

the vocalist's take on the traditional "See-Line Woman" (aka "Sea Lion Woman"), a song closely associated with Nina Simone. Her solution: to take it very uptempo as more an outsider observation than an inside view.

On the whole, *Live at Vic's* is an energized program, its 17 songs showing the many facets of Zuraitis, one of jazz' better singers today.

For more info visit [lareserverecords.com](http://lareserverecords.com). The album release concert is at Drom Sep. 25. See Calendar.



**Alloy**  
Dave Douglas (Greenleaf Music)  
by Jeff Cebulski

For Dave Douglas, the ever-inventive trumpeter and director of the Festival of New Trumpet (FONT) Music, his love of "trumpets blending" led to a first three-trumpet ensemble in 2003. A new version, with Douglas, David Adewumi and Alexandra Ridout, has recorded the just-released *Alloy*, a scintillating survey of jazz styles, harmonically augmented by vibraphonist Patricia Brennan, where the three trumpets manage to signify themselves without overwhelming the other members, like fine New Orleans interplay. As Douglas has said, "It doesn't have to be a high note competition."

The unified result sometimes calls to mind the music of The Westerlies in its chamber-like arrangements. But Douglas' penchant for box-of-chocolate jazz compositions distances *Alloy* from mere comparisons; the music travels from quasi-classical to bop to modal abstraction to spiritual blues, sometimes in the same tune. The ensemble passes the test on "The Illusion of Control", a great title for a collective improvisation by musicians who bathe in synchronicity; the group's keen rapport creates implied structure as Douglas leads and the others follow like mind-readers. The trumpet-leader's affinity for spiritual and other folk tropes shows up here. "Announcement: Vigilance" (the album opener) is led by reverberating horns and vibe sheen, out of which a hymn-like melody emerges before a snare rap from drummer Rudy Royston pronounces a blues statement, with appropriate slurring from Douglas and steady support from bassist Kate Pass. On "Fields", the horns trade single-note expressions that slide into more elongated phrases, almost like Appalachian *a capella* spirituals. Brennan's church-chime addition heralds a gospel-swing interlude that evolves into

a tongue-speaking cacophony. "Standing Watch" bookends the album with another choral pronouncement, this time similar to a funeral stoll where each player has a final word.

On the modal title cut, Douglas' cup-muted pronouncement opens a spirited trade-off with Ridout, followed by a solo passage from each that swings over lovely vibraphone comping. Adewumi then carries on as a lead-in to Royston's solo display. In "The Antidote", chamber themes are eschewed and replaced by solid bop. Douglas, accompanied by a walking line, sets the tone and pace with a fanciful swinging intro that is answered in kind by Ridout as the arrangement settles into a solo/chorus/solo pattern. Adewumi breaks the rhythmic cycle with a deep blues passage bolstered by Pass and Brennan's tandem support, leading to the latter's solo.

On *Alloy*, the chromatic harmony proves that Dave Douglas' instincts are keen, as he and his friends celebrate "trumpets blending" in a show of unification over competition and division.

For more info visit [greenleafmusic.com](http://greenleafmusic.com). The album release concert is at The Jazz Gallery Sep. 5-6 (part of FONT Music). See Calendar.



**Technically Acceptable**  
Ethan Iverson (Blue Note)  
by Andrew Schinder

Pianist Ethan Iverson is also one of modern music's foremost authors, curators and intellectuals. His long-running blog, *Do the Math*, now morphed into Iverson's Substack, *Transitional Technology*, is one of the finest out there and offers valuable jazz insights and information. In addition to having collaborated with frequent bandmate Billy Hart on the drumming legend's just-published autobiography, *Oceans of Time*, Iverson recently released his new album, *Technically Acceptable*. Borrowing from jazz and classical idioms, and utilizing two different sets of accompanying musicians—Thomas Morgan (bass) and Kush Abadey (drums) or Simón Willson (bass) and Vinnie Sperrazza (drums)—the results of the two piano trios taken together are, probably, inevitably, somewhat inconsistent. The highs nevertheless outweigh any lows, resulting in an ultimately successful collection that is certainly much more than its winking title suggests.

Album opener "Conundrum", which Iverson suggests could be the theme song to a game show, is a bright, cheerful ditty, showcasing his virtuosity, but like a flash it ends, clocking in at a mere minute and a half. The bluesy title track with the Morgan/Abadey tandem is a highlight, with a delightfully head-bobbing walking bass line and the pianist having a blast filling in the gaps. With the Willson/Sperrazza trio, the leader plays with time signatures on the more serious (but still interesting) "It's Fine to Decline", which leans into Iverson's avant garde tendencies, even though it ultimately remains grounded in the blues tradition. Two familiar covers provide a climax to this trio portion of the album, starting with the Latin-tinged "Killing Me Softly With His Song", which is perfectly pleasant, but on a program that often leans into intellectualism and complexity, feels out of place (ultimately, this interpretation can't compare to the iconic Roberta Flack or Fugees versions). Conversely, the cover of Thelonious Monk's "'Round Midnight" is stunning. Multi-instrumentalist Rob Schwimmer joins the trio and owns the track on theremin, mimicking an operatic human voice that imbues new emotional depth to a well-wrung standard.



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