



Dear Mr. Bennett
PS Mr. Bennett
John Pizzarelli (Green Hill)
by George Kanzler

While the album *Dear Mr. Bennett* has been out for a few months, guitarist-singer John Pizzarelli has just added the EP *PS Mr. Bennett*, with five more tracks celebrating the music of Tony Bennett (1926-2023) in commemoration of the seminal jazz-pop singer's centennial. The recordings also celebrate the disappearing tradition of the singer-instrumentalist jazz trio that Pizzarelli is an exemplar of.

Famously popularized by Nat King Cole and more recently Diana Krall, here Pizzarelli celebrates that same piano, guitar and bass trio format. And like Cole's, this trio features an exceptional pianist, Isaiah J. Thompson, as well as topnotch bassist Mike Karn. The music covers a wide range of Bennett's career, from his earliest big hits to his iconic signature songs. But Pizzarelli and Bennett differ as singers: akin to boxing, they are like Sugar Ray Robinson (Pizzarelli) opposed to Rocky Graziano; or, in dancing, Fred Astaire opposed to Gene Kelly (Bennett). Bennett was dramatic, almost operatic, while Pizzarelli is breezy, almost vocally diffident at times. That said, Pizzarelli honors Bennett well, even singing many of the songs largely over piano accompaniment, as the honoree did.

88.3 FM

WBGO

NEW PROGRAMS

WBGO.ORG

MON 6AM-8AM

HARD BOP CAFE

WITH MONIFA BROWN

WED 6AM-8AM
SAT 10PM-1AM

NEW STANDARDS

WITH PAUL CAVALCONTE

THU & FRI 8PM-12AM

WITH SHEILA ANDERSON & ANILOA RIVERA

THE NIGHT BYRDS

MON/TUES/WED 8PM-12AM

WITH JOHN PIZZARELLI & JESSICA MOLASKEY

RADIO DELUXE

SAT 7AM-8AM
SUN 7PM-8PM

NO REGRETS

WITH WILLARD JENKINS AND RHONDA HAMILTON

SAT 6PM-7PM
SUN 10PM-11PM

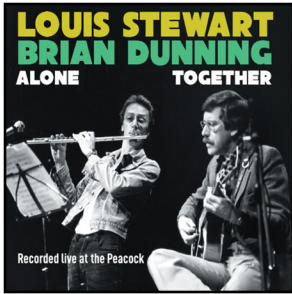
WEEKEND JAZZ OVERNIGHT

WITH SHEILA ANDERSON

The *Dear Mr. Bennett* album covers many of his career highlights, from the singer's first number one hit song, "Because of You" (1951), to his most iconic signature song, "I Left My Heart in San Francisco", which stayed on the Billboard album charts for almost three full years. And Bennett's famous collaborations with pianist Bill Evans are fondly remembered with Evans' own "Waltz for Debby", presented solo by Pizzarelli, singing with his own guitar; and "Young and Foolish", sung over piano and bass. The album also features a tour-de-force for the trio in Duke Ellington's 1931 toe-tapper, "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)", with Pizzarelli's scatting along to his guitar solos and trading with Thompson's swinging fours. Also featured are a quartet of Cy Coleman-Carolyn Leigh songs. Not to miss is Bennett's tango hit, "The Boulevard of Broken Dreams".

Duke Ellington, an idol of Bennett, who mentored the young singer and encouraged his painting talents, shows up again on *PS Mr. Bennett*, with "In My Solitude", Pizzarelli incorporating stop-time breaks into it. The EP also features Bennett's rare, self-penned hit, "Making That Love Scene", as well as the title song from his 1963 hit album *I Wanna Be Around*, penned by Johnny Mercer expressly for Bennett. The EP closes with Pizzarelli's guitar in an instrumental of "We'll Be Together Again", coupled with a vocal of "The Touch of Your Lips", adding Karn's bass.

For more info visit greenhillmusic.com. The albums release concert is at Birdland Aug. 4-8. See Calendar.



Alone Together
Louis Stewart/Brian Dunning (Livia)
by Ken Dryden

Irish guitarist Louis Stewart (1944-2016) is an overlooked artist among US jazz fans, simply because he did most of his performing and recording in the UK. But during his long career, Stewart (whose ten-year deathaversary is this month) made many important recordings as a leader, along with being a sideman for such names as Benny Goodman, Clark Terry, George Shearing and Ronnie Scott. This live concert duo, with flute player (and fellow Irishman) Brian Dunning, recorded in 1979 at Dublin's Peacock Theatre, showcases their incredible chops, deep knowledge of a wide range of music and their ability to anticipate each other's path on the bandstand.

The set list is a blend of standards, bossa nova and classic jazz tunes. Although guitar-flute duos are rarely heard in jazz, their mastery of this instrumentation reveals the freedom available without having additional players. Stewart is hardly playing background to Dunning's inspired improvisations, as his lines are just as unpredictable, starting with a dazzling rendition of the chestnut "There Will Never Be Another You". Their lyrical, lighthearted exploration of Chick Corea's "Windows" suggests a sunny spring day with birds singing. Their improvised "Definitely Doctored" gets its name from having part of its introduction edited out during production, though the communication is so tight it actually gives the impression of being a composed work. Joe Henderson's "Inner Urge" is a favorite of saxophonists, and here Stewart and Dunning reshape the piece to fit their approach without losing any of its furious sound, as they negotiate its many twists with some of this album's most dazzling playing.

"Alone Together" has long been a favorite standard of jazz instrumentalists; Stewart sets it up with a long introduction before Dunning joins him, breaking new ground versus simply rehashing more familiar approaches. Even a demanding song like Charlie Parker's rapid-fire "Donna Lee", a contrafact of "(Back Home Again in) Indiana", presents little challenge to the two masters who work in playful quotes as they go. The two studio bonus tracks are also enjoyable. The offbeat setting of "Someday My Prince Will Come" plays around the edges of its theme, emphasizing the joy within this standard, while their spirited rendition of Wes Montgomery's "West Coast Blues" adds an unnamed bassist.

The revival of the Livia record label has given jazz guitar fans another opportunity to learn more about Louis Stewart. This is but one of his numerous and memorable sessions, which the Irish label has released.

For more info visit liviarecords.com



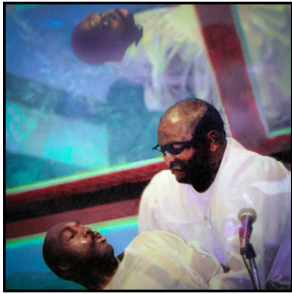
Organ Monk Sings (Introducing Ms. Raina)
Gregory Lewis (Sunnyside)
by John Pietaro

Gregory Lewis developed the *nom de bop* "Organ Monk" as a mission to prove just how hip the work of the great jazz conceptualist could sound on a Hammond organ. Thelonious Monk, born of the same movement that begat Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Max Roach, looked beyond the advancements of modern jazz toward a modernist jazz previously unimagined: he foresaw abstract expressionism in the music decades before Ornette Coleman's 5-Spot premier. And his compositions, in Lewis' hands, ring authentically as the advanced harmonies become sonic alarm bells over thrashing basslines and crashing melodic weaponry. With the addition of vocalist Raina Welch, Lewis and company beautifully capture even the unsung, painfully beautiful qualities inherent in anything Monk put to manuscript paper.

One of Monk's most perfect ballads, "Ruby, My Dear" features a vocal melody reminiscent of Betty Carter. Lewis' Hammond playing is at a whisper, and Jerry Weldon's tenor floats just overhead. This is an utterly classic rendition of a classic. And this perhaps goes double for "Round Midnight", the effect of which is a late-night session back when after-hours clubs were essential to the city and the music's growth. Welch's full, evocative, emotive alto brings something very special to this standard. She appears to conjure Carmen McRae with echoes of Sarah Vaughan through each melodic turn, calling on the darkness in that once smoke-filled lounge. And Lewis' breathless solo midway through exudes brilliance, mastery that exposes the weaknesses in far too many who've come before him. This band swings and soars too, with drummer Nasheet Waits' dance over skins and cymbal-driving with his unique command and, as needed, absolute discipline. "Well, You Needn't" is another highlight, its clipped midtempo groove, its swinging vocal, and an all too brief solo by Weldon (his cool, light tone seems inspired by Lester Young, who, too, foresaw the music's next phase). "Straight, No Chaser" is another memorable version of the tune, with Welch managing to breathe even as she sings through the rapid-fire lyric *à la* Annie Ross. The instrumental

"Off Minor" features Waits' melodic drumming, and his traded 8s in "Rhythm-a-Ning", coming off a brisk uptempo Welch vocal, carries the ears directly to the Minton's Playhouse of an earlier, now lost day.

For more info visit sunnysiderecords.com. Lewis is at DADA Aug. 8, Hudson River Park Aug. 15 (part of Blues BBQ Festival), Midnight Blue Aug. 22, Arthur's Tavern Aug. 31, and American Legion Post 398 Sundays (with Harlem Groove Band). See Calendar.



(Beautifulism) Sweet Surrender
Marquis Hill
(Black Unlimited Music Group/Big Shoulders)
by Andrew Schinder

Trumpeter Marquis Hill surveys many facets of the jazz idiom with his new EP, *(Beautifulism) Sweet Surrender*, a study of his explorations in straight-head jazz, hip-hop, R&B, soul and gospel. Despite the relative brevity of the EP, it still seamlessly blends all of this musical diversity into the release.

Here Hill surrounds himself with fellow iconoclastic Chicagoans: Junius Paul (bass) and Makaya McCraven (drums), plus Marcus Gilmore as well as Juan Pastor and Justin Brown (and, on one track, Hill himself) taking turns on percussion. Paul holds it down on every track, with a variety of guest stars making appearances. The downside to the scale and musical range of the release is that it, ironically, has the effect of diminishing the showcase of Hill's own talents on the horn. Thus, listeners looking for a standard jazz release where leaders demonstrate instrumental virtuosity over, or with, a "backing" group, may want to look elsewhere for more suitable Hill showcases (of which there are many, dating back to his 2011 leader debut). This EP is nonetheless an exciting expression of jazz and jazz-adjacent, musical forward-thinking and represents another facet of Hill's talent and concept.

Young alto star Immanuel Wilkins and vocalist Amyna Love take the lead on "Water (Feelings, Emotions)", with Gilmore and Paul providing heavy rhythm. Love emotes beautifully, harmonizing with backup vocalist Manessah. Wilkins takes a more restrained approach, downplaying his typical saxophonic acrobatics, with a Wilkins/Hill duet emphasizing soul over technique. The title track is an affecting, expressive R&B ballad featuring Atlanta-based vocalist Zacchae'us Paul, harmonizing with Manessah's backup vocals. This selection is mostly electronics-based, with the leader pulling triple duty on trumpet, keys and percussion (Pastor contributes percussion, with Matt Gold on guitar). The purely instrumental "Blues" is based on a killer, overdubbed guitar blues riff provided by Gold; Hill's studio-manipulated trumpet takes the place of any vocals. The twin tracks "Free #1A" and "Free #1B" have Hill playing in his hip-hop sandbox. Authoritative, Queens-based, jazz-inspired rapper Kumbaya takes the mic on the former track, and she is commanding and imposing. On the latter, Cisco Swank has a more laid-back yet still commanding delivery, with Hill providing strong brass interludes between verses.

For more info visit marquishill.com. Hill is at Village Vanguard Aug. 1 (with Makaya McCraven) and Marcus Garvey Park Aug. 28 (part of Charlie Parker Jazz Festival, presented by Summerstage). See Calendar.

DROP THE NEEDLE



The Complete 'Round About Midnight
at the Café Bohemia
Kenny Dorham (Blue Note Tone Poet)
by Tom Greenland

McKinley Howard (aka Kenny) Dorham's classic *The Complete 'Round About Midnight at the Café Bohemia* sessions is now available for the first time as a 3-LP, all-analog, 180g high-grade vinyl edition on Blue Note's Tone Poet series, pressed directly from recording engineer Rudy Van Gelder's original on-site masters. A 2-CD set of this historic night was released in 2002, but vinylphiles wanting the whole shebang were previously obliged to locate used copies of each of the three volumes, the second and third only available on a 1984 Japanese release. But this music, recorded live over four sets 70 years ago on May 31, 1956, in the basement of 15 Barrow St., is a vital time capsule documenting the tentative flowering of what would later be codified as hard bop.

As a trumpeter-composer-arranger, Dorham (born 102 years ago this month) was always more of a musicians' musician than a popular favorite. He'd worked in Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker's bands and was a founding member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, soon to get the call to replace the late Clifford Brown in Max Roach's group. Here, he was in between jobs, and this was a chance to show his stuff as a leader. He brought his working band—J.R. Monterose (tenor), Bobby Timmons (piano), Sam Jones (bass), Arthur Edgehill (drums) and special guest Kenny Burrell (guitar). It was the second live recording



Took So Long
Nat Adderley Jr. (NAJ)
by Scott Yanow

The answer to this album's title is: "It sure did!" After a full career in music, Nat Adderley Jr., at 70, has finally recorded his first jazz album as a leader. The pianist-keyboardist is the son of cornetist Nat Adderley Sr. and the nephew of altoist Julian "Cannonball" Adderley. While he was a guest on a few of his famous relatives' records during 1970-76, it was mostly as a singer. He did appear as a jazz keyboardist on a few albums through the years by Dwight Andrews, Gloria Lynne and Jay Hoggard, but he has spent most of his career playing R&B and pop music, including with Luther Vandross from 1981-2003.

Nat Adderley Jr.'s credible jazz playing on *Took So Long* is a bit of a revelation. Sticking to acoustic piano, he sounds like a veteran, modern mainstream player who has been performing in jazz trios for years, rather

ever made at the venue (after Blakey's in November 1955), but Van Gelder's precocious skill makes you feel like you're seated at a stage-side table. Dorham, highly adept, artful, yet never a show-off, prepared what was an appealing selection and sequencing of repertoire, enhanced by light but effective arrangements to preserve variety and spontaneity.

There are up-tempo burners: "Monaco", "Mexico City" (a contrafact of Bud Powell's "Tempus Fugue-it"), "Hill's Edge" (a contrafact of "Tune Up", attributed to Miles Davis) and Thelonious Monk's "The Theme" (here titled "N.Y. Theme" and attributed to Dorham). There are blues: Dorham's "K.D.'s Blues" and "Riffin'", and "Royal Roost" (aka "Tenor Madness", originally composed by Kenny Clarke and Fats Navarro)—all of which are played in extended takes that give Dorham, Monterose, Timmons and Burrell the space and time to exhibit the full extent of their imaginations. There are also standards: "Round About Midnight", "A Night in Tunisia", "Autumn in New York", "Who Cares?" and "My Heart Stood Still". Alternate takes of four tunes allow close listeners to trace subtle differences in the improvisational strategies.

Dorham's playing should come as a rediscovery. Monterose will be a revelation for those who haven't heard him before: an overlooked jazzman deserving wider recognition (a year after this recording he made his eponymously-titled leader debut on Blue Note, a quintet with Ira Sullivan, Horace Silver, Wilbur Ware and Philly Joe Jones). Timmons, making his recording debut here, shows signs of inchoate mastery. Burrell, the surviving member of this group, scuffles with precipitous tempos and overcomes technical limitations to emerge triumphant. What delights is the overall "listenability" of this music: it's of its moment, in search of its own voice and style, newly discovering itself.

For more info visit store.bluenote.com. The second annual Kenny Dorham Festival is at Dizzy's Club Aug. 31. See Calendar.

than someone who is merely moonlighting. Clearly, this is his background even though it has often been hidden during the past half-century. The pianist heads a trio that has either Belden Bullock or Chris Berger (bass) and Tommy Campbell, Vince Ector, Dwayne "Cook" Broadnax or Steve Johns (drums). Regardless of the personnel in accompaniment, the rhythm section is tastefully supportive and swinging throughout.

While a few numbers are a touch funky, such as "People Make The World Go Round", "Superstar" and "You Make Me Feel Like a Natural Woman", the performances are mostly straight ahead and creative within a vintage style. In addition to the pianist's thoughtful playing on his original title cut, the trio performs Stevie Wonder's "You and I", which swings well, "Invitation", Dizzy Gillespie's "Con Alma", a particularly rewarding rendition of "On Green Dolphin Street", a sensitive "You Don't Know What Love Is" and "Old Devil Moon". Also included is a warm vocal by Alana Adderley (the pianist's daughter) on "Don't Explain".

While it is true that it "took so long" for Nat Adderley Jr. to get around to leading a jazz album, hopefully his sophomore effort and additional future ones will follow before too much more time passes.

For more info visit natadderleyjr.com. Adderley Jr. is at Marcus Garvey Park Aug. 29 (part of Charlie Parker Jazz Festival, presented by Summerstage). See Calendar.