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**NOV 7-8**

**CYRO BAPTISTA AT 75:**  
A BANQUET FOR THE SPIRITS

FEAT. TREY ANASTASIO (OF PHISH (11/7) AND CASSANDRA WILSON (11/8)



**NOV 14-15**

**STEVE MILLER**

FEAT. LIL' NATHAN AND THE ZYDECO BIG TIMERS



**NOV 21-22**

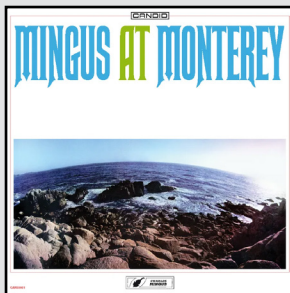
**JOURNEY THROUGH JAZZ:**  
THE MIGHTY NEGRO SPIRITUALS

THE JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA

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## DROP THE NEEDLE



**Mingus at Monterey**  
Charles Mingus (Candid)  
by Fred Bouchard

Picture yourself in a halcyon summer daze at a SoCal coastal resort in 1964, at a mellow outdoor festival with hallowed history, lightly swinging West Coast combos, an airy breeze, a glass of chardonnay, a glowing sunset. Jimmy Lyons, amiable DJ and Monterey Festival godfather, warmly introduces legendary bassist-composer Charles Mingus, who eases into his set with a cozy medley of ballad chestnuts by his idol Duke Ellington (also present at the festival). Mingus soothes “I Got It Bad (And That Ain’t Good)” with pizzicato flourishes as Dannie Richmond (drums) keeps it brush-light. Charles McPherson (alto) coolly lilts “In a Sentimental Mood”; Jaki Byard (piano) tickles “All Too Soon”; Lou Blackburn (trombone) adds a taste on “Mood Indigo” and to close, Mingus chills “Sophisticated Lady” with elegant rococo tremolos.

Suddenly—*bam!* Tempo’s up and heat’s on as Billy Strayhorn’s “Take the A Train” steams into the oak-studded fairgrounds. McPherson wails blithely over horn riffs, Byard prances through his stop-time Fats Waller stride chorus and Lonnie Hillyer launches a kick-ass trumpet solo, channeling Duke alum Rex Stewart. Saxophonist John Handy (tenor), a mainstay on Mingus’ Columbia classics, roars in with delight, a set-up for Richmond to amp the crowd with a storming solo (“Salt Peanuts” asides)

and stomping out-chorus. Then—*wham!* Mingus counts off the garishly titled and extravagantly unfolding “Orange Was the Color of Her Dress, Then Silk Blue”, which churns through layers of smoky melody. McPherson uncoils sensuous lines over Byard’s rhapsodic swirls; a sharp double-time unleashes Hillyer’s hot horn solo, a sexy recap and coda.

Finally—*kapow!* The two-part “Meditations on Integration” finds the leader calling up extra troops in top LA studio men for an orchestral expansion of a sextet piece premiered months before in Europe with Eric Dolphy, who passed away soon after. The main theme—bowed bass and flute over a nervous brass ostinato—gathers force and complexity into a statement on the post-Jim Crow-era politics unfolding across America. Major voices are McPherson’s eloquent alto, Buddy Collette’s searing flute, Byard’s arresting piano and the leader’s pleading, quasi-Sephardic bass. Though sound may be a bit muddy, the experience is indelibly moving and visceral, especially through our 60-year magnifying lens.

Originally released in 1966 on Mingus’ Jazz Workshop imprint, this album—out of print for 40+ years—is newly remastered and once again available, including as a limited edition, crystal clear, 180gr gatefold double-LP. However, meddlers in the Candid Records legacy chopped up the majestic trajectory of Mingus’ 62-minute performance at Monterey, which conceivably should have easily been accommodated over the double-LP. The performances of “Orange Was the Color of Her Dress then Blue Silk”, the two-part “Meditations on Integration” and the “A Train” conclusion of the Ellington medley are each inexplicably split up on more than one vinyl side.

For more info visit [candidrecords.com](http://candidrecords.com). Mingus tribute bands performing this month include Mingus Dynasty at Zinc Bar Nov. 21 and Mingus Orchestra at Birdland Nov. 28-30. See Calendar.



**Solo Be-Bop!**  
Pasquale Grasso (Sony Masterworks)  
by Marilyn Lester

Wrapping up the recording of *Fervency* (Sony Music Masterworks, 2021), virtuosic, Italy-born and NYC-based guitarist Pasquale Grasso had two extra studio days booked, and no fixed plan. What else to do but sit down and let the music flow. What emerged was *Solo Be-Bop!* (which became a precursor for his 2022 trio release, *Be-Bop!* for the same label).

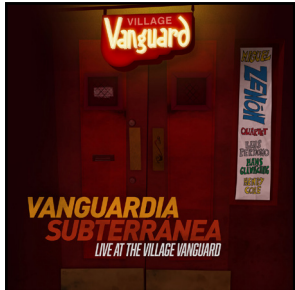
This album is an homage to piano greats that Grasso particularly admires, such as Art Tatum, Thelonious Monk and especially Bud Powell. The unity in its dozen tracks is a feel for the bebop swing ethos, rising from an internal, inherent sense of it, through his fingers in the translation. As to its execution, the guitarist says he aimed to achieve independence between all his fingers, the same ten digits piano masters use to create music over 88 keys. But he is no stranger to transcribing piano

parts. An early influence was the late Barry Harris, whom Grasso studied with. A gentle, gracefully-flowing “Stella by Starlight” offers the perfect opportunity of hearing how piano artistry can be translated to guitar; Grasso emulates left- and right-hand execution flawlessly. One of Grasso’s favorite composers, Tadd Dameron, is addressed in “Sid’s Delight” (1949), taken at a mild swing tempo, with a dominant melodic hand and comping with the other.

Attributed to Dizzy Gillespie, the essentially novelty tune, “Salt Peanuts”, is a cooker, with a repeated call-and-response and vocal repetition of the title within the musical progression. That construct has translated well for interpretations by Powell and Herbie Hancock, who’ve powered through it with fingers flying. Grasso is up to the task; is it possible for human fingers to move that fast plucking guitar strings with such precision and dexterity? Monk’s angular and almost Tatum-esque ballad “Pannonica” is amazingly replicated through the guitar lens, dedicated to Grasso’s mother. Another ballad, Bud Powell’s gentle “Time Waits”, is dedicated by the guitarist to his family in Italy. It captures definitive yet nuanced statements, and is perhaps the album’s most soulful of the many evocative interpretations. The album closer, Powell’s more obscure “Yeheadeadeadee”, is the perfect out-number, jaunty and swingy, putting a satisfying cap on a beautifully-curated album. No regurgitation this, but a reinterpretation of music, *Solo Be-Bop!* is for lovers of guitar, piano and classic

jazz, played with an abundance of heart and a master's skill.

For more info visit [sonymusicmasterworks.com](http://sonymusicmasterworks.com). Grasso is at The Kate (Old Saybrook, CT) Nov. 5, Zinc Bar Nov. 11, Birdland Theater Nov. 12, 26 (with Frank Vignola), Saint Tuesday Nov. 19 and The Django Nov. 20. See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



**Vanguardia Subterránea:**  
**Live at the Village Vanguard**  
**Miguel Zenón Quartet (Miel Music)**  
by Andrew Schinder

What else is there to say about NYC's Village Vanguard? Opened in 1935 by Max Gordon, it has become arguably one of the world's most revered spaces for jazz music, where the list of luminaries who *haven't* played the venue is likely a short one. Live recordings there began in 1957 with albums by tenor saxophonist Stan Getz, then Sonny Rollins, and many greats who have since followed, including John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Betty Carter, et al. It's now time to add Miguel Zenón to that list. The tireless Puerto Rico-born, NYC-based alto saxophonist, whose active gig schedule is impressive even for a modern jazz musician, has successfully blended Latin, bop and modern jazz styles to create a unique sound that is instantly recognizable and entirely pleasurable. After a multi-decade recording career, he has finally released his first live album, and no setting better for such a milestone than the Vanguard stage. Zenón's quartet puts on a clinic in showcasing their distinctive brand of hybrid Latin-inspired jazz.

The quartet—Zenón (alto), Luis Perdomo (piano), Hans Glawischnig (bass), Henry Cole (drums)—performs a combination of reworked standards and originals by the leader. In general, the covers provide the album's temporal crescendos. The version of Willie Colón and Héctor Lavoe's 1973 classic "El Día de Mi Suerte" is thrilling, the rhythm section keeping the drive on, pushing Zenón's alto playing further and further into the stratosphere. "Perdóname", the album closer, is the band's version of the salsa standard, and it is smooth and groovy, evoking imagery of the beauty of Puerto Rico. The originals, on the other hand, tend to focus less on groove exercises (though are still usually quite rhythm-centric) and more on artfulness and nuance. "Vita" was originally written for Zenón's grandmother, and the song perfectly captures the love and tenderness of their relationship. "Dale la Vuelta" finds him improvising over the quartet's experimentation with time signature changes, before building up to a powerful crescendo (which audibly thrilled the live audience). The title track is a fitting tribute to the historic club: at first quiet and almost reverent before building to an arpeggio motif that simply exudes joy.

Ultimately, *Vanguardia Subterránea* is a worthy entry into the *Live at the Village Vanguard* canon.

For more info visit [miguelzenon.com](http://miguelzenon.com). Zenón's Big Band is at The Jazz Gallery Nov. 21-22. He is also at Smalls Nov. 3 (with Ari Hoenig), St. Frances Cabrini Shrine Nov. 9 (with Jason Yeager), Carnegie Hall Nov. 15 (with Dan Tepfer) and Trinity Church Nov. 23 (with Fred Hersch). See Calendar.

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All artists and programs subject to change.

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