



Bright Dawn
Harvie S (Origin)
by Pierre Giroux

Few bassists in modern jazz speak with the authority, warmth and emotional candor that Harvie S does. On *Bright Dawn*, he provides a beautifully-measured reminder of why he remains one of the instrument's most eloquent modern voices. This isn't merely a leader date but a carefully-curated ensemble statement, with the bassist and his drummer Matt Wilson as its only constants. Guitarist Peter Bernstein and pianist/Fender Rhodes player Miki Hayama appear in shifting trio and quartet settings, giving the album a subtle but unmistakable structural grace and uncommon balance. That design is essential.

The music transitions smoothly from track to track, and Harvie S knows precisely how to let the evolving textures express themselves. "Ghosts of Havana", one of the three quartet performances, opens the program with a soft Afro-Caribbean undertow, its pulse suggestive rather than explicit. Hayama's Fender Rhodes and Bernstein's versatile guitar playing add color without overwhelming the line, while Harvie S confirms that he is a bassist full of creative twists. The other quartet tracks are

"The Truth" and "Voice in the Sky". The former begins and ends with the bassist's beautifully executed, deeply lyrical arco work. Bernstein and pianist Hayama's contributions add more edge and sharper contours to the performance. For the latter selection, the leader is again center stage, his plucking full-bodied and expressive in a reading that remains in a spacious, almost hymn-like calm. The two outside selections are inspired choices: Bob Dorough's "Devil May Care", heard as a lean guitar trio, features the bassist setting the scene with an extended solo intro that covers the melody before Bernstein swings in with dry wit and seasoned ease. The guitarist's understated playing is even more persuasive for never trying too hard. Harvie S closes things out with a determined, fluid bass line. Chick Corea's "Humpty Dumpty", here in a piano trio guise, includes Hayama capturing its asymmetrical charm with a silky solo. The bassist works hard to keep the number buoyant, never allowing cleverness to turn into calculation.

Throughout, Harvie S' bass is more than just a foundation; it embodies the music's voice: grounded, melodic, rhythmically attentive and deeply sensitive to form and emotion. Wilson listens superbly, Bernstein remains characteristically graceful in his note selection and overall performance, and Hayama offers harmonic elegance of the highest caliber. *Bright Dawn* reveals itself to be a mature, beautifully-paced jazz album. It is lyrical, exploratory and quietly sophisticated, unmistakably the work of a master who continues to deepen his craft.

For more info visit originarts.com. Harvie S is at Smalls May 5 (as leader) and May 15-16 (with Jerry Bergonzi) and Mezzrow May 25 (with Alan Broadbent). See Calendar.



String Theory
Marc Copland (InnerVoiceJazz)
by Ken Dryden

Marc Copland has never been one to stand still during his long, prolific career. Originally a saxophonist, eventually he found his calling as a pianist. His latest release, *String Theory*, is a collaboration with veteran violinist Mark Feldman and two different rhythm sections.

Copland and Feldman share a common link in their work with the late guitarist John Abercrombie and have a similar spirit of adventure, even when playing in unison. The majority of the album's tracks feature the younger rhythm section of two up-and-coming instrumentalists: Felix Hankelhausen (bass) and Jonas Burgwinkel (drums). The centuries-old "Greensleeves" has arguably never been in better hands, as the understated scoring retains its wistful nature and showcases the soloists in a lyrical manner that simulates a soundtrack to a dream. The disguised introduction to Mongo Santamaria's Afro-Cuban masterpiece "Afro Blue" is far more subtle than typical performances, allowing the tension to build with Feldman's abstract lines and Copland's off-center chords, as the rhythm section keeps the groove going while simultaneously

exhibiting freedom. Hankelhausen's intricate solo is an added bonus. The modal masterpiece "Nardis" (written by Miles Davis and/or Bill Evans, depending on your source) has long been a favorite for jazz musicians. Copland's understated introduction disguises the piece well, while the slower than usual tempo along with the sensitive playing of Feldman and Copland's increasingly dramatic solo, are buoyed by the interactive work of the bassist and drummer, who blend together well to bring a new dimension to this oft-recorded classic.

Bassist Drew Gress and the late drummer Anthony Pinciotti (who died from a sudden heart attack in late 2024) are heard with Copland on the album's other three songs. The intense workout of the standard "Alone Together" (Arthur Schwartz) features the terrific interplay of the rhythm section, as each soloist adds intricate variations on its well-known theme. In Copland's brooding "The Sun at the Zenith" (inspired by Jean-Paul Sartre's protest against the French occupation of Algeria), one can almost feel the upheaval and human tragedy in this dramatic instrumental, brought to life by the insight of this talented quartet. Finally, "Like It Never Was", composed by Gress, opens in an unusual way with both violin and bass playing pizzicato in unison, leading into a playful, yet mysterious jazz waltz that keeps shifting in new directions.

For more info visit innervoicjazz.com. Copland is at Mezzrow May 22-23. See Calendar.



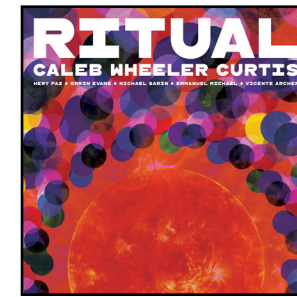
There's A Yearnin' (Music for Winds and Voice)
Jeff Lederer/Mary LaRose (little (i) music)
by George Kanzler

According to Jeff Lederer, "This is large form aspirational music as created by leading composer-improvisers of African American music in the 1960s." For his new album, *There's a Yearnin' (Music for Winds and Voice)*, Lederer contributed new arrangements of works by Ornette Coleman, Oliver Nelson and Eric Dolphy (with one added original Lederer composition) for the Wildebeest Quintet. Anchoring the album are three of the movements of Coleman's "Forms and Sounds", interspersed with works by the others, after opening with the first movement. Coleman recorded this twice with larger wind ensembles, taking improvised solos (on trumpet, not alto) in the middle of each movement. Here, Sara Schoenbeck (bassoon), along with Lederer and Mike McGinnis (clarinets), handle the improvised solos. The winds of the Wildebeest Quintet—Michel Gentile (flute), McGinnis (clarinet), Katie Scheele (oboe), Schoenbeck (bassoon) and Nathan Koci (horn)—interact in a variety of ways within each movement, from serial steps and weaving lines, to ping-ponging notes and tones.

Five of Nelson's compositions, as arranged by Lederer for the wind ensemble, feature Mary LaRose adding wryly enigmatic, original lyrics in a granite-timbered jazz-pop style. Those familiar with the saxophonist-composer's jazz recordings, especially the 1961 classic *Blues and the Abstract Truth*, will recognize stylistic similarities to the works here, which share his strong, blues-rooted penchant for creating strong melodies. Lederer includes a new version of his own "Cruixifiction (not a word)", based on an African American spiritual, as sung by Marian Anderson, which was originally written in 1982 for

string orchestra and saxophone soloist. Here on this recording, it's an emotionally resonant version for the wind quintet, with atmospheric electronics added by Curha (Curtis Hasselbring). The most intriguing selection here is Dolphy's "Woodwind Quintet, mvt 2". Its superb four-and-a-half-plus minutes feature Gentile's airily lyrical flute solo over a diaphanous cushion of winds—a tantalizing glimpse of Dolphy's protean talents, suggesting that a first and third movement might even exist.

For more info visit littlemusic.com. The album release concert is at Brooklyn Music School May 3 (part of Long Play Festival). Lederer is also at Nimnet & George's (Huntington, NY) May 6 (with LIU Big Band), Next Chapter Books (Huntington, NY) May 9, Shapeshifter Lab May 28 (with Lisa Parrott) and Looove Labs Annex May 30 (with Katie Bull). See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



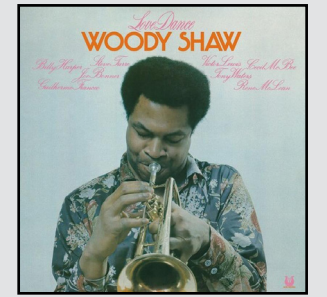
Ritual
Caleb Wheeler Curtis (Chill Tone)
by Thomas Conrad

Chill Tone is a new label that has hit with a splash, musically and sonically. Two examples of the label's noteworthy releases from just last year are saxophonist Noah Preminger's *Ballads* and pianist Julian Shore's *Sub Rosa*. Now there is *Ritual* by Caleb Wheeler Curtis, which gets better every time you hear it. Curtis plays the stritch, a rare straight-bodied variant of the alto saxophone, which helps to give him a distinctive, bright, penetrating sound. The core band on the album has Vicente Archer (bass), Michael Sarin (drums), and exciting new guitarist Emmanuel Michael. Orrin Evans (piano) joins for four tracks and Hery Paz (tenor, flute) for six. On two selections, Curtis switches to soprano and soprano saxophones as well as trumpet. All the change-offs create a recording in which ensemble character shifts, track to track.

But each different iteration of a Curtis band succeeds on its own terms. On the evidence here, he would be a ferocious improviser on any instrument. By choosing the stritch, he puts a keen edge on his lines. His supply of fresh, intelligent ideas seems endlessly renewable. He gravitates toward urgency, but he can communicate passion without playing fast and hard. *Ritual* is an appropriate album title because many tracks feel like ceremonial slow burns. The opener, "Fantasmas", sets the prevailing atmosphere. Curtis introduces the first of his plaintive melodies, in long calls, over Michael's whispered chords. Michael continuously reveals here and throughout the album why there is such a buzz about him on the street. The final song, which is the title track, is the most haunting of the album's rituals. Curtis, on soprano and trumpet, creates a dark blend with Paz' tenor and Michael's guitar. The seven tracks in between contain many more such memorable moments. Evans is concise and beautiful on "You Can't Just Keep the Music", a short duo piece with Curtis. Two more skills possessed by the leader are less common today than instrumental proficiency: he is both an inspired composer and a careful arranger. Curtis writes melodies that stick in your head and assembles each of his ensemble statements into a complete, detailed design.

For more info visit chilltone.com. The album release concert is at Bar Bayeux May 16. See Calendar.

DROP THE NEEDLE



Love Dance
Woody Shaw (Muse-Time Traveler Recordings)
by Andrew Schinder

Trumpet great Woody Shaw (1944-1989), who passed away 37 years ago this month, created some of the finest post-bop music of the last quarter of the 20th century. Yet despite often being called "the last great trumpet innovator," Shaw's artistic peak coincided with the commercial dominance of jazz fusion, which often overwhelmed his more straight-ahead sound. The tragedies that befell the trumpeter (kidney failure, progressive vision loss, the amputation of an arm) ultimately eclipsed his musical output. But a recent reassessment has coincided with a resurgence in popularity of the brilliant acoustic jazz of the '70s, leading to the reissuing of Shaw's forgotten masterpiece, *Love Dance*. Time Traveler Recordings, a new archival label founded by Zev Feldman (aka the "Jazz Detective"), has created a beautiful repackaging of this Muse release. The album sounds fantastic, and the new version includes updated liner notes by jazz critic Bob Blumenthal, in addition to the original liners by historian Dan Morgenstern.

Recorded in late 1975, *Love Dance* finds Shaw in the middle of a string of now-classic leader albums, after a period serving as trusted lieutenant for such masters as Eric Dolphy and Larry Young. The band, like the record's sound, is big, as the leader surrounds himself with friends and frequent collaborators: Steve Turre (trombone, bass trombone), René McLean (soprano, alto), Billy Harper (tenor), Joe Bonner (piano), Cecil McBee (bass), Victor Lewis (drums), Guilherme Franco (percussion) and Tony Waters (congas). Shaw expertly leads the group, catering to each member's strengths while still retaining thematic consistency. Very much a product of its mid-'70s era, the album is nevertheless fundamentally rooted in the post-bop tradition.

Album opener is the Bonner-penned title track and it's a banger. McBee and the percussionists dynamically harmonize into a driving, Latin-inspired groove, with the pianist and brass players trading melodies. The result is exhilarating and at twelve and a half minutes, it's still way too short. "Obsequious" keeps the energy up. Bassist McBee is particularly killer here: solidly in the middle of his prime, he never lets up, daring his bandmates to keep up, while following a blazing Shaw solo with some exceptional improvisational lines of his own. "Sunbath" chills the album out a bit, retreating from the fast tempo of the opening two selections, but offering some groovy, dank funk. The five-track album closes with its lone ballad, Harper's stunningly meditative "Soulfully I Love You (Black Spiritual of Love)". The leader's gripping trumpet solo marries intense power with passionate depth, demonstrating the need for the continued appreciation and adoration of Woody Shaw's music.

For more info visit instagram.com/timetravelerrecordings

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