Hilton’s playing is very considered. She swings, but never recklessly and her attacks as Opsvik bows rich, cello-like melodies. Later, the pulse is dropped and the combo follows Sacks’ lingering chord cues, leaving large gaps of empty space. The cycle of pulse and space repeats once more before a final acceleration and further permutations of the beat. “Rock and Heat” features the bassists simultaneously playing fast walking patterns that trend separate but synchronous pathways. On the lullaby “Last Time One More Time” (which Weiss wrote for his daughter, who was presumably stalling for a later bedtime), Morgan once again lays bedrock for Opsvik’s expressive arco technique.

Elsewhere the instrumentation is standard trio. Morgan plays on “Please Don’t Leave”, a transmogrified AfroCuban 6/8 groove; “Jamerson”, after James Jamerson, the rock behind “the Motown sound”; and “Bonham”, after John Bonham, the rock rolling Led Zeppelin and a formative inspiration to Weiss, who signifies on the drummer’s hard-hitting but highly finessed style in a remarkable drum feature. Opsvik plays on “Rain”, responding to Sacks’ lush rainforest chords before a sudden lull in the middle, taking the lead with pizzicato eighth-notes, soloing in a minor tonality and then reengaging Sacks with canny reactions.

Although album title references the infamous wood-tonality and then reengaging Sacks with canny reactions. On this disc, Allen makes his entrance with great aplomb from the start of the album and his playing is consistently strong throughout. He adds a potent accent, as always, and his cymbals dance lightly.

For more information, visit lisahiltonmusic.com. This project is at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall Jan. 9th. See Calendar.

Chalkboard Destiny
Lisa Hilton (Ruby Slippers)
by Phil Freeman

Lisa Hilton’s good taste. The Malibu, California-based pianist and composer makes an album a year, typically alternating a solo or trio disc with one featuring horns and she picks superb rhythm sections and frontline partners. This is her eighth album to feature tenor saxophonist J.D. Allen since they began working together in 2009. The two are joined by bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Rudy Royston (himself a veteran of two previous Hilton sessions).

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Drummer Dan Weiss, bassist Thomas Morgan (whom Weiss nicknamed “Rock”) and pianist Jacob Sacks have been gigging together around the city for almost 20 years, making their first trio date, Now Yes When. Now Yes When

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Drummer Dan Weiss, bassist Thomas Morgan (whom Weiss nicknamed “Rock”) and pianist Jacob Sacks have been gigging together around the city for almost 20 years, making their first trio date, Now Yes When. Now Yes When

under Weiss’ aegis in 2006. When Morgan was busy working together in 2009. The two are joined by bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Rudy Royston (himself a veteran of two previous Hilton sessions).

Though all the music is Hilton’s, save a version of Joni Mitchell’s “Blue Boy”, she gives her collaborators room to run. She lays out entirely during Allen’s solo on “Sympathy For Blues” and without her presence at the keyboard to anchor things, the others spark quite an intense flame. On the Mitchell tune, Allen’s horn is huge, like a mournful foghorn, perfectly complementing the piano, which sounds almost like an underwater as Hilton allows the melody to roll slowly off the keyboard. But again, she plays a short intro, then retreats, leaving the trio to do their thing. When she returns, just shy of 90 seconds into a four-and-a-half minute piece, her solo builds slowly out of the melody. It’s clear that Hilton has spent years listening to this song and that Mitchell’s voice is still in her head as she plays.

The compositions play with a variety of forms. In addition to the aforementioned blues, there’s a tango, a waltz and a few other tracks exploring Latin rhythms and her attack is confident each time. She knows where she’s going and gets there. Hilton’s playing is very considered. She swings, but never recklessly and her attacks as Opsvik bows rich, cello-like melodies. Later, the pulse is dropped and the combo follows Sacks’ lingering chord cues, leaving large gaps of empty space. The cycle of pulse and space repeats once more before a final acceleration and further permutations of the beat. “Rock and Heat” features the bassists simultaneously playing fast walking patterns that trend separate but synchronous pathways. On the lullaby “Last Time One More Time” (which Weiss wrote for his daughter, who was presumably stalling for a later bedtime), Morgan once again lays bedrock for Opsvik’s expressive arco technique.

Elsewhere the instrumentation is standard trio. Morgan plays on “Please Don’t Leave”, a transmogrified AfroCuban 6/8 groove; “Jamerson”, after James Jamerson, the rock rolling Led Zeppelin and a formative inspiration to Weiss, who signifies on the drummer’s hard-hitting but highly finessed style in a remarkable drum feature. Opsvik plays on “Rain”, responding to Sacks’ lush rainforest chords before a sudden lull in the middle, taking the lead with pizzicato eighth-notes, soloing in a minor tonality and then reengaging Sacks with canny reactions.

Although album title references the infamous wood-tonality and then reengaging Sacks with canny reactions. On this disc, Allen makes his entrance with great aplomb from the start of the album and his playing is consistently strong throughout. He adds a potent accent, as always, and his cymbals dance lightly.

For more information, visit lisahiltonmusic.com. This project is at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall Jan. 9th. See Calendar.
Adventures of a Jazz Age Lawyer is the lively story of legal giant Nathan Burkan, whose career encapsulated the coming of age of the institutions, archetypes, and attitudes that define American popular culture. This is a rich source of new discoveries for anyone interested in the spirit of the Jazz Age.

“This is both a first-rate story and a previously untold one.”
—Peter Jaszi, Professor Emeritus, American University Law School

“I don’t know of anyone who writes about popular music more knowledgeably and elegantly than Gary Rosen.”
—Ben Yagoda, author of About Town: The New Yorker and the World It Made

“This book reads like a literary novel, peopled with such colorful characters as Victor Herbert, Charlie Chaplin, and Gloria Vanderbilt.”
—Philip Furia, author of The Poets of Tin Pan Alley

A dramatic cultural history of entertainment and intellectual property law

www.ucpress.edu
Defined by discretion and a subtle touch, pianist and composer Eri Yamamoto’s *Goshu Ondo Suite* soars with graceful, positive energy.

Yamamoto began her musical studies outside the jazz context, focusing on voice, viola and composition. These influences are evident throughout the suite, which combines the classic jazz piano trio with the Choral Chameleon group. The album embraces a patient development over its course, each segment providing its own distinctive structure while following a through-line evolved from the opening melodic figure. This figure and much of the suite was inspired by a traditional circle dance song performed during Japan’s annual summer harvest festival, the Bon festival. The result is a blend of traditional Buddhist vocal melodies underscored by modern jazz piano landscapes.

Choral Chameleon’s polyphony, heterophony and unison singing provide an effervescent texture while Dave Ambrosio’s clever bass and Ikue Takeuchi’s subtle drumming, especially when deploying brushes, provide the swing that drives the whole. For example, the second movement—the longest—is enriched by evolving metric shifts as well as Choral Chameleon’s ascendant intoning.

Another remarkable feature is the discreet solo insertions by each of the trio members. These emerge organically out of the suite’s broader themes, as opposed to intruding or breaking the form. This fluid approach contributes to the impression of an organic, living entity, despite the obviously meticulous construction that Yamamoto poured into the suite.

A poetic evocation of a distinctly Japanese folk tradition, the *Goshu Ondo Suite* shimmers with elegance. As an homage to multiculturalism and the fertile ground folk traditions provide, the suite resonates outward from its simple, melodic beginnings to create an immersive, enriching experience, bound to lift the spirit as much as it will please the ears.

For more information, visit aumfidelity.com. Yamamoto’s trio is at Arthur’s Tavern Thursdays-Saturdays. See Regular Engagements.

__LP1__

Theo Bleckmann/Joseph Branciforte (Greyfade) by Tyran Grillo

This collaboration between vocalist Theo Bleckmann and electronic musician/producer Joseph Branciforte is their first album as a duo and the inauguration of Branciforte’s new label Greyfade. Bleckmann and Branciforte drew upon their experiences performing together with Ryuichi Sakamoto in 2018 before diving into this unscripted studio encounter. Using Bleckmann’s voice as foundation, Branciforte manipulated and mixed raw vocal elements into something greater than their sum, an entirely new entity that is both and neither, locus and void, present and timeless.

Outside references linger, but give us a portrait only of the music’s surface. One could easily characterize “3.4.26”, for example, as a haunting smoothie of Taylor Deupree, Nico Muhly and Tim Hecker. But to do so risks masking its unfolding into something entirely its own—a journey that would never exist without the input of its primary travelers. “4.19” is even more spatial, treating the voice as an architectural element of the cosmos, however the listener chooses to define it. One senses whispers and lullabies hiding in there somewhere, but only with the intention of half-sleep, lest we be robbed of messages yet to be conveyed.

The diamond rings of this eclipse shine in the opening and closing tracks. “6.15” unravels a breathy hope for melody. When the voice at last unclthes itself, we almost feel slain by its familiarity, as if it were the relic of a world that no longer exists except in shadow. “5.5.9” is molded by a more human touch, flesh and bone articulating cages of possible meaning around open syllables.

At just shy of 35 minutes, LP1 is a lesson in quality over quantity. This is music so intimate that it aches. Bleckmann’s voice never stops evolving and in Branciforte’s artistry it has found a lifelong partner.

For more information, visit greyfade.com. Bleckmann is at Subculture Jan. 10th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
Vertical Shores
Zack Clarke Trio (Clean Feed)
by John Sharpe

After the electro-acoustic sessions producing Random Acts Of Order (2017) and Mesophase (2018) on the same label, pianist Zack Clarke pulls out the plug for the piano trio on Vertical Shores and follows the egalitarian models of forerunners such as Bill Evans and Paul Bley by allowing his colleagues equal agency in the edgy interaction he promotes. In fact, bassist Kim Cas, a regular with the likes of John Zorn and Matt Mitchell, delivers a caffeinated take on the Scott LaFaro or Gary Peacock role, on occasion seeming the lead voice. Although all nine cuts are credited to Clarke, they avoid overt melodic and rhythmic themes and could easily pass as improvisations.

Clarke himself at times sounds content to supply the foundations with a succession of repeating piano figures, creating a canvas against which Cass in particular flares and spatters. The bassist, who restricts himself to pizzicato throughout, hogs the spotlight on a regular with the likes of John Zorn and Matt Mitchell, contributing the final two songs, “Way Down Below” and “Big Discount”, which discuss the ongoing struggle for equal rights.

Musically this grab-bag collection is hit-and-miss but would be a great staged production someday. For more information, visit orgmusic.com. This project is at Birdland Jan. 21st-25th. See Calendar.

Shoulder to Shoulder
Karrin Allyson Sextet (Entertainment One)
by Scott Yanow

Shoulder to Shoulder is a very different album for Karrin Allyson, a tribute and remembrance of the Women’s Suffrage Movement of 1848-1920. After a long struggle, women gained the right to vote 100 years ago when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was passed. Utilizing an all-female sextet of trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, alto saxophonist Mindi Abair, pianist Helen Sung, bassist Endea Owens and drummer Allison Miller plus (usually on one song apiece) eight singers, a rapper, five readers, a string quartet, a few other guests and a large choir, Allyson and arranger John Daversa musically revive some of the highlights of the suffrage movement.

Most of the pieces are songs and speeches influential at the time but long forgotten; there were actually hundreds of pro-women’s rights songs, none of which became a standard. On this CD, which could be thought of as the soundtrack for a Broadway production that never was, speeches by Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, Elithu Root, Alice Paul and Sojourner Truth are read quite effectively by Rosanne Cash, Harry Belafonte, Peter Eldridge, Julit Swidler and Lalah Hathaway.

Of the songs, “The March Of The Women” was considered the anthem of the women’s suffrage movement and utilizes the 40-voice choir Frost Women’s Chorale along with Allyson. “The Great Convention” has lyrics from 1852 sung by Madeleine Peyroux, Denise Donatelli and Allyson separately and together, representing the diverse voices that formed the women’s movement. 1835’s “I’ll Be No Submissive Wife” has some futuristic lines. Veronica Swift swings and scats her way through “Anti Suffrage Roose”, which made fun of the movement. Allyson sings “She’s Good Enough To Be Your Baby’s Mother” and has a duet with Kurt Elling on “Winning The Vote”. She also contributed the final two songs, “Way Down Below” and “Big Discount”, which discuss the ongoing struggle for equal rights.

Musically this grab-bag collection is hit-and-miss but would be a great staged production someday. For more information, visit entertainmentone.com. Allyson is at Birdland Jan. 21st-25th. See Calendar.

Symphonie of Flowers
William Hooker (ORGMusic)
by Kyle Oleksiuk

Extremely prolific artists sometimes find it difficult to maintain a high standard of originality and quality in their work. For drummer William Hooker, not so. He is one of the most productive musicians working today and Symphonie of Flowers, the third album he’s released in 2019, stands out with the freshness of a first recording. Even when played on half-dead computer speakers, it sounds like live music being performed right in front of you.

And what live music it is. During the first two-thirds, Hooker supplies brisk, virtuoso playing with strong elements of breakbeat. In the background, a grand piano plunks chaotically in shrill and deep bass tones. Hooker’s combination of steady drums and frenzied piano evokes chaos at the end of a tragic opera. Hearing half an hour of this music can make one feel as if in the presence of evil, these musicians, like demons, thriving in an inferno of sound that casual listeners can only bear for so long. Jazz fiends, indeed.

As if this beginning weren’t tumultuous enough, Hooker ups the ante in the final third by moving the spotlight off of his drumkit and onto an array of electronic instruments and modified saxophone squeals. On the second-to-last track, “Soul”, the instrumentation appears to consist of computerized bleeps and bloops, warped TV static and lasers from another dimension. This song and the last one, “Hieroglyphics”, sound like caricatures of an electrified band from the perspective of an acoustic drummer like Hooker.

The final third of Symphonie of Flowers is not for the faint of heart, but it could be experimentation like this that keeps a musician as prolific as Hooker from falling into predictability. In any case, the album ends a long way from where it starts and adventurous listeners are encouraged to make the journey.

For more information, visit orgmusic.com. This project is at Fridman Gallery Jan. 11th as part of New Ear Festival and Ibeam Brooklyn Jan. 25th. See Calendar.
Pianist Roberta Piket has taken her pianistic artistry, her intimate and unique improvisational ability, and created a gift for her drummer husband Billy Mintz on the occasion of what she calls a “landmark” birthday: solo versions of ten of his distinctive compositions.

Opener “Ghost Sanctuary” is a deliriously lovely melody moved by a 5/4 rhythm, played with insistent authority, quiet and poignantly confident. Mintz can certainly create gorgeous melodies. On “Beautiful You” the delicate romance is peacefully coaxed from the keyboard. And “Your Touch” is harmonically intricate and perfectly lovely, thanks to Piket’s...well...touch. “Looking Down at the Stars” is a beautiful ballad, dark and dreamy with sensitive use of space. And “Destiny” is yet another lovely slow tune, Piket complementing her delicate pianistics with a profound vocal.

Outside of these elegant and intimate ballads Mintz has written some exceptional tunes on which to blow, giving Piket the opportunity to display her intimate and unique improvisational ability, and the right playing dazzling solo lines. Piket notes that “Flight” is one of the Mintz tunes becoming a standard for jazz musicians on both coasts; she increases the tempo at the beginning of each of the last three choruses, displaying power and technique with ease and leisurely moderation. Mintz and Piket know the blues too as is revealed on “Cannonball”, possibly a funky tribute to the legendary alto saxophonist, simple and disarming.

Two more tunes round out this set of fine originals; “Blind’s Eye”, which combines a darkish main theme and a bridge bearing a resemblance, as Piket and Mintz note, to Clifford Brown’s “Daahoud”; and finally, “Ugly Beautiful” which has roots in Piket’s arrangement—from 20 years ago—of Jimmy Webb’s “Up, Up and Away”.

*Domestic Harmony* is a strikingly sensitive tribute from one brilliant artist to another.

For more information, visit thirteenthnoterecords.com. This project is at Mezzrow Jan. 16th with Virginia Mayhew, Mike Fahn and Billy Mintz. See Calendar.

These two recordings both further a collaboration that began with 2018’s *Vortex*, also on RareNoise, and extended the aesthetic range of exciting minimal groove movement coming out of Switzerland and centered around Nik Bärtsch and his Ronin Rhythm label. It is the most musically fulfilling thing happening right now in progressive rock and perhaps in all of non-jazz/non-classical instrumental music.

David Torn and SONAR (*Fractal Guitar*)—released at the end of last year—is credited to Stephan Thelen, but since he’s also the Artistic Director of SONAR and since the album personnel amount to an augmented version of the band, there’s little distance between the two records) are as complementary as can be imagined, the guitarist the lead voice for a band that never varies since the album personnel amount to an augmented version of the band, there’s little distance between the two records) are as complementary as can be imagined, the guitarist the lead voice for a band that never varies from their pure ensemble concept. These two styles have to work in practice, of course, not just in the imagination and that’s where Torn impresses most.

If SONAR is in the crudest sense a backing band, then Torn still has to exercise good musical taste and judgment.

This he does throughout and across both albums. SONAR’s music uses small musical ideas to create complex rhythms while also leaving wide-open spaces for their subtle changes in emphasis and accent, which carry great masses of meaning and pleasure—the title of their 2014 record, *Static Motion*, is also a succinct description of what they produce. It’s possible to hear the limits of their style as literally limiting—it can be hard to differentiate tracks across albums—but this is also music that shows the vastness between granules of sound.

There is enough space to fill with extended guitar solos, but that’s the opposite of what the music is about and Torn is exquisitely judicious with his statements. Even more, his personal voice is made up just as much of raw, electric guitar sound as it is any string of notes or chords and he’s just as likely to drop in a growl or a roar as he is an identifiable phrase. Think Adrian Belew with King Crimson, but with even more discipline.

Thelen is actually the one (relatively) verbose voice. “Road Music”, the second track on *Fractal Guitar*, has some four-note riffs, quasi-melodies. Heard after listening through *Tranceportation*, they appear as a magnificent edifice on a vast and empty horizon. Except it’s not empty; it’s full of small but discernible curves and undulations.

In the context of this style, *Fractal Guitar* is the more colorful album. There are moments that glance at some of Bärtsch’s “Modul” compositions, as well as Steve Reich’s *Electric Counterpoint*. Thelen explains in the liner notes that he wanted to bring a different concept to this record: “After a few years of playing without effects apart from reverb...I felt the urge to record some pieces in which effects were an integral part”, one of those being a rhythmic delay he calls “Fractal Guitar”.

Torn is just one on the list of esteemed players, which includes fellow guitarist/sound experimenters Henry Kaiser, Markus Reuter and Barry Cleveland (the last two credited with “soundscape” and “atmospheres”). The effects and the larger cast make this a more extroverted experience than *Tranceportation*—if that album (like most of SONAR’s music) is best experienced through headphones, the riffs insinuating themselves into the brain’s waves, *Fractal Guitar* sounds best through speakers, the details of timbre filling up the listening space while the grooves get the feet to tapping. In a relative sense it is a conventional album compared to SONAR’s avant-gardism and would be an excellent gateway drug to a mind-expanding experience.

For more information, visit rarenoiserecords.com and moonjune.com. Torn is at The Sultan Room Jan. 17th as part of Winter Jazzfest. See Calendar.
Grants First Stand | Alive! | Born to Be Blue
Grant Green (Blue Note)

by Kurt Gottschalk

Grants First Stand, Alive!, and Born to Be Blue are three albums by Grant Green that showcase his unique approach to jazz. Born to Be Blue, recorded in 1962 but not released until 1985, strikes a happy medium. While Theres (sadly) no organ, there’s plenty of right-in-the-pocket piano by Sonny Clark and the masterful saxophonist like Quebec shows he knows how to fill in a groove without over-taking it. While the band is just as big as on the Alive! dates, Green has more room to move and his tone on “If I Should Lose You” (a tune often heard as a vocal number but Green was no doubt familiar with the Charlie Parker With Strings version, and perhaps, then-recent takes by Hank Mobley and Jimmy Smith) alone is worth the price of admission.

Like Grant’s First Stand, Born to Be Blue was recorded by Rudy Van Gelder and sounds brilliant. It’s a shame to lose the bonus tracks on the previous CD issues of the albums, but the heavy covers and 180g vinyl give Green the presentation he’s long deserved.

For more information, visit bluesnote.com. Tributes to Grant Green by Scott Sharrard are at Bar Lunatico Jan. 6th and Café Bohemia Jan. 17th. See Calendar.

Algorithm

Curtis Brothers (Truth Revolution)
by Russ Musto

Nearly a decade following Completion of Proof, the debut album by The Curtis Brothers Band, pianist Zaccai and bassist Luques Curtis reunite with their masterminds—trumpeter Brian Lynch, alto saxophonist Donald Harrison and drummer Ralph Peterson—for a live club recording that documents their development as two of the most talented players of their generation. Comprised of nine Zaccai compositions, which in the composer’s words attempt to fuse mathematical ideas with soul, its not surprising that much of the music recalls the sound of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, the unit in which the three elders served.

The band comes out charging on “Three Points and a Sphere”, an exciting anthem, which takes off on a melodic progression redolent of Joe Henderson’s “Inner Urge” and is driven by indefatigable drumming. The mood calms for “Phi”, an easy grooving excursion flowing over the malleted New Orleans-styled drum rhythm associated with the Ahmad Jamal Trio’s classic rendition of “Poinciana”, which buoys soulful alto. Harrison is celebrated on the date’s next track, “Chief”, an edgy hardbopping outing. Next is a pulsating AfroCuban groove on “Parametric”, Harrison and Lynch blowing rhythmic lines recalling their tenures with Eddie Palmieri, and Peterson demonstrating his powerful command of the idiom, which contrasts with his sensitive brushwork on “Torus”, a pretty waltz that showcases full-bodied bass.

Lynch is fêted on “The Professor”, a dramatic feature for soaring trumpet, first heard on Completion of Proof. “Undefined”, a sequel to “Manifest Destiny”, another song from that earlier album, follows in the Jazz Messenger mold, with explosive drumming propelling high-flying trumpet and alto solos, then calming down to complement a gripping piano solo and back up for its own feature. The dynamic level remains elevated on “Staircase To Mount Sinai”, one more piece that could have easily found its way into the Blakey repertoire. The date concludes with “Sensei”, a high-energy tribute to Peterson constructed over a five-note piano and bass vamp, much like the one associated with Jerry Gonzalez and The Fort Apache Band’s arrangement of Monk’s “Evidence”, which the brothers played many times as members of that band.

For more information, visit truthrevolutionrecords.com. This project is at Dizzy’s Club Jan. 15th. See Calendar.

Patricia Brennan

Stone Residency at Happy Lucky No. 1 734 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216 happylucky101.com

Jan. 17, 2020 8pm

MOCH presents “Ratios Jarochas” Patricia Brennan - Vibraphone Michael Formanek - Bass Mauricio Herrera - Tenor/Alto Saxophone Noel Brennan - Electronic percussion, turntables

Jan. 18, 2020 8pm

Adam O’Farrill - Trumpet Jon Irabagon - Tenor/Alto Saxophone Patricia Brennan - Vibraphone Matthew Shemell - Piano Tomas Fujiwara - Drums

PATRICIABRENNAN Vibes.com
Russo Lossing is both a distinguished and a distinctive pianist. He has produced a series of CDs over the past 20 years in solo, duo and trio formats ranging from free improvisation to standards to two CDAs dedicated to compositions of the late Paul Motian, both a mentor and a collaborator. To all Lossing brings a forcefully linear conception fusing a keen sense of space with intense momentum. On Ways, he plays with his trio of bassist Massa Kamaguchi and drummer Billy Mintz, previously heard on Oracle (2008) and Motian Music (2017).

Each of Ways’ eight pieces is entitled by a word including “way,” suggesting perhaps something of the Tao, though the playfulness that extends the compound titles includes “Breezeway,” itself suggestive of the late John Ashbery’s 2015 collection of characterized mysteriously, elliptical poems, at once plain-spoken, pithy and unknowable. There’s something of that, too, in the philosophical influence of John Cage on Lossing’s work. It’s music that’s both intensely alive in the instant and open to extended reflection.

The opening “Passageway” begins in a pressing piano improvisation in which rapid, single-note lines press upward, coil and press again. That intensity is matched again and again in collaboration with his partners. Kamaguchi is a fierce melodist who can impact the music with one note that’s a miracle of coiled energy while Mintz can move from subtle polyrhythmic chatter to an explosion. “Causeway,” the title itself a fine ambiguity, moves from near-serial keyboard abstraction to dissonant clusters to collective improvisation highlighted by swarming chromatic piano runs.

Ways is virtually a continuous hour-long suite, segments sometimes separated by the briefest silence, sometimes by nothing at all. Densities shift and passions arise and ebb within a single episode. “Passageway” ends with Mintz playing quietly, disappearing into a silence broken an instant later by Lossing in the piano interior at the same volume level. The brief fifth track, “Skyway,” is an unaccompanied bass solo introducing the trio’s “Byway”. The piano solo “Away” disappears into brief nothingness only to become the concluding “Way”. It’s a thoughtful, compelling work, which expands with each hearing.

For more information, visit hathut.com. Lossing is at Scholes St Studio Jan. 19th with Kazuki Yamanaka and Ibeam Brooklyn Jan. 20th with Gordon Grdina. See Calendar.

This superb live recording from October 2001 is puzzling and at the same time very timely. The former because it is inexplicable how it could lay idle for almost two decades; the latter since it is a stark reminder of what this trio was and could have become. The tragic passing of pianist Esbjörn Svensson nearly 12 years ago cut short one of the most innovative piano trios of the last few decades. Way too much is usually written about the trio’s use of electronics, forgetting this was mainly an exquisite acoustic trio with no equal within its parabola. The blend of northern European, somewhat contemplative aesthetic with rock-influenced cadenzas and classically-inspired dramatic openings has e.s.t. reach out beyond traditional jazz audiences. This was largely thanks to a knack for a predominately melodic approach and irresistible capacity to move swiftly across these influences while swinging hard.

For more information, visit actmusic.com
Drummer Al Foster has been an important part of many groups over his four-plus decade career, including 13 years with Miles Davis. Although Foster has made few recordings under his own name, he began leading his own bands on a regular basis in the mid '90s. His current quintet is comprised of trumpeter Jeremy Pelt, tenor saxophonist Dayna Stephens, pianist Adam Birnbaum and the drummer’s longtime bassist Doug Weiss. Foster showcases his skills as a composer and arranger, with 11 of the 13 tracks his originals, all of which he developed at the piano by ear. Although Foster is a more-than-capable soloist, he prefers to feature his band and provide the inventive rhythms to boost their efforts. A sauntering yet vibrant setting of Hancock’s “Cantaloupe Island” provides a strong opening track, featuring gritty tenor saxophone and fiery trumpet. The focus then shifts to Foster's compositions, beginning with “Ooh, What You Do To Me”, which blends a soulful groove with an AfroCuban rhythm built into it. The elegant jazz waltz “Simone’s Dance” has a bit of a Latin tinge, Foster briefly in the spotlight. “Douglas” is a hip hardbop vehicle with a laidback attitude, Pelt and Stephens both exuding a joyful spirit. The Latin-infused “Song For Monique” has a bit of a twist, as Stephens switches to baritone saxophone, blending so well with trumpet it sounds like he is still on tenor, until he begins the first solo. The leisurely, loping “Jazzon” has the flavor of Thelonious Monk, with its offbeat rhythm and dissonance. Foster finally takes an unaccompanied solo to introduce “Aloysius” (this given name), a pulsating bop anthem that would serve as a perfect set closer. But the session ends on funky note with Davis’ “Jean-Pierre”, featuring both muted and open trumpet.

For more information, visit smokesessionsrecords.com. Foster is at Smoke Jan. 23rd-26th. See Calendar.
Johnny Guarnieri was a gifted pianist primarily active during the Swing Era, known for his stride chops and ability to mimic the playing of Fats Waller and Art Tatum. After the 40s, Guarnieri continued to perform, though recording opportunities were sporadic. He moved to the West Coast and often played solo, as heard on this 1973 recording opportunities were sporadic. He moved to the After the '40s, Guarnieri continued to perform, though

Johnny Guarnieri was a gifted pianist primarily active during the Swing Era, known for his stride chops and ability to mimic the playing of Fats Waller and Art Tatum. After the 40s, Guarnieri continued to perform, though recording opportunities were sporadic. He moved to the West Coast and often played solo, as heard on this 1973 session originally released by Jim Taylor Presents.

Harry Warren’s compositions have long been popular with jazz musicians and Guarnieri plays some of the standards still popular in the 21st century, along with forgotten gems. Guarnieri’s formidable stride skills are on display in his rollicking treatment of “Nagasaki”. The pianist gives both “Shadow Waltz” (one of the overlooked works) and “September In The Rain” glistening, lyrical arrangements, reflecting a bit of his classical training. One can hear the obvious influence of Waller in Guarnieri’s playful rendition of “Lulu’s Back In Town”. Guarnieri delivers “You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby” — a huge hit when it was first recorded but falling by the wayside in the modern jazz period and as such has more of a rhapsodic feel. The vocalist and it sounded dated as an instrumental, elegantly—throwing in a few flourishes to keep it from getting too stale. He has a bigger challenge with the syrupy ballad “I Only Have Eyes For You” and doesn’t quite succeed in removing the dust from this warhorse... Guarnieri’s catchy call-and-response between his two hands in “I Found A Million Dollar Baby” and poignant setting of “Boulevard Of Broken Dreams” also merit strong praise.

Guarnieri died 35 years ago this month and since relatively little of his discography has been reissued; this album is worth investigating for swing and stride fans.

For more information, visit ilusorecords.com. Newsome is strongly praised.

When the terms jazz, fusion and guitarist are thrown together, it all too often describes a certain breed of ‘sports-car’ guitarists of phenomenal dexterity, though some may lack equivalent skills in spontaneous invention. L.A.-based Scott Henderson is a notable exception. Gaining early jazz creed with Joe Zawinul and Chick Corea, he later found his voice with bassist Gary Willis in the band Tribal Tech, wielding a mercurial guitar sound grounded in classic urban blues phraseology and bathed in subtle shadings of distortion, chorus, whammy bar and wah-wah pedal.

People Mover, his sixth solo album, a trio date (though with multiple guitar overdubs) with bassist Romain Labaye and Archibald Ligonniere, amply demonstrates his penchant for improvising on his feet. His solos develop out of shorter shapes and ideas, moving sequentially, adapting to changing harmonies without sacrificing narrative arc, longer lines often capped by expressive conversational gestures derived from a blues sensibility. His solo in the middle of “Happy Fun-Sing”, for example, is an elegantly formed melodic statement while his outro on the same track achieves the visceral thrust of arena rock. “Satellite”, taken at a slightly stiff up-swing tempo, played with his cleanest tone, demonstrates a facile command of legato line-building and morphing chord melodies. “Blood Moon” and “Blue Heron Boulevard” mix the open E-string drilling of Delta blues with various keyboard-esque overdubs and layered rhythm parts, the latter track again showing instinctive ingenuity.

Labaye and Ligonniere mainly function as supporting cast members, though the former proves an adroit soloist and Ligoniene shines in those places where his accents and fills synchronize with Henderson’s lines, propelling the music to exciting heights. A heavily produced project, with some tracks more filler than killer, People Mover is nevertheless elevated by Henderson’s fertile and expressive imagination.

For more information, visit scottjohndotnet. This project is at Iridium Jan. 28th and 30th. See Calendar.
The career of Art Pepper (1925-82) can easily be divided into two parts with a long transition in between. After his sideman years (most notably two stints with the Stan Kenton Orchestra) were over, during 1952-60 he led a series of mostly superb recordings. One of the very few alto saxophonists of his generation (along with Lee Konitz and Paul Desmond) not to sound like a close relative of Charlie Parker, Pepper had his own personal tone, could play perfectly flawless solos at rapid tempos and was flexible enough to sound very much at home in both cool jazz and hardbop settings. A lifelong drug habit and jail sentences resulted in him being largely off the scene during 1961-73 other than a stint with the Buddy Rich Big Band and a few brief reappearances. During that time the influence of John Coltrane resulted in Pepper creating fairly free reappearances. During that time the influence of John Coltrane resulted in Pepper creating fairly free improvisations but losing some of his musical personality. During 1974-75, with the inspiration of his wife Laurie Pepper, he returned to fulltime playing, displaying his earlier personality but with a greater emotional range, the intensity of a Jackie McLean and the philosophy of playing every solo as if it could be his last. Somehow throughout his career, despite his erratic and sometimes dangerous lifestyle, Pepper (unlike his contemporary Chet Baker) never made an unworthy recording despite whatever shape he was in. Considering the circumstances, his consistency was quite remarkable.

In 1979 Pepper, who had previously recorded for Contemporary and had just begun work for Galaxy, fulfilled a promise and made an album for producer John Snyder’s Artists House label, So In Love. It originally consisted of two songs recorded Feb. 23rd in New York with pianist Hank Jones, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Al Foster and three numbers from May 25th-26th in Los Angeles with pianist George Cables, bassist Charlie Haden and drummer Billy Higgins. However Snyder actually recorded much more during those two sessions. A pair of albums later released by Galaxy (Art Works and New York Sessions) and a little-known set (Standart) put out by Japanese RCA came from those dates and there were 30 other additional performances. 11 of the latter were included along the way on sampler albums or by Laurie Pepper’s Widow’s Taste label, but 19 have been issued for the first time on the five-CD boxed set Promise Kept: The Complete Artists House Recordings.

16 of the 50 performances are from the New York session. As Laurie Pepper relates in the liner notes, the saxophonist felt a bit uncomfortable throughout the date because he felt that the New York musicians (particularly Carter and Jones) were condescending towards him since he was not based in the Big Apple, thinking of him as a has-been white West Coast player. However Pepper channeled his frustration into competitive solos and the tension resulted in his playing being even more passionate than usual. The more extensive West Coast sets may have been a little more comfortable (Haden and Higgins were old friends and Cables would eventually join his working quartet) but Pepper never let up in his intense playing, pushing his sidemen to play at their best.

The overall repertoire is a bit more bop-oriented than Pepper’s usual live sets, including such songs as “Straight No Chaser”, “A Night In Tunisia”, “Donna Lee”, “Tin Tin Deo” and “Anthropology”, but Pepper also contributes several originals, most notably “Diane”, “My Friend John” and “Blues For Blanche”. In addition to the quartet performances, Pepper took “Duo Blues” as a duet with Carter, sounds excellent on clarinet on pianoless versions of “Anthropology” and “In A Mellow Tone” and, most intriguingly, performed “Johnny’s Blues”, “Body And Soul”, “But Beautiful” (recorded on Aug. 21st), “Art’s Sweet Blues” (which is really “Lester Leaps In”) and three versions apiece of “Lover Man” (two on alto and one on clarinet) and “You Go To My Head” as unaccompanied solos. While one wishes that he had recorded a full-length unaccompanied album, one is grateful for the existence of these melodic and heartfelt performances.

Any listener with an interest in Pepper will definitely want to pick up this very enjoyable release, which features him in top form throughout.
Waldron are replaced by saxophonist Mobley, Jerome Richardson and Mal Doug Watkins and drummer Art Byrd, guitarist Kenny Burrell, bassist Hackensack, NJ living room to record reconvened in Rudy Van Gelder’s, The Prestige All Stars Waking up a week after making 42
Chuck Flores b.1935
†Lennie Hastings 1927-78
†Wild Bill Davison 1906-89
Alex Cline b.1956
Eugene Chadbourne b.1954
†Musa Kaleem 1921-88
†Preston Jackson 1902-83
†Nick Fatool 1915-2000
James Shipp b.1980
Chris Potter b.1970
†Helmut Brandt 1931-2001
†Al McKibbon 1919-2005
January 1
28
20
23
18
3
30
20
The title may be a reference to a parent soprano saxophonist clarinetist who got his start in the late ’70s with countryman Claude Bolling’s big band. Tissendier’s main outlet as a leader has been his Saxomaniac group, active intermittently since the late ’80s and often working with American stars including, here on the group’s debut, saxophonist Benny Carter. The latter, completing the leader and also saxophonist Jean Elieve and tenor saxophonists Claude Bradac and Nicolas Monier (plus rhythm section) confine themselves to pity takes on jazz standards.
On this Day by Andrey Henkin

BIRTHDAYS

ALDO ROMANO
January 16th, 1941
Italian drummer Aldo Romano, unlike many of his countrymen, pursued an international career from the start. After work with Giorgetto Gaslini in the mid ’60s, Romano’s resume reads like the United States, Cesi Bley, Bob Moses 1948
John McLaughlin 1942 Eugene Chadbourne 1954 Alex Cline b.1956
January 5
3
16
25
31
January 4th, 1988
Wordless
Steve Lacy 1944 (Futura) January 4th, 1971
Celebrating the birth of his adopted home country of France, -MV
PANCEVO

BY THOMAS CONRAD

It is natural to think of the Pancevo Jazz Festival in Serbia (Oct. 31st-Nov. 2nd) as an offshoot of the bigger, older, better known Belgrade Jazz Festival, which precedes it every year by a few days. Pancevo is only 18 kilometers from Belgrade. Vojislav Pantić, one of the most consistently interesting programmers in jazz, books both festivals.

But the Pancevo event has its own vibe. This industrial city of 90,000 has never been accused of being beautiful. It looks like most of Serbia: unprosperous and in need of refurbishing. But there are some pretty river vistas. Pancevo is situated on the confluence of the Danube and Tamiš rivers. The music happens in Kulturni Centar Panceva on a nice town square. It has a modern 380-seat auditorium with good sight lines and acoustics. The foyer of the Center was the gathering point for the festival scene. The walls were covered with striking images by Romanian jazz photographer Dragoslav Nedici. The festival is one of the most important annual arts events in Pancevo and you felt the excitement in the crowded foyer. It would have been a nicer hang without the national curse of Serbia: cigarette smoke.

On opening night, Dave Holland, Chris Potter and Zakir Hussain set the bar high. They are at the top of the jazz world on their respective instruments and all pursue a wide variety of projects. No one knows whether the ensemble they call the Crosscurrents Trio will become an established working band. (They have one album, the new Good Hope, on the Edition label.) But for now they have found magic. Their concert began with the tapping and ringing of Hussain’s tablas beginning to commingle, pull apart and reassemble.

The spare format allows each of the three to display the full range of his expressive capacity. Holland is one of the world’s few bassists who can follow an epic soprano saxophone, three distinct streams of energy began to commingle, pull apart and reassemble. As she sang “Sophisticated Lady”, her first selection, Assuredly, McLendon can hold her own in this company. (For the record, Cole is her prof at SUNY.) As she sang “Sophisticated Lady”, her first selection, she held the melody deep in her chest, as Vaughan did, and alluded to Ella Fitzgerald’s nimble alteration of the vocal line, signaling her familiarity with the Songbook masters. But she sang the usual ballad as a swinging midtempo, modulated away from the initial key and added new lyrics, proving that she has her own mind about things too. She went on to tackle “Perdido”, the winsome Vaughan classic, with much fidelity to the original version. But it was her throaty, extended scat that showcased her confidence as a soloist—one of the primary competencies for which the judges look. As a finale, she performed the little known “Autumn Nocturne” by Josef Myrow, using the tender down-tempo popularized by Cassandra Wilson to explore the emotive side of her vocalism.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)

SASSY AWARDS

BY SUZANNE LORGE

Bronx-native Samara McLendon, a vocal jazz student at SUNY-Purchase, claimed first place in the Eighth Annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition (Nov. 24th). The competition, held at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on Sarah Vaughan Way in Newark, N.J., threws on talented up-and-coming vocalists from around the globe, helping them to advance their developing musical careers. Also called the “Sassy Awards”, in reference to Vaughan’s nickname, the competition acknowledges singers for their improvisatory skills, vocal jazz technique and creative interpretations of the Great American Songbook.

Of the hundreds of jazz singers who apply for consideration each year, only five make it to the finalists circle, and three take home cash awards —$5,000 for first, $1,500 for second, and $500 for third. In previous years, first-place winners also received a recording contract with Concord Records, but beginning in 2017, the top Sassy Award singer earned a set in the high-profile Newport Jazz Festival instead. With this prize, McLendon joins a distinguished cohort of previous winners. Former first-place singers include Cyrille Aimée (2012) and Jazzmeia Horn (2013), both of whom are contenders for Grammy Awards this year, and Nicole Zuraitis (2015), a third-place singer, garnered a Grammy nomination last year. Grammys aside, however, Sassy finalists typically go on to perform, record, and tour in the upper echelons of the jazz world—Ashleigh Smith (second, 2012; first, 2014), Alexis Cole (finalist, 2012), Hilary Kole (finalist, 2012), Camille Thurman (third, 2013), Shacara Rogers (second, 2014), Arianna Neukrug (first, 2015), Quinnia Lynell (first, 2017), and Laurin Talese (first, 2018).

Assuredly, McLendon can hold her own in this company. (For the record, Cole is her prof at SUNY.) As she sang “Sophisticated Lady”, her first selection, she held the melody deep in her chest, as Vaughan did, and alluded to Ella Fitzgerald’s nimble alteration of the vocal line, signaling her familiarity with the Songbook masters. But she sang the usual ballad as a swinging midtempo, modulated away from the initial key and added new lyrics, proving that she has her own mind about things too. She went on to tackle a precisely articulated vocalese as her intro to “Perdido”, the winsome Vaughan classic, with much fidelity to the original version. But it was her throaty, extended scat that showcased her confidence as a soloist—one of the primary competencies for which the judges look. As a finale, she performed the little known “Autumn Nocturne” by Josef Myrow, using the tender down-tempo popularized by Cassandra Wilson to explore the emotive side of her vocalism.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 55)

Monheim Triennale

July 1st-5th 2020

Sam Amidon
Lakecia Benjamin
Pan Daijing
Kris Davis
Greg Fox
Shabaka Hutchings
Sofia Jernberg
Park Jiha
Robert Landfermann
Ava Mendoza
Marcus Schmickler
Phillip Sollmann
Terre Thaemlitz
Julia Überh
Jennifer Walshe
Stian Westerhus

www.monheim-triennale.de

Director: Reiner Michalka
Curators: Swantje Lichtenstein, Louis Rastig, Rainiers Robert, Meghan Stabile, Thomas Venker
Artworks: Vasilis Marmatakis

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | JANUARY 2020 43
Wednesday, January 1

- Juan Macuinto Trio with Trevor Brown, Josh Roberts
- Greg Rovino Big Band
- Birdland Big Band with guest Nicole Zuraitis
- Billy Stritch Trio
- Chris Botti with Lee Pearson, Reggie Hamilton, Leonardo Amura, Hoeger Marjama, Andy Szniter, Sandy Cameron, Shayna Steele

Thursday, January 2

- Jimpie Yo Yo Duo
- Amy Cory
- Birgitte Griflette Orchestra
- Janie Becker Trio with Sam Trombetta, Austin Walker
- Birdland Big Band with guest Nicole Zuraitis
- Billy Stritch Trio
- Chris Botti with Lee Pearson, Reggie Hamilton, Leonardo Amura, Hoeger Marjama, Andy Szniter, Sandy Cameron, Shayna Steele
- Cafe Bohemia Quartet led Jon Erik Kellso
- Noriko Kamo Duo
- Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio D'éte with Matt Brewer, Eric Harland
- William Delisfort
- Faban Mary Quintet; Mark Whitfield

Friday, January 3

- Anna Kokina/Jinjoo Tjo
- Vincent Chenery, Joe Fonda, Kevin Norton
- Assad Kahlil Trio with Matt Pavlica, Peter Trommelen
- Birdland Big Band with guest Nicole Zuraitis
- Billy Stritch Trio
- Chris Botti with Lee Pearson, Reggie Hamilton, Leonardo Amura, Hoeger Marjama, Andy Szniter, Sandy Cameron, Shayna Steele
- Songonisty Trio
- Gil Schwartz Duo
- Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio D'éte with Matt Brewer, Eric Harland
- Willerm Delisfort
- Ken Fowser Quintet; Michael Arenella and His Dreamland Orchestra

Saturday, January 4

- Ayana Love
- James Silberman Trio with Marco Panepinto, Vinco Charoic
- Birdland Big Band with guest Nicole Zuraitis
- Billy Stritch Trio
- Chris Botti with Lee Pearson, Reggie Hamilton, Leonardo Amura, Hoeger Marjama, Andy Szniter, Sandy Cameron, Shayna Steele
- Janiem Quintet
- Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio D'éte with Matt Brewer, Eric Harland
- William Delisfort
- Denver Jonkuch and The Revisionists
- Ivan Rosta Quintet; Raphael Dufour Quintet; Greg Glasman, Jam
- Chris Speed Trio with Chris Tordini, Dave King
- Jonny King Trio with Im Coleman, Natasha Waits
- David Drum, Jame Session
- Sean Jones Quartet with Brett Williams, Kyle Miles, Kendrick Scott
- Lenny White 70th Birthday Celebration; Lenny White Trio with Dave Liebman, Guru Perc
- Melissa Aldana/Kevin Hays, Jon Davis
- JC Hopkins Big Band with Joy Hanson, Vahera Gould
- Immortal Willows WRE
- Jazzat; Derrick Baker, Mark Adams, Jovon Nelson, George Gray
- Assaf Kahlil Trio

Sunday, January 5

- Grammy® Nominee 2020
- TANGO JAZZ ORCHESTRA
- Emil Solla presents PUERTOS - Music from International Waters
- CD Release Party

January 5th, 5:30 PM
BIRDLAND JAZZ CLUB
315 West 44th St. New York, NY 10036
www.birdlandjazz.com
Sunday, January 5

- Vic Juris; Adam Larson Band

- Emil Sosa Tango Jazz Orchestra

- Donald Vega Trio with Peter Washington, Billy Drummond

- Chris Booth with Lee Pearson, Robert Glasper, Leonardo Antunes, Holger Marjamäki, Andy Sznider, Sandy Cameron, Shigaka Sibue

- Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio d’Or with Matt Brewer, Eric Harland


- Terry Vásco’s Gotham City Band; Jody Stephens Fat Cat Big Band

- Sean Jones Quartet with Brent Williams, Kyle Miles, Kendrick Scott

- Tatiana Eva-Marie and Aviation Jazz Band with guest Gil Skokel

- Lenny White 70th Birthday Celebration: Lenny White Quartet with Dave Stryker, Mike Lee, Ed Howard

- Jamie Robinson, Steve Wilson, Orlando de Fleming

- Rze Coras Trio with Eddie Montrose

- Sean Claps; Or Barakel


- Richard Shade

- Adam O’Farrill/Gaya Feldheim Schor

- Or Bareket 4tet with Joel Ross, Shai Maestro, Savannah Harris

- Shane Big Band: Blake Skjeller, Dave Sewelson, Ethan Helm, Elijah Shiffer, Andrew Hadro, Jamie Rogers, Work Brackman, Matthew McDonald, Jonathan Weinman, Andrew, Niles, Andrew Dow, Jon Panikoff, Yutaka Takahashi, Aron Nemanerth

- Mike Mullins Quintet with Zaid Hassem, Pasquale Grasso, Ari Roland, Keith Balla; Alex Hoffman Quintet with Emad Liane, Gregory Chen, Charlie Himmel, Mike Lee, Ed Howard

- John Coltrane Festival—Countdown Quintet VIII: Bobby Watson, Eric Alexander, George Cables, John Weider, Joe Farnsworth

- Wil & Daniel: Pravit/Siit/Daniel Hurst; Matt Foster’s Mirror Image with Lisa Hopper, Wesley Rink, John Wolfon, David Arroste, Gabe Frangoulis, Sonya Sotita

- Ronnie Barragán Group

- Chris Potter Circuits Trio with James Francis, Edi Odeval

- Grégoire Charbonnier; Triptet: Michael Monhart, Tom Baker, Greg Campbell with guest Xan Xaberx

- Jakob Ebers Quintet

- Maurice “Mobetta” Brown Birthday Vibes Session with Talib Kweli, Isaiah Sharkey, James Francies, Ben Williams, Amanda Anderson, Alexander Weis, Kevin Eichenberger, Stephen Gau, Adam Lane, Kevin Sheer, Neo Fort, Ayten Kobrinski, Sarah Bernhardt, Jason Kan Heung, Andrew Wilson, Michael TA. Thompson; Colin Hinton Quartet with Tony Malaby, Ed Howard, Andrew Sheer, Andrew Godfrey

- Scott Lowrie; David Gibson

- Alex Hoffman Quintet with Emanuele Basentini, Gregory Chen, Charlie Himmel, Mike Lee, Ed Howard

- Simon Jermyn, Michael Vatcher

- Sunday, January 5

- Zinc Bar 4 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Jim Corner 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

- Friday, January 3

- 55Bar 9:30 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- The Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

- Sunday, January 5

- The Stone at The New School 8:30 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Smalls 10:30 pm 1 am $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Jazz Standard 7:30, 9:30 pm $30

- Sunday, January 5

- The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm $15

- Sunday, January 5

- Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35

- Sunday, January 5

- Birdland 8:30, 11 pm $40

- Sunday, January 5

- Zinc Bar 7:30, 9 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Birdland 7 pm $25-30

- Sunday, January 5

- Bar Lunático 8:30, 10 pm $10

- Sunday, January 5

- Russian Samovar 3 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- The Owl Music Parlor 7:30 pm $10

- Sunday, January 5

- North Square Lounge 12:30, 2 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Birdland 5:30 pm $30

- Sunday, January 5

- Soup & Sound 7 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Mezzrow 7:30, 10:30 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35

- Sunday, January 5

- Blue Note 8, 10:30 pm $75

- Sunday, January 5

- Spectrum 7 pm $15

- Sunday, January 5

- Smalls 7:30, 10:30 pm 1 am $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Shrine 8 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Saint Peter’s Church 6 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- 55Bar 6, 9:30 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Russian Samovar 3 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- The Owl Music Parlor 7:30 pm $10

- Sunday, January 5

- North Square Lounge 12:30, 2 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Birdland 5:30 pm $30

- Sunday, January 5

- Soup & Sound 7 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Mezzrow 7:30, 10:30 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $40

- Sunday, January 5

- 55Bar 6, 9:30 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Bar Lunático 8:30, 10 pm $10

- Sunday, January 5

- Russian Samovar 3 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- The Owl Music Parlor 7:30 pm $10

- Sunday, January 5

- North Square Lounge 12:30, 2 pm

- Sunday, January 5

- Birdland 5:30 pm $30

- Sunday, January 5

- Soup & Sound 7 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Mezzrow 7:30, 10:30 pm $20

- Sunday, January 5

- Dizzy’s Club 7:30, 9:30 pm $35
**Wednesday, January 8**

- **Orlando: In Fleming Quintet with Will Vinson, Philipp Dack, Sean Wayland, Nate Wood, Mike Stern**
- **Michael Adams; solo; Matt Schild; solo; Steve Allen; solo; Jeremy Kenner; solo**
- **Rob Verheyden Quintet with Marc Copland, Michael Formanek, Victor Lewis**
- **Omar Avila Trio**
- **Alex Aldrich Trio with Connor Evans, Chris Wright**
- **Kurt Elling**
- **Matt壬花-Ard's Bosses Always Have Guillermo Montesino, Helio Alves**
- **Mauricio "Mocho" Brown Birthday Celebration with Pablo Santrich, James Francis, Ben Williams, Mike Miller**
- **Mark McKay Band; Dave Kolkher Band**
- **Annie Figueroa Sextet with Alex Richardson, Matt Patlauss, Yasuo Nakamura, Rudy Royston**
- **Jazz.ORG**
- **New Aesthetic Jazz Orchestra; Wynton Tackett**
- **Raphaël Drupplof Trio; Joe Farris; with Fred Gold Jam**
- **Louis Armstrong Legacy Jam with Harold Land, Don Davis, Javon Jackson**
- **Brian Fornan's The Red Guitar**
- **Manolo Watataneke with Sant Dedeem, Francesco Mazzoli**
- **Darius Jones Quartet with Joel Ross, Sean Conk, Kusty Abad**
- **The Music of Brad Broomeyer directed by Ryan Transeul with Tim Resi, Ethan Helm, Donny McCall, Luke Prince, Scott Robinson, Owen Binder, Asa Hughes, Tony Rudolf, Nadie Noordhuis, Riley Muller, Tim Higgins, Mike Davis, John Moses, Paul Fornak, George Forman, Gary Verance, Drew Gress, John Holland, Kenon Wilson, Mike Tye**
- **Camille Bertaux-Lee Genove, Julius Noya, Erica Nock, Maxime Szymczak**
- **Danny Baker; Allen Kanian, Darn Johnson**
- **Saints Public's Church**
- **Ensemble imprové Cia with Tais Talatro, Sarah Niswanger, Sebastian Nordl; Matt Nordal; Jon Neostand; Simon Premazzi Quintet with Ben Mond; Mark Shin, Joe Marcus, Kusty Abad; Andrew Ketner**
- **Mike Tye**
- **Friday, January 10**

**New York City Jazz Record January 2020 – February 2021**

**SPRINTUAL SOUNDS AND THE JAZZ AGE**

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis revisits two of its most acclaimed originals: Victor Wooten's Ungramed and Tyme and James Crenshaw's God's Trombones.

**This project was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center with the generous support of the Howard Gilman Foundation.**

This project is supported, in part, by an award from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

**DIANNE REEVES**

NEA Jazz Master and Grammy Award-winning vocalist Dianne Reeves sets the mood for Valentine's Day weekend.

Alexandria Philharmonia is a lead sponsor of Dianne Reeves.

**THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER**

**TRANSFORMATION WITH GLENN CLOSE AND TED NASH**

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis performs a new work by JCLC Member Ted Nash and award-winning actor Glenn Close. This project was commissioned by Jazz at Lincoln Center with the generous support of the Howard Gilman Foundation.

**This project is supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts and for public and cultural affairs from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.**

**HERLIN RILEY PRESENTS: SOUNDS OF CUBA AND NEW ORLEANS**

Drummer extraordinare Herlin Riley explores the intersection of Latin jazz and the sounds of New Orleans, joined by Cuban percussion genius Pedrito Martinez, prolific trumpeter Nicholas Payton, and bassist Russell Hall.

**Jazz.Org**
Saturday, January 11

- Tony Tieler
  Apolo Theater & Music Café 10 pm $22

- Paul Austerlitz/John Laggis, Ric Moore, Summert, Aminen, Chad Sabato, Cole Henry, Eric Parks, Nick Lyons, Evan Crane, Dan Kurtz
  Amineto’s 7:30 pm $12

- Patrick Cornelius Trio with Rick Ragatz, Carl Al истор
  Bar Next Door 7:30, 10:30, 1:30 pm $12

- Sara Gazzar
  Barenard 8:30, 11 pm $40-$50

- Venetta Swift with Emmett Cohen Trio
  Ballard Theater 7:30 pm $30-$40

- Winter Jazzfest: Naxos John’s Oul of the Invisible, Alice Fasio with Tony Peterson, Pierre Perichaud, Christophe Parazoo, Ann Shery
  Flume with Russh, Alexey, Thomas de Pouplongy and Sagicor with Laurent Bontkpark, Facione Borton, Arnold Freuden, Helenie Galaxy, Edward Ferrant, James Brand; Jonathan, Junior’s Le Pierre Fox with James Chad, Tim, Coco, Sue Dubu
  Firehouse 7:00 pm $35-$40

- Winter Jazzfest: Helen Sun’s Song with Words with Christa Dazey, Steve Wilson, Rosalind, Hugo Albrecht, Charles, Jason On Derer, Mark Goldman; Susan Acorn Quartet with Mary Herringman, Mark Feltman, Michael Fornarack
  Ryan Singer, OJP Nate One, Felix C. Cordero, Anas Wehrab’s Cockroaches Split with Jeremy Vinc, Jacob Garth, Christopher Hoffmann, Matt Mitchell, Chris Tordis, Chas Smith
  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $30-$40

- Russell Hall’s The Feeling of Romance with Hugo Sato, Martina Didkina, Vanessa Perez, Robert Fox, Julian Le, Matias Pianci, Emmett Cohen, Kyle Poole, Nick Russo
  DiB Pell 7:30, 9:30 pm $40-$50

- Charles Turner and Upton Swing Bands Club 11:30 pm $20

- Mike DiBilbouf Quartet with Brian Jayone, Upping Dwayne’s with Jo-Co, Moby Band
  The Dance 7:15 pm $55-$150

- Rafael Montagu & Duane Entiner, Greg Glassman Jam
  Fire Cat 7:30 pm $10

- New Ear Festival: William Hooker’s The Sympathetic Esclamats with Marc Edwards, Theodore Woodard, Matt Chilton, Joanna Mollot solo
  Homan Gallery 7:30 pm $30

- Arica Oriz
  Happyness 11:30 pm $5

- Mark Sozin Quartet with Rich Perry, Jay Anderson, Matt Wilson
  Jazz at Florence 8:30 pm $20

- Jen Shroba’s Zoz Zero Grasses
  The Jazz Gallery 7:30, 9:30 pm $30

- Winter Jazzfest: Jocca Stevens with Michelle Kyle, Chris Tong, Jordan Peterson, Jan Eskra, Lakis Benjamin’s Parabola’s—The Music of the Continents with Shuggea Montgomery, Regina Carter, Marc Strickland, Doug Cornett, Lorenzo Francis, Delfin Green, Isaac Aligado
  Le Poisson Rouge 7:30 pm $30-$50

- Wenny White’s Birthday Celebration: Larry White with Tom Guarna, Richi Goods
  Made In New York Jazz Café 7:30, 9:30 pm $40-$80

- Winter Jazzfest: Marcia Hill New Gospel Revival with Berlin Smith, Joel Ross, James Francis, Harlan Ragerman, Kendric Scott; Mr. Frieder Trios with Matt Penman, Jimmy Mac-Key, Hymn; Brass Ensemble, Kessa Oversea’s Thing I’m Good with Malaika Charles, J. Roard, Ouma Wilson, Morgan Guerin, Carlos Caraval, Theo Croser’s Star People Nation with Mike King, Eric Wheeler, Michael Ode
  Heroes Are Gang Leaders: James Brandon Lewis, Thomas Sayers Ellis, Theo Croser’s Star People Nation with Mike King, Eric Wheeler, Michael Ode
  Heroes Are Gang Leaders: James Brandon Lewis, Thomas Sayers Ellis

- Winter Jazzfest: Jimmy Macbride; Hypnotic Brass Ensemble; Kassa Overall’s I Think I’m Good with Reggie Workman, Regina Carter, Marcus Strickland, Greg Osby, Lonnie Plaxico, Jan Esbra
  Lakecia Benjamin’s Pursuance—The Music of the Coltranes with Jeremy Vinc, Jacob Garth, Christopher Hoffmann, Matt Mitchell, Chris Tordis, Chas Smith
  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $35-$40

- Jeremy Viner, Jacob Garchik, Christopher Hoffman, Matt Mitchell, Chris Tordis, Chas Smith
  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $35-$40

  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $35-$40

- Winter Jazzfest—Steve Dalachinsky Celebration: Daniel Carter, Dave Liebman, Tom Guarna, Kassa Overall
  Made In New York Jazz Café 7:30, 9:30 pm $30-$50

- Jennifer Jones Quartet with Tony Jones, Stu Taszkay, Kenny Wollesen
  Noire 9:30 pm $30-$50

- Winter Jazzfest: Aniello Karpardoskic Burtzzi, Demitriou Filip, Amae
  Mike Rodriguez Sextet with John Ellis, Gary Versace, Hamish Smith, Joe Martin, Reggie Woods Quartet
  The Dance 7:15 pm $55-$150

- Winter Jazzfest: Laila Biali; The Cookers: Billy Harper, Eddie Henderson, David Weiss
  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $30-$50

  St. Francis 9:30 pm $30

- Winter Jazzfest: Tos Fuller Quartet with Eric Wheeler, Andrew Rodros, Michael Ode
  Revoluter: Peter Apfelbaum, Tom Bernard, Aaron Johnson, and guest Bill Laswell
  Winter Jazzfest: Laila Biali; The Cookers: Billy Harper, Eddie Henderson, David Weiss
  Winter Jazzfest: Tos Fuller Quartet with Eric Wheeler, Andrew Rodros, Michael Ode
  Revoluter: Peter Apfelbaum, Tom Bernard, Aaron Johnson, and guest Bill Laswell
  Winter Jazzfest—Steve Dalachinsky Celebration: Daniel Carter, Dave Liebman, Tom Guarna, Kassa Overall
  Made In New York Jazz Café 7:30, 9:30 pm $30-$50

- Mike Rodriguez Sextet with John Ellis, Gary Versace, Hamish Smith, Joe Martin, Reggie Woods Quartet
  Made In New York Jazz Café 7:30, 9:30 pm $30-$50

- Winter Jazzfest: Helen Sun’s Song with Words with Christa Dazey, Steve Wilson, Rosalind, Hugo Albrecht, Charles, Jason On Derer, Mark Goldman; Susan Acorn Quartet with Mary Herringman, Mark Feltman, Michael Fornarack
  Ryan Singer, OJP Nate One, Felix C. Cordero, Anas Wehrab’s Cockroaches Split with Jeremy Vinc, Jacob Garth, Christopher Hoffmann, Matt Mitchell, Chris Tordis, Chas Smith
  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $35-$40

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  Smoke 7:30, 9:30 pm $30
Monday, January 12

- Madeleine Peyroux
- Ben Harper
- Stacey Kent
- Allison Miller's Bloom Tix Boom with Jenny Schraffman, Kirk Knufft, Ben Myra Mellott, Todd Sickabooms
- Emmet Cohen Trio
- Daniel Bennett Group
- Phil Mangan: Michael McQuilken, Jenifer Knapp, Alex Odeh

Tuesday, January 13

- Madeleine Peyroux
- Ben Harper
- Stacey Kent
- Allison Miller's Bloom Tix Boom with Jenny Schraffman, Kirk Knufft, Ben Myra Mellott, Todd Sickabooms
- Emmet Cohen Trio
- Daniel Bennett Group
- Phil Mangan: Michael McQuilken, Jenifer Knapp, Alex Odeh


**Friday, January 17**

- Anna Koichi Jinjo Yoo 1988 Eat, Drink Bar & Lounge 8 pm
- Craig Brann Trio with Nick Morrison, Sarah Kadoura Bar None 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm $12
- Count Basie Orchestra directed by Scotty Barnhart Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35

**Saturday, January 18**

- Paul Bollenback Trio with Alexander Claffy, Tommy Carmello Bar None 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 pm $20
- Count Basie Orchestra directed by Scotty Barnhart Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35
- Maceo Parker Mighty Mo Bells, Cecilia Lopez, Joe McQueen, Matthew Egan, Seth Davis Dizzy's Club 8 pm $10
- Mediterranean Jazz Festival: Petri Karpanso Improvisations with Kristjan Randalu and guest Dias Apsirapan, Panagiotis Andrika, Layla Chaker, Sardan with Jake Chockey, Philip Gullah, Nick Gunningham, Cristian Patino, Mediterranean Jazz Festival Dizzy's Club 6:30 pm $25
- Terry Holdsworth Gotham City Band - Fat Cat 8 pm $10
- David Murray Octet with Lalecia Benjamin, Josh Evans, Terry Green II, Mingus Murray, David Bryant, Russell Carter Bar None 9 pm $30
- Ben Williams’ I Am A Man with Marcus Strickland, Big Yuki, David Rosenthal, Casey Benjamin Smoke 9 pm $30

**Sunday, January 19**

- Julian Lage Trio with Jorge Roeder, Dave King Village Vanguard 8:30, 10:30 pm $35
- Brian Miles with Primo Pitkow,-bedroom: Adam Benjamin, Shante Dieudonne, Ben Wendel, Nate Wood and guest Mark Guiliano, Shanae’ Daniels Music Hall at Wall Street 8 pm $30
- Maceo Parker Fat Cat 8 pm $10
- Mediterranean Jazz Festival: Petri Karpanso Improvisations with Kristjan Randalu and guest Dias Apsirapan, Panagiotis Andrika, Layla Chaker, Sardan with Jake Chockey, Philip Gullah, Nick Gunningham, Cristian Patino, Mediterranean Jazz Festival Weequahic 7:30 pm $25
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- Ben Williams’ I Am A Man with Marcus Strickland, Big Yuki, David Rosenthal, Casey Benjamin Smoke 9 pm $30

**Monday, January 20**

- Mike Stern Live Jazz Bar & Lounge 8 pm $10
- Miles O’Keefe Trio with Anthony Ross, Shanae’ Daniels, Taisa Bar None 9 pm $20
- Mediterranean Jazz Festival: Petri Karpanso Improvisations with Kristjan Randalu and guest Dias Apsirapan, Panagiotis Andrika, Layla Chaker, Sardan with Jake Chockey, Philip Gullah, Nick Gunningham, Cristian Patino, Mediterranean Jazz Festival Weequahic 7:30 pm $25
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- Maceo Parker Mighty Mo Bells, Cecilia Lopez, Joe McQueen, Matthew Egan, Seth Davis Dizzy’s Club 8 pm $10
Tuesday, January 21

- Loui Stamm 5:15 pm
- Otis Rush Trio with Brian Blade and Dave Stryker 6:30 pm
- Warren Wolf’s Mosaic 7 pm
- George Noi’s New World Rhythm 8 pm
- Augie Meyers 9 pm
- Brian Blade with Paul Bley 10 pm
- Frank Foster’s Duckpond 11 pm

Wednesday, January 22

- Mike Stem 5:15 pm
- Brian Blade’s Vitamin String Quartet 6 pm
- Matthew Shipp 7 pm
- Satoko Fujii’s Takane 8 pm
- The Stone at The New School 8:30 pm

Thursday, January 23

- Jeppe Yoo Du 9 pm
- Orlando Feinberg Trio with Matthew Shipp 9:30 pm
- The Whistlers 10 pm

Friday, January 24

- Anna Kodinha/Anju Yoo 8 pm

Saturday, January 25

- Mark Heinkleman Trio with Jim Cullum 7 pm
- Kim Jong-Won Trio 10:30 pm
- The Stone at The New School 8:30 pm

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The New York City Jazz Record
Sunday, January 26

- Adikson Evans Quartet with Silvano Monasterios, Josh Allen, Jongkuk Kim and guest
- Sabath Perez
- Sunny Albers Quartet in celebration of Lila Downs
- Tia Fuller Quartet in celebration of the release of her new album, "Reverie"
- Bill Ware Trio
- Benny Green Trio with David Wong, Aaron Kimmel
- Jeremiah Cymerman solo
- Sam Newsome solo
- Nick Dunston solo
- Downtown Music Gallery 7:30 pm
- Terry Walsh’s Gotham City Band
- Steve Williams
- Ed Fast and Congo Bop
- JFA Jam Session
- Ryan Kobert and His Juke, Pasquale Grasso
- George Cables Trio with Ed Howard, William Lewis
- Whitney MacMillan’s Big Band with Patience Higgins
- Nels Cline’s From Cape to Cunningham with Ryland Angel, Zenee Parkins, Laura Roeder
- Stefan Harris and Blackout with Casey Benjamin, Marc Cary, Luques Curtis, Torey Gillum, Torey Gillum
- Joel Shahar
- Ari Hoenig Group with Brail Maestro, Rick Gerber with an all-star quartet with Michael Thomas, Philip Harris, Sean Magnus
- The 88 Big Band
- Rodney Jones Quartet with Dabin Ryu, Kenny Davis, Connor Paris

Monday, January 27

- Mike Stern 5:30 pm
- Adam Nussbaum’s Leaundra’s Project with Steve Cardenas, Nate Radley, Ohad Talmor
- Lila Hope Trio with Dayton Seeks, Tammy Sather with Mito Fukushima, Romer Ibbit
- Ben Paterson Quartet with Jeff Welton, Luke Sellick, Charles Gold
- Lisa Hooper Quartet with Dayon Seeks, Tammy Sather with Mito Fukushima, Romer Ibbit
- Nicole Zaner Money, Faye Kiltum, Mohamed Kallura, Stephen Gauci, Adam Lane, Kevin Stone, Toby Motley, Robert Bonnet, BeBeau
- Juan Pablo Carletti’s Big Ensemble with Jake Henry, Kenny Warren, Yoni Kretzmer, Ronen Itzik
- Linda May Han Oh, Joey Baron
- David Byrd-Marrow, Jacob Garchik, Liz Kosack, Nick Dunston, Satoshi Takeishi
- Yuma Uesaka, Erica Dicker, Joanna Mattrey, Mariel Roberts, Adam O’Farrill, Phil Stewart; Johnny O’Neal Trio with Mark Lewandowski, Itay Morchi
- Hillel Salem
- Brandon Seabrook, Henry Fraser
- Sara Berner
- Brielle Berlin
- Chris Kringel
- Henry Allen
- Nels Cline’s From Cage to Cunningham with Ryland Angel, Zenee Parkins, Laura Roeder
- Stefan Harris and Blackout with Casey Benjamin, Marc Cary, Luques Curtis, Torey Gillum, Torey Gillum
- Joel Shahar
- Ari Hoenig Group with Brail Maestro, Rick Gerber with an all-star quartet with Michael Thomas, Philip Harris, Sean Magnus
- The 88 Big Band
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Tuesday, January 28

- Nick Manzi Trio with Nik Lukanov, Veronique Davray, Assam Outlaw’s Trio with Leonard Thompson, Matt Wilson
- The Hot Sanders
- Sancta’Sanctus: The Sancta’s Sanctus with John Escreet, Matt Brewer
- Pasquale Grasso solo
- James Morrison Quartet
- Maria Yvette Quintet
- Soul Rubin Zetbert
- Raoul Kino and His Latin Band
- Alexis Group; Jon Cowherd, Masai Kamogawa, Diego Vogino
- Scott Henderson Trio
- Bruckner Brothers Quartet with Chris and Dan Bruckner, Mike Dickow, Chuck Lamb
- Ingrid Laubrock with Thana Alexie and More
- Josh O’Connor
- Ulysses Cook
- Will Walthers Trio
- Ben Paterson Quartet with Jerry Welton, Luke Sellick, Charles Good
- Joel Shippin Trio
- Carol Morgan
- Ronnie Brown and Holographic Principle with Michael Wilbur, Nick Novak, Chris Grant, Mike Dickow, Chuck Lamb, Will Walthers Trio
- Cynthia Scott with Patience Higgins, John Escreet, Andrew Cullen, Victor Lewis
- Borderlands Trio; Kris Davis, Stephen Kupka, Chris Smith
- The Stakes at the New School

THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD | January 2020


**REGULAR ENGAGEMENTS**

**MONDAY**
- Richard Clements/Murray Wall Band
- Grove Street Stompers
- Earl Rose
- Terry Woods/Guthrie City Band
- Jordan Young
- Vince Giordano and The Night Hawks
- Iris Dorn Jam Session
- Mingus Big Band
- Kyle Cota and Friends
- Steve Snider
- Napoli Togarico
- Vincent Herring Quartet and Jam Session

**TUESDAY**
- Yukio Hirayaka Trio
- Art Hershfield Trio
- David Budwey Trio
- John Young
- David Ostrowski and Louis Armstrong Centennial Band
- Joey Fontesolo
- Les Kuntz Trio
- and The Django Session
- Val jazz Session
- Neal Garabedian Jam
- Les Gordon Band
- Glenn Crytzer Orchestra
- Eileen Catalan
- Stan Rubin Orchestra

**WEDNESDAY**
- Ray Blue Organ Quartet
- Eli Yanamado Trio
- and The Bohemia Quartet
- Joe Farnsworth Trio
- Melissa Ferla Orchestra
- Oscar Peterson Trio
- Stan Rubin Orchestra
- and The Django Session
- Joey Fontesolo
- Steve Vinas/C. Cohun Quintet
- Kyle Collins and Friends
- Les Goodman Band
- Genti Bertoni
- Rob Dobbs/Oscar Peterson Trio
- Ms. Marie Showcase

**THURSDAY**
- Joolitin Outbackland
- Eli Yanamado Trio
- Joey Fontesolo
- The Crooked Trio
- David Budwey Trio
- Birdland Big Band
- Bohemia Allstars Jazz Jam
- Bennett Fauster Trio
- Gerry Eastman Quartet

**FRIDAY**
- Creola Cooking Band
- The Divas and Friends
- Mark LaVern Johnson Session
- Peter Marz Band
- Stephanie Wronski
- Antonio "Patta" African Latin Jazz Orchestra
- The Boogaloo Band
- The Earflugals
- Joey Fontesolo
- Sam Taylor
- Gramercy Jazz Ensembles
- Ian Morin Trio
- Tony Middleman Trio
- Christopher McBride
- Marcella Ettel
- Lu Reid Jam Session
- New Orleans
- John Benitez Jam
- Joe Smith and guest

**SATURDAY**
- Roni Ben-Hur Quartet
- Ben Hunter, guitar
- George Cables, piano
- Harvey S, bass
- Victor Lewis, drums

**SUNDAY**
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- Joe Smith and guest
TNYCJR: When did you first become aware of hip-hop?

DH: I became aware of hip-hop with a song called “Rapper’s Delight”. I think that was the late ’70s.


DH: 1979. So then, when I was going to New York, I started going to the Bronx to see where this music was coming from. And I got a chance to see some of those early hip-hop groups. I went to Madison Square Garden, where I saw Whodini and Run-D.M.C. I started doing rhymes and started doing my thing with hip-hop and actually, I mentored one of the guys who was considered the king of East Coast rap in the ’90s, The Notorious B.I.G., and helped him put jazz elements in hip-hop. I was able to play with Guru’s Jazzmatazz and a group called Digable Planets. I keep working on trying to sharpen my rapping skills and I get some respect as a rapper.

TNYCJR: What are some of your memories of working with The Notorious B.I.G.?

DH: The Notorious B.I.G. was a hard worker. If you gave him an assignment, he would come back the next day and he had mastered it. Not just worked on it, mastered it. He took things like putting the snare drums from a jazz solo into hip-hop in his rhymes. And he lived the lifestyle he was rapping about. Even though some older people may not understand what he was saying, the kids understood it. The Notorious B.I.G. was a symbol of hope to those who were considered less than. He was telling the down trodden they could achieve.

TNYCJR: Obviously, you’ve never been the type of jazz musician who only likes jazz.

DH: Without other styles of music, jazz wouldn’t be what it is. Jazz was born of mixing different elements together. If they’re happy playing a style of music and don’t want to add anything else to it—just want to explore from that perspective—then I think they have the right to do that. But I don’t think that jazz is the only music that should exist.

TNYCJR: On YouTube, there’s a clip of Buddy Rich appearing on The Mike Douglas Show in 1971 and he’s ranting against Glen Campbell and talking about how awful he thought country music was. And yet, Charlie Parker liked country music. Bird enjoyed listening to Hank Williams, Sr.

DH: Buddy Rich was a great drummer; you can’t take that away from him. But sometimes, people can have blinders on. I don’t have a problem with him not listening to that music, but I don’t think you should put other people down for liking what they like. Personally, I grew up when Glen Campbell was on the radio. He was on the radio in my youth and if I heard him, I would have a good time listening. And plus, my mother and my father played every style of music that you can imagine at home. Indian music, classical music, Broadway, Charlie Parker, Etta James, James Brown, Hank Williams, everything. I don’t have any musical prejudices. I listen to everything because of how my parents were.

TNYCJR: What are some of your current projects?

DH: I just did a record with Dr. Eddie Henderson. His invention was so relentless. There was so much to decipher. And I have a new recording called The Eclectic Jazz Revolution of Unity. It’s a two-CD set; the first CD is an acoustic jazz band. The second CD is a lot of different types of music, from jazz with hip-hop influences to straight hip-hop to R&B/soul, Chicago stepping music. Dr. Lonnie Smith is on there...For organ players, Lonnie’s the man. To get support from Lonnie is really wonderful. Lonnie has helped a lot of young musicians. He’s a great master. I’ll be playing with him at the end of [December] down in New Orleans.

TNYCJR: Another organ icon you’ve played with is the late Jack McDuff.

DH: I started with Roy Haynes—Roy showed me a lot of things as well—but my second gig was with Jack McDuff. When I see George Benson, we talk about Jack McDuff. When you play with certain bands, it’s like a broth- erhood of musicians who play with people—like Miles Davis has his brotherhood, Art Blakey has his brotherhood. George has a reverence for Jack McDuff.

TNYCJR: You also played with Miles Davis in the ’80s.

DH: The first time I played with Miles Davis, I was a changed person. There was something about his proficiency and how the music was put together; every note was just in the right place. That’s the lesson I got.

For more information, visit donaldharrison.com. Harrison is at SubCulture Jan. 11th with The Cookers as part of Winter Jazzfest and Drom Jan. 16th. See Calendar.

Recommended Listening:
- Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers — Oh-By The Way (Timeless, 1982)
- Donald Harrison/Terence Blanchard — Black Pearl (CBS/Columbia, 1988)
- Donald Harrison — Indian Blues (Candid, 1991)
- Roy Haynes — Te-Vo! (Dreyfus, 1994)
- Donald Harrison — Nouveau Swing (Impulse!, 1996)
- Donald Harrison/Ron Carter/Billy Cobham — This Is Jazz (Live at the Blue Note) (Half Note, 2011)

Destiny’s discography has started to gain the attention of the mainstream jazz press. In their review of Tommy Howards’ Storybook, The Austin Chronicle stated, “Always impressive but never flashy, Storybook shows off its bandleader’s skills as player and composer without self-indulgence.” Presence by pianist Brad Whitely received high praise from DownBeat: “New York pianist-organist Brad Whiteley offers more than a smart record. He shows us how it’s done.”

While Destiny doesn’t have any far-reaching goals for the next several years, they want to maintain a steady course. Shields states, “I want us to stay natural and without manufactured intention or self-imposed ambition. We don’t necessarily have a standard that we try to keep things to. I almost want to keep our footprint slightly less than obvious. I want to let each artist and piece of music be what it would be on its own and anything we do to improve it to be in the background. I can’t say exactly what it will look like—number of albums, types of artists, styles of music even—but I want the music to become what it was meant to regardless of what we do or are.” Mizell states, “I would like to see Destiny Records continue to grow as a label for creative music. Ultimately, we do this out of the love Mike, George and I have for making music, so the direction we go and the choices we make will all be rooted in whether or not the work is fulfilling and brings value to our lives. We have no control over where the music industry will go or what the monetary value of recorded music will be in the future. All we can control is the quality of the music we release and I hope that in 5-10 years we’ll be able to look back and feel like we helped some great artists make their best work.”

For more information, visit destinrecordsmusic.com. Artists performing this month include Tyler Blanton at Fat Cat Jan. 9th and Mezzrow Jan. 22nd; Michael Eaton at Downtown Music Gallery Jan. 19th; Mike Fahie at The Jazz Gallery Jan. 9th-10th with Darcy James Argue; Tom Guarna at Made In New York Jazz Café Jan. 11th with Lenny White and Mezzrow Jan. 30th; and Brad Whiteley at Room 623 at 82 Harlem Jan. 24th. See Calendar.

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CAMILLE BERTAULT

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Vanity Fair

US Tour January 2020

January 8
Mezzrow
Camille Bertault & Leo Genovese

January 10-11
Jazz Forum
Camille Bertault with Leo Genovese
Diego Figueiredo

January 14
Rockwood Stage 3
Camille Bertault with Mederic Collignon
David Helbock

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