



Jakob Bro, Brian Blade, Craig Taborn, Chris Cheek, Jesper Zeuthen, Anders Christensen, Larry Grenadier, Marcus Gilmore (Loveland Music)
Det Osagda Mumlar i Båcken Aldrig i Livet (ILK Music)
by Jeff Cebulski

Danish saxophonist Jesper Zeuthen (who turns 77 this month) has been a part of the European creative music scene since the '60s and remains active, most recently within the cadre of musicians associated with guitarist Jakob Bro. Two recent releases, one led by Bro and another by a new quartet including Zeuthen, demonstrate the width and breadth of the saxophonist's alto palette.

Recorded in 2024 after a weeklong residency by Bro's two-bass/two-drum octet at the Village Vanguard, *8* (on Bro's boutique label, Loveland Music) captures the musical momentum of those concerts. The group has a formidable lineup of American and Danish artists alike: Bro (guitar), Zeuthen (alto), Chris Cheek (tenor), Craig Taborn (piano), Larry Grenadier and Anders Christensen (bass) and Marcus Gilmore and Brian Blade (drums). The album pays tribute to the late Paul Motian (Bro played with the drummer on various projects of his own as well as the drummer's). The guitarist's three compositions, inspired by the drummer, meld nicely with four Motian tunes, which combine dreamy, modal expression with

angular post-bop excursions. Throughout, Zeuthen and Cheek stay closely aligned in emotional and tonal intensity over the colloquial, sometimes propulsive paired basses and drums, anointed with guitar and piano touches. The alto saxophonist's high-pitched delivery adorns Bro's elegiac "Pearl River", where he sounds like a snake charmer's pungi. Zeuthen leads Motian's wistful ballad "It Should've Happened a Long Time Ago" with Paul Desmond-like fluidity. The leader's reflective "Saturday" mirrors Motian's occasional Latin swirl (with Cheek taking the lead on this one).

Months after the above session, Zeuthen recorded *Det Osagda Mumlar i Båcken* ("the unsaid murmurs in the stream") in what is the debut album of the quartet Aldrig i Livet. The ensemble, formed after a 2023 recording session with Danish musicians and American drummer Ra Kalam Bob Moses, focuses on free improvisation and, again, features two percussionists, Thomas Præstegaard and Michala Østergaard-Nielsen, both of whom also play vibraphone. The group is completed by the effects-laden guitar of Swedish experimental musician Martin Nilsson (not to be confused with two other musical Martin Nilssons). The selections are faintly melodic and spiritual, with a yearning quality that is enhanced by Zeuthen's poetic delivery and Nilsson's ambient atmospheric touches. The juxtaposed harmonies of Præstegaard's vibraphone and Østergaard-Nielsen's vibraphonette introduce the title cut, leading to Nilsson's vibrant display and Zeuthen's aching expressions of sound. The underlying mood continues on "SJÆLE MØDES I ET BLIK", where Zeuthen solos atop Nilsson's vibrato comping. On "BESYNDERLIGE BESYDNINGER", the pairing of the high-register alto and Præstegaard's Moses-like rumbling suggests a paradoxical struggle. The intensity rises in "SANDHEDEN ER EN STEN", as both drummers flail and Zeuthen pleads over Nilsson's

electronic effects, before the album closes with the lovely ballad, "AFSKED".

For more info visit lovelandcph.bandcamp.com and ilkmusic.com



Bird's Words
Spike Wilner (SteepleChase)
by George Kanzler

Pianist Spike Wilner's *Bird's Words* is a purposely anachronistic tribute to Charlie Parker's bebop, zeroing in on Bird's studio recordings. Those recordings were, because of the technology of the day and their distribution on 10- or 12-inch platters, limited to under six minutes. The longest of the eleven tracks here is 5:42, the shortest 2:33. In his notes, Wilner says the "biggest challenge" of those Bird recordings "is overlooked. The challenge of concise soloing." That, and the challenge and constraints of early bebop language, are what Wilner and his bandmates—Dmitry Baevsky (alto), Yves Brouqui (guitar), Paul Gill (bass) and Joe Strasser (drums)—confronted in making this album.

Eight of the tracks are Parker originals, including two 12-bar blues and six contrafacts of American popular songs, of which three are "rhythm changes," based on the

chords of the Gershwins' "I Got Rhythm". Wilner hones in on Parker's late '40s recordings for the Dial label, including the 1946 Los Angeles session where the alto saxophonist had a mental breakdown that landed him in Camarillo mental hospital for three months. "Lover Man", oft cited as a sonic record of Bird's breakdown, is given a reading by Baevsky that hints at the emotional turmoil Bird must have felt. The other infamous tune from that Dial session, the pop song "The Gypsy", is a piano trio track here, Wilner plumbing the lower register to suggest an air of mystery.

The album's goal of "concise soloing" is admirably achieved, as is the evocation of the sound and spirit of early Parker studio recordings. Strasser is never obtrusive, favoring brushes at most tempos, and Gill contributes both pizzicato and arco solos, the latter impressively on "Marmaduke" (based on "Honeysuckle Rose"). Parker's famous tunes are etched with scintillating precision by the tandem of alto saxophone and guitar, with Wilner most often playing the bridge. Two tracks that really nail the Bird bebop vibe are "Chasin' the Bird", Parker's one contrapuntal, fugue-like melody, and "Quasimodo", his wry contrafact of "Embraceable You".

For more info visit steeplechase.dk. Wilner is at Mezzrow Nov. 2 and 16. See Calendar.



Solo Piano
Alexis Marcelo (Intakt)
by John Sharpe

NYC native Alexis Marcelo makes up for lost time with the maximum exposure afforded by *Solo Piano*, his first unaccompanied recording. Although he has been a fixture on the music scene for many years, his sparse discography under his own name doesn't do justice to someone who studied and performed with legendary multi-instrumentalist Yusef Lateef and has appeared alongside luminaries such as David Murray, James Brandon Lewis and Craig Harris. Perhaps that stems from having a broad stylistic range that encompasses hip-hop and experimental rock (which can be heard in his duo Lexiglass with drummer Will Glass) as well as the left-leaning improvisations heard here.

Marcelo astutely treads the delicious borderline between form and freedom on a program of eight originals and two covers, captured in a studio session in January 2025. A strong sense of rhythm, allied to a love of pursuing patterns to see where they will lead and a willingness to employ tunefulness and consonance, give his playing its distinctive character. At times he recalls Stanley Cowell in his drive and Amina Claudine Myers in his gospel inflections, the latter especially audible in the churchy contours of "Break Bread".

The opening "Boogieminish Bop" establishes a fiercely rolling beat and a series of recurrent well-turned motifs, interspersed with out-of-time cascading digressions. That same infectious momentum distinguishes "Dance Around the Sun", this time with sparks flying from the confluence of dark staccato and treble register eruptions. He displays a more measured demeanor on "Have Mercy", a delicate chiaroscuro heightened by a stream of vibrant accents, and "Amargado", where a wistful melody soars and sparkles before swelling into a richly-voiced rubato, all set off by a festive coda that channels his Latino heritage.

Occasional passages of chiming dissonance betray Marcelo's love of Thelonious Monk, which emerges fully

on the closing reading of "Eronel". He initially plays it straight, before being overtaken by a ragtime impulse at the same time that he plays fast and loose with tonality. The homage provides a fitting conclusion to an album that should put Marcelo firmly on the map.

For more info visit intaktrec.ch. Marcelo is at Roulette Nov. 4 (with JD Parran & Spirit Stage 3) and Greenwich House Music School Nov. 18 (with JD Parran's Dance Clarinets). See Calendar.



Sangam & Friends
Charles Lloyd (Blue Note)
by Andrew Schinder

Tenor saxophonist-flutist Charles Lloyd has built one of the most distinguished careers in modern jazz by combining the musical traditions of the American South with a deep reverence for Eastern philosophy and spirituality, in particular the music and culture of India. Lloyd met Indian tabla icon Zakir Hussain in November 2000, and they first performed as a duo in 2001, shortly after 9/11. The two masters would go on to record together on several occasions, including 2004's *Sangam*, with drummer Eric Harland completing the trio. Sadly, Hussain passed away in December 2024. (Both Lloyd and Harland participated in a star-studded tribute to him at Carnegie Hall this past March.)

In 2009, Hussain brought his Sangam bandmates to India to participate in the annual "Abbaji" concert, honoring his late father, fellow tabla legend Alla Rakha. Following the concert, Sangam entered the studio in Mumbai and brought along some of India's finest musicians—Rakesh Chaurasia (bansuri), Ranjit Barot (keyboards), Niladri Kumar (sitar), Sabir Khan (sarangi) and Vijay Prakash (Carnatic vocals). The resulting session, along with some California studio and live recordings from the Sangam archives, finally has seen its commercial release with *Sangam & Friends*, which functions as a moving tribute to Hussain, as well as a fantastic, if not essential addition to Lloyd's vibrant late-career catalog. The album also serves as an excellent introduction to Indian music for jazz fans who are neophytes in this area.

A brief vocal introduction by Prakash on "Clear the Dust" opens the album, before a segue into a series of deeply-spiritual polyrhythmic explosions. Sangam recorded the subsequent two tracks—"The Blessing" and "Jai Ganga"—on opposite sides of the planet and on separate occasions: "The Blessing", with the full ensemble, in Mumbai, and "Jai Ganga", with just the trio, in San Francisco. Nevertheless, the pieces blend seamlessly together, Lloyd effortlessly improvising on tenor saxophone and flute over astonishing percussive harmonies. A live trio track from Santa Barbara, CA, "Tagore" (named for the Indian poet) is pure groove, the funky percussion heightened by Lloyd's reliably strong, distinctive flute playing. "Eternal Dreamer", with the full ensemble, features Barot's keyboards backing a traditional Indian harmonization by Lloyd's tenor and Kumar's sitar. It is a stunningly beautiful while and another example of the leader brilliantly bridging the gap between East and West.

For more info visit bluenote.com/artist/charles-lloyd. Lloyd is at the Blue Note Nov. 18-19. He is also at New Jersey PAC (Newark, NJ) Nov. 21 (part of TD James Moody Jazz Festival). See Calendar and 100 Miles Out.



Harlem Jazz Boxx

Live Creative Music In Harlem

Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church
15 Mount Morris Park West @ 122nd St.
Harlem ~ New York, NY



Every Thursday @ 7pm
RHYTHMS OF RESISTANCE
Craig Harris and Harlem Nightsongs Big Band

"Expanding the music far beyond the restrictive confines of jazz"
— Ron Scott, amsterdamnews.com

Every Friday @ 7pm | HARLEM JAZZ SERIES

November 6th: Gene Pritsker
A Grammy-nominated composer and guitarist of boundless imagination who has written over 500 compositions, orchestrated The Matrix Resurrections, and brought jazz, hip-hop, and classical music into thrilling conversation.

November 13th: Antoinette Montague
A 2024 Jazz Hero, Grammy-nominated vocalist, and tireless advocate for jazz whose voice — rooted in the blues and the spirit of Ella Fitzgerald — commands every room she enters.

November 20th: Rod Williams
A Detroit-born pianist and composer praised by the New York Times, whose extraordinary career spans collaborations with Cassandra Wilson, David Murray, Henry Threadgill, and Steve Coleman.

November 27th: Seventh Sun
A rising tenor saxophonist and Berklee-trained bandleader whose debut album earned international acclaim for honoring jazz's deepest traditions while boldly charting its future.

Photo@Ozier Muhammad

harlemjazzboxx.com | 212.662.7779

JAZZ POWER COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

LEARN, CONNECT & PLAY JAZZ WITH DR. EI

Calling Pianists, Singers, and Instrumentalists of all levels!

Step into a hands-on jazz learning experience with internationally acclaimed musician and educator **Eli Yamin** — "Dr. E."

Immerse yourself in an uplifting atmosphere of discovery, curiosity, and connection as you explore timeless tunes and the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic language of jazz and blues.

For ages 16+

STRUCTURE:

- Piano Keyboard 6-7p.m.
- Voice 7-8p.m.
- Improvisation 8-9p.m.

TUESDAYS

6:00PM–9:00PM



The People's Theatre
Centro Cultural Inmigrante,
419 West 206th Street, New York, NY 10034

\$50 General admission
\$25 Moderate Income
\$15 Students with ID

JAZZ POWER INITIATIVE

LEGENDARY BASS. TIMELESS MUSIC.

NAT REEVES

NOW IN TIME

A Powerful New Recording

Now In Time captures a powerful performance from veteran bassist Nat Reeves. Recorded with an all-star ensemble personally selected by Reeves, the album stands as both a celebration of his 70th birthday and a reflection on a distinguished career spanning more than five decades.

Joined by Eddie Henderson, trumpet; Steve Davis, trombone; Eric Alexander, tenor saxophone; Orrin Evans, piano; Jeff "Tain" Watts, drums, the recording presents new original compositions alongside music by Jackie McLean, Kenny Garrett, Mulgrew Miller, Sonny Stitt and Pharoah Sanders.

The pulse of jazz.
The heart of the music.

SIDE DOOR JAZZ • RECORD LABEL

www.natreeves.com