



Clone Row
Ches Smith (Otherly Love)
by John Pietaro

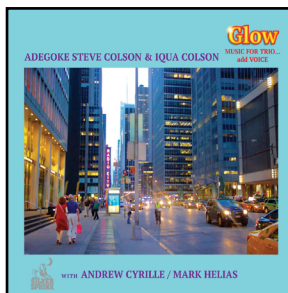
For those raised on rock 'n roll, the word "band" conjures the two guitars-bass-drums configuration notably established by The Beatles and taken to new heights by prog-rock group, King Crimson and its co-founder Robert Fripp. Ches Smith has not identified *Clone Row*, his most compelling recording to date, as an homage to that seminal ensemble, but its qualities certainly make this album a fitting companion.

Album opener, "Ready Beat", speaks volumes in this regard, from throbbing acoustic/electronic drums to the ominous Fripp-like guitar and bass lines, doubled at points by Smith's vibraphone. Even the casual listener should seek to absorb the intricacies, with Mary Halvorson's guitar in the right channel and Liberty Ellman's the left—separate but also forming a wondrous mélange. The tone row concept (a concept explored heavily by Fripp) is heard plainly and then seemingly in retrograde, running over polyrhythms, and colored at all points by splashes, scratches, scrawls and snarls of a whole other kind. By midpoint, Smith's drumming, equal parts melodic and contrapuntal, spins the rage with the muscle and flow of a latter-day Rashied Ali.

The extended intro of "Abrade with Me" offers cool, open-extended chords played in a heterophonic manner, the very close repetitions only hinting at the piece's main body of biting, unpredictable rhythmic turns. Bassist Nick Dunston artfully fills every space of the broken meter with both his instrument and a boiling, sizzling field of electronics. This is a duty shared with the leader throughout the album. The title work exemplifies the use of electronics—at points triggered by Smith's vibraphone—most melodically, while the guitars and bass synthesizer reinvent the tone row concept with each touch. "Town Down", largely unaffected by electronics, sports a bright 10/8 with intertwining modal lines and brilliant fusionist drumming, and "Heart Breakthrough" somehow blends the acoustic and electronic in a highly-listenable manner. When the rhythm section drops out, leaving the space to the guitars, Ellman's garage-rock tone is spaciouly paired with Halvorson's clean, clipped delivery as they trade inventive, inspired statements. The closing piece, "Play Bell (for Nick)" comprises arco bass, vibraphone (both through effects and pure), and wholly percussive sounding guitars flooding into and through electronics.

Is *Clone Row* the future of new, expansive jazz? Quite possibly, but it shouldn't be missed, especially since THIS is the band that King Crimson might have become.

For more info visit otherlylove.net. The album release concert is at Firehouse 12 (New Haven, CT) Oct. 3 and Public Records Oct. 5. See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



Glow: Music for Trio...Add Voice
Adegoke Steve Colson & Iqua Colson
(Silver Sphinx)
by John Sharpe

Pianist Adegoke Steve Colson's *Glow* gathers a lifetime of music into a crisp, modern piano trio setting. Colson calls on two A-list partners—drummer Andrew Cyrille, his longtime collaborator, and bassist Mark Helias, a linchpin of countless adventurous ensembles. His wife and artistic counterpart, vocalist Iqua Colson, adds her burnished, soulful presence to four of the album's seven tracks. A half-century-plus member of Chicago's esteemed AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians), Colson is best known for exploratory projects alongside luminaries such as David Murray, Amiri Baraka and Baikida Carroll. However, listeners expecting abstraction in the spirit of his last recording—*Tones For* (2015), an expansive double set of unaccompanied piano—may be surprised by the tuneful, rhythm-forward program here. Melodic clarity dominates, though flashes of Colson's avant garde instincts emerge, most vividly on "Atrocities", where his piano solo edges toward atonality before resolving with the structural elegance that distinguishes his work throughout.

Helias and Cyrille maintain a buoyant, conversational partnership from the opening "Gelling Comfortable", with its insistent Latin groove. Helias, steadfast yet lyrical, threads supple counterpoint throughout the album, while Cyrille, ever resourceful, shapes textures without calling attention to himself. His shifts in color—switching to cymbals to frame a Helias solo, or building a feature out of rimshots and stick-on-stick dialogue—reveal a master percussionist

in constant motion. "Midnight Samba" finds him subtly pivoting into galloping hi-hat patterns under Helias' improvisation, a detail easily missed yet crucial to the piece's momentum. "For Freddie", written shortly after the passing of trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, brims with suitably bright boppish energy. When she appears, Iqua Colson adapts her dramatic phrasing to the contours of the tunes. Even on "Atrocities" she delivers unsettling lyrics with disarming warmth, her voice enriched by Helias' responsive bass figures. The title track closes the set with striking restraint: Helias' cello-like bowing introduces the aching theme, later carried by Iqua Colson's wordless line, an arrangement suggesting what we might be missing in the larger-scale entries in Colson's catalog that remain under-documented.

Glow stands as both a summation and a revelation: Colson channels his AACM-honed imagination into music that swings, sings and resonates across the full spectrum of jazz history.

For more info visit colsonsmusic.com. The album release concert is at Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church Oct. 10. Adegoke Steve Colson also plays DiMenna Center Oct. 25 (part of AACM-New York's "Piano Series"). See Calendar.




Wild Women Don't Have the Blues (Candid)
Second Thoughts (Benfan)
Nancy Harrow
by Anna Steegmann


Vocalist Nancy Harrow (who turns 95 on Oct. 3) has released 18 albums as a leader, reflecting on an illustrious career as a singer, songwriter and composer, as well as work in musical theater.

Harrow's recently reissued debut album, *Wild Women Don't Have the Blues*, recorded exactly 65 years ago this month and still a standout in her discography, catapulted her to success. Prominent jazz critic Nat Hentoff spotted her at the Five Spot, signed her to the Candid label and produced the album for its 1961 release. The "backing" band of trumpeter Buck Clayton's Jazz Stars was comprised of some of the top jazz artists of the era: Buddy Tate (tenor), Danny Bank (baritone), Tom Gwaltney (clarinet, alto), Dickie Wells (trombone), Kenny Burrell (guitar), Dick Wellstood (piano), Milt Hinton (bass) and Oliver Jackson (drums). This all-star nonet provided a free-swinging, sophisticated sound that complemented her expressive vocal style, distinctive phrasing and emotional subtlety. Her voice, praised for its authenticity and nuance, can be fully appreciated in interpretations of compositions by Duke Ellington ("All Too Soon"), Count Basie ("Take Me Back Baby") and Harold Arlen ("I've Got the World on a String"). The album also includes delightful renditions of "On the Sunny Side of the Street" (Dorothy Fields, Jimmy McHugh) and Kay Swift's "Can't We Be Friends". The title track, the Ida Cox classic from 1924, turns out to be a surprising feminist anthem that has stood the test of time, as has this album, which remains a must-have for fans of vocal jazz.


If Harrow's debut was bold, *Second Thoughts*, in contrast, is more gentle, inward-looking and deeply personal. Her voice and artistry have matured over time. We no longer find a dynamic interaction with an ensemble playing jazz and blues, but rather a more intimate, literary approach that retains its jazz roots. Most of the 11 tracks are originals and duets with pianist Ted Rosenthal (bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Dennis Mackrel appear on two tracks). Rosenthal's




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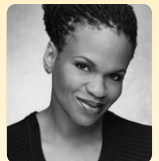


Sunday, October 26th 4:40pm
The Makanda Project
All Saint's Church Park Slope, NY





Sunday, November 9th 4:40pm
Robert Rutledge Quintet
Soapbox Gallery Brooklyn
Robert Rutledge Quintet ignites modern jazz with rich & fearless original grooves



Sunday, December 14th 4:40pm
Gha'il Rhodes Benjamin
Soapbox Gallery Brooklyn
"She Got Burned" award-winning spoken-word artist, poet & educator