



The Order
Silt Remembrance Ensemble (Cuneiform)
Assassinations (for free-jazz quintet)
Luke Stewart (Catalytic Artist)
 by Sophia Valera Heinecke

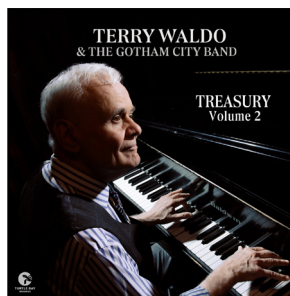
Bassist Luke Stewart—whose C.V. ranges from Irreversible Entanglements (with the late trumpeter Jaimie Branch) and Heroes Are Gang Leaders (with tenor saxophonist James Brandon Lewis), to drummer William Hooker and currently saxophonist David Murray's quartet—is also an estimable leader in his own right, as these two releases reveal.

Nominally led by Stewart, *The Order*, by the Silt Remembrance Ensemble, brings together players from his Remembrance Quintet and Silt Trio, creating continuity with figments and fragments of collective imagination. How the album came to pass was happenstance of place and time, an opportunity seized. The sound interrogates free jazz against liberty, seeming to, as stated by poet No Land on the opening track, “see through matter into the core, molten experience.” We hear it on “River Road” as layering, building, fading with stand-out percussion from Chad Taylor, and from a haunting lead in on “Survive”, invigorated by Jamal Moore on reeds, sustained by the ebb and flow of the bassist. It isn't a live album, but an intentional sequencing of music was arranged in post-production by Stewart to create a new narrative. There is a steadfast

building of energy throughout, something so deep you can't touch the bottom. Many moments let us swim in something visceral. “Commandments” moves the body first to move the heart, inviting listeners to dance, quake, to be involved. On “Lions Den”, the interplay between volume and tone creates an internal to external conversation that evokes looking inside oneself for the past, asking “what do you have to offer?” and “what do you bring to collective action?” as well as “can what you bring adapt to meet the needs of the present flow?”

Individual power is multiplied by collectives. *The Order* is expertly in conversation with *Assassinations (for free jazz quintet)*, a live recording centering the words of essential figures in the global struggle for Black liberation, including contributed poetry by Stewart's contemporary and Irreversible Entanglements bandmate, Camae Ayewa (better known as Moor Mother). *Assassinations* was released to raise funds for the Jericho Movement, an organization amplifying the stories and struggles of political prisoners and POWs inside the US. “What kind of elder would you like to be?” Stewart asks, setting up the delivery of sonic homages for Patrice Lumumba, Malcolm X and Steve Biko. The Malcolm tribute includes electronics from Aquiles Navarro, exemplifying the future that these figures spoke of is now, not speculative. “The aspirations of colonized people everywhere are the same,” Stewart's voice reminds us, quoting Lumumba in the first piece. Throughout the album, instrumental breaks descend into rightful disarray and reorganize around vital texts in each unique movement. “We shall ensure for everyone a station in life befitting human dignity, worthy of his labor...” Janice Lowe's narration echoes Stewart's “worthy,” speaking Biko's words. In the lament of Keir Neuringer's saxophone playing and in the group tapestry of sound woven altogether, Stewart actualizes what Biko understood to be “envisioned self,” focusing towards self-determination, presenting a genuine stylistic fusion from the players invited to perform. The grief that accompanies the brutal theft of these assassinated leaders is palpable. Still, the album is not just an effort in remembering. *Assassinations* is a determined activation to take to heart, full of feeling to recognize the privilege of being alive without forgetting death.

For more info visit cuneiformrecords.com and catalyticsound.com. Stewart is at Owl Music Parlor Sep. 21 (with History Dog) and The Jazz Gallery Sep. 25 (with Yuhuan Su). See Calendar.



Treasury, Volume 2
Terry Waldo & The Gotham City Band (Turtle Bay)
 by Marilyn Lester

Terry Waldo, pianist-composer and historian of early American music, has enough credits to his name to fill many treasury volumes; but this series plans only three. *Treasury, Volume 2* offers 11 tracks of prime ragtime, with The Gotham City Band, which Waldo has been fronting since 1984. Thirteen of his band's regulars appear here, many of whom also sing (as does Waldo), plus two additional guest vocalists.

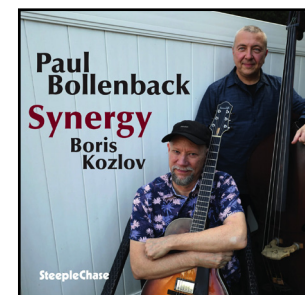
This second volume's bounty, taken from sessions recorded in 2018 and 2022, opens with the power of “Guess Who's in Town” (J. C. Johnson) with vocalist extraordinaire, Veronica Swift, who began her career as a precocious young jazzier and then expanded into a

fusion of rock and modern genres. Her adaptability is front and center on this raggy swinger, as she perfectly replicates the style of 1920s singers. A specialist in classic big band song, vocalist Molly Ryan delivers the happy-making “Get Out and Get Under the Moon” (William Jerome, Larru Shav, Charles Tobias). Her clear, light, girlish tone is uniquely suited to this style of music, creating a transportive effect to the collective of “girl singers” famous back in the day.

For a sampling of Waldo's vocal ability, there's “Smiles” (J. Will Callahan, Lee S. Roberts), opening with his easy pianism and crooning scat, leading into a sharp trumpet solo by Mike Davis before returning to a sweet harmony duet with Arnt Arntzen (vocals, guitar, banjo) taking the top voice in a mildly grainy, yet charming delivery. Others in the unit who sing are fellow banjoist Jerron Paxton, Jim Fryer (trombone) and Brian Nalepka (bass). They can be heard respectively, on the barrelhouse “Wabash Blues” (Fred Meinken, Dave Ringle) and the wildly uptempo “Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down” (Ray Ludwig, Howdy Quicksell); full-bore, hot closer “Viper Mad” (Sidney Bechet, Rousseau Simmons) and the classically raggy “Sweet Sue” (Victor Young, Will J. Harris). Waldo, Paxton and Nalepka make a fine trio on the terrific banjo feature, “The Smiler” (Percu Wenrich).

The leader's piano playing is effectively and wisely presented throughout, but he's also generous in features for his crackerjack sidemen, who also include Colin Hancock (trumpet), Ricky Alexander (clarinet, alto), Evan Arntzen (clarinet), Dan Levinson (tenor), Jay Rattman (bass saxophone), Nick Russo (banjo), Jay Lepley (drums) and Mike Lipskin (piano).

For more info visit turtlebayrecords.com. Waldo is at Arthur's Tavern Thursdays. See Calendar.



Synergy
Paul Bollenback/Boris Kozlov (SteepleChase)
 by Tom Greenland

Synergy, guitarist Paul Bollenback's tenth release as leader/co-leader (this his first on SteepleChase), arrives over a decade after his last album, *Portraits in Space and Time* (Mayimba Music, 2014). Known for his 20-year stint in the late organist Joey DeFrancesco's trio, this pared down duo setting with Russian-American bassist Boris Kozlov brings the guitarist's comprehensive skill set into sharp focus: ten tunes are his, while two are covers.

The sound of a clean-toned guitar and acoustic bass stretched over the length of an album risks monotony: both instruments are limited in their ability to produce dramatic dynamic contrasts. But Bollenback and Kozlov keep things exciting with constantly changing tones and textures. The mood is mostly relaxed, even when the proceedings get complicated, as on “Confrontation”, where the abstract, key-shifting melody is doubled, or on “G Blues in Bb”, an odd 14-bar form with a strange extended turnaround and short, traded solos played in double-time. Bollenback's unfiltered electric guitar tone reveals every nuance of his touch, while his sundry techniques—rapid legato phrases, double-stop passages, swept arpeggios, chord melodies, filled octaves, popped harmonics, bluesy riffs, cross rhythms—add variety.

On tunes such as “Lope”, “After-Thaw-T”, Ellington's “In a Sentimental Mood” and Johnny

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Mandel's "Emily", these techniques are effortlessly linked together via mirrored phrases, and/or transposed shapes, to give the improvisations coherency. Whenever Kozlov and Bollenback trade short solos, the energy escalates, as on "B's Bounce" and "Benny's Vibe", when the trading gets looser and freer as it progresses. The guitarist's bluesy side, present throughout, is especially prominent on "Also", "Vernal", "Jittery Bugs" and "Confrontation". Kozlov mixes it up by toggling plucked and bowed attacks and constantly shifting rhythmic strategies; his solo on "Emily" is short but melodically on-point. Bollenback's acoustic guitar, heard on "Emily", "Vernal" and "Child's Play", is another source of variety, where his touch comes into even sharper relief. The latter tune, a bossa, contains one of his most creative yet cohesive solos, followed by playful guitar and bass exchanges.

A final notable attribute of Bollenback's playing is his adroit balance of melody and chords, whether he's harmonizing the song theme, comping for his own solo (*à la* Barney Kessel) or soloing with chordal passages (*à la* Wes Montgomery). His most interesting comping, on "Emily", "Vernal" and at the end of "Confrontation", occurs in response to Kozlov's improvisations.

For more info visit steplechase.dk. Bollenback is at Jazz Forum (Tarrytown, NY) Sep. 6 (with Mike LeDonne) and DADA Bar Sep. 10 (with Jake Rosenkalt's Guitar Quartet). Kozlov is at Smalls Sep. 18 (with Tatum Greenblatt) and Zinc Bar Sep. 19 (with Mingus Dynasty). See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



The Big Room
Joe Farnsworth (Smoke Sessions)
by Scott Yanow

Joe Farnsworth has been a familiar figure on the jazz scene over the past 30 years, consistently uplifting the music of others with his inventive and swinging drumming. Starting with his 1992 debut recording with tenor saxophonist Junior Cook, he has worked and recorded with such notables as saxophonists Benny Golson, Cecil Payne, George Coleman and Pharoah Sanders, as well as pianists Cedar Walton and Harold Mabern. For the last almost three decades, he's also been the rhythmic drive of the group One For All. Farnsworth has led occasional record dates of his own: *The Big Room* being his fourth for the Smoke Sessions label and tenth overall.

Here the drummer heads an all-star sextet that includes Jeremy Pelt (trumpet), Sarah Hanahan (alto), Joel Ross (vibraphone), Emmet Cohen (piano) and Yasushi Nakamura (bass). A group such as this, which includes three leaders (Pelt, Ross and Cohen) plus a reliable bassist and an up-and-coming altoist, has unlimited potential—and they equal one's high expectations throughout this excellent outing. The unit performs at least one original by each musician, (excepting Nakamura), plus a rendition of the standard "I Fall in Love Too Easily".

The album starts out with Hanahan's blazing "Continuance", which inspires plenty of hot solos. Pelt and Ross are showcased on the latter's ballad "What Am I Waiting For", which precedes the trumpeter's medium-tempo blues "All Said and Done". A bit of a surprise is "The Big Room", a free vibraphone/drums duet improvisation that holds one's interest for its three and a half minutes. The full group swings

hard on "Radical", and Pelt is showcased on a fairly conventional version of "I Fall in Love Too Easily". Cohen's cooking "You Already Know" is filled with passionate solos before the set concludes with the leader's joyful boogaloo "Prime Time".

The Big Room is easily recommended to modern hard bop collectors and fans of all these illustrious players.

For more info visit smokesessionsrecords.com. The album release concert is at Smoke Sep. 3-7. Farnsworth is also at The Django Sep. 25 and Smalls Sep. 29. See Calendar.



Throw It In The Sink
gabby fluke-mogul & Lily Finnegan
(Sonic Transmissions)
by Brad Cohan

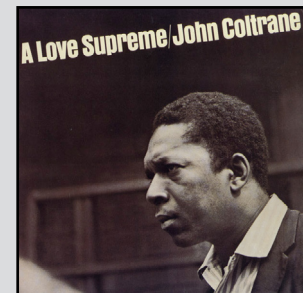
The vibrant experimental and avant garde jazz scenes in NYC and Chicago have birthed a pair of wildly innovative upstarts and cornerstones in Brooklynite violinist gabby fluke-mogul and Chicagoan drummer Lily Finnegan. The two have delivered jolts of immense creativity that have kept the intrigue of profound ideas and sonic possibilities flowing. And within their sound-worlds lies a foundation where collaboration is paramount. A singular solo artist in their own right, with a growing catalog, fluke-mogul has also teamed up on essential recordings alongside Joanna Mattrey, Ivo Perelman, Ava Mendoza and Carolina Pérez. Finnegan, a member of Ken Vandermark's Edition Redux, bashes the drums in hardcore punk group Cucay and is bandleader for the terrific avant jazz ensemble Heat On.

It was only a matter of time before their paths crossed and *Throw It In The Sink* is the dazzling result of their new-found musical cooperative, a first-time meeting and collaboration. And as the fitting title suggests, the duo do, in fact, "throw it in the sink." This meeting of these deep minds is mostly a loose, idiosyncratic and mind-bending hootenanny of sorts. The nine tracks have a cheap tape recorder, lo-fi vibe—a good (and intended) thing—and toss around a stylistic patchwork of harsh noise, free-improv, spoken word, vocal jazz and New Weird America—all cut from a DIY punk rock cloth. The album's notes say as much: "...fluke-mogul and Finnegan give their respects to the queer punk rock and avant jazz musicians of the expansive continuum past, present, future."

Finnegan's peppy marching band beats on "Fragmented Memory" kicks off the album before fluke-mogul joins the fray with spoken recollections of a shared time of joy. "Do you remember?... Do you remember that time?" they ask. The screeches and squawks of violin make the track combust with what sounds like detuned and trashy guitars from the school of Sonic Youth. They are only getting started. Finnegan's skittish and busy punctures and stabs on the drum set on "Alone at the Bar", "Unknown Caller" and "Slow Melt", combined with fluke-mogul's dissonant, rustic twang and nails-on-chalkboard shredding should energize the mosh pit. Let's hope this duo throws it in the sink again, as they recently did just a few months back in a new trio guitarist Bill Orcutt debuted at Bowery Ballroom.

For more info visit sonictransmissionsrecords.bandcamp.com. fluke-mogul is at The Jazz Gallery Sep. 10 (with Aakash Mittal Breathe Ensemble). See Calendar.

DROP THE NEEDLE



A Love Supreme (60th Anniversary Edition)
John Coltrane (Impulse!)
by Bill Meyer

John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* was recorded in December 1964 and released the following month, signaling that it was immediately understood to be significant. This 60th anniversary edition doesn't change much from that impression, which is for the best. As this month marks one year before Coltrane's centennial, if you've been thinking of upgrading your vinyl copy, as the saying goes, "no better time than the present": this limited-edition anniversary diamond clear vinyl pressing will not let you down.

While this epic recording was deemed important upon its 1965 release, people need it even more now amid societal upheaval that's arguably surpassed those of the '60s, which then included an accelerating war in Vietnam and the Civil Rights Movement and struggle coming to a peak. It's pretty clear that people still need to hear the message of *A Love Supreme*: the four-part suite that's a prayer of thanks to a redemptive, consoling God who can be accessed by many paths and creeds. We (still) need to hear what Coltrane's music is saying.

One reason for this album's endurance is in this spiritual impact, which is conveyed by the tone of the leader's tenor saxophone playing, affirmed by the statement and poem that are reproduced inside the gatefold sleeve, and framed by his ensemble's accompaniment. It is a work of peak collective musical skill. Even though it was not credited to the John Coltrane Quartet, unlike other albums of its time with the same personnel, this music is a collective statement made by players at the top of their game. Everything that McCoy Tyner (piano), Jimmy Garrison (bass) and Elvin Jones (drums) play on it models mutual support and absolute respect for the project and each other, forged in the crucible of years of performing together. Every surging rhythm, every exalting chordal flourish or underscoring tone, exemplifies a common intention to use one's talents to make three other people sound their best, as well as to make something for others.

To borrow an objective that Anthony Braxton has been very open about—how Coltrane's example shaped him, set as a creative life goal, this music strives to help humanity. And the extent to which its profile exceeds the musical realm from which it came—there are, after all, a lot of people who don't listen much to jazz, but listen to *A Love Supreme*—it succeeds. Whether you're seeking comfort or trying to get your priorities straight, this album is as necessary now as it was 60 years ago.

For more info visit impulsererecords.com. Coltrane b-day tributes this month include Orrin Evans at World Café Live (Philadelphia, PA) Sep. 10, James Carter at Sistas' Place Sep. 20, "Coltrane Revisited 24th Anniversary" at Birdland Sep. 23-27 (with Jimmy Greene and Wayne Escoffery), Jazzmobile presents "Celebrating John Coltrane" at Marcus Garvey Park Sep. 23 and Franklin Kiermeyer's Scatter The Atoms That Remain at Dizzy's Club Sep. 23. See Calendar.