

DUDUKA DA FONSECA TRIO
with DAVID FELDMAN & GUTO WIRTTI
LIVE IN RIO
SSC 1823 / AVAILABLE DECEMBER 4

Da Fonseca grew up in a household full of music, especially jazz. He was especially attracted to the great live albums of the legendary Bill Evans Trio. The Evans Trio cemented a concept of group communication, forming a singular ensemble voice, that stuck with Da Fonseca and became a goal for him when he assembled his own trio.

The opportunity came in 2009 when Da Fonseca enlisted fellow Brazilians Feldman and Wirtti to become his regular ensemble while in Brazil and South America. For nearly twenty years, the group has worked together, playing innumerable gigs and recording albums playing original compositions, jazz standards, and music from the brilliant composers of Brazil. The trio has continued to evolve over the years, the members becoming more in tune with one another. They have come to a place of freedom and spontaneity within musical creation and elasticity in time during performance.

In December 2025, Da Fonseca traveled to Brazil for a number of gigs with the trio. As they prepared for a January performance at Festival Internacional de Jazz de Punta del Este in Uruguay, the three decided to finally capture the group in an environment where it presented itself most dynamically, in live concert.

The seamless marriage of jazz and Brazilian music has been treasured by listeners for decades. It is under the command of brilliant musicians like Duduka Da Fonseca, David Feldman, and Guti Wertti on stage that the music truly evolves, as can be heard on their trio's **Live In Rio**.

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Over sixty thousand people ran around the five boroughs earlier that day (Nov. 1), participants in the city's 56th annual marathon, but it was jazz biz as usual that evening at the Village Vanguard. **Aaron Parks**' trio was just beginning the early set of the final night of its six-day residency. The pianist was in good hands: those of bassist Ben Street and the soon-to-be 85-year-old drummer Billy Hart. Without much up-front chitchat, Parks plunged into a satiating set of covers and originals. Unlike the marathoners, he wasn't in a rush or trying to set a record, preferring instead to linger over the complex chord structures, an approach that privileged harmonic invention over linear development. Buoyed by Street's springy bottom and memorably motivic solos and Hart's almost subliminal support, the trio immediately achieved a floating, alpha-wave-enhancing ambiance. Standout songs included the tangy but gorgeous ballads "Straight Ahead" (Mal Waldron, Abbey Lincoln) and "Contraption" (a contrafact of George Shearing's "Conception", featuring an extended soliloquy by Hart), "All Right" (a modal meditation in A-minor), "Reinventing the Wheel" (inspired by Kenny Wheeler's "Foxy T") and Parks' catchy waltz, "Little River". Even amidst thickset forests of chords, the leader always found a theme to guide him through, a theme he would sing aloud as his head pitched, tilted and rolled about the axis of his neck in sync with the ecstatic dance of the music. ***— Tom Greenland***

The fifth annual Mutual Mentorship for Musicians (M³) festival at Roulette (Nov. 7) was billed as "a one-day, marathon-style festival," but in reality became an endurance test from 7-11 pm, with over 11 sets featuring 30+ mostly experimental musicians. The intentions of the nonprofit M³, which seeks to empower and promote underrepresented and marginalized musicians through mentorship and collaborative commissions, could not be disputed, but the planning and unfolding of the evening needs re-evaluating. By the time headliner **Terri Lyne Carrington**'s pianoless quartet took the stage at 10:45 pm, most of the audience had departed. The abstract Jack DeJohnette piece, "Lawns", seamlessly transitioned to a second number, with the drummer fully displaying her confident, intelligent style: an economy of beats in which every note counts. The brevity had to do; at that late hour, even a musician of Carrington's stature could not expect more from attendees. An hour prior was evening highlight **Theo Bleckmann**. Over 10 minutes he musically vocalized a speech by NYC's Mayor Zohran Mamdani, using various loops and live piano. The result was as haunting as it was strangely beautiful. Vocalist **Martha Redbone** offered the most traditional set, with R&B-adjacent songs accompanied by piano, electric violin and foot-operated electronic beats. The opener was a mixed bag, with the glorious **William Parker** playing doson ngoni and flutes (bamboo shakuhachi and the overtone Fujara) to the '70s-retro interpretive movement and recitations of Patricia Nicholson. ***— Marilyn Lester***


STEVEN SUSSMAN

Billy Hart @Village Vanguard


SHERRY RUBEL @SRSTUDIOS_BIZ

Terri Lyne Carrington @Roulette

Brooklyn is a haven of hidden jazz gems, if you know where to look. One good place is in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, where Bar Bayeux hosts a vital scene bursting with local talent. On a Wednesday evening (Nov. 4), **Jacob Sacks** (piano) and **Eivind Opsvik** (bass), founders of and primary composers for Two Miles a Day, were joined by Hery Paz (tenor) and Connor Parks (drums) for an extremely enjoyable session. Judging by their expressions, the musicians were having as much as if not more fun than the audience. Sacks, seated at the grand piano, back to the crowd, stared straight at his bandmates throughout the set, grin fixed to his face, eyebrows arched up delightedly, relishing each exquisite moment of music-making. The quartet roles were perfectly balanced. Paz, playing tenor with a baritone mouthpiece, had the full, warm tone of an Italian operatic tenor in the bel canto tradition, only he was applying it in a post-jazz context. Sacks, hunched/crouched forward, his jutting soul patch almost touching the piano's upturned lid, knees and feet tucked back under the bench, played with remarkable complexity and clarity—suggesting adjectives such as "capricious" or even "weird"—though everything he did seemed just right for the situation. Opsvik, a more temperate presence, brought a firm backbone, beautiful but unusual originals and the occasional inspired smile to the proceedings. Parks, grinning right back at Sacks, seemed to relish the fact that he was in the right place at the right time—with the right timing. ***(TG)***

In a bountiful year of centenaries, with most spotlights on Miles and Coltrane, it was sheer delight to experience the love for Charlie Parker-influenced altoist, Lou Donaldson (b. Nov. 1, 1926 – d. Nov. 9, 2024) at Dizzy's Club (Nov. 9). The tribute, hosted by pianist-singer **Champian Fulton**, who had close ties to Donaldson, began with four numbers by the "house band," the pianist joined by Jaleel Shaw (alto), Peter Bernstein (guitar), John Webber (bass) and Fukushi Tainaka (drums). Fulton did sing one number, "Exactly Like You", with her characteristic upbeat charm, but it was a treat to hear her primarily as a pianist, playing in a lyrically straight-ahead style with serious chops and creative ideas. There were lively readings of "Blues Walk" and "Wee", as well as the haunting standard, "Laura", executed mainly by Shaw, sticking close to the melody. A change of personnel brought Brian Charette to the piano, with Frank Basile (baritone), Sam Raderman (guitar) and Adam Ray (drums). Webber remained steadfast, as he would for the duration. A swingy "Caracas" featured a tasty saxophone duet between Basile and a returning Shaw. Another change of musicians—with Marc Devine (piano), David Sneider (trumpet), Klas Lindquist (alto), Charlie Sigler (guitar) and Larry Johnson (drums)—conquered "Ornithology". Closer was a Papa Lou staple, an all hands on deck, funky and boppish "Alligator Bogaloo". The step-ins and -outs were fast and furious, the whirlwind trades fierce, all arriving at a wondrously satisfying conclusion. ***(ML)***

A free-improv trio led by drummer **Francisco Mela** at Jazzcultural (Nov. 3) was a surprisingly adventurous booking for Spike Wilner's new midtown venue, and a good fit for the space's crystal-clear acoustics. With Matthew Shipp (piano) and William Parker (bass), this performance was a belated celebration of the 2021 album *Music Frees Our Souls, Vol. 1* (577 Records). In an hour-long, unbroken set, these players showcased their unique improvising styles and varied approaches to harmonic and rhythmic abstraction. Shipp and Mela showed a particularly tight connection from the beginning, the drummer immediately picking up on the pianist's deliberate, ritualistic pulse. Often Shipp steered the music compositionally, while Mela defined the rhythmic shape; Parker meanwhile contributed an additional layer of counterpoint against the others—not an accompanying bass line, but an alternate path for piano or drums to occasionally break off and follow. The set had a well-defined dynamic structure, with gradual peaks and valleys throughout. Shipp would pause to make room for sparse, subdued soundscapes from the other two, then re-enter with abstract balladry to begin the next buildup. Mela reached the most climactic point of the set in a high-density solo, soon joined by the others in roaring abandon before a long, well-controlled ensemble diminuendo. Toward the end, the trio briefly coalesced into a bouncy medium swing; intense and driving, this passage was no less free than any other moment in such a wide-open set. ***— Elijah Shiffer***

At Blank Forms' new Soho space (Nov. 1), **Cyro Baptista** held a portable fan whose blades buzzed, nicking a microphone. **Andrew Cyrille** searched beneath his snare drum for another sound. **Oren Ambarchi**'s guitar suggested an organ, siren, tolling bell, a scatter of sparks. Three musicians were making the sources of their music difficult to locate. Presented by Kou Records, the trio's first encounter marked the release of Ambarchi's solo album *Prophetic Perfect Tense*, first conceived as a rhythm-centered group record. Here was that alternate route realized, with past collaborator Baptista, and Cyrille, a hero and dream bandmate. Against Cyrille's spare cymbal strokes and exact snare figures, Baptista constantly shifted textures, drawing on equipment that looked like hardware-store inventory: bird whistles, a hose, a shaggy mass of shakers, a megaphone for unintelligible ranting. Facing each other, the percussionists exchanged gathering volleys. Ambarchi's sustained tones occupied and enlarged the openings. The spacious music moved between sacred stillness and a pulse suggesting the atmospheric reaches of house music. Near the end, Cyrille fussed with a triangle, then stopped. "They don't make them like they used to," he said. After so much uncertainty about sound origins, an ordinary equipment complaint supplied the resolution. Charmaine Lee, Kou co-founder, assured the crowd it had all been multitrack recorded. Ambarchi called the night "surreal." The first record he ever bought, he said, was by Cecil Taylor—with Cyrille on drums. ***— Ariella Stok***


SILVIA SAPONARO

Francisco Mela @Jazzcultural


ANNA YATSKEVICH

Andrew Cyrille @Blank Forms

An all-star roster of 15 musicians convened in various combos at Greenwich House Music School (Nov. 5) to celebrate what would have been the 70th birthday of pianist-composer **Frank Kimbrough** (1956-2020). The program consisted mostly of his compositions, aside from an original opener by guitarist-vocalist Aayushi Karnik (who studied with the pianist at Juilliard), accompanied by bassist Jay Anderson. Though more indie-pop than jazz, Karnik's "Frank's Song" shared a simple, powerful melody and reflective mood with many of the pianist's works. As these players proved, Kimbrough's songs never dictate a specific way of playing, but can be vehicles for any soloist's personal style. Marty Ehrlich's full-toned clarinet shone on "Whirl" and "Kudzu", while Ben Monder brought his signature ethereal guitar effects to "Quickening" and "Kids Stuff". Vocalist Kendra Shank contributed her lyrics to "November", plus a solo showcasing her unique, ecstatic scat vocabulary. The most heartfelt dedications were on songs with open-ended, rubato themes, such as "TMI", an energetic romp featuring Ted Nash (on soprano) in a hyperactive duo with Monder, before a deft drum solo by the ever-playful Matt Wilson. "The Call" was a particularly touching tribute, both in its haunting chorale melody and subsequent duo improv from tenor saxophonists Marc Mommaas and Michael Blake. The closing "For Jimmy G", with all players on stage, was a further homage to Jimmy Giuffre—a clear influence on Kimbrough's writing. ***(ES)***

At Roulette (Nov. 4), **JD Parran** opened on a wide-bore wooden flute he called an "AACM instrument"—referring, of course, to Chicago's legendary Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. A veteran of St. Louis' Black Artists Group (BAG), Parran joined AACM members **Adegoke Steve Colson** and **Iqua Colson** for a celebration of AACM's 61st anniversary. The concert renewed a musical relationship of two collectives rooted in Black artistic self-determination dating back to their joint concerts in 1969. Parran's Spirit Stage 3—Alexis Marcelo (piano), Christopher Dean Sullivan (bass) and Michael TA Thompson (percussion)—let sounds accumulate slowly: rain stick, frame drum, sliding bass notes. The music felt improvised but unfolded in distinct movements. The Colsons invoked the previous day's midterm election results before trading lines from Amiri Baraka's "Heathens" over Luke Stewart's bass: "They go to the bathroom to have a religious experience." As satire gave way to protest, Adegoke's delicate piano supported Iqua's accounts of denied health care and arbitrary arrest. On "Parallel Universe", Adegoke's alto saxophone tangled with Steven Bernstein's trumpet over Chris Beck's drums. Richarda Abrams, daughter of AACM co-founder Muhal Richard Abrams, hosted. Between sets, Amina Claudine Myers held court at the merch table while cellist Tomeka Reid stopped to pay her respects. The association's continuity was visible in that encounter, while its breadth was audible in the space between Parran's patient unfolding and the Colsons' pointed songs. ***(AS)***

WHAT'S NEWS

The National Endowment for the Arts recently announced the 2027 recipients of its **NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship**, the nation's highest honor in jazz. The honorees are: the 102-year-old, legendary vibraphonist Terry Gibbs, drummer Harvey Mason (Herbie Hancock's The Headhunters, Fourplay, George Benson), bassist Rufus Reid (Eddie Harris, Dexter Gordon, Jack DeJohnette among hundreds of credits) and fellow bassist and Rutgers professor Dr. Larry Ridley (Freddie Hubbard, Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley, Horace Silver), as well as Dr. John Edward Hasse (longtime and since-retired Curator of American Music at the Smithsonian Institution, author, Duke Ellington scholar), the recipient of the 2027 A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy. The Arts Endowment, in collaboration with the DC Jazz Festival, will honor them in a tribute concert on Apr. 5, 2027, at Arena Stage in Washington, DC, and streamed online. For more info visit arts.gov/honors/jazz.

In NYCJR photographer news…Citizen Arts and Education (CAE)—co-founded by Meg Araneo and Rob Reddy—announced The Robert Sutherland-Cohen Emerging Artist Award for Artistic Ingenuity. This award recognizes an early-career, NYC–based artist demonstrating sustained dedication to two distinct, independently pursued artistic practices. The award honors **Robert Sutherland-Cohen**, artist, author, educator and NYCJR contributing photographer, whose distinguished careers in theatrical stage management and jazz photography reflect his enduring dedication to two distinct art forms. By naming the award in his honor, CAE celebrates Sutherland-Cohen's dedication to his longstanding commitment to supporting others in the arts by recognizing an emerging artist whose curiosity and creative drive are evident in sustained work across such distinct artistic fields. Applicants (age 18-28 and NYC-based) should show evidence of regular practice and a commitment to developing their skills in two fields (e.g. photography, theater, music, dance, visual art, film, literature, design, etc.). Application deadline is Dec. 15, and the award ceremony will be Feb. 6, 2027. For more info visit citizen-arts.org/about.

The Jazz Gallery's opening reception for NYCJR contributing photographer **Steve Sussman**'s second exhibition installment of his jazz photography, *Jazz Seen, Pt. II*, will be held on Jan. 8. In addition to NYCJR, Sussman is a regular contributor to *DownBeat*. His work has also appeared in *JazzTimes*, *The New York Times* and *Vogue*. A recipient of the Lona Foote-Bob Parent Award for Career Achievement in Photography, Sussman's photos in his current *Jazz Seen* exhibition at The Jazz Gallery (which is still being displayed) are readily available for purchase: from images of Al Foster, Ahmad Jamal, Hank Jones, Buster Williams, Melissa Aldana and Frank Lacy to Samara Joy, this latter also available as a limited-edition 17×17-inch print, personally signed by both the vocalist and photographer (and a wonderful gift for a jazz enthusiast this holiday season!). For more info visit sussmanphotography.com/jazz-seen-gallery.

The 69th annual **GRAMMY** Award nominations have arrived… Here's just a sampling of some of the nominees: Catherine Russell (Best Jazz Vocal Album), Lakecia Benjamin (Best Jazz Instrumental Album), Helen Sung (Best Large Ensemble Album) and Melissa Aldana (Best Latin Jazz Album). Of multi-category nominees, there's Cécile McLorin Salvant (Best Jazz Performance; Best Jazz Vocal Album; Best Alternative Jazz Album; and for Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals is Darcy James Argue on Salvant's "Send in the Clowns"), Nicole Zuraitis (Best Jazz Performance; Best Jazz Vocal Album; Best Traditional Pop Vocal Performance), and Jon Batiste (Best Jazz Performance; Best Jazz Instrumental Album; Best Contemporary Instrumental Album; Best Classical Compendium). Our congrats go out to all of the GRAMMY nominees who will be announced at the Feb. 27, 2027 ceremony to be held at LA's Crypto.com Arena. For more info visit grammy.com.

Live music and great food returns to 116 E. 27th Street, which NYC jazz fans will fondly recall as the former Jazz Standard space. **Garcia's NYC** –inspired by the life, music and spirit of the late Grateful Dead guitarist and founder Jerry Garcia—is a new 200-person capacity concert venue and dining destination, which will open in the heart of NoMad with its first calendar of shows on Dec. 15. For the full lineup and tickets visit garciasnyc.live (after Dec. 1).

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