

VLADY BAS (Feb. 2, 1929 – Mar. 15, 2026) The Spain-born multi-instrumentalist, known for his work on alto saxophone and clarinet, and who was especially important to the evolution of jazz in Spain, particularly in the '60s and '70s, died at age 97. He was one of the last surviving members of the 1958 Newport International Youth Band, curated by Marshall Brown, upon the suggestion of festival producer, George Wein, drawing on young jazz musicians from across Europe (their performance was recorded and released on Columbia). Bas had albums on Acción and credits with Jazztet de Madrid, Pepe Nieto, Juan Carlos Calderón, Jayme Marques, Pepe Sánchez and others. A sometime photographer, his work was used on albums by Paul Mauriat, Tamba Trio, Count Basie, Arthur Lyman, Tete Montoliu and a Spanish pressing of Max Roach's *Jazz In 3/4 Time*.

THORSTEN BENKENSTEIN (Jun. 1, 1968 – Mar. 15, 2026) The German trumpeter, a first-call session musician who was primarily known for his work with big bands, died in Hamburg at age 57. At the time of his passing he was the lead trumpet player (since 2005) for the NDR Big Band. Benkenstein was with the Vienna Art Orchestra (1993-2005) and a member of the Pepe Lienhard Band. And though he never recorded as leader, he did record on 75 albums since his early '90s debut with Peter Herbolzheimer, including credits with Thilo Berg, German Jazz Orchestra, Clark Terry, Peter Erskine, George Gruntz, Gene Perla, Mark Helias, The United Jazz+Rock Ensemble (with Wolfgang Dauner and Albert Mangelsdorff), Bob Brookmeyer's New Art Orchestra and others.

TERRY COX (Mar. 13, 1937 – Mar. 19, 2026) Born in High Wycombe (northwest of London), the British drummer passed away at age 89 in Maó, Menorca, Spain, where he'd lived for decades. His early fame was with folk-rock-blues group Pentangle (1967-73), but he'd cut his teeth gigging at the Cadena Club, then joining the Al Fairweather-Sandy Brown band. He was also a member of Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated, and a prolific session musician. Cox had credits with Johnny Hawksworth (the drummer's 1964 recording debut), Ray Warleigh, Harold McNair and Cleo Laine, as well as David Bowie, Elton John, Bee Gees and Charles Aznavour.

JAMES GADSON (Jun. 17, 1939 – Apr. 2, 2026) Born in Kansas City, MO, the prolific session drummer died at age 86 in Los Angeles, where he'd long lived. Although proficient over many genres, his sound was especially sought after on soul, R&B and funk projects. He was particularly noted for his work with Bill Withers as well as extensive collaborations with Quincy Jones, Marvin Gaye and The Temptations. Since his first credits in the late '60s with The Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, Gadson became one of the most recorded drummers in music history. Among his 500+ credits are those with Charles Kynard, Herbie Hancock, John Handy, Blue Mitchell, Sonny Criss, Gene Harris, Johnny Hammond, Patrice Rushen, Willie Bobo, Benny Golson, Herb Alpert/Hugh Masekela, Jimmy Smith, Pharoah Sanders, Roy Ayers, Ramsey Lewis, Nancy Wilson, Stanley Turrentine, Les McCann, Freddie Hubbard, Noel Pointer, Joe Sample, Jon Batiste, Norman Connors, as well as Aretha Franklin, B.B. King, Smokey Robinson, Ray Charles, Donald Fagen and many others.

LARS-OLOF GUSTAVSSON (? – Mar. 21, 2026) Best known as founder of the Silkheart record label (with Keith Knox), Sweden-born Gustavsson died at an unknown but advanced age. He had prior experience in music distribution and established the label in 1985 to focus on improvised music and free jazz. He had spent time in NYC where he developed an interest in the Loft scene and "new jazz." His Silkheart went on to release noteworthy albums by Dennis Gonzalez, Steve Lacy,

Ahmed Abdullah, Charles Brackeen, Kahil El'Zabar, David S. Ware, Charles Gayle, William Hooker, Matthew Shipp, Ernest Dawkins, Roy Campbell, Sirone, Denis Charles, Andrew Cyrille and Steve Swell, among others.

STEVE HOUBEN (Mar. 19, 1950 – Mar. 21, 2026) Born in Liège, Belgium, Houben was noted for his virtuosic playing on alto saxophone and flute (as well as being the father of trumpeter Greg Houben). Mainly a bebop player, he was also noted for contemporary and fusion styles. As an educator, he was a jazz professor at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. Houben was a member of various Belgian jazz collectives and had his own or collaborative albums on a variety of labels including MD, Arpeges, Igloo, Jazz Cats, Timeless, B.Sharp, Ricercar, Big Bang Music, Pylyjazz, Mogno Music and Universal Music France. Credits include Guy Cabay, Chet Baker, Act Big Band, Ali Ryerson, Chris Joris, Gilbert Isben/Cameron Brown, Emil Viklický, Charles Loos and others.

GINO PAOLI (Sep. 23, 1934 – Mar. 24, 2026) Born in Monfalcone, Italy, the singer-songwriter, a foundational figure of the "Genoese School" of Italian music, died in Genoa at age 91. Paoli was essentially a balladeer incorporating jazz elements into his work. Among the now staples of Italian music are his songs "Il cielo in una stanza", "Sapore di sale", "Senza fine" and "Che cosa c'è". Since his 1961 self-titled leader debut (on Ricordi), he has had new millennium collaborative albums on RCA Italy, Durium, Sony and Parco Della Musica. In 2007, he was a member of an Italian jazz supergroup (featuring Enrico Rava, Danilo Rea, Renato Sellani and Roberto Gatto), which recorded *Milestones: Un Incontro In Jazz* for Blue Note Italy. His songs have been recorded by Peggy Lee, Wes Montgomery, Dick Hyman, Joe Pass, Nina Simone, Piet Noordijk, Giovanni Tommaso, Aldo Romano, Giovanni Mirabassi and others.

SEVERI PYYSALO (Dec. 18, 1967 – Apr. 13, 2026) The Finnish vibraphonist-composer gained significant attention at age 16 during the 1984 Pori Jazz festival, which resulted in collaborations with Sarah Vaughan and Paquito D'Rivera. He also composed for major classical ensembles, including the Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Turku Philharmonic. Pyysalo performed and toured with Perko-Pyysalo Poppoo and had his own or collaborative albums on Selecta, Scandia, Storyville, Blue Note/EMI Finland, Abovoice, Footprint, Sony Classical and Svart, with credits that include Anders Jormin, Ken McIntyre/Thierry Bruneau 5tet, Jukka Perko, Thomas Clausen, Klaus Suonsaari, UMO Jazz Orchestra, Jukkis Uotila, Jesper Bodilsen, Niklas Winter, The Five Corners Quintet, Varre Vartiainen and others.

PAUL STOUTHAMER (1959 – Mar. 28, 2026) The jazz and classical cellist, composer and educator died at age 66. He first studied at the Conservatoire de Lille in France and then at the University of Akron (Ohio) as well as Berklee College of Music where he focused on composition, film music and improvisation. Stouthamer's projects were diverse: he had a 12-year tenure as a composer for the Dutch theatre group Griftheater as well as work with the European Jazz and Pop Orchestra in Austria. His creative output included the composition "Four Studies for Soprano or Alto Saxophone" (recorded by Anders Paulsson), and collaborative performances at the Konstakademien in Stockholm. He recorded as leader just once, a new millennium date, *Grif Music* (Cococon) and credits include his 1983 recording debut with Bill Desmond, and dates with Jordi Sabatés, Frans Vermeerssen, Marcel van Vugt, Rajesh Mehta, Arnau Gil and others.

CHIP TAYLOR (Mar. 21, 1940 – Mar. 23, 2026) Born James Wesley Voight in Yonkers, NY, the singer-songwriter died at age 86 after a battle with cancer. He

was the son of professional golfer Elmer Voight and brother of actor Jon Voight. Taylor attempted to follow his father into professional golf, but instead transitioned into the music industry, performing and writing hits such as "Wild Thing" and "Angel of the Morning". His work was recorded by Al Hirt, Peggy Lee, Sarah Vaughan, Sonny Stitt/Bunky Green, Johnny Hodges, Steve Marcus and Nina Simone, among others.

JEAN-PIERRE VIGNOLA (1949 – Mar. 23, 2026) The French producer, who died at age 77, worked on and supervised albums released by Black & Blue (including those by Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Stephane Grappelli, Olivier Franc and Rhoda Scott) and did concert programming for Jazz Club Lionel Hampton, Le Meridien Etoile, Jazz à Vienne, Internationales Jazzfestival Münster and Chicago Blues Festival.

ALFIE WADE JR. (1932 – Feb. 6, 2026) Born in Montreal, Canada, the singer and jazz polymath died at age 93. In Canada he started the first Oscar Peterson fan club, studied piano with Daisy Peterson Sweeney, formed the band the Stablemates and was a pioneering disc jockey and promoter. In the '70s, Wade arrived in Harlem where he was active in community affairs and was a founding member of the *Harlem World* magazine. Eventually settling in Sète, France, he released his first album in 2018, performing with Le Trio Sayj. He was also involved in cultural documentation, including his participation in film projects such as *A Great Day in Paris*. Additionally, he was a cultural liaison for Mercedes Ellington and the NYC-based The Duke Ellington Center for the Arts.

DAN WALL (Sep. 7, 1953 – Apr. 14, 2026) The Atlanta-born pianist, organist, keyboards player and educator died at age 72. His enrollment at Berklee College of Music was made possible by a *DownBeat* Hall of Fame Scholarship. Wall was an Associate Professor of Jazz Piano at Oberlin College and Conservatory from 2001 until his retirement in 2025, but he is perhaps best known for his work with the John Abercrombie Trio. He also had albums on Landslide, Audiophile, Koch Jazz, Enja and Double-Time and credits with Eddie Gomez, Joe Lovano, Kenny Wheeler, Billy Drummond, Buddy DeFranco and Maxine Sullivan.

MIKE WESTBROOK (Mar. 21, 1936 – Apr. 11, 2026) The British pianist-composer and bandleader, recognized for his pioneering large-scale orchestral jazz compositions and big-band leadership, as well as his work as a solo pianist, died at age 90. He initially studied painting before dedicating himself to music, teaching himself to read notation and transitioning from trumpet to piano. He was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (1988) and received an Honorary Doctorate of Music from the University of Plymouth (2004). Westbrook played in various ensembles, including his early sextets, the Mike Westbrook Concert Band and in collaborations with his wife, Kate Westbrook. His bands featured a who's who of UK jazz, including John Surman, Mike Osborne, Harry Miller, Kenny Wheeler, Alan Skidmore, Paul Rutherford, John Marshall and many others. He had albums on Cadillac, RCA Victor, Transatlantic, Original, Polydor, hatHUT, Enja, BGO and Jazzprint, as well as his own label.

BOB ZIEFF (Jun. 4, 1927 – Mar. 26, 2026) The composer-arranger, born in Lynn, MA, died at age 98. At Boston University, he studied harmony, composition and musicology, later applied to composing avant garde works with intricate harmonic structures and unconventional instrumentation. Zieff also wrote for *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* and hosted radio shows in California and Pennsylvania. He had credits with Chet Baker, Gerry Mulligan, Lars Gullin, Dick Wetmore, Anthony Ortega, Jack Nimitz, the Playboy Jazz All-Stars and others.