

iridium
NEW YORK CITY
JAZZ · ROCK · BLUES

Join Us To See Our
September
LINEUP

including some of your favorite artists!

Oz Noy
MARK LETTIERI
with special guests

Thursday, September 10th at 8:30pm

Stanley
JORDAN

September 11th & 12th at 8:30pm

Adam
HAWLEY

Friday, September 18th at 8:30pm

A Concert Honoring
Pat
MARTINO
featuring 11 amazing performers!

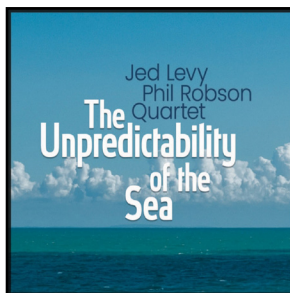
featuring Nir Felder, Oz Noy, Dave Stryker, Adam Rogers, Paul Bollenbeck, Ed Cherry, Sheryl Bailey, Joel Harrison, Alain Mednard, Rez Abbasi, & Jeff Miles

Saturday, September 19th at 8:30pm

Check out our website to get the latest updates on upcoming shows!

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1650 Broadway + 51st - New York - NY - 10019
Below Ellen's Stardust Diner!



The Unpredictability of the Sea
Jed Levy-Phil Robson Quartet (Livvia)
by Scott Yanow

Tenor saxophonist Jed Levy has worked with Jaki Byard, Ron McClure, Jack McDuff, Chico O'Farrill, Peter Leitch, Hendrik Meurkens and Mike Clark, recording at least a dozen albums of his own along the way. He has a mellow tone and a relaxed style even when playing fast double-time runs. Levy met British guitarist Phil Robson at a New York club and for a time their quartet performed in NYC, San Francisco and Europe. During the COVID-19 era, Robson (who has worked with David Liebman, Benn Clatworthy, Claire Martin, Alex Dankworth and Christine Tobin) moved to Ireland. But since Levy and Robson enjoyed working together (the two have similar styles), they recently put together a new quartet with English bassist Mark Hodgson (formerly with Bill Bruford's Earthworks) and the prolific Italian drummer Roberto Gatto to record their first album together.

Performing five songs apiece by Robson and Levy, the quartet could be said to be playing modern cool jazz. While none of the originals' melodies will stick in one's mind or are particularly hummable, they nonetheless offer inventive chord changes that challenge musician and listener alike. Other than an occasional uptempo number such as "Now", the music is generally a bit melancholy and laid back, most obviously on the mournful "Love Loss" and the brooding "Why" (the latter a response to gun violence in schools, Levy overdubbing on several tenor saxophones).

While Hodgson has a few solos and Gatto gets a spot on "3 Chord Trick" (the drummer also contributes a memorable introduction to the title track), they are heard primarily in the background, offering quiet support of the session's co-leaders. Robson's playing behind Levy blends in well and gives the saxophonist a comfortable foundation no matter how complex the tune. Although the pieces are more modern (at times the lead voices are a little reminiscent of the saxophone/guitar pairing of Lee Konitz and Jimmy Raney) the quartet here creates cool-toned music that generates heat just below the surface.

For more info visit liviarecords.com. Levy is at The Django Sep. 13. See Calendar.



in this body
Sparklmami (Verve/slowplay)
by Sophia Valera Heinecke

From the opening moments of *in this body*, Sparklmami's debut release, listeners are lifted up. A radio dial spinning across worlds of rhythm, memory and desire, the music is crisp yet carries listeners in a dreamy wash, cinematic in its timing and its emotional

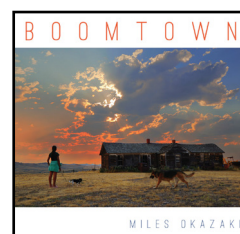
breadth. William Corduroy's bass gives a sense that you've walked onto a soundstage, the star of a show, but it's Sparklmami, the audacious conductor, who serves as a guide across their relatable narratives, improvisations and compositions.

Josh Jessen's keyboards and synths are this album's connective tissue, guiding the music smoothly between moments of reflection and points of action. "Vaga Interlude" establishes an air of mystery, blending futuristic sounds with echoes of memory, while the Bembé rhythm evoked on "Penso en Voce" adds a vibrant pulse. On "Grounded", saxophonist Kenneth Leftridge Jr. offers a wistful rebuttal to stagnation, as this sonic world is not one trapped in nostalgia. Over a beat that flourishes into something like samba, the leader plays with the double meaning of being grounded: are we children being punished or are we holding it down in the midst of wave after wave of chaos? "5 am" wakes up with a punchy bass lead-in and fades out mid-thought, the last vibrations of Sparklmami's voice letting us know there is no resolution. Tracks that fade in and out (the album's signature) seem to represent something eternal. We as listeners are privileged to tune into one little piece of it.

Voice charts compel shifts from station to station. Sparklmami nudges the dial, scanning through the soundtrack of their life, traversing spoken-word articulation with a formal, almost British lilt, so different from cantando, which drips with pleasure and from the jazz singing that ricochets from the subconscious. Some tracks, such as "quisiera", contain many shifts; it begins with a whimper of classical piano, then dissolves into gentle bass, a resigned doo-wop stroll into an exclamation, "ay mi madrecita". Jessen's keyboard textures swirl with the vocals, pulling from wash to wakefulness. This movement between languages, literal and figurative, embodies the album's central motif: the soundtrack of a life, ever evolving and borderless, is both reality and fantasy. A crisp 24 minutes leaves you wanting more.

in this body is an album that puts Sparklmami in your ear and keeps them on your mind, inviting you to savor every note and every memory it awakens.

For more info visit store.ververecords.com. The album release concert is at Central Park Summerstage Sep. 2 (part of "Verve's 70th Anniversary"). See Calendar.



Boomtown
Miles Okazaki (Pi Recordings)
Unclassified Affections
Dan Weiss (Pi Recordings)
by Tom Greenland

Guitarist Miles Okazaki and drummer Dan Weiss have been hanging out, socially and artistically, since they met as students at Manhattan School of Music in 1998. In addition to expertise in mainstream jazz practices, they share an affinity for ulterior influences, such as Indian and additive rhythms, as well as eclectic compositional approaches derived from the graphic, plastic, visual and literary arts. Each has a new record out (*Boomtown* and *Unclassified Affections*, respectively) on which the other appears. Both records, not surprisingly, are full of surprises.

Like many a science fiction writer, Okazaki understands that constructing novel, fanciful worlds takes time, patience and close attention to detail, small choices having potentially large consequences. Two of his previous trilogies of albums explored two