

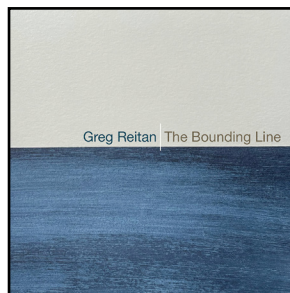
**Close to Mars**  
John Taylor (CAM Jazz)  
**I Thought About You**  
Louis Stewart (Livia)  
by Jim Motavalli

British pianist John Taylor (who died exactly a decade ago this month at age 72) was a brilliant pianist, even if an unheralded one stateside. He began recording and extensively working in the early '70s in the bands of such heavyweights as countrymen Graham Collier and Mike Westbrook, as well as with saxophonists Alan Skidmore and John Surman, drummer Tony Levin and vocalist-wife Norma Winstone: the latter three appear on Taylor's leader debut *Pause, And Think Again* (Turtle, 1971), along with trumpeter Kenny Wheeler who would become another frequent collaborator.

Recorded 35 years after his first sessions, and now newly released, comes *Close to Mars*, an estimable Taylor piano trio, which included Palle Danielsson (bass) and Martin France (drums). From a near 20-year-old Ludwigsburg, Germany recording, the music may in actuality be from the same session that resulted in the 2012 album release, *Giulia's Thursdays*, with the exact same trio, which additionally had recorded a few years prior (*Angel Of The Presence*). Both those releases were not so coincidentally also on CAM Jazz, Taylor's label of choice in the last decade of his life: he recorded at least 15 times as leader, co-leader or sideman for the label in those final ten years. This calming, ECM-adjacent album is full of mostly Taylor originals (excepting the closer, "Ever After", which is from the pen of Wheeler). The pianist's playing may be a little spikier, and a bit more angular, than some of his previous works, but reveals a veteran voice with many more years than the less than ten he had remaining.

Like Taylor, Irish guitarist Louis Stewart was a Europe-centric player, which similarly limited his name recognition in the US, as well. The two recorded with an 'A' list American rhythm section back in 1977, after Stewart had a date at London's Ronnie Scott's club, which coincided with the appearance of pianist Cedar Walton's quartet. Stewart subsequently invited Taylor, along with Walton's bassist and drummer, Sam Jones and Billy Higgins, to record with him. The result was *I Thought About You* (originally released in 1980). But Stewart, a perfectionist, wasn't happy with his own playing, took the tapes back to Dublin and rerecorded some of his solos. A fair amount of spontaneity, as well as sound quality, was lost in the overdubbing, and the resulting record didn't do well. This recent reissue (by the revitalized Livia) restores Stewart's (excellent) original solos and ironically, this album may be his finest recorded moment, as each Stewart and Taylor were audibly inspired. Chick Corea's "Litha", taken at a brisk pace, finds Stewart hurling himself right into it, his lengthy solo assured, every note cleanly articulated, while Taylor tracks him with some headlong bebop piano. Jimmy Heath's "Smiling Billy" (for Higgins) is joyous, with lovely, lyrical piano playing from Taylor. The bassist's "Unit 7" reveals a Wes Montgomery influence in the guitarist's playing (Jones of course worked extensively with Montgomery who played and recorded this composition with such regularity it's since become a jazz guitar standard). Van Heusen's "I Thought About You" is relaxed and loping, but it's on Boland-Woode's "November Girl" where the pace really slows down; in contrast, Taylor's fluid playing enlivens Stewart's take of Miles Davis' "All Blues".

For more info visit [camjazz.com](http://camjazz.com) and [liviarecords.com](http://liviarecords.com)



**The Bounding Line**  
Greg Reitan (Sunnyside)  
by Ken Dryden

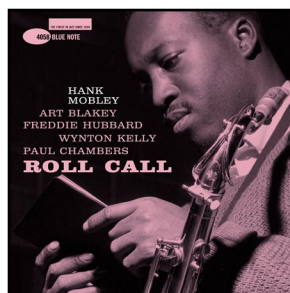
Greg Reitan emerged in the mid-2000s as one of many promising 30-ish pianists who was up to the challenge of the demanding NYC jazz scene. Over the years, his trio recordings for Sunnyside, with bassist Jack Daro (bass) and Dean Koba (drums), have showcased his considerable skills as an improviser, composer and arranger.

The inspiration for the songs on his sixth album, *The Bounding Line*, came about during his residency at the Aaron Copland House in Cortlandt Manor, NY, when much of the music for this recording began to take shape. Starting with his original "The Path", a jazz waltz with a constantly shifting center point, Reitan's laid-back introduction gives way to increasing tension, with a darting, rapid-fire right hand, fueled by his stimulating rhythm section. The pianist's "Summer Days" initially has the feeling of a nostalgic, carefree look back in time. But as the theme develops, his turbulent right hand insinuates the flood of activities that accompany the season. His "The Bounding Line" is a twisting post-bop line that constantly shifts direction, burning with energy as Daro and Koba fuel his flight.

One of the additional joys of hearing Reitan is his exploration of works by jazz masters who have been awaiting others to uncover their inner beauty. Composer Earl Zindars, whose songs were championed by legendary pianist Bill Evans, is represented by an original arrangement of the ballad "My Love Is an April Song" (recorded by Evans but otherwise seemingly forgotten). Here the thoughtful arrangement brings out the tune's nuances, a piece deserving of a lyric if it doesn't already have one. Dave Brubeck's "Rising Sun" (a hidden gem from his album *Jazz Impressions of Japan*) could easily serve as a portrait of sunrise anywhere in the world, thanks to Reitan's new perspective. The inclusion of Keith Jarrett's "Love No. 1" is a nice surprise, a tender ballad that shimmers here in the pianist's capable hands. To wrap the session, Reitan plays a brief arrangement of Copland's unjustly obscure "Down a Country Lane", transforming the composer's rural portrait into a viable jazz vehicle.

Greg Reitan's *The Bounding Line* is another important addition to the pianist's discography.

For more info visit [sunnysiderecords.com](http://sunnysiderecords.com). The album release concert is at Dizzy's Club Jul. 23. See Calendar.



**Roll Call**  
Hank Mobley (Blue Note)  
by Jason Gross

Putting aside his tragic life, which included addiction, jail time and early retirement, tenor saxophonist

Hank Mobley (who passed away at age 55 in 1986 and whose 95th birthday we commemorate this month) was undoubtedly one of the leading lights of the bebop movement. After coming up through the ranks in groups led by Max Roach, Horace Silver and Art Blakey, he came into his own through Blue Note in the mid '50s, with a string of promising albums as a leader, then started the '60s with the well-regarded *Soul Station*, leading an all-star quartet of pianist Wynton Kelly, bassist Paul Chambers and Blakey.

First released in the summer of 1961, *Roll Call* (now in stereo, all-analog and mastered from the original tapes and reissued as part of Blue Note's limited edition Tone Poet series on 180gr vinyl) featured the same group plus then-newcomer trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, with almost all tracks composed by the leader. The ten-minute-plus title track starts with a theme that alternates between martial-sounding and jolly, as Mobley breaks out with an extended high-speed rollick before handing off to Hubbard who's similarly brisk. Therein follows a relatively calmer strand by Kelly before climaxing with a thunderous Blakey drum solo. The more low-key "My Groove Your Move" (whose riffs resemble Little Willie John's vocal rendition of "Fever") features the horn players starting a soaring theme before Mobley takes off in easy-going style, followed by a progressively screaming solo from the trumpeter and then more reflective takes from the pianist and bassist before ending with the opening theme. Beginning with a swinging, lithe horn chorus, "Take Your Pick" has the tenor saxophonist channeling a Charlie Parker-like grace as Blakey masterfully thrashes around him, and Hubbard follows again loudly, wildly ending with each member of the rhythm section deftly stepping out on their own. "A Baptist Beat" has a Miles Davis-

## RECOMMENDED NEW RELEASES

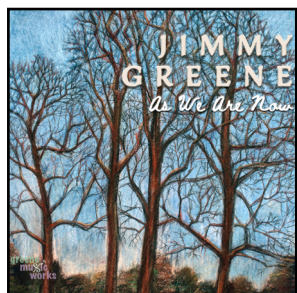
- Brass Danse Orchestra – *La Danse du Temps* (Yolk)
- Michael Dease – *City Life* (Music of Greg Hill) (Origin)
- Robert Dick, Stephan Haluska, James Ilgenfritz – *Time Wants a Skeleton* (Infrequent Seams)
- Agustí Fernandez – *@70: Aesthetic of Prisms*. (Not Two)
- Jordan Glenn's BEAK – *The Party* (Queen Bee)
- Alexander Hawkins – *Song Unconditional* (Intakt)
- Fung Chern Hwei's Fungal Bloom – *Free Fall* (Adhyâropa)
- Keith Jarrett – *New Vienna* (ECM)
- Izumi Kimura/Gerry Hemingway – *How the Dust Falls* (Auricle)
- Ramon Lopez – *40 Springs in Paris* (RogueArt)
- Pete McGuinness Jazz Orchestra – *Mixed Bag* (Summit)
- Gabriele Mitelli – *Three Tsuru Origami: Colapesce* (We Insist!)
- Larry Ochs, Joe Morris, Charles Downs – *Every Day → All the Way* (ESP-Disk')
- Remedy (Thomas Heberer, Joe Fonda, Joe Hertenstein) – *Hipp Hipp Hooray* (Celebrating the Centennial of Jutta Hipp) (Fundacja Słuchaj)
- Sifter – *Flake/Fracture* (Queen Bee)
- Tessa Souter – *Shadows and Silence: The Erik Satie Project* (NOANARA)
- Larry Stabbins/Mark Sanders – *Cup & Ring* (Discus)
- Luke Stewart Still Remembrance Ensemble – *The Order* (Cuneiform)
- Cecilie Strange – *Beech* (April)
- Terry Waldo & The Gotham City Band – *Treasury, Volume 2* (Turtle Bay)



like cool with yet another very catchy horn motif, as the trumpeter testifies on what may be his most raucous solo on the entire album. “The More I See You”, the sole cover (which would also soon become a standard for singers), proceeds at an even more relaxed pace with Mobley, then Hubbard and Kelly, riding out the melody elegantly. The exciting closer, “The Breakdown”, is a joyous romp with a propulsive horn sequence and cheery trumpet solo, ending with back-and-forth solos between Mobley and Hubbard, as Blakey punctuates loudly in between.

While Mobley’s previous album *Soul Station* is much more heralded, *Roll Call* is a hard bop gem as well.

For more info visit [bluenote.com](http://bluenote.com)



*As We Are Now*  
Jimmy Greene (Greene Music Works)  
by Jeff Cebulski

In late 2014, saxophonist Jimmy Greene and the Mack Avenue record label released *Beautiful Life*, a tribute (with contributions from notable friends) to his daughter Ana Grace, a victim of the 2012 Sandy Hook, CT, school massacre, and a remarkable witness of her family’s faith in the midst of unspeakable tragedy. Over a dozen years later, Greene has added another chapter in his musical testimony with his new album *As We Are Now*, a commissioned suite that indicates the saxophonist has retained his faith and vision while navigating the post-tragedy emotional seas. As Greene states in the liner notes, “My emotional path over the past 12 years has not been linear...I tried to reflect that spectrum of emotion in the composition of the various songs...”

Assembling an ensemble of versatile ex-classmates and bandmates—including Aaron Goldberg (piano), Mike Moreno (guitar), Dezron Douglas (bass) and Jonathan Barber (drums)—Greene begins the suite and sets the tone with “Praises”, which provides a jaunty African-American gospel expression augmented by Hammond B-3 organ played by Shedrick Mitchell. In the midst of joy, the leader’s saxophone dances and testifies, while the bassist and drummer percolate. Two songs with Greene’s lyrical soprano playing follow. The compositions suggest a reflection of his life, with a sense of understanding and gratitude. “Seventeen Days”, with guest singer Javier Colon, dwells on Greene’s early career as a performer and father. “Impatient”, a frenetic rendering that is stylistically tied to another song, “Flood Stage”, may represent Wayne Shorter’s influence (the latter is a reworking of his “Pinocchio”). On “Impatient”, Moreno proves up to the task of staying with the saxophonist, who plays with incessant clarity, while “Flood Stage”, likewise, evinces Goldberg’s synchronicity with Greene.

The mid-album trio of “Unburdened”, “As We Are Now” and “Anhelando” is the emotional center. “Unburdened” and “Anhelando” (Spanish for “longing”) represent the leader’s diametrical feelings about his departed daughter. The title song includes snippets of comments from Greene, his wife Nelba Márquez-Greene and their son Isaiah, as they address the tragedy’s aftermath. Moreno’s eloquent solo and Douglas’ robust bass work provide additional dignity. The closer, another paradoxical moment, is the wistful

re-working of Kurt Weill’s “Speak Low”, morphed into an Afro-Cuban dance number fueled by percussionist Gabriel Globus-Hoenich. It’s a final statement for now: Jimmy Greene is living his best life—and playing his best music—without disrespecting the fateful event that won’t fade away soon.

For more info visit [jimmygreene.com](http://jimmygreene.com). Greene is at Smoke Jul. 9-13 at Smoke (part of “The Coltrane Legacy” featuring The Tenor Titans). See Calendar.



*A Common Language*  
Steve Nelson, Joris Teepe, Eric Ineke (Daybreak)  
by George Kanzler

If you frequent jam sessions, or those local ad hoc jazz gigs featuring hastily assembled musicians who may have, or have not, played much together, you’re likely to have heard some of the tunes included on this double album, *A Common Language*. And if your sweet spot for jazz recordings is the later middle-decades of the 20th century, these tunes will certainly be familiar to you. It was indeed a “common language” for jazz musicians then, a lot more than now. That “common language” consists of (mostly) Great American Songbook standards of the pre-rock era, as well as the jazz tunes of the time, which enjoy continuing prevalence among musicians and singers still performing them today. On this album, some of these standards are further informed by their indelible association, and at times transformations or additions, from famous recordings by jazz musicians.

Surprisingly, this is a rather audacious album. Most current musicians tend to emphasize their own compositions on their recordings, which is financially advantageous for them. But the 15 selections here are all standards that will garner no royalties for any of the three musicians—Steve Nelson (vibes), Joris Teepe (bass) and Eric Ineke (drums)—two of whom emerged as outstanding jazz musicians in the ’70s (Teepe appeared later, in the early ’90s). What makes this album outstanding is not the repertoire, per se, but the high degree of creativity the trio brings to the proceedings. Nelson’s vibes are the lead instrument in this unusual trio, and he noticeably trumpets his major influence, Milt “Bags” Jackson, by opening the album with his most famous composition, “Bags’ Groove”. Teepe adds jazz reference depth by quoting in his solo a famous radio theme song of the late bebop/early hard bop era: “Jumpin’ with Symphony Sid”. The trio also reference famous versions of standards, including the Latin vamps of Charlie Parker’s intro and tag of “Star Eyes” and “I’ll Remember April” at the hard bop tempo of the Clifford Brown-Max Roach version.

One of the pleasures of this album is the many variations of group sound through varying tones and timbres: Dutchman Ineke’s mix of brushes and sticks, drumheads and cymbals; countryman (though longtime NY/NJ-based) Teepe’s varied attacks; and Nelson’s two- and four-mallet approaches, all with the main appeal of their concentration on melody. Whether limning them with elan and grace, or improvising with lines developed from their foundations, this is an album where melody reigns supreme.

For more info visit [timelessjazz.com](http://timelessjazz.com) and [stevenelsonvibes.com](http://stevenelsonvibes.com). Nelson is at The Django Jul. 27. See Calendar.

## Blue Note NEW YORK

### UPCOMING SHOWS

JUL 3-6	ROBERT GLASPER
SUN DAYS	THE WORLD FAMOUS HARLEM GOSPEL CHOIR <b>BRUNCH</b>
JUL 7	SERENA BRANCALE
JUL 8-13	THE DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND
JUL 14	KENNETH WHALUM
JUL 15-16	THE NEW MASTERSOUNDS
JUL 17-20	THE BAD PLUS
JUL 21	MATTHEW WHITAKER
JUL 22-27	LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO
JUL 26	MILO Z <b>BRUNCH</b>
JUL 28	J. IVY
JUL 29-31	TALIB KWELI WITH LIVE BAND
AUG 5-6	VICTORY BOYD
AUG 7-10	ISAIAH SHARKEY
AUG 11, 19-26	DIZZY GILLESPIE ALL-STARS & BIG BAND
AUG 12-13	ADAM BLACKSTONE PRESENTS THE LEGACY EXPERIENCE
AUG 14-17	THEO CROKER
AUG 23	PAUL WEST AND BETHUNE BIG BAND <b>BRUNCH</b>
AUG 27-31	ARTURO SANDOVAL

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