



THELONIOUS MONK BREMEN 1965

THELONIOUS MONK piano
CHARLIE ROUSE tenor saxophone
LARRY GALES bass
BEN RILEY drums

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The release of Bremen 1965 finds the legend on his second tour to feature stops in Germany with his seasoned quartet featuring his longtime saxophone foil, Charlie Rouse, along with bassist Larry Gales and drummer Ben Riley. Bremen, Germany was the second stop on the quartet's world tour, which would include much of Europe, Australia, and Japan. The original master tape of the concert at the Sendesaal / Studio F was transferred to high resolution (24/96) files by Radio Bremen technical staff.



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Opening night, second set of Smoke's 15th annual Thelonious Monk Festival (Oct. 8-19)—celebrating its namesake's 108th birthday (Oct. 10)—featured the quartet of **Orrin Evans** (piano), **Melissa Aldana** (tenor), **Robert Hurst** (bass) and **Terri Lyne Carrington** (drums), a tetrad of talent well-prepared to revisit and revive the maestro's legacy. Evans immediately established a playful tone by scrapping the planned opener, remarking, "In the spirit of Monk, I'm gonna change this all up," opting instead for Charles Mingus' "Jump Monk", each musician deconstructing the tune in their own way. "I Want to Be Happy" (Vincent Youmans) sounded more unified, the pianist deriving his long improvisation from a single, short melodic kernel, Hurst lacing his walking lines with smooth syncopations, Carrington wowing the house with decelerating stick bounces that sounded like ricocheting pinballs. Monk's "Bemsha Swing" was taken in 7/4, the old familiar favorite acquiring a new, less familiar aspect. Aldana played an ear-opening solo interpretation of "Ask Me Now" that incorporated spidery arpeggios shaped and shaded with subtle ornamentation and dynamic contrasts. Her solo on the closer, "Well, You Needn't", combined sweeping bends with chain-linked motifs. The pianist left tasteful spaces throughout his solo, which Carrington happily exploited for her own expressions, taking the reins from Evans for an extended soliloquy, driven by her pulsing kick drum before the set concluded with an extended outro vamp.

— Tom Greenland



ALAN NAHIGIAN

Robert Hurst, Melissa Aldana @Smoke

Israeli-American clarinetist **Anat Cohen**'s foursome, Quartetinho, which played its very first gig at Columbia University's Miller Theatre in 2020, recently returned to the venue (Oct. 4) to feature music from its second and latest album, *Bloom* (Anzic). Opening, Cohen summoned the spirits with a mourning, minor melody, cueing the band—Vitor Gonçalves (piano, accordion), Tal Mashiach (bass, guitar), James Shipp (percussion, vibraphone)—to join her on a sensuous 6/8 romp through "The Night Owl". Shipp, switching from vibraphone to an idiosyncratic drumkit that included a Brazilian tamborim and side-mounted bass drum, propelled the group through "Coco Rococo", then a 3/4 version of Thelonious Monk's "Trinkle Tinkle", Gonçalves applying his considerable chops in a supportive, tastefully restrained manner. On his "Paco", Mashiach thumbed a seven-string acoustic guitar, flamenco style, while the rest clapped compás patterns. Gonçalves switched to button accordion on Shipp's "Friends in Every Manner of Conveyance" and Egberto Gismonti's "Lôro", single-handedly generating the force of a roaring locomotive. A cover of the late Hermeto Pascoal's "Suite Pixitotinha", a slow gospel reading of Antonín Dvořák's "Goin' Home" and Maria do Carmo Barbosa de Melo's "Boa Tarde Povo", finished the formal setlist. Cohen then challenged the audience to sing back her clarinet phrases, gradually climbing to the upper register of her instrument, before Gonçalves launched into Pascoal's "Santo Antônio" on button melodica, accompanied by hand percussion as the quartetinho paraded into the aisles.

(TG)

There's jazz and there's jazz-adjacent. The American Voices-produced *Women in Jazz* concert at The Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College (Oct. 8) was decidedly the latter, geared to an older, mature audience. And quite probably, this not-really-jazz outing met expectations just fine. The program did celebrate jazz legends Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Lena Horne and Billie Holiday, via four excellent, if mostly misused vocalists: Lilli Cooper, Maya Days, Hilary Kole and Madeleine Peyroux. The former two singers are Broadway divas, and the latter two jazz, if not jazz-adjacent, vocalists. Even Ryan Keberle's Big Band Living Legacy Project, with pianist Adam Birnbaum, seemed toned down, with arrangements leaning toward pop/Broadway. A band intro of "Blue Skies" and "I Can't Stop Loving You" was primly delightful yet devoid of any swing, despite notable members such as multi-instrumentalist Scott Robinson and trumpeter James Zollar. The format had American Voices director Paul Alexander behind the lectern setting up the first segment (Fitzgerald) and the last (Holiday). Two young presenters gave short intros for Vaughan and Horne. Each legend was represented by four songs, delivered in succession by each singer. It wasn't till Kole performed "Lullaby of Birdland" in the Vaughan segment did any level of swing and jazz rock the room. Kole was game, but the set list skewed heavily to popular music dominated by the Gershwins, which Peyroux also had to contend with (and she did seem off her game). Closer was the quirkily-voiced Days with an uninspired "God Bless the Child".

— Marilyn Lester



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Hilary Kole @The Kaye Playhouse

It seemed like *Groundhog Day*: another promise-of-jazz program with "Busy Being Free: Great Singer-Songwriters of the '60s & '70s" at Merkin Hall (Oct. 11), geared to an older audience, and headlined by one of the most talented, vibrant and thrilling jazz vocalists of today—**Gabrielle Stravelli**. The concert's promotional material promised to deliver "a new perspective" (jazz?) on classic songs such as Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now", Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'", Paul Simon's "The Sound of Silence", and others written by Carole King and James Taylor. Not at all: save for Stravelli, in a disappointing program, Sean Hartley, singer-songwriter and host of Merkin Hall's "Broadway Close Up" series, offered a rehash, dominating the evening with too much narrative and his own bland vocals, sometimes in duet with Stravelli. So why hire a jazz singer who has swing in her bones for a concert that was a far cry from re-imagined? Yet, despite the flaws, Stravelli shone, with an underlay of jazz oozing out of every pore. And what was repetitively pointed out by Hartley, that this era had produced talent that wrote poetic and personal storytelling, allowed an enormous spotlight to shine on her, confirming a rich vocal instrument with amazing range and superior chops as a storyteller, which was worth the price of admission alone. The rhythm section, competent bass guitarist Milo Rosengard and minimalist drummer Dan Acquisto, was completed with the classically trained and oriented music director Jihwan Kim, whose energetic and creative performance revealed a true jazz soul.

(ML)

“The Shape of Jizz to Cum.” Yes, you read that correctly, and, no, there isn’t a trace of insult to Ornette Coleman. Here’s a series of bold, experimental “GayJazz” concerts, founded by avant and out saxophonist **Michael Foster** and guitarist Chuck Roth. Brooklyn’s hip performance space, the LGBTQ lounge Singer’s hosted the series, which featured Foster’s boundless trio The Ghost (Oct. 14). The single-piece set lauded Mr. Coleman beyond any jazz tome. Foster opened by playing his soprano *sans* mouthpiece, blowing pseudo-electronic sounds at a whisper and then shouting nightmare convulsions. Once John Moran (bass) and Joey Sullivan (drums) entered, Foster’s horn was whole, communing through bluesy turns, overblowing, and a rubber tube as arco bass played chords off its bridge. Moran then established a bassline, shades of Coleman’s David Izenzon years, and the trio phased into a blurred *presto* tempo, truly harmolodic, best of the old “new thing.” One imagined hearing “Kaleidoscope” within the tumult, but Foster held back, offering moments of “Solitude” instead. The deep, morbid bass drum tone reinforced Moran’s melodic lines as counterpoint tangoed and the drummer skewered rims and metals, convicted in that Billy Higgins mode. The Ghost’s “leatherdaddy free jazz” is more than an homage to the music’s liberation; it speaks too of Queer rebellion in a time of renewed repression. And expect more: Shape of Jizz is an outgrowth of Foster’s Queer Trash, “a roving series showcasing radical Queer artists engaged in experimental performance.” But what makes both essential is the urgency. — **John Pietaro**

ANNA YATSEVICH



Michael Foster @Singer's

Drummer-percussionist **Ben Perowsky**, when not within a Who’s Who of jazz, pop and the avant, leads the wonderfully vexing, shape-changing Moodswing Orchestra. The latest iteration at Owl Music Parlor (Oct. 9) boasted Dana Lyn (violin), Ilusha Tsinadze (guitar) and Marcus Rojas (tuba), with Perowsky’s drumkit speaking loudest of boundary dissension: two snare drums, a bass drum triggering a tuned electronic bass, floor tom-tom, ride and hi-hat cymbals, plus a central collection of 1½-octave modally tuned bells (mutant Almglocken?) on a table-top, yet another playing surface. His use of this instrument included melodies and traditional agogo bell right-hand patterns with left-handed polyrhythmic lines around the kit. Reimagined compositions, laden with disparate folklore and improvisation, carried the set via a visceral, collective strength. Vietnamese dissident monk Thích Nhất Hanh’s “Love Letters to the Earth” opened; its thick, terra firma bottom grounding the mournful violin melody of ghost notes, immediately recalling the traditional, bowed *dan nhi*. Thelonious Monk’s “Light Blue” was tersely turned inside out, while the gorgeously soaring “Nem Um Talves”, by Brazilian composer Hermeto Pascoal (1936-2025), was realized here in violin, guitar and tuba over percussion flourishes. This vision alleviates any question why Miles Davis, and Perowsky, sought out Pascoal as inspiration. With eyes forward and within the rear-view, Moodswing signals the next phase of new music’s reach. (JP)

Nels Cline occupies a rare perch in American music—a guitar hero fluent in both avant garde and song-based dialects. His work with rock band Wilco has broadened his influence, proving that experimentalism and melody can share the same air. In a more intimate setting than stages he’s occupied with Wilco, Cline’s Consentrik Quartet made a rare appearance (Oct. 1) at Littlefield, an evening of easy camaraderie and focused interplay. Drawing from this year’s self-titled Blue Note album, the group offered two sets of intricately shaped yet open-ended music. The opening free improvisation by the guitarist coaxed harmonics and feedback swells before slipping into the reflective “Inner Wall”. His effects bay functioned as a second instrument, creating organ-like washes, rocket ship bleeps and space-echo trails around saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock’s lucid lines, drummer Tom Rainey’s painterly touch and Chris Lightcap’s grounding bass. The leader’s knack for riffs—compact, singable cells that surfaced and dissolved throughout—anchored the music’s explorations. Laubrock proved the ensemble’s center, binding Cline’s figures to Rainey’s restless pulse. On “Satomi”, there was an exhilarating play of tightening and release, and “Question Marks (The Spot)” delivered a torrid downtown fusion of noise and swing. “Down Close” fluttered with bird-like multiphonics and “Allende” sighed with psychedelic introspection. The band was most alive when it stretched to the edge and then, almost imperceptibly, locked back into a theme—precision meeting the room’s appetite for drift and return. — **Ariella Stok**

SCOTT FRIEDLANDER @TWOOTOOLS



Nels Cline @Littlefield

Walking into Public Records’ sealed sound room on a Sunday night (Oct. 5), was an experience devoted to sound at its most deliberate. The occasion was the release of **Ches Smith’s** *Clone Row* (Otherly Love), framed by two opening sets that felt like portals into the main act’s aesthetic. Brandon Seabrook opened with solo pieces from his 2024 release *Object of Unknown Function* (Pyroclastic), demented baroque etudes for his Jerry Jones 12-string guitar prepared with metal clips. At one point he held a cassette player to the pickups, amplifying a miniature storm. His music seemed to teeter between manic architecture and erasure. Next, Tomeka Reid, Ikue Mori and Craig Taborn’s trio improvisation felt like a living field recording—bubbling electronics, murmuring cello, soft synth vapor—a kind of humanized *musique concrète*. Finally, Smith’s *Clone Row*—with Mary Halvorson and Liberty Ellman (guitars), as well as Nick Dunston (bass)—recreated the album’s channel separation by spreading the guitarists to opposite sides of the stage. The leader, who alternated between drums and vibraphone, launched the EDM-like pulse of “Ready Beat”, the group spiraling into intersecting rhythmic lattices. The music’s rigor became ecstatic: polyrhythms fracturing, tone rows mutating, bass detonations punctuating the swirl. What feels exacting and cerebral on record turned live into something communal and kinetic—an experimental ensemble shaking the room like a club. The head-bobbing crowd responded as if they were at a techno party, which in a way they were: one driven by precision, transcendence and surprise. (AS)

WHAT’S NEWS

The former French Riviera hotel suite of legendary jazz vocalist **Ella Fitzgerald** has been transformed into a luxury apartment. Located at the gateway to Cap d’Antibes, Le Provençal, the three-bedroom apartment (at over 2K square feet) was originally part of Hôtel Provençal, built by architect Lucien Stabile in the mid ’20s for American millionaire Frank Kay Gould. The landmark building and property, since transformed into a luxury residential address, has an illustrious history of hosting royalty and A-list celebrities, including Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Marilyn Monroe. Fitzgerald first stayed at the fashionable Antibes hotel in 1960 for the inaugural Jazz-à-Juan music festival. The apartment’s south-facing rooms offer exquisite views over the landscaped gardens and the Mediterranean, while north-facing bedrooms overlook the towering Alps. The estimated value: over \$9.7 million! For more info visit leprovençal.com.

Applications for the **Queens Arts Fund** (QAF) “New Work Grant” are due by Nov. 18. QAF offers project-based grants to artists, artist collectives and small non-profit organizations based in the Queens borough, which support local production of artwork and cultural programs that highlight, engage and bolster the diverse communities of Queens. Grant requests should range from \$2,500 to \$5,000. QAF grants is a program supported in part by public funds from the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs and Greater New York Arts Development Fund, in partnership with the City Council. For more info visit nyfa.org/awards-grants/queens-arts-fund-new-work-grant.

The 2025 MacArthur Fellows have been announced. Of the 22 new fellows of the prestigious annual award (which includes a no-strings attached \$800K) is pianist-keyboardist-electronicist **Craig Taborn**, who joins past jazz-related musician fellows including Tomeka Reid (2022), Cécile McLorin Salvant (2020), Mary Halvorson (2019) and Tyshawn Sorey (2017). For more info visit macfound.org/programs/awards/fellows and craigtaborn.com.

Brooklyn’s leading arts and media organization, **BRIC**, has been designated as a Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) member, along with four other new CIG members. Founded in 1979, Downtown Brooklyn’s BRIC is the first media and arts organization to join CIG in the prestigious coalition’s 150+ year history. Last month’s two-night BRIC JazzFest presented Adrian Younge, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Endea Owens, Chief Adjuah and Nubya Garcia (the latter was TNYCJR’s Oct. issue Artist Feature). For more info visit bricartsmedia.org.

Thirteen 2025 Jazz Road Artists were announced by **South Arts**. The artists and ensembles are awarded between \$5K - \$15K to develop tours (within the Oct. 2025 – Jul. 2026 time range) for presentation to communities across the country. Organized by the GA-based organization, South Arts (founded in 1975), with support from the Doris Duke Foundation and Mellon Foundation, Jazz Road touring artists include New York locals in Brass Queens, Riley Mulherkar, Simon Mogul and Brooklyn Raga Massive, in addition to Braxton Cook Quartet (CA), Sofia Goodman Trio (TN), Makaya McCraven (IL) and Michael Janish Band (WI). For more info visit southarts.org.

TNYCJR congratulates writer-author (and frequent contributor to this publication) **Scott Yanow**, who recently logged in a milestone: 1,000 liner notes! His first liners were for Mat Marucci’s *Who Do Voo Doo* (1979), followed over a decade later with Chet Baker’s *The Last Great Concert* (Enja, 1990). Liner note highlights in his writing career include those for albums by Tommy Flanagan (*Thelonica*), Stephane Grappelli/Martial Solal (*Happy Reunion*), Herb Geller (*Plays the Al Cohn Songbook*), Patty Waters (*Love Songs*), Clark Terry (Ow) and Paul Bley (*Plays Carla Bley*), gracing such labels as Capri, Pablo, Arbors, Storyville, V.S.O.P., Concord, Naxos, Challenge, Fantasy, Origin, HighNote, SteepleChase, Timeless and many, many others. In addition to writing for TNYCJR, Yanow’s writings have appeared in *DownBeat*, *Jazziz*, *The Syncopated Times*, *The Jazz Rag*, *Jazz Artistry Now* and *AllMusic.com*. His byline has appeared on over 20K album reviews through the years, and he has published books including *The Great Guitarists: The Ultimate Guide*, *The Jazz Singers, Jazz on Record — The First Sixty Years*, and *The All Music Guide To Jazz*. For more info visit scottyanow.com.

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