

UNEARTHED GEM



Live In Tompkins Square Park
Steve Tintweiss and The Purple Why
(INKY DOT MEDIA)
by Daniel A. Brown

In the hit-or-miss spectrum of archival releases, Steve Tintweiss and The Purple Why album scores a certain, vibrant bullseye. Primarily culled from an August 7, 1967 concert on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, *Live In Tompkins Square Park* is a captivating 13-track collection of seminal '60s NYC avant garde jazz. The ensemble is led by bassist Tintweiss (turning 80 this month), who from 1965-1970 performed with such north-star jazz artists as saxophonists Albert Ayler and Frank Wright, pianist Burton Greene and vocalist Patty Waters. He has since continued to enjoy a decades-long career as true-blue carrier of the flame. Here Tintweiss is heard leading a sextet with Jacques Coursil and

James DuBoise (trumpets), Perry Robinson (clarinet), Joel Peskin (tenor, bass clarinet), Randy Kaye (piano, drums) and Laurence Cook (drums).

"Water" finds the ensemble charging in with a chorus of mournful wails and agitated rhythmic shrapnel, discovering then disbanding a whole-tone-flecked motif. "N.E.S.W. Up/Down" burns along on a post-Ornette deranged-bop motif, propelled by the leader's unrelenting walking bass and Cook's locomotive drumming. "Space Rocks" toggles a minor-second theme with textural, ambient playing, eventually reaching a *bona fide* freak-out crescendo. At nearly 11-minutes, the swinging "California Sandra" keeps the slightest thread tethered to the blues, while "Ramona, I Love You" utilizes Tintweiss' ostinato line to nudge and goad the band into similar long-form excursions. A notable asset is the presence of Coursil and Robinson, arguably two of the more intriguing, chops-rich and singular players of the international free music scene.

Sweetening the pot, the album also serves as a historical document, highlighting the shift from the incendiary and terse ESP-Disk'-style playing to the more extended suite-like, exploratory music featured on the eventual bounty of BYG/Actuel releases. Released nearly 60 years after its occurrence, *Live In Tompkins Square Park* is well worth the wait.

For more info visit originalvinylrecords.com/inkydot



Spring
Tierney Sutton/Tamir Hendelman (BFM Jazz)
by Jim Motavalli

When vocalists make duo albums it's generally with a pianist (though the late Sheila Jordan liked to get intimate with bass players). Here, on her 17th album, Tierney Sutton shares the studio with pianist Tamir Hendelman, who she describes as "an encyclopedia of songs," and he bows to no one in swinging hard.

Their duo album's program encompasses and overflows with songs about the spring season, and fortunately the Great American Songbook, as well as Tom Jobim's *oeuvre*. Sutton takes on two of the latter, both classics: "Double Rainbow" and "Waters of March". The first is introduced with vocalese and luminous piano work that segue into a rapturous reading of the lyrics, "rain falling on the roses," and "a robin to announce the season." Singing with Stan Getz on the 1976 *Best of Both Worlds*, vocalist Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda did it faster, but Sutton here offers an equal amount of reverie. "Waters of March", which captures the cascading effects of the heavy rains of March in Rio de Janeiro, has been recorded dozens of times, and Sutton and Hendelman are totally in sync for a bright version that takes a few useful liberties. The two also perform Simon and Garfunkel's evocative song about the departure of a romantic partner in "April, Come She Will", which develops as an effective slow jazz ballad, minus the folk overtones.

The Gershwin's "S Wonderful" isn't actually about spring, but Sutton added a few lyrics to make it fit the theme—and it works; the tune is also a nice

showcase for Hendelman, who puts a touch of stride into his long solo. The pianist proves even more spectacular on "L.O.V.E" (Kaempfert, Gabler). "Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most" (Wolf, Landesman) was definitively recorded in a super-slow version by Betty Carter on her *Inside* album and here the duo does it at a slightly faster tempo, with the lonely poignancy of the lyric still intact. Hoagy Carmichael's "I Get Along Without You Very Well" is similar in feel, with an added dose of self-delusion. "Things Are Swingin'" is a lesser-known 1958 song by a Sutton role model, Peggy Lee, capturing the lightly swaying original (which was written with Jack Marshall). "You Must Believe in Spring", originally Michel Legrand's film melody to *The Young Girls of Rochefort*, is balladry personified.

For more info visit tierneysutton.com. The album release concert is at Smoke Jul. 1-5. See Calendar.



The Wonderful World of Louis Armstrong
Wynton Marsalis/Vince Giordano (Blue Engine)
by Fred Watts

Now that a century has passed since Louis Armstrong's first efforts as a leader were recorded, the jazz community is abuzz with occasions to champion his masterworks. And what better time to celebrate than on his traditionally-celebrated Fourth of July birthday (even though his actual birthday is Aug. 4). Here in NYC, lectures, concerts and radio broadcasts have popped up to celebrate the session that resulted in "Cornet Chop Suey" and Blue Engine, the recording arm

of Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC), has joined in on this celebration with the archival release of *The Wonderful World of Louis Armstrong*. Made during a 2012 run at Dizzy's Club, the album is a collaboration between JALC artistic director/trumpeter Wynton Marsalis (who recently announced that he'll step down from his position there this time next year) and traditional jazz luminary Vince Giordano (bass saxophone, tuba). Marsalis, Giordano and their first-rate band present a set of music that celebrates this important part of American history while, at times, reimagining the musical landscape.

This reimagining manifests in various ways throughout the album, which may catch listeners off guard if they are unfamiliar with Marsalis' musical ethos. A listener looking for an album of pure historical performance will surely be confused by the third chorus of "Hotter Than That", when the rhythm section of Dan Nimmer (piano), Carlos Henriquez (bass) and Ali Jackson (drums) transport the groove from early jazz to hard bop to accompany Victor Goines (clarinet). This hard shift almost feels like a needle drop into the '60s, and despite its jarring effect, it perhaps serves as an allegory. Marsalis has long made comparisons between jazz and democracy, comparing the discourse and debate of policy to being on the bandstand, communicating musical ideas with bandmates, and perhaps not always being in agreement. This shift in texture functions as a fitting parallel to the chaos of contemporary life. Ultimately, on tracks including "Potato Head Blues", "Cornet Chop Suey" or "Heebie Jeebies", these changes in time, feel and orchestration serve to inject a new perspective into these oft-performed numbers. Despite these changes, traditionalists have much to enjoy with this new record. "Savoy Blues", "12th Street Rag" and "Weary Blues" are largely preserved in their stylistic conventions, and the improvisations throughout are captivating.

With the next few years of important centennial dates regarding Armstrong's recordings, *The Wonderful World of Louis Armstrong* provides an ability to reflect on our current moment through these timeless tunes.

For more info visit jazz.org. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis (performing Ellington's Black, Brown and Beige) is at Rose Theater Jul. 13-14. Marsalis tributes are at David Rubenstein Atrium Jul. 12 and Jul. 16. Vince Giordano is at Birdland Mondays and Tuesdays. See Calendar.



Patterns from Nature
Quinsin Nachoff (Whirlwind)
by Ken Waxman

Jazz suites have been composed to celebrate revolution and freedom; depict space exploration; and portray numerous geographical locations from whole countries to city parks. So why not write one interpreting the dynamics of flow and fracture illuminated by physics theory? That's exactly what tenor saxophonist Quinsin Nachoff has done here, using University of Toronto professor Stephen Morris' research into emergent patterns as his base, and collaborating with three filmmakers for a distinctive multi-media presentation. *Patterns from Nature* is its audio portion, but the effectiveness of the music by the Torontonian turned New Yorker and its interpretation by soloists François Houle (clarinet), Ryan Keberle (trombone), Matt

Mitchell (piano), Carlo De Rosa (bass), Satoshi Takeishi (percussion), and Nachoff himself, means the music can be appreciated on its own.

Coupled with a performance of "Winding Tessellations", Nachoff's three-part saxophone concerto, and aided by contributions throughout from the Molinari String Quartet, plus a five-member orchestral ensemble, the complete program substantiates the saxophonist's talent as composer and improviser. One of the complements here is that the musicians—including most in the formal ensemble—are as cognizant of freeform extemporization as formal education. This means that even precise interjections into the compositional flow, by the likes of John Clark (French horn), Sara Schoenbeck (bassoon) and members of the string quartet come with a profound understanding of multiple musical forms. On "Cracks", for instance, Houle's peeping clarion cries curl and whirl as they extend variations in counterpoint to De Rosa's string stops and clenched swells, as fluid harmonies from the other strings vibrate around them. Eventually, all work up to a rolling crescendo when horn vamps and kettle-drum-like smacks are added. Percussion reverberations are more prominent on "Flow" as Takeishi's gong pealing and idiophone shakes and pings cut through the strings' buzzing undulations at the same time as one violinist's lyrical string stretching adds needed emotion. More singularly arrives during "Convergence", the bouncy mid-section of the saxophone concerto, as Nachoff's pressurized reed and overblowing emphasize each note of the scale; as he vibrates pitches up and down, he's seconded the low-pitched splutters of bassoon and French horn.

A complete audio and visual wrap around may produce another *Patterns from Nature* involvement,

but there are plenty of moods and colors that can be appreciated from this recording experience alone.

For more info visit whirlwindrecordings.com. Nachoff is at Dizzy's Club Jul. 13 (with the Miggy Augmented Orchestra). See Calendar.



Triological
Ben Allison, Steve Cardenas, Ted Nash (Sunnyside)
by George Kanzler

After a decade, and four albums celebrating Broadway, pop and jazz composers, the trio of Ben Allison (bass), Steve Cardenas (guitar) and Ted Nash (reeds) presents their first collection of originals. *Triological* proves that in their ten years together—Allison and Nash have collaborated since they were founding members of New York's Jazz Composers Collective (1992-2005)—the three have achieved a superb rapport that is both delicately intricate and full-bore swinging, and all without a drummer. The trio was originally inspired by the model of multi-reedman Jimmy Giuffrè's drummer-less trios of the '50s, although here, with Nash playing tenor on eight of the ten tracks, another group from that era comes to mind, namely tenor saxophonist Lucky Thompson's trio (with guitarist Skeeter Best and

bassist Oscar Pettiford).

The three musicians here bring distinctive ideas and styles to their compositions. Allison, who contributes four tracks, plays a Hofner electric bass on three of them, meshing like a second guitar with Cardenas. His work has a cinematic cast: "See Forever" is inspired by Henry Mancini, while "Fellas with Umbrellas" (a contrafact of bassist and Giuffrè alum Steve Swallow's "Ladies in Mercedes") is indebted to Michel Legrand. The slow, rhythmically simmering "Milton" brings out Nash's most lyrical tenor crooning. And Allison's reflective "Peace Out There" features Nash's clarinet delivering lush glissandi over a cushion of guitar and Hofner bass riffs and chords. Cardenas contributes a gossamer ballad, "By Heart", as well as swingers in 5/4 and Kansas City swing in 4/4. Nash is the most adventurous composer, with three tracks reworking or inspired by jazz icons: "Burnt Toast and Avocado" finds him playing clarinet in Ornette Coleman's orbit; "For Bill" brings swing momentum to a take on pianist Bill Evans' "Time Remembered"; "Ida's Spoons" (a contrafact of "Stella by Starlight") is Lennie Tristano-like, its intricate ensemble lines and steady, bass-led swing, *sui generis* Tristano.

Triological adds up to this album not only being the latest, but also the best, from a trio that has been developing a balanced, intricate musical kinship akin to a classical string quartet. And although his sound on tenor is out of the Four Brothers style rather than Lucky Thompson's Coleman Hawkins-derived approach, Nash here meshes exquisitely with guitar and bass as Thompson did back in the middle of the last century.

For more info visit sunnysiderecords.com. The album release concert is at Dizzy's Club Jul. 10-12. See Calendar.

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