

UNEARTHED GEM



**At the Peninsula Library 1972
Marian McPartland (Liberation Hall)**
by Ken Dryden

Within a career stretching over six decades, Marian McPartland (whose 107th birthday we commemorate this month) developed into a versatile pianist capable of playing a wide variety of styles with authority. While she enjoyed a decade-long stint at the Hickory House in New York City and recorded for several labels, by the mid '60s her career stalled. Undeterred, McPartland launched her own record label and sought out audiences wherever she could find them. When she played this 1972 trio concert at the Peninsula Library on Long Island, she was not yet the jazz giant that she would become a half dozen years later after her NPR series "Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz" launched. But on this date, it's immediately apparent that she had developed greatly as an improviser since her Hickory House years.

Accompanied by her regular trio of Rusty Gilder (bass) and Joe Corsello (drums), the pianist played for

an audience of children and their parents, not letting the youngsters up front distract her from putting on a great show. Her 78-minute set mixes standards including a blues-infused "Willow Weep For Me" (a longtime favorite frequently part of her live shows), a driving interpretation of "A Night In Tunisia" and a playful, fluid take of "Giant Steps". Yet she also connects with the younger people, who weren't yet necessarily jazz fans, by including familiar, then-current pop songs such as Burt Bacharach's "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" and James Taylor's "Fire and Rain". Further evidence that the pianist's chops had grown tremendously is revealed in her remarkable post bop setting of "Close Your Eyes". McPartland was known for joking about her "fake fugue" introduction, which she created for her arrangement of "All the Things You Are", even though the body of the piece swings effortlessly in her hands, supported by Gilder's creative bass lines and Corsello's nimble percussion. Her rollicking rendition of the early jazz favorite "Royal Garden Blues" (Clarence and Spencer Williams) is followed by a strikingly abstract treatment of Thelonious Monk's "Straight, No Chaser", segued to a brief sign-off with Sonny Rollins' "Oleo".

This previously unissued concert was recorded from the audience by Boris Rose, who was known for recording live jazz broadcasts and selling them as pirate LPs. The audio isn't high fidelity, as audience conversations intrude at times, but the chemistry of McPartland's trio and the diversity of styles throughout the set make it an important addition to the pianist's vast discography.

For more info visit liberationhall.bandcamp.com



**simpletrio2000
Anna Webber (Intakt)**
by Mike Shanley

Anna Webber's new album might be called *simpletrio2000* but the only thing simple about this group relates to the ease in which they navigate the bandleader's complex ideas and original compositions. Along with Webber (tenor, flutes), the trio includes Matt Mitchell (piano) and John Hollenbeck (drums), a unit whose origins date back just over a decade and were heard most recently on half of Webber's double-disc 2021 release *Idiom* (the second disc features a large ensemble). Together they mesh with a precision that feels intuitive, anticipating solo and support role changes in the music, and playing stuttering passages with tight cohesion that occasionally creates the feel of a skip in the recording. Like much of Webber's work, *simpletrio2000* dexterously walks the line between unhinged, unrestrained improvisation and modern composition.

"Idiom VII" starts with droplets of tenor notes, matched precisely by drums, rising and falling in dynamics before the trio really begins to gain momentum. Like the album, the music may sound a tad rigid, but certainly not stiff. Hollenbeck keeps it spiky



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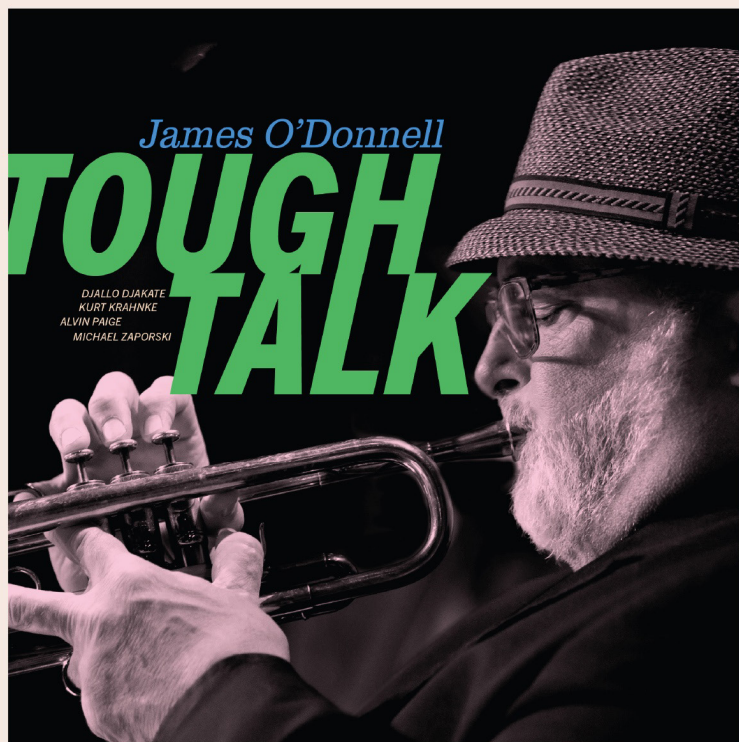
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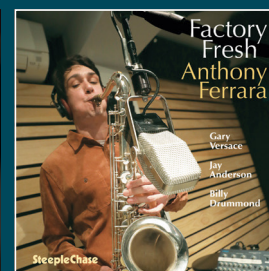
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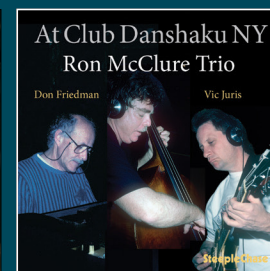
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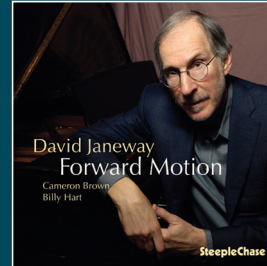
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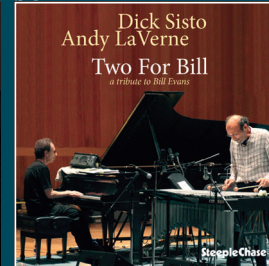
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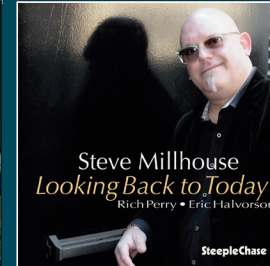
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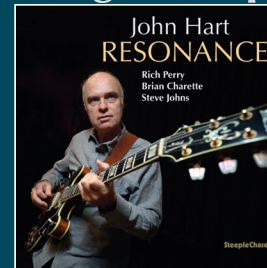


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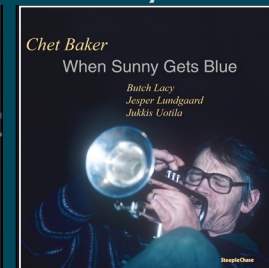


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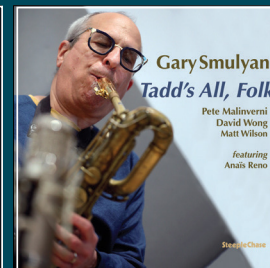
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