

as a delightful singer, Payton, who first gained attention on trumpet and flugelhorn, is featured primarily as a keyboardist and arranger, with his horn sprinkled on four of this album's seven pieces. Riggins remains a versatile percussive drummer, supporting conventional and postmodern music alike, with aplomb.

Jazz elements persist: occasionally, Payton, Sonny Rollins-like, will drop quotes from known songs, on both piano and trumpet. The heft of spalding's bass lines, the intricate stickwork of Riggins and the leader's swing stand out, while the assortment of styles attests to the BAM doctrine of mixing popular motifs with intracultural expression. Tributes also rule: the album is bookended by pieces composed by the late pianist Geri Allen, whose music Payton has addressed before. The first, "Unconditional Love", matches the original's languid pace but adds spalding's lilting wordless vocal. The final cut, "Feed the Fire" (a "bonus" track), which electrifies Allen's version with Payton's fuzzy Fender Rhodes leading the charge, sounds like a demo that may promise a more animated trio repeat. A nod to the late Sly Stone occurs on the gospel-funk "#bamisforthechildren", which features a chorus including New Orleans friends Ivan Neville, Erica Falls and Otis McDonald. The remaining selections are all Payton compositions, a few of them repeats: "Ultraviolet", featuring a vocal from Snarky Puppy's Nikki Glaspie; a bouncy, spalding-scatted "Jazz Is a Four-Letter Word" with significant swing; and "Gold Dust Black Magic", a Brazilian-tinged ditty with a spalding-Payton wordless voice duet.

On *Triune*, Nicholas Payton and friends provide a harmonious aside and hat-tip to the broad, contemporary sounds created in the Black milieu, while highlighting his cohorts' extraordinary skills, opening a door to cross-generational appreciation.

For more info visit smokesessionsrecords.com. Payton is at Smoke Oct. 1-5. See Calendar.



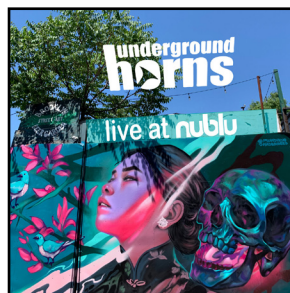
Star Mountain
Otherlands Trio (Stephan Crump, Darius Jones,
Eric McPherson) (Intakt)
by David Cristol

This debut album, *Star Mountain*, by the Otherlands Trio, was born of another, the Borderlands Trio, with pianist Kris Davis, bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Eric McPherson. Crump and McPherson wished to continue their collaboration and so reconvened without their pianist, thus forming the Otherlands Trio with alto saxophonist Darius Jones. Both the bassist and drummer have appeared in small formats on several other albums on the Swiss Intakt label, including Borderlands Trio's three albums, as well as with Mary Halvorson, Ingrid Laubrock, Cory Smythe, David Virelles and Ohad Talmor.

This new trio signals Jones' first appearance on the label and a rare outing outside his own projects. His skewed melodic lines, insubordinate swirls, peremptory and sometimes hoarse sound, free yet compendious playing, aren't this release's only merit. McPherson is also a joy to listen to, never predictable, establishing rhythms only to deconstruct them with the help of his more subdued but unwavering bass accomplice. The spontaneously-created compositions (two long tracks encircling three shorter ones) are credited to all three members and offer original angles

aplenty. The recording is pristine, allowing the listener to appreciate each member's ideas, interactions and changes of pace. The ultimate result, however, feels like the debut that it is—three musicians sizing each other up, working things out between them. It's a cautious approach, without the urgency of Jones' works under his own name or the whole-hearted stretches into the unknown that made the Borderlands Trio so valuable, live and on record. Consequently, the 46 minutes of *Star Mountain* feel too short, leaving this listener longing for more. There's much potential for development, especially of the abstract and textural parts such as the penultimate "Instared" (a mere interlude) or the ending of closer "Imago". Looking forward to the next volume.

For more info visit intaktrec.ch. The album release concert is at The Jazz Gallery Oct. 17. See Calendar.



Live at Nublu
Underground Horns (s/r)
by Elijah Shiffer

As New York's brass band scene has proliferated exponentially over the past decade or so, it has consistently produced some of the most exciting live performance environments the city has to offer. Hearing a band live will never be the same as experiencing it on record, but as shown on *Live at Nublu* by the Underground Horns, proper documentation of a particularly electrifying gig can preserve a high percentage of its magic. Though this album cannot literally replicate the crowded festivities of a brass band show, it comes extremely close.

The New York brass band sound is both instantly recognizable and difficult to describe precisely. It incorporates a vast range of like-minded influences from across space and time, including Ethiopian jazz, Afro-Cuban salsa, New Orleans funk, swing and even the "space jazz" of Sun Ra; all of these genres are essayed characterfully by the Underground Horns. Led by alto saxophonist Welf Dorr, the core group also includes Patrick Adams (trumpet), Justus Heher (trombone), Evan Jaffa (sousaphone), Clemens Grassmann (drums) and Michael Glanzer (percussion). On three of the seven tracks, the ensemble is doubled in size with an expanded version of the Dingonek Street Band, a like-minded group whose stylistic range is similarly omnivorous.

Dorr's clever sextet arrangements (all his own compositions) sound just as big as the larger ones. "The Alchemist" and "Tatato" are the most interesting of these with their slippery, inventive melodies; on the latter, the leader's multiphonics add a quirky avant garde spice to the ensemble sound. Rebirth Brass Band classic "Feel Like Funkin' It Up" showcases soloists from both Underground Horns and Dingonek, including the latter's three trumpeters, with a particularly salacious statement by Thomas Abercrombie.

Live at Nublu is not an album for passive listening; this is music to feel with one's whole body. On every song, the groove makes dancing inevitable. Like the best live shows, this album is guaranteed to stick with the listener for a long time—even after just the first hearing.

For more info visit undergroundhorns.com. The album release concert is at Nublu Oct. 1. See Calendar.

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UPCOMING SHOWS

ROBTOBER VOL.7

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EP. 2 OCT. FRI 3 - SAT 4 - SUN 5
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EP. 3 OCT. WED 8 - THU 9 - FRI 10
ROBERT GLASPER x EMILY KING

EP. 4 OCT. SAT 11 - SUN 12
ROBERT GLASPER x SURPRISE GUEST

EP. 5/6 OCT. WED 15 - THU 16 - FRI 17 - SAT 18 - SUN 19
ROBERT GLASPER 20TH ANNIVERSARY
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EP. 7 OCT. WED 22 - THU 23 - FRI 24
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ISAIAH SHARKEY - JAH! SUNDANCE x BILAL

EP. 8 OCT. SAT 25 - SUN 26
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DERRICK HODGE - JUSTIN TYSON - TAYLOR MCFERRIN

EP. 9 OCT. WED 29 - THU 30
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