

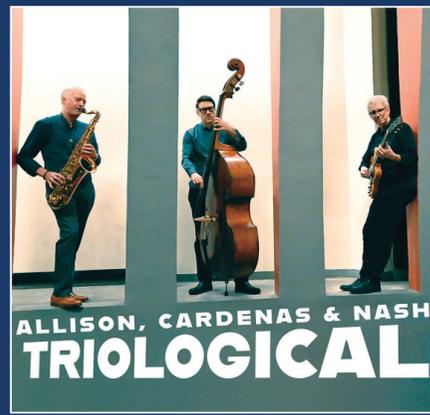
**GARY VERSACE TRIO
THREE TRACK MIND**

WITH FRANÇOIS MOUTIN & RUDY ROYSTON

SSC 1803 / AVAILABLE 4/03/26

@ Mezzrow, April 17-18

Versace has long been admired for his incredible touch on piano, organ, and accordion, appearing alongside tremendous and eclectic collaborators. His playing has adorned the work of artists as diverse as John Scofield, Maria Schneider, John Holtenbeck, and Madeleine Peyroux.



**ALLISON, CARDENAS & NASH
TRIOLOGICAL**

**ALLISON | CARDENAS | NASH
TRIOLOGICAL**

SSC 1811 / AVAILABLE 4/10/26

@ Birdland Theater, April 10-12

For a decade, the trio of Ben Allison, Steve Cardenas, and Ted Nash has coalesced into a singular ensemble highlighting impressive group interplay and creative interpretations of the music of their favorite composers. After years of focusing on the music of others, the drummer-less trio found it the right time to take on the compositions of its members on the new recording, *Triological*.



www.sunnysiderecords.com

People of all stripes of the cultural rainbow came out for **Zakir Hussain Eternal**, a 75th birthday celebration of the late tabla maestro's unvanquished spirit at Carnegie Hall (Mar. 6). His palpable presence—felt in opening remarks by family, seen in backdrop screen photos, heard in vital music-making by collaborators—quite literally uplifted the audience, which sprang to its feet nine times in three hours for standing ovations. The line up included Charles Lloyd's *Kindred Spirits*; a trio with Alam Khan, Vijay Iyer and Nitin Mitta; a quartet of Béla Fleck, Edgar Meyer, Iyer and V. Selvaganesh; Selvaganesh's duo with son, Swaminathan Selvaganesh; Marcus Gilmore's drumkit solo; Meyer's string trio; Hussain's Triveni ensemble and Tabla Choir (featuring seven former students); and an all-star finale directed by Grateful Dead drummer-percussionist Mickey Hart. Among many, some of the brightest highlights were the cross-rhythmic currents flowing at the end of the Khan/Iyer/Nitin set; the percussive wizardry of Fazal Qureshi (tabla) and Anantha R. Krishnan (mridangam) in Triveni's set; and Selvaganesh's kanjira (frame drum) and konnakol (vocal percussion) duet, a universe of rhythms fashioned from only two voices and two tiny hand-drums. True to Hussain's boundary-blind vision, Hindustani, Carnatic, jazz, classical, folk, composed and improvised musics were blurred and blended. Even artists and audience reversed roles in the final moments when the latter improvised a chant to a Bo Diddley beat to honor Hussain's enduring impact. — *Tom Greenland*



V. Selvaganesh, Swaminathan Selvaganesh @Carnegie Hall

Yaniv Taubenhouse not only straddles, but has both feet firmly planted in classical and jazz traditions, the latter most prominent during the Israeli pianist's recent gig (Mar. 4) at Birds, the newish Village venue. Since moving to NYC in 2013, his working trio—with Rick Rosato (bass) and Jerad Lippi (drums)—has three albums under its belt and another on the way. This collective experience was immediately tangible in the group's sympathetic interplay. Taubenhouse is the point man for compositions, melody statements and extended improvisations, but he leads in a manner that relies on active contributions to make it work. Rosato, a lively yet inobtrusive timekeeper, spanned the entire bass neck with slides, hops and leaps in lieu of more common walking patterns. Lippi, a paradigm of economy and taste, seemed to know just where to place an accent, tag or reply—more importantly, he knew where to leave spaces when such touches weren't required. Playing the house Rhodes electric piano, Taubenhouse employed a brisk, supple touch, his hands hovering across the 88 keys like a slow-motion dragonfly combing a pond for insect lunch. His compositions were full of surprises: harmonies rarely resolved to tonic, branching out open-endedly instead, while minor-to-major cadences and distinctively ornamented melodic contours reflected classical influences. The trio's collective spirits lifted with "Onward", swung brightly over Thelonious Monk's "Bye-Ya" and navigated tricky polyrhythms on "Mind Trap", another original, with verve and finesse. (TG)

In the world of tubists, **Bob Stewart** is a legendary superstar. A virtuoso, he has proactively spent decades redefining the tuba's role from a background rhythmic instrument to a versatile solo, melodic voice in what he's dubbed the "Tuba Diaspora." At a packed Roulette, his *Tuba Spectacular* (Mar. 12), in (belated) celebration of his 81st birthday, was a veritable extravaganza. In 3.5 hours, eight different varieties of tuba, plus an array of instruments, including violin, cello, French horn and conch shells (Steve Turre), were played in homage to Stewart, whose career spans almost 150 albums and collaborations with the likes of Taj Mahal, Carla Bley, Arthur Blythe, Howard Johnson, et al. Warming up the audience (and playing the outro) was a Dixieland quintet, playing such standards as "Caravan" and "Down by the Riverside". Remarks were delivered by Stewart and son, violinist Curtis Stewart (performing as a member of PUBLIQuartet), with the bulk of the program devoted to a succession of improvisational ensembles. A fraction of key players included tubists Ben Stapp, Marcus Rojas, Velvet Brown and Jose Davila, playing the music of Stewart, Henry Threadgill, Blythe and more. The large ensemble finale, conducted by Stewart—with seven tubas, strings and brass, piano, drums and two guitars—also featured Charenne Wade, who provided gorgeous vocals to "Sophisticated Lady", "(Night Time) Is the Right Time" and, with all in attendance and onstage joining in, Stevie Wonder's "Happy Birthday". It was all truly a glorious once-in-a-lifetime event. — *Marilyn Lester*



Bob Stewart @Roulette

It's the Savoy Ballroom's centenary and among the many celebrations was *Jazzmobile Sessions - Savoy Ballroom Centennial: Tribute #1* with **Charenne Wade's** tribute to Ella Fitzgerald at Interchurch Center (Mar. 11). The legacy of the Savoy is deep and significant: it was premier in Harlem's so-called Golden Age, the home of drummer Chick Webb—the "King of the Savoy"—and his band, beginning in 1931. It was also the place that introduced Ella to the world, and also made the Lindy Hop famous; plus it was, unlike the tony Cotton Club and other Harlem night spots, integrated. An instrumental opening in the first of two sets, by a rhythm trio plus flute (Yael Acher "KAT" Modiano), paved the way for the main attraction of the evening. Singer, composer, arranger and educator Wade's effortless style and command of a rich vocal tone includes an intuitive feeling for improvisational phrasing and scat that would make her Fitzgerald antecedent proud. She opened with a richly scat-infused "Honeysuckle Rose" (Waller) and as is her wont, encouraged the audience to become interactive and clap along; Wade exudes charm, a friendly spirit that's embracing and elevating—and is invested in having a good time. Her playful deconstruction of the iconic Ella tune, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket", was as delightful as it was creative. The vocalist was joined for several tunes by Brandon Bain, an easy, dapper vocal partner who engaged in a conversational "These Foolish Things (Remind Me of You)" (Strachey, Marvell) and a swinging, uptempo "Blue Skies" (Berlin). (ML)

Tap and jazz have been long-enmeshed with African and African American folk dance evolving into the percussive movement art coming of age by the '30s. Historically marked by the Nicholas Brothers, Gregory Hines and many in between, tap reflects the crackling rim shots of jazz drumming. At National Sawdust (Mar. 8), the unique vision of **Michela Marino Lerman** may be the best capture of tap in its entirety; with precision and authority, Lerman splinters triplets over bar-lines, casting polyrhythms with the ease of a master percussionist. The dancer's Phoenix Collective, co-led by drummer Savannah Harris, reached spectacular heights with original material often reminiscent of Alice Coltrane's dreamlike sojourns, and a fascinating reimagining of Monk, Trane and Bird. Adding to that bounty was a sizzling guest appearance by bassist Christian McBride, plus tenor saxophonist Nicole Glover who augmented the set with a slow-burn of precious long-tones and built, aural detonations. Miki Yamanaka's pumping harmonies and airborne runs were as notoriously post bop as avant garde, while bassist Or Baretel's driving lines and fluttering arabesques spun a network around Harris, the pair producing breathy pulsations and roving downbeats. McBride's "Ballad of the Little Girls Dancing" by McBride (on electric bass) had a warmly funky Chick Corea-like atmosphere, colored with triple-time tap fills. The primarily female-based Phoenix Collective, fronted by Lerman's aerial syncopations, conjured an International Women's Day sure to be remembered. — *John Pietaro*



Michela Marino Lerman @National Sawdust

It poured cats and dogs as winter finally, if momentarily, acquiesced to the calendar. Drenched, listeners filed into Smalls (Mar. 5) as **Phillip Johnston's** quintet stepped onstage. Like many of the city's downtown back-when, Johnston's roots flourished in raw new music. This leader of the Microscopic Septet and Public Servants, which brandished a who's who of the era, electrified both coasts with the music of necessary change. Johnston later focused on film and theatre scores, including works with Art Spiegelman, before relocating to Australia 20 years ago. For the now-rare Manhattan gig, Johnston had Dave Hofstra, first-call bassist among '80s visionaries and a founder of The Waitresses ("Christmas Wrapping" fame), and drummer Richard Dworkin, whose CV boasts the Micros, Alex Chilton and James Chance. Another longtime Johnston ally present was Joe Ruddick, whose blurring, rapid-fire pianistics graced an array of new sounds. Mike Hashim, the seeming traditionalist of the Widespread Depression Orchestra and Judy Carmichael, collided beautifully with the inborn *new* New Thing bubbling onstage. Overall, the quintet offered a mélange of classic post bop, lightly swinging, but barely concealing the free-jazz whirling out of saxophone bells. Brilliance struck early on as the band played Johnston's "I Do Like It Like That", rollicking on a Latin underpinning with Hashim's wide vibrato leaping over strains swimming in Raymond Scott. It was a when we least expected it experience. (JP)

Drummer **Lesley Mok** is usually heard as an experimentalist. So it felt slightly transgressive that the trio at Café Ornithology (Mar. 1)—with Shawn Lovato (bass) and Micah Thomas (piano)—was devoted to standards. That said, the canonical material chosen (Billy Strayhorn's "Take the 'A' Train", Thelonious Monk's "Bye-Ya" and "Round Midnight", etc.) were each pulled apart and reassembled as spare shapes and repeating cells. But that familiarity only emphasized how inside-out the band approached them. Sirens streaked along Bushwick's Broadway, their echoes slipping into the vegan café before dissolving into the trio's quiet concentration. From this listener's perch behind Mok, optimal sight lines revealed the drummer's exceptional fluidity: brushing the snare in small arcs, then smudging the sound at the center, as if shading a drawing. Working with maximum ease, the three introverted temperaments turned inward toward the direction of the music. Thomas summoned lyric warmth, particularly in "Autumn Leaves", before nudging the group outward with a rippling ostinato. Lovato found the inner cavities of each tune, threading bass lines that deepened the harmony without crowding it. Late in the second set, bassist Russell Hall replaced Lovato. His thunderous arco playing expanded the room's dimensions. Thomas answered with ragtime flashes and a gleefully crooked reading of Herbie Nichols' "2300 Skidoo", sliding improbably into the gospel classic "Total Praise" (Richard Smallwood). — *Ariella Stok*



Lesley Mok @Café Ornithology

In a shed behind Singers bar (Mar. 3), the monthly queer jazz residency hosted by musicians Michael Foster and Chuck Roth unfolds with the intimacy of a gathering and the electricity of a happening. Foster's introduction, heavy with playful innuendo around the series title, *The Shape of Jazz to Cum*, set a tone of communal irreverence. Originally billed as a solo set, multi-instrumentalists **Ka Baird** and **Taralie Peterson**, partners in the long-running duo *Spires That in the Sunset Rise*, opened with "Sax Solfa", the former tracing a droning synthesizer figure while the latter's saxophone answered in curling lines. Baird's wordless soprano chanting—half prayer, half spell—floated above the exchange. Peterson moved to cello and Baird to flute, their phrases colliding and building toward an ecstatic friction. The next duo—**gabby fluke-mogul** and **Mari Maurice Rubio** (performing as: more eaze)—sat back-to-back on a wooden box, each with a violin. Beginning with bluegrass shapes pushed through distortion, sustained bow pressure gave way to sibilance. fluke-mogul knocked and rubbed the back of the instrument, while Rubio filtered sound through pedals that bent it like water and rewound it like tape. Out of the thicket of dissonance, Ornette Coleman's "Lonely Woman" briefly surfaced. fluke-mogul began to sing, intoning "I've been afraid wondering what this world would do to me," while Rubio drew her strings nearly to breaking. The set ended in a spray of plucked notes, splintering like a meteor shower. As Foster had put it earlier: "We are here because we love gay people." (AS)

WHAT'S NEWS

Harlem Community Radio, WHCR 90.3 FM, celebrates 40 years of broadcasting as the "Voice of Harlem" with an International Jazz Day concert (Apr. 30) at Aaron Davis Hall at the City College of New York, featuring bassist-vocalist Mimi Jones, pianist Luis Perdomo, drummer-percussionist Bobby Sanabria and pianist Orrin Evans' trio. The event will be one of the final major performances at the venue before it closes for a planned, multi-year renovation. For more info visit eventbrite.com/e/whcr-903-fm.

New Music USA and the Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice recently announced the 2026 **Next Jazz Legacy** cohort (led by Artistic Director Terri Lyne Carrington and funded by the Mellon Foundation) for the program's fifth year advancing jazz inclusivity through intergenerational apprenticeship and mentorship. The seven emerging artists include: saxophonist Alden Hellmuth, trumpeter Allison Phillips, trombonist Siya Charles, pianist Sequoia "REDWOOD" Snyder, bassists Devon Gates and Destiny "Le Queen" Diggs, and drummer Lily Finnegan, each paired with such master bandleaders (for year-long performance apprenticeships) as Allison Miller, Ingrid Jensen, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Jason Moran Sylvie Courvoisier, Braxton Cook and Cmae Ayewa. Additionally, "creative mentors" will offer holistic career support: Andrew Cyrille, Dianne Reeves, Ingrid Laubrock, Marilyn Crispell and others. For more info visit newmusicusa.org/program/next-jazz-legacy.

The **Jazz Gallery (TJG) 2016 Honors Gala** (May 18 at the Cosmopolitan Club) will honor alto saxophonist, EWI player and Sun Ra Arkestra bandleader Marshall Allen (Lifetime Achievement Award); pianist and former Artistic Director for the then-named Kennedy Center, Jason Moran and mezzo-soprano vocalist Alicia Hall Moran (Trailblazer Award); as well as NJPAC President/CEO John Schreiber (Contribution to the Arts Award) and longtime TJG supporters Ken Kimerling/Gammy Miller (Founders Award). For more info visit jazzgallery.org/2026gala.

The street naming of "Eddie Palmieri Way," for the ten-time GRAMMY Award-winning pianist and bandleader, will take place Jul. 8 (1 pm) on 112th Street and Park Avenue. The McCoy Tyner-inspired Palmieri (1936-2025) was the founder of La Perfecta and Harlem River Drive. His music has been and will forever continue to be highly influential in Latin Jazz, salsa and jazz. For more info visit elbarriomusicspeaks.org.

On the last weekend of this month (Apr. 23-25), Bremen, Germany's annual **jazzahead! Festival** and convention, the world's largest jazz industry gathering (20K+ attendees expected this year!), will celebrate its 20 years by showcasing 38 international acts and presenting more than 160 concerts with a particular focus placed on musicians and bands from Sweden (the country is the jazzahead!'s 2026 partner). Additionally, the Deutscher Jazz Preis (German Jazz Prize) awards ceremony will take place on the final day. For more info visit jazzahead.de.

Multi-instrumentalist, composer and music theorist **Anthony Braxton** will receive the 66th Edward MacDowell Medal on Jun. 28 at a medal ceremony (free and open to the public) in Peterborough, NH. The Medal has been awarded annually since 1960 to, as stated on its website: "an individual artist who has made an outstanding contribution to their field." Previous artists who have received the award include Leonard Bernstein, Georgia O'Keefe, Sonny Rollins, Merce Cunningham, Toni Morrison, Art Spiegelman, Gunther Schuller, Kiki Smith, Steve Reich, George Crumb, Lee Friedlander, Willem de Kooning, Edgard Varese, Robert Frost, Aaron Copland and the inaugural awardee, Thornton Wilder. For more info visit maddowell.org.

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