

STEVE LACY IN THE '50S • TIM LEEFEBVRE • 2022 FESTIVAL GUIDE

AMERICA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

JazzTimes

JUNE 2022

Kenny Garrett

ON ANCESTORS & ARTISTRY

BY DAVID FRICKE

MELISSA ALDANA

Plays the
Winning Card

MARK TURNER

Science Fiction,
Virtuoso Fact

WALTER SMITH III

Takes the Before
& After Challenge

SAX SPOTLIGHT

Greg Abate
Charlie Gabriel
Eli Degibri
Julieta Eugenio
Marcus Elliot

BLUE NOTE®



JOEL ROSS THE PARABLE OF THE POET

Acclaimed vibraphonist's 3rd Blue Note album is an expansive album-length suite performed by a dynamic 8-piece ensemble of young modern jazz luminaries.



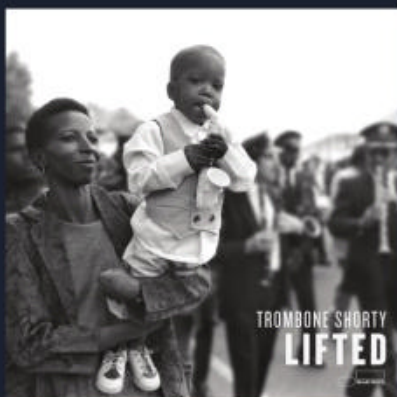
GERALD CLAYTON BELLS ON SAND

Pianist's ravishing 2nd Blue Note album explores the abstraction of time with contributions from **Charles Lloyd, John Clayton, Justin Brown & vocalist MARO**.



MELISSA ALDANA 12 STARS

Saxophonist makes her Blue Note debut with a set of original music performed by her quintet with **Lage Lund, Sullivan Fortner, Pablo Menares & Kush Abadey**.



TROMBONE SHORTY LIFTED

New album of original songs captures the explosive energy of his legendary live shows combining classic New Orleans sounds with modern lyrics & beats.



NDUDUZO MAKHATHINI IN THE SPIRIT OF NTU

Pianist evokes the sounds of the South African landscape on his 2nd Blue Note album which features the country's leading young jazz stars.



IMMANUEL WILKINS THE 7TH HAND

Saxophonist follows his NYTimes #1 Jazz Album of 2020 with a new suite composed for his quartet with **Micah Thomas, Daryl Johns & Kweku Sumbry**.



NORAH JONES COME AWAY WITH ME

Expanded 20th Anniversary Super Deluxe Edition of best-selling 8-time GRAMMY-winning debut including 22 previously unreleased tracks.



TONE POET AUDIOPHILE VINYL REISSUE SERIES

All-analog 180g vinyl produced by **Joe Harley**, mastered by **Kevin Gray** from original masters, pressed at **RTI**, & packaged in **deluxe gatefold tip-on jackets**.

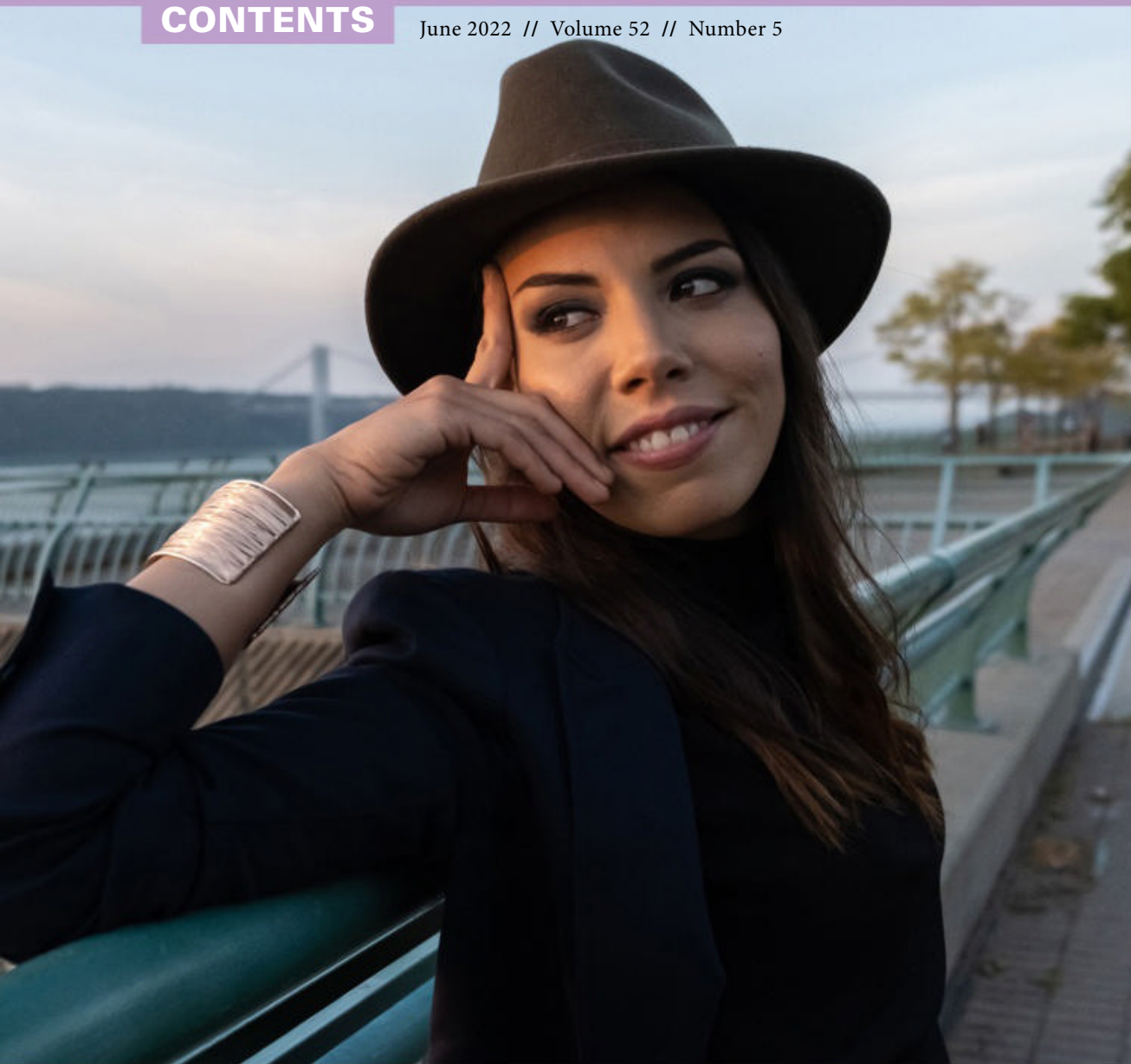


BLUE NOTE CLASSIC VINYL REISSUE SERIES

All-analog 180g vinyl reissues of classics from all different eras & styles of Blue Note mastered by **Kevin Gray** from original masters & pressed at **Optimal**.

GET OFFICIAL BLUE NOTE MERCHANDISE AND EXCLUSIVE RELEASES AT
STORE.BLUENOTE.COM

twitter.com/bluenoterecords | BlueNote.com
facebook.com/bluenote
instagram - @bluenoterecords | © Blue Note Records



Features

18 MARK TURNER

His unyielding attention to detail over decades has made him a modern master, influencing a generation of saxophonists. But Mark Turner shows other sides of himself in this unvarnished conversation with **A.D. Amorosi**. "I'm not naturally talented," he confesses. "I have to study and pay attention to the craft to credibly play music. I have to be on it all the time."

22 MELISSA ALDANA

As our world fell apart in 2020, Melissa Aldana not only found herself facing the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftereffects but also had to confront the reality of a divorce and an uprooted life. With her latest album *12 Stars*, the Chilean tenorist closes that uncertain chapter and begins a promising new one. **Jackson Sinnenberg** checks in.

28 KENNY GARRETT

The past two years have led us to re-examine many things. Among them: the work of Kenny Garrett. If only more such re-examinations were as enjoyable! The alto great's most recent release, *Sounds from the Ancestors*, is music with a mission, and **David Fricke** discusses that and much more with Garrett in a fascinating and wide-ranging interview.

34 2022 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL GUIDE

With bonus listings for 2023!

IN EVERY ISSUE

3 JTNotes

4 Opening Chorus

Preservation Hall's octogenarian reedman Charlie Gabriel makes his first solo album; Eli Degibri honors his parents; Julieta Eugenio of Argentina; Marcus Elliot of Detroit; and farewells to Jessica Williams, Dennis González, Barbara Morrison, Tina May, John Swenson, and Charnett Moffett



10 Chronology

Steve Lacy, bebopper

12 Before & After

Walter Smith III

16 Overdue Ovation

Greg Abate

44 Audio Files

Brent Butterworth on active vs. passive speakers

46 Gearhead

Gibson brings a long-forgotten electric guitar design to life

48 Reviews

The tintinnabulation of Gerald Clayton's *Bells on Sand*, prime early-'60s Dexter Gordon, Avishai Cohen, Myra Melford, Joel Ross, and more

56 Artist's Choice

Meat maven Tim Lefebvre

Cover image by Hollis King
Table of Contents images: Eduardo Pavez Goye (Melissa Aldana), Esmond Edwards/CTSIMAGES (Steve Lacy)



► Exclusive Content

What exactly is “fazz” and what does it have to do with Noel Paul Stookey, best known as one-third of Peter, Paul and Mary? Lee Mergner’s recent online profile of Stookey explains that “fazz”—a combination of “folk” and “jazz” first coined by saxophonist Paul Desmond—appears in the title of the singer/guitarist’s latest album ... but you’ll have to read the article to find out why. Plus *JazzTimes* 10 lists, festival reviews, photo galleries, obituaries, and much more.



► JT News

The city of Newark, New Jersey, in partnership with jazz radio station WBGO, has renamed a section of Park Place as Wayne Shorter Way in honor of the saxophonist, composer, and bandleader, who was born and raised in Newark. On April 29, WBGO and the city celebrated Shorter and unveiled the new street sign; the 88-year-old musician was scheduled to participate via video from his West Coast home. Because an adjoining section of Park Place was already renamed for another Newark native, Sarah Vaughan, it’s now possible to stand at the intersection of Wayne Shorter Way and Sarah Vaughan Way.



► Audio & Video

Israeli-born, L.A.-based saxophonist Daniel Rotem puts fresh angles on a John Coltrane classic with his intriguing rearrangement of “Syeeda’s Song Flute,” a track that premiered on jazztimes.com. Also check out tracks from Nicole Henry and Uri Caine’s Catbird.

JazzTimes

AMERICA’S JAZZ MAGAZINE

Editor

Mac Randall | mrandall@jazztimes.com

Contributing Editor

Lee Mergner

Contributing Writers

David R. Adler, Dan Bilawsky, Shaun Brady, Philip Booth, Brent Butterworth, Nate Chinen, Sharonne Cohen, Thomas Conrad, J.D. Considine, Morgan Enos, Brad Farberman, Colin Fleming, David Fricke, James Gavin, Andrew Gilbert, Fernando Gonzalez, Steve Greenlee, Evan Haga, Geoffrey Himes, Marc Hopkins, Willard Jenkins, Mike Joyce, Ashley Kahn, David Kastin, Aidan Levy, Bill Meredith, Ken Micallef, Allen Morrison, John Murph, Jennifer Odell, Ted Panken, Adam Perlmutter, Britt Robson, Mike Shanley, Jackson Sinnenberg, Jeff Tamarkin, Lucy Tauss, George Varga, Natalie Weiner, Michael J. West, David Whiteis

Contributing Photographers & Illustrators

John Abbott, Enid Farber, Ken Franckling, Peter Gannushkin, Ben Johnson, Jimmy Katz, Marek Lazarski, R. Andrew Lepley, Jati Lindsay, Alan Nahigian, John Rogers, Nick Ruechel, Jack Vartoogian, Michael Weintrob, Michael Wilderman

Reviews Editor

Michael J. West

ART & PRODUCTION

Senior Designer

Scott Brandsgaard

Graphic Designer

Nicole Popma

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Director of Media Solutions

Ed Feldman

Client Services

clientservices@madavor.com

Marketing Director

Tommy Goodale

Marketing Associate

Carly Noyce

Marketing Associate

Jaime Sweeney

SEO & Content Marketing Supervisor

Anthony Buzzeo

Content Marketing Associate

Patricia Gary



OPERATIONS

Operations Director

Cheyenne Corliss

Senior Client Services & Operations Lead

Andrea Palli

Media Solutions Manager

Toni Eunice

Senior Client Services & Media Analyst

Tou Zong Her

Client Services Associate

Darren Cormier

Accounting Director

Amanda Joyce

Accounts Payable Associate

Tina McDermott

Accounts Receivable Associate

Wayne Tuggle

In memory of Susan Fitzgerald, COO, 1966-2018

DIGITAL OPERATIONS

Audience Development Analyst

Ryan Gillis

Senior Digital Designer

Mike Decker

WordPress Developer

David Glassman

EXECUTIVE

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer

Jeffrey C. Wolk

Chief Operating Officer

Courtney Whitaker

VP, Circulation Strategy

Jason Pomerantz

Content Director

Matt Martinelli

Newsstand Distribution

Weekly Retail Service

JAZZTIMES EDITORIAL OFFICE

10801 Margate Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

Madavor Media, LLC, 35 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 101, Braintree, MA 02184
Tel: 617-706-9110 | Fax: 617-536-0102

JazzTimes (ISSN-0272-572-X) is published 10 times per year by Madavor Media, LLC.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1-877-252-8139 OUTSIDE US: 1-760-496-7575

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to JazzTimes, PO Box 460700, Escondido, CA 92046. a. Subscribers allow 4-6 weeks for change of address to become effective. Subscriptions ordered are noncancelable and nonrefundable unless otherwise promoted. Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted if they are to be returned, and no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. All rights in letters sent to JazzTimes will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyright purposes and as subject to unrestricted right to edit and to comment editorially. Requests for permission to reprint should be sent to the Permissions and Reprints Department. The title JazzTimes is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Contents copyright © 2022 by Madavor Media, LLC. All rights reserved. Nothing can be reprinted in whole or in part without permission from the publisher. Printed in the U.S.A.

JAZZTIMES FOUNDER: IRA SABIN (1928-2018)



The 2021 Leopold Jazz Festival in Ukraine—a reminder of all that can change in a year

Next Year in Lviv

First the good news: As you can see in our annual Festival Guide (beginning on pg. 34), there are plenty of jazz festivals scheduled to happen around the world this year, and at the moment there seems little reason to doubt that they'll all take place more or less as planned.

Now the not-so-good news: You just never know what might happen around the bend.

Take the COVID pandemic, for example (or, as Jackie Mason might say, *please*). A lot of people had a difficult time acknowledging its existence at first. Then they had similar difficulty envisioning what havoc it would wreak on the world. More than six million deaths later, many of those same people would very much like to believe that the danger is over. I would very much like to join them in that belief, but I can't. The evidence against it is way too strong. What I see every day in my social media feeds, what I hear in phone calls from recently infected friends who did everything right for two years but caught the virus anyway, and what I've experienced even in my own home (as I write this in mid-April, my wife is ill after testing positive five days ago) leads me to the conclusion that another surge is coming, no matter what we'd like to believe.

Don't get me wrong, though. At least

right now, I'm not sensing that this surge will have the impact of the previous ones. With luck, our lives won't be all that inconvenienced by it and festival season will carry on ... in most places. Unfortunately, pandemics are by no means the only thing that can affect mass gatherings; there are lots of other adverse developments that we can be similarly unable to foresee. I'm thinking in particular of what fate may lie in store for the Leopold Jazz Festival in Lviv, Ukraine.

Last June, as jazz tentatively returned to global stages, Leopold was the first post-COVID festival *JazzTimes* covered. Michael J. West called its programming, which included sets by Kamasi Washington and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, "superlative" and reported that Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky—a name with which we've all become much more familiar this year—had planned to attend but "other business waylaid him."

There's been a whole lot of other business going on in Ukraine since then. Much of it would have seemed impossible to believe only a few months ago. Though not currently at the heart of the war (it's located on the western edge of the country, near the Polish border), Lviv is subject to random attack from Russian missiles. In

our Festival Guide, the 2022 Leopold Jazz Festival dates are optimistically listed as "TBA." Who knows when those dates will be filled in?

As has been noted in the past by more eloquent individuals than myself, jazz and democracy go together. The way in which the music is made stands both as a potent metaphor for democracy and as a living embodiment of it. Jazz without democracy isn't jazz you'd want to listen to. A world without democracy isn't a world you'd want to live in either. Under the circumstances, it only seems right that those who create and love jazz should do what they can to stand for democracy, in Ukraine and everywhere else on our planet.

Today, at the top of the Leopold Jazz Festival website's homepage, there is a single sentence: "The festival will take place immediately after the victory." Underneath that sentence is a heart with blue and yellow stripes, like the Ukrainian flag.

—MAC RANDALL

Sour Note: In our feature on the 30th anniversary of the Peter Bernstein/Larry Goldings/Bill Stewart trio (May 2022), the credit for the photographs of Bernstein, Goldings, and Stewart was incorrect. All of those photos were taken by John Rogers. We regret the error.



Going Solo—at 89

Preservation Hall vet CHARLIE GABRIEL makes his debut as a leader

When we learn a song, we play it from *here*.” At the word “here,” Charlie Gabriel motions to his heart. It is a Tuesday afternoon in early April and Gabriel, the octogenarian saxophonist for the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, is explaining over Zoom how musicians from New Orleans learn music, learn to truly inhabit the music and let the music inhabit them. “What the most important thing is ... If you don’t know the melody of the song, really know it, then you don’t know the song, see? You have to know the melody and let it become part of who you are.” Musicians of any age should listen well to the word of Gabriel, and his heavenly music.

At 89 years old, Charlie Gabriel—or “Mister Charlie,” as he’s known by fans and admirers the world over—is a living embodiment of the jazz tradition. He’s the fourth of six generations of Gabriel (three before him and two following) to play music in New Orleans. His father, a drummer and a saxophone player, taught his four sons to play different instruments so the family could play hymns on Sundays. Morton and August took up the trumpet; Leonard played trombone; and Charlie and his cousin were taught saxophone. He began attending shows in New Orleans (specifically performances by WPA bands) and playing when he was just seven years old; he played his

first gig with the Eureka Brass Band in 1943; roomed with the revered Detroit trumpeter Marcus Belgrave; and shared stages with the likes of Lionel Hampton, Aretha Franklin, and Tony Bennett.

The history he embodies is so much more than his résumé. Ask Preservation Hall’s leader Ben Jaffe, and he’ll tell you that Gabriel has committed an extraordinary amount of jazz history to his memory. “This is what’s amazing, man, to me,” Jaffe says on the same Zoom call. “I can put on Coleman Hawkins; I can put on Ben Webster; I can put on Lester Young; and Charlie knows every note of every solo of every song. He’s probably one of the last living musicians





A taste of licorice: Gabriel on clarinet

who knew those people and knows their sound. You almost have to be an expert or a historian today to know the difference between them, and to Charlie ... as soon as he hears them, he's humming along to the song."

"I was trying to keep my ear to what they were doing," Gabriel exclaims, "so I can try to do those things!"

Jaffe's references to those three tenor giants of the 1930s and '40s are well made, considering how deeply their sounds are felt in *Eighty Nine* (Sub Pop), Gabriel's new album and—amazingly—the first to be put out under his own name as bandleader. Those familiar with his work over the past 15 years in Preservation Hall's funky, bouncing traditional New Orleans collective will find little trace of that style here. Gabriel's music on *Eighty Nine* bears much more resemblance, sonically, to the Blanton-Webster era of Duke Ellington's band and, with its simple support team of bass (Jaffe)

and guitar (Joshua Starkman), the Nat King Cole Trio.

"That trio sound has always been a part of what I like, because you can hear everything," Gabriel explains. "The bass player holds the foundation. He holds a

"You have to know the melody and let it become part of who you are."

rhythm ... and the chord progression. The guitar player plays in place of the piano. ... And the horn is just the melody. It's most beautiful: You got everything you need. What else do you need?" It's easy to understand Gabriel's essentialism when you listen to the eight tracks on *Eighty Nine*, six standards

and two originals that sound like they were written into the Great American Songbook decades ago.

The album came about after Gabriel's brother Leonard passed away from complications due to COVID-19. After eight decades of playing, Mister Charlie put away his horn for a bit while he grieved. Weeks passed. Then one day, while he was playing chess with Jaffe

NEW GROOVES	
10 JUNE <p>Sonic Liberation Front: <i>Justice: The Vocal Works of Oliver Lake</i> (High Two): Though he's best known as a founding member of the World Saxophone Quartet, Lake considers himself a composer above all. This is his first recorded work for voice, pairing a vocal quartet with a quintet of violin, flute, tenor sax, bass, and drums.</p>	<p>viously unreleased concert recording from August 16, 1958 features Fitzgerald backed by a full orchestra conducted by Paul Weston, who also did the arranging/conducting honors for her <i>Irving Berlin Songbook</i> studio album.</p>
8 JULY <p>Steve Cardenas/Ben Allison/Ted Nash: <i>Healing Power: The Music of Carla Bley</i> (Sunnyside): The latest release by the trio of Cardenas, Allison, and Nash pays tribute to the compositions of an artist with whom all three have past personal experience. Nine Bley pieces from a range of eras are taken on here.</p>	
24 JUNE <p>Ella Fitzgerald: <i>Ella at the Hollywood Bowl: The Irving Berlin Songbook</i> (Verve): This pre-</p>	

in the Preservation Hall kitchen, he heard Starkman shedding in a corner. Something in the guitarist's practice routine inspired Mister Charlie, and the two began messing around. The album captures that quintessential facet of New Orleans music and musicians: While the performances were mostly spontaneous, they reflect such a deep study and dedication to the craft that the arrangements sound tight and polished. Just listen to the way the three musicians interact on the opening track "Memories of You," which features Gabriel on clarinet. The trio floats in on a spring breeze, Jaffe strolling at ease as Gabriel makes the melody absolutely sing and Starkman lays out the chord progression with a jovial strut.

"When I went back and was listening to the songs," Jaffe says, "I realized what I was listening to is what I get to hear all the time, and that's Charlie in a very pure state. You get to hear the beauty of his horn and the beauty of his notes without anything distracting from it."

—JACKSON SINNENBERG



“I wanted my parents to hear what music I had made in their memory before they left me alone.”

Parental Guidance Examined

ELI DEGIBRI taps into his experience as family caretaker on *Henri and Rachel*

Everything about Israeli-born tenor and soprano saxophonist Eli Degibri is a celebration. You can hear that in his sideman gigs with Herbie Hancock and Al Foster; on his earliest leader albums, such as 2004’s *In the Beginning*; on the ruminative *Israeli Song* of 2010; and on his new self-released *Henri and Rachel*, a haunting elegy for his parents. It’s in his tone: smooth and inviting but never saccharine and unafraid of a rough edge. It’s in his incessant devotion to jazz, family, and home. And in every one of his phrases, either musical or in conversation from his home in Tel Aviv, you can find revelry.

“Jazz is joy,” Degibri says. “Music—it is everything to me.”

In 2012, he moved from his adopted New York City back to Tel Aviv for a less than fully joyful reason: to take care of his aging, ailing parents. But along with the sour, there’s been plenty of sweet, including the recording of 2013’s *Twelve*, 2015’s *Cliff Hangin’*,

and 2018’s *Soul Station*, a tribute to the 1960 Hank Mobley album of the same name. On the latter, he teamed up for the first time with pianist Tom Oren and drummer Eviatar Slivnik; they reappear on *Henri and Rachel* (joined by bassist Alon Near) and have become a second family for the saxophonist. “They’re amazing, beautiful human beings and we share great chemistry,” he says.

Degibri’s first family is the focus of the new album. Taking its name from those of his mother and father, *Henri and Rachel* explores the meaning within the responsibilities he took up a decade ago. There’s an intellectualized melancholy at work in the smartly subtle “Noa” (dedicated to his fiancée, as is his soprano-rich “Longing” and “The Wedding”); the misty, atmospheric blues of “Gargamel”; and the immensely soulful title track that freshly represents his career’s through line while hitting mature compositional heights that Degibri has only hinted at in the past.

An only child close to his parents throughout his worldly travels, Degibri had to take on the true-to-life role of an old soul to capture accurately the emotion of his father’s decline and eventual passing, as well as his mother’s descent into dementia after having developed Parkinson’s disease. To speak to one’s parents’ disappearance after a lifetime of such intense proximity means pulling oneself out of one’s nonage and reaching someplace wiser, personally and musically.

Degibri isn’t so sure about that last part. “They say,” he notes, “that when you sleep on your stomach, you are still in the throes of childhood, and when you can sleep on your back, you’ve matured mentally. I think that I am often still sleeping on my stomach ... I wanted my parents to hear what music I had made in their memory before they left me alone.”

He tells a moving story about how his mother absorbed the music made in her name. “My dad passed away in the bed next to where my mother laid,” he says, slowly. “I couldn’t let go of him, and though she was crying too, my mother could not remember who exactly he was. That was surreal for me. Fast-forward to two months later, and I’m caring for her as she is in a wheelchair while I am writing the new album. I brought her into the living room, where I had a keyboard to practice and write. She asked me to play her something, and I played her ‘Henri and Rachel.’ This is my mother, forgetful and without memory. Suddenly, she hears my melody and begins singing the same melody in 5/4, as if she had it in her soul her whole life. Now, she’d heard the recording of this song for many months, but it still was amazing. When I remarked on how beautifully she was singing, and did she know what the name of the song was, my mother said, ‘Of course I do—it’s “Henri and Rachel.”’”

That is joy, Eli Degibri style

—A.D. AMOROSI



Julieta Eugenio's Giant Leap

The young saxophonist has gone from Argentinian student to New York pro

Tenor saxophonist Julieta Eugenio was recently reminded of the distinct pleasure one can derive from masters of her chosen instrument. While cooking at home and listening to *Ben Webster Plays Ballads*, she was struck by the depth of his vibrato. “He sounded like a violin,” she tells *JazzTimes* with awe. “He makes you feel something. That’s what I love about him.”

Eugenio used to play alto as an undergrad back in her home country of Argentina. She grew up about five hours from the “big city” of Buenos Aires, where she attended the Manuel de Falla Conservatory for Jazz Performance.

“I was between medicine and music,” she says, the latter having been her physician father’s career path. “He was like, ‘Well, I’d rather you try doing music first, rather than going into medicine and regretting not doing that,’” she recalls. “I knew that if I studied medicine, I wouldn’t have time to play. So, I was like, ‘I have to try focusing on what I want to do.’”

Like many saxophonists, Eugenio gravitated toward John Coltrane as a youngster.

But something about his style didn’t feel right for her. “I was trying to be like him, and I was missing the lower register,” she says. When Eugenio switched to tenor, a new kind of voice emerged from deep within her. Within that part of her instrument’s range, she grew from an imitator into a communicator.

Which leads us to *Jump*, Eugenio’s debut album as a leader, featuring bassist Matt Dwonszyk and drummer Jonathan Barber and released on trumpeter Dave Douglas’ Greenleaf label. The title is meant to refer to her move to New York—one countless students of the music have taken—but it can be more meaningfully understood simply through her tone. Embracing a nonchordal trio format, Eugenio sounds relaxed yet lively, plugged into tradition yet seemingly up for anything.

Barber crossed paths with Eugenio while making the rounds on the New York scene, both at Smalls, where Barber ran jam sessions, and elsewhere. “I thought it was cool how she was from Argentina and went to New York to get even more of an experience with this music,” he says. The two became fast friends—and collaborators.

Eugenio mostly played standards early on, but then brought out her original music, which Barber found intriguing. “It was a little different than the quote-unquote standard A-B-A form, or contrafacts, or things of that nature,” he recalls. “She had her own personality with what she wrote.”

Around the clubs, Eugenio also met Dwonszyk, one of Barber’s best friends. Stylistically, the bassist quickly ascertained where she was coming from. “I guess the opposite would be Coleman Hawkins: loud and strong. She is strong, and can be that way too,” he says. “But at the same time, she doesn’t need to play extremely aggressively to say what she’s trying to say through her instrument. She writes the melodies [of her compositions] first, then puts chords to [them], which is very interesting. And of course, the melodies are beautiful.”

Together, in Connecticut, the trio recorded *Jump*, a mellow yet decisive set of mostly originals. Eugenio’s tunes include the searching “Efes”; the subtly dark-hued “La Jungla”; and “Raccoon Tune,” a loping ode to the titular pest. Two standards—“Flamingo” and “Crazy He Calls Me”—are woven in. It all ends with the elegant “Tres,” leaving a profound impression of a fresh new voice on the scene.

“One thing that struck me about the recording is how mature it is. It’s not a rushed, virtuoso, showy, tour-de-force first release, which happens to people a lot,” Douglas tells *JazzTimes*, citing Eugenio’s “super-warm tone—very poised, inside the tunes.”

Of course, none of this came overnight. “It hasn’t been easy and it’s not easy still, but I keep pushing,” Eugenio says, declaring there are “no bad shows,” just learning experiences.

Her mind drifts back to the poignant sound of tenorists like Webster, which she keeps chasing. “I never get tired of

listening to it,” she says. If you feel similarly, you may want to jump into the music of Julieta Eugenio.

—MORGAN ENOS

“It hasn’t been easy and it’s not easy still, but I keep pushing.”



Representing the 313

MARCUS ELLIOT is keeping a Detroit jazz tradition alive

The Detroit Way,” according to author Bill Harris, who’s written extensively about jazz, is a tradition of schooling rising Detroit jazz musicians on the rudiments of musicianship, audience engagement, attire, and comportment on and off the bandstand. This is a tradition that saxophonist Marcus Elliot has mastered—and that he has every intention of continuing as his reputation grows. .

“I see myself in a new position and now that I’m a little bit older, I can start using my band as a place to mentor as well. That’s how it was done for me,” says Elliot, whose own go-to mentors were trumpeters Marcus

Belgrave and Kris Johnson, as well as bassist Rodney Whitaker.

After graduating Michigan State University in 2012, Elliot decided to build his career in Detroit and not move to New

York as some of his peers had; he was confident he could thrive in his native city’s vibrant jazz community. Not long after graduation, he secured a weekly residency at Detroit’s popular jazz club Cliff Bell’s, giving him a chance

to build his chops one brick at a time.

During the residency, which lasted four years, he led several bands.

“I was able to form my quartet ... and

“Every week just felt like such a heart-opening experience.”

every week just felt like such a heart-opening experience to play with those guys. Writing music, pushing one another to be better on our instruments and to listen deeper, we would just get into these spaces, and we could just stay in them forever.”

During this time, Elliot also became a musical ambassador for the cultural diplomacy program American Voices. He performed in countries like South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Egypt, Jordan, and Indonesia, furthering his understanding of music as a universal language: “Most of the people that we played with, we couldn’t even really talk to ... but we were able to connect on this music thing.” He credits his time in Africa with influencing the way he viewed rhythm and making it more of a focal point in his music.

Elliot has a way of playing—sometimes enhanced by looping and other electronic effects—that compels people to listen. Pianist Michael Malis, who co-leads the band Balance with Elliot, says that the saxophonist’s sound acts as a messenger that connects directly with audiences: “I love the work that Marcus and I do in Balance. We’re able to go very deep on very challenging music because we have established a strong working process over our 15 years of knowing each other. We spend a lot of time zooming in on the minute details of the music. We’ll discover all of the space and breadth that those moments have to offer. I’m really grateful to have a collaborator who pushes me to this level of depth.”

Since 2015, Elliot has self-released four albums, and he plans to release *Conjure*, his second project with Balance, this summer. It’s an extension of their self-titled 2017 debut, a showcase of compositional brilliance and improvisational know-how; this time around, the duo will also welcome some special guests.

Elliot’s embrace of the Detroit Way includes educating the next wave of musicians from the city. He’s a newly appointed saxophone instructor at Wayne State University and previously served as director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s Civic Jazz Ensemble, in which he once played as a student. He plans to use any future bands he assembles to further his music and guide the next generation of Detroit jazz musicians.

“I see this as a new chapter,” Elliot says, “and it’s a great opportunity for me ... I’m really excited to be able to help out students in any way I can and to be a part of the ecosystem that is here in Detroit.”

—VERONICA JOHNSON

Farewells



Charnett Moffett

Charnett Moffett, a bassist and composer whose virtuosity on both electric (often fretless) and acoustic instruments was matched by his versatility, died of a heart attack April 11 at Stanford University Medical Center in Stanford, Calif. He was 54 and “had been struggling with bouts of intense pain from Trigeminal Neuralgia for the past few years,” according to an official announcement. Despite his young age, Moffett was ubiquitous for nearly four decades, both as an accompanist/collaborator and as a bandleader. A former child prodigy who first recorded at age eight with his drummer father Charles Moffett Sr., he reportedly contributed to more than 200 albums during his career, by a dizzying array of artists ranging from Pharoah Sanders to Harry Connick Jr., Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Ornette Coleman, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Stanley Jordan, Anita Baker, Herbie Hancock, Sonny Rollins, Carla Bley, and McCoy Tyner. He also recorded 17 albums under his own name; the most recent, *New Love*, was released last year.

Barbara Morrison, a jazz and blues vocalist long beloved on the Los Angeles music scene, died March 16 of cardiovascular disease and related complications. She was 72. Born in Michigan, Morrison moved to L.A. at 21 and established a career singing alongside such artists as Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson, Ray Charles, and Doc Severinsen, maintaining a regular weekly gig at Pip’s jazz club for more than a decade. In later years, she founded both the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center in Leimert Park Village and the California Jazz & Blues Museum. She also became an adjunct associate professor of global jazz studies at UCLA; in recognition of

her work, the university created the Barbara Morrison Scholarship for Jazz in 2020.

Jessica Williams, a vibrant pianist and composer with an unshakeable sense of swing, died March 10 of atherosclerotic heart disease. She was just a week shy of her 74th birthday. In the late 1970s, the conservatory-trained Williams became the house pianist at San Francisco’s legendary Keystone Korner club. From there she went on to work with a gallery of jazz greats—Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Charlie Haden, Tony Williams, Airto Moreira, and Flora Purim among them—and compile a discography as a

leader that encompassed more than 40 albums, earning her two Grammy nominations. Although she never recorded for a major label, she received numerous grants from prestigious arts organizations, including a Guggenheim Fellowship. The last decade of Williams’ life was shadowed by severe physical difficulties, including spinal problems that required multiple surgeries.



Jessica Williams

Daphne “Tina” May, an English jazz singer and educator, died March 26 of a brain tumor. She was 60. Over a career of more than three decades, May contributed to more than 30 albums and worked with a wide variety of musicians, ranging from bandleader Humphrey Lyttelton to pianist Enrico Pieranunzi.

Dennis González, a trumpeter, educator, and radio host who spent his life carving out a place for avant-garde jazz in his native Texas, died March 15 at Methodist Dallas Medical Center in Dallas. He was 67 and had reportedly been in failing health for some time. González founded the Dallas



Dennis González

Association for Avant-Garde and Neo-Impressionistic Music (daagnim), a Texan version of Chicago’s AACM, in the late 1970s. At the same time, he began what became a 21-year run hosting the radio show *Miles Out* on KERA-FM. Among his closest musical collaborators were saxophonist Charles Brackeen and bassist Henry Grimes, both of whom he helped coax out of lengthy periods in retirement.

John Swenson, a venerated music journalist and founding father of rock criticism who later transitioned gradually and effectively into the jazz world, died March 28 of prostate cancer. He was 71. Swenson began writing about music professionally in 1967, and his byline appeared frequently in *Crawdaddy*, *Rolling Stone*, *Creem*, and other groundbreaking rock-oriented publications. Among the 15 books to his credit are the first two editions of *The Rolling Stone Record Guide* (co-edited with Dave Marsh) and *The Rolling Stone Jazz Record Guide*. Long based in New York, Swenson established a second home in New Orleans during the 1990s, and eventually became a key contributor to *OffBeat* magazine, specializing in jazz and other genres associated with the Crescent City.

Steve Lacy in 1957



Not Too Cool to Bop

STEVE LACY's early saxophone style owes a major debt to Sonny Rollins

BY MARK STRYKER

Steve Lacy was once a brilliant bebop player. Yet conventional wisdom says the opposite. Many have long argued that a key to the innovative soprano saxophonist's stubborn originality over a 50-year career was precisely the fact that he *never* played bebop, the common-practice language of jazz since about 1950.

The Lacy creation myth unfolds like this: Born in New York in 1934, he fell in love with the soprano sax as a teenager after hearing Sidney Bechet, cozied up to pre-bop elders like his teacher Cecil Scott, and made his first records in 1954 at age 20 in quasi-trad/swing bands. Shortly thereafter, iconoclastic pianist and composer Cecil Taylor plucked him

out of revivalist waters and threw him into the avant-garde ocean.

Lacy then discovered his lifelong guru, Thelonious Monk, whose idiosyncratic music shaped bebop harmony and structure but also created a sound world askew from bop conventions. With Monk as his avatar, Lacy was alone playing modern jazz on the soprano until Coltrane took it up. He forged a singular legacy from myriad strains of modernism until his death in 2004: free jazz, solo concerts, multimedia works, and small groups committed to his tart compositions, often rooted in texts ranging from Melville to Robert Creeley.

Missing from this account is the

profound role that bebop, particularly as embodied by Sonny Rollins, played in Lacy's formative years. Proof is all over his first two recordings as a leader in 1957-58, *Soprano Sax* (Prestige) and *Reflections* (New Jazz). Rollins' shadow looms as large over these records as Monk's, and it's their twin influences working *in tandem* for about three years that pushed Lacy into maturity.

He moved swiftly. By late 1960, when he recorded *The Straight Horn of Steve Lacy* (Candid) at age 26, he was leaving bebop behind and pruning the rococo ornaments of Rollins' style from his solos. But the concern for thematic improvising, melodic and rhythmic rhyme, drama, and humor—lessons Lacy absorbed from Rollins, who had earlier absorbed them from Monk—remained integral to his DNA. He also received an advanced degree in tone production by practicing occasionally with Rollins on the Williamsburg Bridge during the tenor saxophonist's sabbatical.

“Back then Rollins was my idol,” Lacy told me in 1994. “He was No. 1. He was champion of the world. He was the strongest, the most interesting, the most swinging saxophonist in the world after Charlie Parker died and until Coltrane got to his full strength, and then they were evenly matched.”

Here’s Lacy in a 2002 interview with *The Wire*: “I didn’t skip over anything. I learned all of Charlie Parker’s tunes and Benny Golson’s tunes, Sonny Rollins’ tunes ... I went through all that pure bop stuff. No, that’s a myth that I skipped over bebop.”

Lacy inaugurated his Rollins phase most definitively with four swinging choruses on Cole Porter’s “Easy to Love” from *Soprano Sax* in November 1957.

You hear it in the loosey-goosey vibe created by his leisurely rhythmic displacements on the melody and behind-the-beat phrasing. Like Rollins, he keeps Porter’s theme in the foreground while improvising. Witty curlicues embellish flowing eighth-note lines that thread the changes. That’s bebop Sonny side up!

You don’t need to know a whit of theory to follow Lacy’s narrative, but the inverted major, minor, and augmented triads that often appear in bars 5 to 8 of each 16-bar half-chorus help organize the solo into a gestalt. Alas, bassist Buell Neidlinger and drummer Dennis Charles (Lacy’s bandmates in Taylor’s group) sound clunky, un-swinging. Pianist Wynton Kelly’s jaunty gait tries to rescue the groove, but he and Lacy deserve a more authoritative beat.

Taped a full year later, *Reflections* is one of Lacy’s most rewarding recordings and a landmark: the first LP devoted solely to Monk’s music aside from those led by the composer. Four of the seven songs had not been recorded since Monk introduced them: “Four in One,” “Hornin’ In,” “Ask Me Now,” “Skippy.”

While *Reflections* documents the peak of his Rollins infatuation, Lacy now has

such a deep understanding of his idol’s conception that he personalizes it without sounding like a copy. Sidestepping licks, he carves fresh shapes derived from the formal structures and emotional moods of Monk’s compositions.

The band is almost perfect. Pianist Mal Waldron gets Monk innately. Drummer Elvin Jones’ rapturous polyrhythms lift the bandstand. Neidlinger remains overmatched, but Jones, strong as a bull, puts the bassist on his back and carries him. (Wilbur Ware was supposed to be on the date, but when he didn’t show for the rehearsal, Lacy called his former colleague.)

Every area of Lacy’s playing has leapt forward since *Soprano Saxophone*:

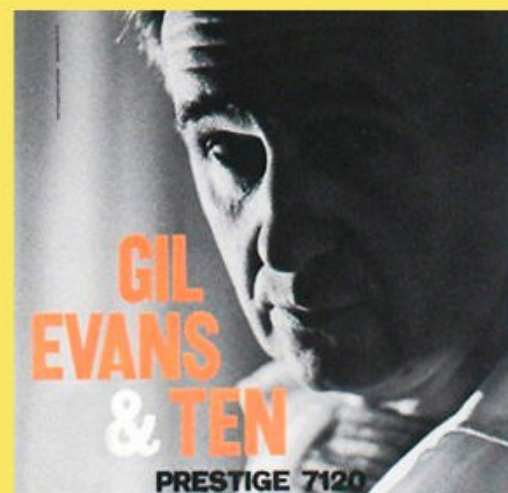
sound, technique, intonation, time, ideas, execution, articulation, individuality. His tone is broader, warmer, balancing a reedy expressiveness with the brassy punch of a trumpet. He’s also downright loquacious. Never again would he solo so volubly—a stark difference from the almost Webern-like distillation he favored by the late ’70s.

Lacy attacks the daedal melody of “Four in One” like a lion tearing into prey and solos with uninhibited ardor. When he returns later for a second solo, he picks up the bassist’s hee-haw figure and chews on it humorously. Then he launches into a dazzling 10-bar snake that carries him well into the bridge. He grabs a quick breath and, like Houdini slipping out of a straitjacket, escapes the labyrinth with a furiously descending figure of oscillating intervals. Ingenious.

There’s one more tip of the hat to Rollins in the third bar of the last A section. He hammers the quarter notes on beats 2 and 3: BAP! BAP! Sonny is the king of aggressive articulation, and Lacy’s startling homage is the sound of a gifted apprentice becoming a master. **JT**

Rollins’ shadow looms as large as Monk’s over Lacy’s first two recordings as a leader, Soprano Sax and Reflections.

FURTHER LISTENING



Gil Evans: *Gil Evans & Ten*

(Prestige, 1957)

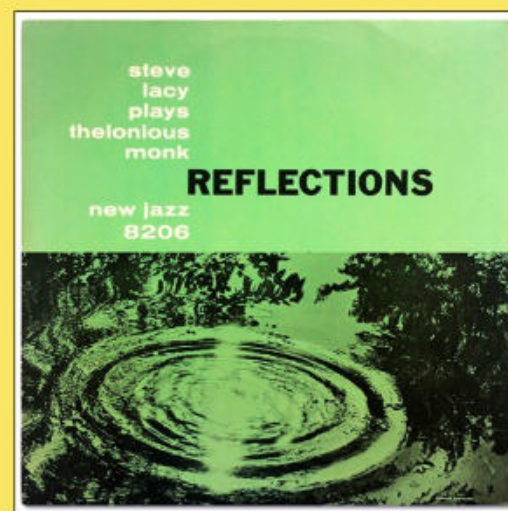
Frisky and purposeful solos on “Ella Speed” and “Just One of Those Things” find Lacy starting to lean into Rollins.



Steve Lacy: *The Straight Horn of Steve Lacy*

(Candid, 1961)

A masterpiece: No weak links in the pianoless quartet (Charles Davis, John Ore, Roy Haynes), a stimulating program (Bird, Monk, Cecil Taylor), and Lacy playing past his influences.



Steve Lacy: *Evidence*

(New Jazz, 1962)

A buoyant quartet (Don Cherry, Carl Brown, Billy Higgins) tackles Monk, Ellington, and Strayhorn. The added weight and range of Lacy’s sound surely reflect his sessions on the bridge with Rollins.



Walter Smith III

A tenor for our times is on point while on the move

BY DAN BILAWSKY

Walter Smith III has been burning the candle at both ends. As he connected with *JazzTimes* via Zoom from a New York City hotel room in mid-March, a flurry of activity surrounded him. He spent the previous weekend playing with both the Maria Schneider Orchestra and vocalist Sara Gazarek in their respective performances at Birdland, kicked off a weeklong run with drummer Bill Stewart's trio at the Village Vanguard the night before this virtual listening session, and completed six hours of work on schedules for the summer and fall semesters at Berklee College of Music—his alma mater, where he now serves as the chair of the woodwind department—shortly before we logged on. One might think such a workload and pace

would sap him of his energy, but he was right as rain and raring to go. That same focus and enthusiasm that Smith showed for our get-together seems to factor into all of his many pursuits, making him one of the most in-demand saxophonists on the scene today.

Since releasing his debut album 16 years ago, Smith has seemed almost omnipresent. His sideman credits include work with trumpeters Ambrose Akinmusire, Terence Blanchard, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, and Sean Jones; pianists Jason Moran, Gerald Clayton, and Danny Grissett; drummers Roy Haynes, Eric Harland, Donald Edwards, Kendrick Scott, and Ralph Peterson; and numerous others, including bassist Christian McBride and vibraphonist

Warren Wolf. Having appeared on more than 100 recordings, including recent releases from trumpeter Marquis Hill and drummer Matt Slocum, Smith proves as powerful and thought-provoking a presence in the studio as he is on stage.

His own leader discography reveals that too. With a handful of well-received dates under his own name spanning formats from the compact chordless trio (on 2018's *Twio*) to a sturdy sextet, Smith has carved out his place within the ranks. And through a series of co-led releases with guitarist Matthew Stevens under the In Common appellation, he's broken new ground. Each In Common album has employed a different three-piece rhythm section; *In Common III*, released five days before we spoke, finds Smith and Stevens meeting up with an exceptional x-factor in the form of pianist Kris Davis, bassist Dave Holland, and drummer Terri Lyne Carrington.

An easy conversationalist showing great insight, good humor, and pure love for what he hears and does, Smith moved comfortably from topic to topic before and between

our times in listening mode, touching on everything from the origins and progress of the In Common concept to previous teaching work at Indiana University and current efforts at Berklee to his and saxophonist Bob Reynolds' early, positive encounters with the concertizing Kenny G. And when the music was rolling, not surprisingly, Smith appeared right at home for this, his first Before & After.

1. Myron Walden

"Giving"

(*In This World: To Feel*, Demi Sound). Walden, tenor saxophone; Jon Cowherd, Fender Rhodes; Mike Moreno, guitar; Chris Thomas, bass; Brian Blade, drums. Recorded in 2007.

BEFORE: [*Listens to the track for more than two minutes*] I only lived in New York for two years, from 2003 to 2005, and Myron was my favorite saxophone player and I got to know him really well then. I'm not an equipment person. I never change [the types of] mouthpieces and reeds [I use]. But he's been there for every decision I've made like that and he's encouraged me to play certain things—a mouthpiece, all that type of stuff.

Maybe the best concert that I ever saw was when he was playing with Brian Blade's Fellowship band at Joe's Pub. I don't remember the year, but Wayne Shorter's biography [*Footprints* by Michelle Mercer] had just come out and for the release they had two acts. Gretchen Parlato and Lionel Loueke played duo and then the Fellowship band played after that. That concert was my first time seeing Fellowship live, it was like one of those dream-come-true moments, and Myron was so ridiculous.

So he's been my favorite alto player for a long time. And around that same time he was starting to play tenor. He was really, like *really*, into it, checking out all this different stuff, getting down to the details of what kind of horn he wanted to play. With saxophone players, we all know that most people play vintage horns or vintage-inspired horns. There's something about these old Selmers—Mark VIs and the Balanced Actions—that everyone loves. Coltrane played them. That's part of why people want them, but there's also the different metal, the weight of them, they're broken in, all that. And Myron was very specific about not wanting to play one of those horns because he wanted to develop his own sound. He was just like, "Man, anytime I pick up a Mark VI, it feels like it's already been

claimed by all of these different people." So I remember he was getting into Keilwerth horns and he was very, very, very particular about all of the details.

I know he started two bands: He did this one and then he had a Stanley Turrentine band, which was, I believe, an organ trio. But this record is great. It's incredible writing. Mike Moreno's on it playing guitar. He sounds great on it ... and Myron just has a way of shaping solos and building intensity and then keeping it there for longer than anybody can. It's just sound and lyricism. He's a master of that.

"You're not just going to come across Arnett Cobb the way everyone listens to music now. He's not going to be on Spotify's State of Jazz or Jazz Currents on Apple Music, you know what I mean?"

2. Arnett Cobb

"Funky Butt"

(*Funky Butt*, Progressive). Cobb, tenor saxophone; Derek Smith, piano; Ray Drummond, bass; Ronnie Bedford, drums. Recorded in 1980.

BEFORE: [*Listens for less than 30 seconds*] We were talking about this album last night.

You were talking about this album last night?

Yeah. Bill Stewart was saying this is one of his dad's favorite saxophone players. It's Arnett Cobb.

Do you feel a connection to that whole Texas tenor lineage, being from Houston? Yeah. I feel the connection because

everybody that I grew up around, all of the local teachers and the professional musicians, they would all talk about Arnett Cobb. And my teacher, Conrad Johnson, who was a local legend who they made a movie about [called *Thunder Soul*], had a musical relationship with Arnett Cobb, and he would always talk to me about him and play all of that information.

When I think about Texas tenor, it's about style and sound. The style, it's just clever. They're playing things that nobody else is playing and the sound that they play it with—even never having seen Cobb play live, I know it just fills any kind of room, you know what I mean? And that was the thing for me, being from Houston and not being clever, first of all, but also not having a sound. I feel like, in that way, I'm kind of disconnected because I don't have that *thing*. And that's what I always grew up being around. Everyone was talking about sound, sound, sound, sound, sound. And I remember when I first got to college I met Dayna Stephens, and when he played I was like, "Oh! Now I can see it! [*Chuckles*] This is what they're talking about." But yeah, Arnett Cobb. The sound is incredible. So that's the main thing for me.

I feel like he's not a figure who's discussed often today. Maybe musicians talk about him, but he's not spoken about in broader circles.

I think you're right. Part of it is because most musicians don't get to spend time around people that are a little older—musicians that have really listened to all of this stuff. Left to our own devices [we don't branch out]. When I was in high school, I just listened to Kenny Garrett, Joshua Redman, Branford Marsalis, and it was that all the time. And there's nothing wrong with that. Had my teacher not told me about this, I never would have heard it. And then being around Bill and Larry [Grenadier], we did a tour recently and on all of these long train rides they would just, in passing, talk about [older albums they were listening to]. I remember being around Jason Marsalis too, who's like an encyclopedia. And if you aren't around that, there's so much music to listen to, so how would you ever really be pointed in the right direction? Arnett Cobb is somebody that people would need to tell you about because you're not just going to come across him the way that everyone listens to music now, with playlists. He's not going to be on Spotify's State of Jazz or Jazz Currents on Apple Music, you know what I mean? He's not going to be in lessons because it's going

to be Trane and Sonny Rollins and the ones that we all know. So people need to talk about these guys more often. He's a really important guy, for sure.

3. Stanley Turrentine

"Salt Song"

(*Salt Song*, CTI). Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Eumir Deodato, Horace Parlan, Richard Tee, keyboards; Eric Gale, guitar; Ron Carter, bass; Billy Cobham, drums; Airtio Moreira, percussion; Julius Brand, Paul Gershman, Julie Held, Leo Kahn, Harry Katzman, Joe Malin, violins; Harold Coletta, viola; Charles McCracken, Alan Shulman, cellos. Recorded in 1971.

BEFORE: [*Listens closely for more than three minutes*] Okay. That's what I was waiting for, that sound. Maybe I'm wrong, but Stanley?

AFTER: Okay. Wow. I've never heard that before. And also that's a hard one to pick out because I usually don't picture Stanley playing on major songs. Everything's usually minor, or at least that's how I picture it. [*Sees album cover*] Oh, wait. I've seen this record before. Maybe I've heard some of it, but that piece doesn't sound familiar to me. It was his vibrato that I was picking up on earlier, but then, when I started talking, he did this thing in F that confirmed my suspicion.

I've listened a lot to Stanley in the last few years, and that was actually tied into Indiana University because [guitarist] Dave Stryker is there, and Dave used to play with Stanley. When I was teaching at IU, Dave started calling me for gigs and then, eventually, I did a recording with him. And he would talk about his time with Stanley and we would play some of his songs ... and I never had anything to play on them. They were all slow or they'd have a certain feel to them and I felt very unprepared. So I started listening to a lot of Stanley, which I had not done in a while. He's an incredible guy, the sound and feeling and time feel and the cool things that he does with false fingerings all over the horn. He's pretty recognizable. But he's also less talked about. Not to the level of Arnett Cobb, but still not mentioned too often.

I agree. Everyone throws out *Sugar*, but once you go beyond that, a lot of people just don't talk about him.

I actually have a picture from when I met him. I met Stanley Turrentine in high school at the IAJE Convention. I believe

it was Atlanta. So I was in 10th grade in 1996 ... and he does not look pleased with whatever I said to him beforehand [see next page]. But it was very cool to meet him. He was on *With the Tenors of Our Time*, that Roy Hargrove record which was one of my favorite albums at the time, and I remember going up to him and, right before we took the picture, saying, "I love you on *With the Tenors of Our Time*." And I feel like he was just thinking, "What about all of the other stuff I've done?!" But yeah, it's funny.

*"That's crazy
that saxophone
is Anat
Cohen's second
instrument ...
and she's better
than me."*

4. Martial Solal/Johnny Griffin

"Hey Now"

(*In and Out*, Dreyfus). Solal, piano; Griffin, tenor saxophone. Recorded in 1999.

BEFORE: [*Listens until saxophone exits and piano solo begins*] I hesitate to guess on this one. There was a point where I thought maybe I caught something. So I'm guessing, if it is who I think it is, that it's way later in his career. Is it Johnny Griffin?

AFTER: Oh, wow. Okay. So like I said, in high school I mostly only listened to Kenny and Branford and Josh Redman and all of those guys. But actually my favorite record during that time, and still to this day, is *Thelonious in Action*, recorded live at the Five Spot [in 1958]. Johnny Griffin plays "Rhythm-A-Ning" and he plays this incredible long solo on the rhythm changes there. Something he played on the bridge of that tune—the way he phrased it, floating with an airy tone—sounded [like something I just heard here]. But it makes sense that this was like 40 years later, the same guy. That's incredible. Wow. I've never heard this. Beautiful.

5. Anat Cohen

"The Wein Machine"

(*Luminosa*, Anzic). Cohen, tenor saxophone; Jason Lindner, Wurlitzer electric piano, analog synthesizer; Gilad Hekselman, guitar; Joe Martin, bass; Daniel Freedman, drums. Recorded in 2014.

BEFORE: [*Listens with interest and curiosity for more than five minutes*] I don't know. I'm figuring out the chord changes, though. I have no clue. I don't even know that I have a guess.

Would you like a hint?

Okay. Yeah.

She's better known for another instrument she plays.

She's better known for another instrument.

Right. She's a doubler, and I think most people would say saxophones are her second instrument.

So it's somebody younger? Who's playing guitar?

It's Gilad Hekselman

Okay. That's what I thought. So then if it's Gilad, is this Anat?

AFTER: It is. Yeah, man. I should listen to more of her saxophone playing because I know a lot of her stuff on clarinet, but not much of her saxophone playing. She sounds good too. She's all over the place. That's crazy that that's her second instrument ... and she's better than me. Good for her. [*Laughs*]

6. Lee Konitz

"Tenorlee/Lady Be Good"

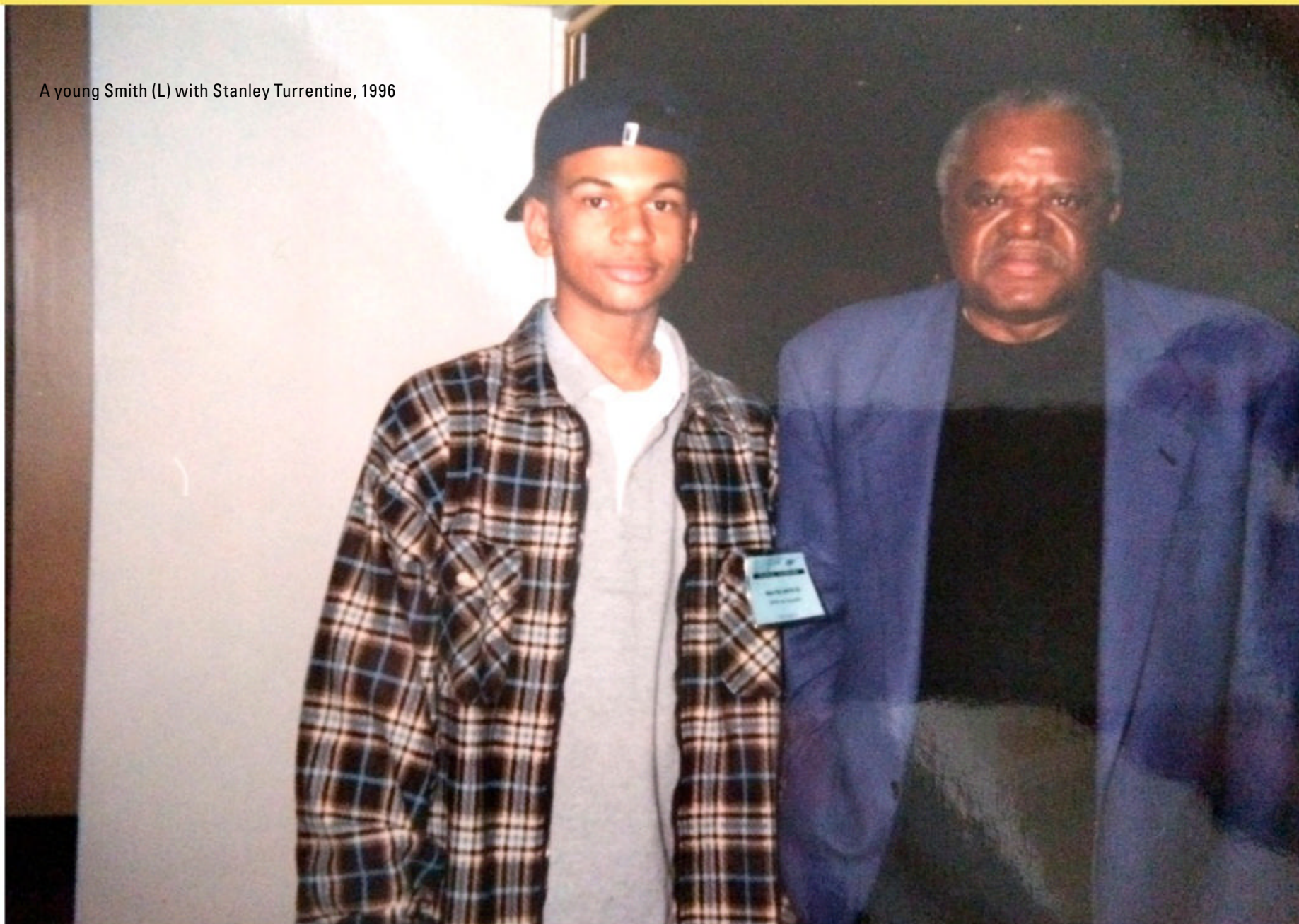
(*Tenorlee*, Choice). Konitz, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Michael Moore, bass. Recorded in 1977/1978.

BEFORE: [*Listens to whole "Tenorlee" solo saxophone introduction and some of "Lady Be Good"*] All right. Now based on what you just did with Anat, I'm guessing that this is Lee Konitz on tenor?

I told you I had to throw in a couple of curveballs. [*Laughs all around*]

AFTER: I don't know this record but I like all of that stuff, like that long intro where there was no agenda. It was just playing, you can relax. I was thinking it might be

A young Smith (L) with Stanley Turrentine, 1996



somebody like Lee because of the length of the line—you know, all those really long lines—and then when the melody came in [I knew]. Beautiful, man. He's a bad dude.

From what I've read, that track was an unplanned, spur-of-the-moment thing in the studio.

Yeah, it feels like it. I feel like that spontaneity is there. He sounds great on tenor. Okay, I've got to check this out too.

7. Sound Prints

"Fee Fi Fo Fum"

(*Scandal*, Greenleaf). Joe Lovano, tenor saxophone; Dave Douglas, trumpet; Lawrence Fields, piano; Linda May Han Oh, bass; Joey Baron, drums. Recorded in 2017.

BEFORE: [*Listens for more than three minutes*] That's the Sound Prints band. You know, there are some people whose sound I should know instantaneously. But he's one that I actually do know as soon as I hear one note. In high school I got that [*Quartets*] *Live at the Village Vanguard* double CD and spent way too much time listening to it. And that *Tenor Legacy* album with Josh Redman. It

always felt like it was really loose within his articulation and the harmony, like he was always finding things that were just adjacent to what would normally be there. So if there are eight eighth notes that fit in a bar, he'd have nine [*chuckles*]. Or if the chord was Fsus there would be an A-flat in it, you know? With all of these different things that he was doing, it felt like he was somebody who's not bound to all of the rules but still plays within the rules.

I remember meeting a great tenor player in Boston by the name of Rick DiMuzio, and he was doing his doctoral dissertation on Joe Lovano's playing. I don't want to exaggerate, but I feel like he had transcribed at least 50 of his solos. And he was telling me that at any moment he's playing the melody—like throughout the song, no matter what the song is, if you just look at it on a grid, he's playing some of it. And whatever happens is directly related to the melody. It might be on the seventh bar for three eighth notes. Or it might be at the top of the bridge where he's just playing the melody the whole time. And then I started listening to him with that in mind, and it gave me even more appreciation for him because my initial impression was

that he was just running wild around what was supposed to be. But then when it was tied to the melody, it made so much more sense. That's one of the beautiful things about him, listening to him play melodies and how he embellishes those things. He plays a lot, but it's not like when some people play a lot in a melody. The complete melody is still there, but there's all this other stuff that he's doing. So his sense of style is just incredible. He's definitely one of my favorites. **JT**

Read the rest of Walter Smith III's Before & After listening session, including comments on music by Adam Larson, the Jessica Jones Quartet, and Bob Reynolds, at jazztimes.com.

Use this QR code to check out Zoom session video from the Before & After listening session with Walter Smith III. Accessible to *JazzTimes* members only; if you're interested in membership, go to jazztimes.com/memberships.





Greg Abate

In the right place at the right time—just like his notes

BY KEN FRANCKLING

Have saxophone, will travel. With Hapologies to Paladin, that sums up the career of reed player Greg Abate. Since the early 1990s, he's been a true-blue ambassador for bebop, at home in southern New England and at venues all over the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Less frequent international forays have taken him as far as Moscow and Georgia—the former

Soviet republic, not the southern state associated with his early musical boss Ray Charles.

Abate, who turns 75 on May 31, estimates that in a normal year, he averages 225 days on the road. After the extended pandemic lull that kept him at home in Rhode Island composing, practicing, and Zoom teaching, he resumed traveling last fall. That itinerary included 19

gigs in England between October 28 and November 23, working with 17 different rhythm sections.

Studio time is also fairly regular. Abate's most recent album, last year's *Magic Dance: The Music of Kenny Barron* (Whaling City Sound), spent seven straight weeks at No. 1 on the *JazzWeek* radio charts and was a *JazzTimes* Editor's Pick (in the July 2021 issue). This kind of success, in his mind, has been a long time coming. Abate says he's only felt confident about his direction for the past 10 years. A major turning point came when he received a stamp of approval from one of his mentors, the late alto saxophonist Phil Woods.

"Having someone validate you helps," he says. "In 2013, I was playing with Phil, who was my guest on some gigs and a few workshops at colleges. At Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, he's talking to the students about saxophone players. He comes over, puts his arm around me and says: 'And I like Greg Abate because he plays from the heart and he's not just playing a lot of bullshit.' And I thought to myself, 'Holy shit, man, there it is!'"

Quicksilver shifts in melodic ideas are key to Abate's vigorous sound. With just one listen, it's clear that he was most influenced by Woods and Richie Cole. He recorded with both alto players on different sessions in his extensive discography, and his sound, much like theirs, is rooted in the bebop foundation set by Charlie Parker. Although alto sax is his primary instrument, *Magic Dance* enabled him to show his chops on the rest of his arsenal as well: soprano, tenor, and baritone saxes and flute, with overdubbing creating a full sax section on two tracks.

It took a musical journey of nearly 20 years, coursing through R&B, jazz-rock fusion, and swing, before Abate fully emerged as a bop stylist in the early '90s. Born in Fall River, Massachusetts and raised in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, he didn't hail from a musical family. When he was 10, a salesman asked his mother if she wanted to rent an instrument for her son to play in school. "He had a clarinet, a trombone, and a trumpet. He demonstrated all three," Abate recalls. "I told my mother I wanted to play the trombone. She said, 'No, you're not playing that. You can play the black one.' So I started playing clarinet in fifth grade. I had no idea what it was. I even had the mouthpiece on wrong."

But it was a start. By ninth grade, he changed instruments. “Dave Brubeck came out. ‘Take Five’ happened. I heard Paul Desmond and alto sax became more important to me. I was listening to the Billy Vaughn big band on the radio. I heard the sound of all these saxophones. I thought it was a really cool sound.” Soon he was playing in Rhode Island’s all-state high-school jazz band. At Berklee College of Music in Boston, he studied with

Joe Viola, Alf Clausen, Roger Neumann, Charlie Mariano, and Herb Pomeroy before graduating in 1971. “I had all those great teachers,” Abate says. “I was just having fun learning about music. I had no idea that I could make a living playing music. I just liked doing it. I really didn’t know the basic things to get out of the chute yet.”

After Berklee, he headed west with three musician friends. He worked in two Los Angeles R&B cover bands until those gigs ran out. Living in Santa Monica and looking for work in 1973, Abate spotted a musicians’ union notice for auditions at Ray Charles Enterprises. “I happened to be in the right place at the right time,” he recalls. After four days of auditioning, Charles hired him to succeed Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis as the band’s lead alto player. The lengthy process featured moments that sound funny when Abate relates them now.

“I was hired to play alto and flute, but I never played flute before. I had to buy a flute for the audition. I couldn’t play the freaking thing,” he says. “James Clay, who was playing tenor, was always so nice to me. The piano player did the intro to ‘Georgia’ and there were some flute things in there, but James played them for me. It was perfect, because Ray couldn’t see who was playing. Ray never commented, but he never complained.”

Abate spent two years with the Charles band, touring primarily in the U.S. and Europe. “I was a fair reader but

soloing-wise, I still had a lot to learn. Ray gave me an alto feature to play on ‘The Shadow of Your Smile.’ I wish I had played it then as I can play it today, but I couldn’t play on the changes. I thought I was, but not well enough. Ray didn’t fire me, but he gave the solo to James Clay. At least I could pay him back a solo for playing flute for me.”

He returned home in 1975, soon working in a busy Top 40 band. A friend

told him to check out the scene at Allary, a Providence jazz mecca from the late ’60s to the late ’70s. Abate started sitting in with Thursday-night regulars, which led to forming his own jazz-fusion sextet Channel One in 1978. It released one record, *Without Boundaries* (World, 1980), before disbanding. Abate also was playing swing with

the long-running Duke Belaire Jazz Orchestra and the revived Artie Shaw Orchestra led by reed player Dick Johnson. These experiences prompted him by the late 1980s to focus on becoming a hard-bop specialist; he still loves the challenges of playing and composing in that style.

“You have a lot of choices,” Abate says. “There are infinite possibilities with the chords going on. It never ceases to amaze me what a challenge it is. To play in that tradition, I’m doing things that are from the past. Other people don’t hear it, but I love it so much. I also like the rhythms of bossa nova and samba, which lets me play bop on top of Latin. So many sounds are ugly now. There are no harmonics, no chords. What do people hear these days? Why do things have to change from that good music?”

In tandem with his live performance work with jazz notables (Barron, Cole, Woods, Nick Brignola, James Moody, Claudio Roditi, Hilton Ruiz, Lew Tabackin, and James Williams, among others), Abate began recording steadily.

“If a surgeon operating on someone puts that knife in the wrong place, it might cause a lot of harm. If you put a note in the wrong place, you’re not going to kill anybody but it is not right.”

RECOMMENDED LISTENING



Greg Abate Quintet featuring Richie Cole: *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*
(Candid, 1995)

Greg Abate: *Bop Lives!*
(Blue Chip Jazz, 1996)

Greg Abate and Gary Smulyan: *First Encounter*
(Blue Chip Jazz, 2012)

Greg Abate: *Motif*
(Whaling City Sound, 2014)

Greg Abate and Phil Woods: *Kindred Spirits, Live at Chan's*
(Whaling City Sound, 2016)

Greg Abate: *Magic Dance: The Music of Kenny Barron*
(Whaling City Sound, 2021)

Starting with his bop debut, *Bop City – Live at Birdland* (Candid, 1991), he has 18 recordings as a leader, three as co-leader, and three as featured artist. “I can’t believe the guys I’ve played with who are total name guys,” he says. “That was my education. I look at it as the School of Berklee, the School of Charlie Mariano, the School of Ray Charles, the School of Phil Woods. It is such a wonderful thing. Each was a school of music. But at the time, I didn’t think I was in school, I was just getting bumped around.”

Abate says he now thinks of the music he makes, the solos he takes, as “surgical playing. Improvising is not just playing a lot of notes. You can do that, but it’s not making a story. If a surgeon operating on someone puts that knife in the wrong place, it might cause a lot of harm. If you put a note in the wrong place, you’re not going to kill anybody but it is not right. It has to be in the right place. You have to be in the moment. I never get tired of it. It is such a great feeling to put the air in there.” **JT**

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal,
providing you various content:
brand new books, trending movies,
fresh magazines, hot games,
recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price

Cheap constant access to piping hot media

Protect your downloadings from Big brother

Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages

Brand new content

One site



AVXLIVE • ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open <https://avxlive.icu>



Found in the Stars

He claims he's not a natural talent. But MARK TURNER's unyielding attention to detail over decades has made him a modern saxophone master.

By A.D. AMOROSI

When you hear tenor saxophonist Mark Turner's name in conversation, it seems to be frequently linked to the notions of mindfulness, precision, and fastidiousness. "That is a good thing ... I think," Turner says from Switzerland, in between a day's Zoom lessons with students and a night's gig with his ensemble.

It also makes him contemporary creative music's sharp dressed man, buttoned up but free, with a feel for the intergalactic in his composition and the spacy (albeit with a serrated edge) in his playing. Listen to his newest ECM album, *Return from the Stars*: He's creating exploratory jazz with a vision that's both open-ended and clear-cut.

So what does Turner do that *isn't* so sharp and clean?

"My social interactions," the saxophonist says with a laugh. "I'm not too together on that, staying connected. I'm definitely the opposite of meticulous on that count. Very messy."

Luckily, his interactions with intelligent and equally diligent fellow improvisers have remained clear since at least his time as a sideman to Leon Parker (ref: 1994's *Above & Below*).

"I think attention to detail is important," he continues. "Most of the artistic masters that I look to, in jazz and the European music continuum—even the visual art world and literature—pay great attention to every point, every component. That focus allows them to get deeper into their art form."

Before he can get into further details of his detailing, though, Turner says a most unusual thing. "I'm not naturally talented. I have to study and pay extra attention to the craft in order to be able to credibly and inventively play music."

He goes on to state that he's been around people with "natural" talent, be it for math or music, and that his definition of engagement is not theirs. "They might work at it, whatever it is, a lot, but they can also do it at a credible level without working at it, and have been able to do so from a young age. That was not me. I have to be on it all the time."

Turner first got "on it" as a Southern California youth with music-loving parents who played their son a wealth of gospel, R&B, and jazz records. He spent his adolescence in marching bands ("that's a very California kid thing") before heading off to the East Coast and Boston's Berklee College of Music. "Thinking in a hierarchical way, I'm sure I was mediocre at Berklee," he says. "I was ordinary ... Maybe I still am."

Here your humble author must protest. If Mark Turner were ordinary, you wouldn't be reading this story. Precise and protean, he's a modern-day Sonny Rollins without the muskiness and overt muscularity. When pushed on this, he makes a reluctant acknowledgement: "I started to feel as if there was something about me and my saxophone playing that was different than other players in 1992 [the year he turned 27], something recognizable on its own."

What separated him then, he felt, was the way that his playing united seemingly contrary approaches. "Something fiery and cool, the best examples being Warne Marsh and John Coltrane. Two players working at the opposite poles at one time. Using meticulous lines with great ornamentation in a modern jazz context. Celebrating a blue flame, as opposed to a red flame. Playing the long game instead of the short game in my sound. Obviously too I was working out

my higher register more, with the same tone quality or control in the altissimo [register] as you would [have] with the mid-to-low portion of the horn, akin to what classical saxophonists did."

A question arises: If Turner has been playing the long game for 30 years, how does that affect his present? He laughs out loud, then responds. "Things I thought that I couldn't do 15, 10, and even five years ago, I can and am doing," he says. "That also means that disparate aesthetic goals that I wanted to accomplish in one place, in one band, I could now do. There's improvising—being able to play in a variety of types of pacing while soloing. And staying afloat. Staying afloat was definitely a part of the long game."

You may be surprised to learn that two saxophone stylists who have long been special to Turner are Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt. "When I was in high school, they were very much a part of who I was," he confesses. "And they're still inside of me, just evolved. Especially in terms of meticulous, linear harmonic type-of-vibes and bop-oriented sounds."

Move forward from his five soulful, post-bop-inspired Warner Bros. albums (from 1998's eponymous debut to 2001's *Dharma Days*) into his current affiliation with ECM and you can hear those influences receding into the background, the delineation of the blues eroding, its fluidity heightened and its lines blurred as Turner's harmony-based improvisations move into greater focus. What we might call modern Turner—starting with *Sky & Country*, the 2009 album by Fly, his trio with drummer Jeff Ballard and bassist Larry Grenadier—is, I'd posit, un-blue free jazz, but without a hint of skronk or squawk.

Turner disagrees on the lack of blues. "It's



“I just don’t want to go that way, that blue way. I have to learn how to bring it in in a different way.”

not obvious, my blues,” he says. “I can do that with the blues—be more obvious—and have certainly done that in the past. But it is difficult to bring out the blues in a way that isn’t so easily noticeable. I still have some way to go to making it not obvious, but I’m getting there. I just don’t want to go that way, that blue way. I have to learn how to bring it in in a different way.”

Two 2012 albums, *All Our Reasons* and *Year of the Snake*, are the gateway drug to the high the saxophonist is on throughout *Return from the Stars*. The first was drummer Billy Hart’s date; besides Hart and Turner, the band included pianist Ethan Iverson and bassist Ben Street. The second was another Fly recording (their most recent). On both, “I was definitely looking to extricate myself from the blues, figure out the blues and my relationship to all that, whatever that means. That search has continued into the present—of me actively figuring out who I was, dealing with tone changes, making things a little brighter.”

Playing with Hart, Turner notes, was akin

to going back to the blackboard of all things avant-garde *and* straight-ahead. “It was definitely like being back in school with a great teacher: the more I got into it, the more I realized how Billy noticed and responded,” he says. “From rhythm to harmony to every aspect of freedom, our playing changed the more that each of us took stock of the other. That is what that whole period was about, those two albums into the album that followed: taking up more space musically, having more weight to the sound.”

The album that followed was 2014’s motivic, meditational, minimalist game-changer *Lathe of Heaven*. Taking its title from an Ursula K. Le Guin science-fiction novel, it combined the saxophonist’s love of classical sounds with a chamber kick, a chef’s smidgen of postbop, and a greater degree of free improvisation than he had used in the past. Pulling magnetic trumpeter Avishai Cohen into the fold with bassist Joe Martin and drummer Marcus Gilmore, Turner found the frenetic without frenzy, and all without a

chordal instrument in sight.

“I think I took more chances, or that I was more willing to take more chances,” Turner says of the period that yielded *Lathe of Heaven*. “I don’t usually think about my parts. Rather, I think about my compositions, so that my playing supports my writing. I do that as a sideman even more, but bringing that to my compositions ... I’m just less concerned about me as opposed to celebrating all of the players.”

Speaking of players, *Return from the Stars* features a significantly different band from *Lathe of Heaven*. Gilmore has been replaced by Jonathan Pinson, and trumpeter Jason Palmer takes Cohen’s spot. While Cohen has a tendency to haunt any atmosphere with warm emotion, Palmer is cool and cerebral, with a wicked sense of humor to go along with his dedication to Turner’s éclat. The quartet’s leader notes that, sound-wise, Cohen and Palmer aren’t that far apart. Or maybe they are?

“Jason’s sound is thicker than Avishai’s in a live setting. Avishai’s is ever-so-slightly lighter. The melodies that Avishai plays have more of a flow, relaxed and easy. Jason, he’s more studied and well-formed. You can hear the work and history in his sound. Avishai in terms of articulation is smooth and lithe, while Jason is cutting, not so much like Clifford Brown, but ...”

The creative relationship between Palmer and Turner started more than a decade ago with the trumpeter’s third album as a leader, 2011’s *Here Today*, and stemmed from his longtime regular engagement at Boston’s beloved Wally’s Jazz Café.

“I had a weekly gig with my own band at Wally’s for over 15 years, every Friday and Saturday night, where we played my originals as well as tunes I would transcribe from various recordings,” Palmer recalls. “There was actually a period of time when my band was playing a lot of Mark’s music. One night we’re playing one of his tunes, ‘Jacky’s Place,’ and all of a sudden I look into the crowd and see a guy who looked like Mark in the audience. The guy didn’t have a horn with him or anything, didn’t have any particular look on his face during the time we were playing the song. In retrospect, we may have sounded sad. After we went on break, I went over and it turned out it was him.”

Two years later, the trumpeter again happened onto Turner, this time at a summer camp in Switzerland; the members of Fly were also on staff there. “I took it upon myself to arrange several Fly songs for a larger ensemble,” Palmer remembers. “That week was the first time we got to play together.



Turner with his erstwhile partners in Fly
Jeff Ballard (L) and Larry Grenadier (R)

That's when I asked him if he'd ever be interested in playing on one of my recording sessions for SteepleChase. He graciously agreed, so that was the start of that."

No matter whether Turner's working as a sideman as on *Here Today* or as a leader as on *Return from the Stars*, Palmer thinks that the saxophonist is a singular and influential artist of the highest order: "It's surreal to make music with him, to be honest, so the simple act of doing that is unique, because he is often imitated, but never duplicated."

Palmer was a part of Turner's working band for three years before recording *Return from the Stars* and played all of the album's songs live during that period, which gave him an extra ease of motion and thought, a sort of sixth sense about the compositions. This was all part of Turner's plan; he wanted to reduce the pressure of a studio scenario. "There's so much stress in studios now," Turner says. "Everyone has to be on point. You can't fuck up. Maybe that raises a musical level, but my music needs space and time. Look at the way that Miles Davis and his bands recorded in the '60s and '70s. Beyond being masters of their craft, they allowed for more time with the music by having played the material live for a while. That's why those records sound so damned human. It helps to play the music over and over live. That's how I'd like to record from now on."

"I've been a student of Mark's music since I became aware of him in the early 2000s," Palmer adds. "When I was in college I worked

as an orderly at a mental/rehab facility. On the overnight shifts that I had there, if all was calm, I would spend time transcribing his records *Dharma Days* and *In This World*. I always feel like a better musician once I've internalized a new piece by him. It's like consuming an unfamiliar vegetable with the understanding that your mind and body will thank you later for eating it."

Return from the Stars is the second Turner album to be named after a 20th-century science-fiction novel (the late Polish author Stanislaw Lem gets the cap tip this time). The saxophonist explains that literature "gives me direction. An emotional direction. A narrative direction. I like that. It helps lift the music upwards—the harmonic and musical themes that intertwine are lifted off the page."

Sci-fi in particular offers him the perspective of confronting unknown challenges. "The characters of science fiction are dealing with situations that might not exist in the real world. Yet," he ends dramatically. "There are many what-ifs, then OK-gos. They allow the writer to change the world with a situation that accentuates certain aspects of our culture, of the usual realms of human experience."

Later in our conversation, Turner will refer to receiving a similar uplift from James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, a 1912 book about "passing" and other matters of race and class

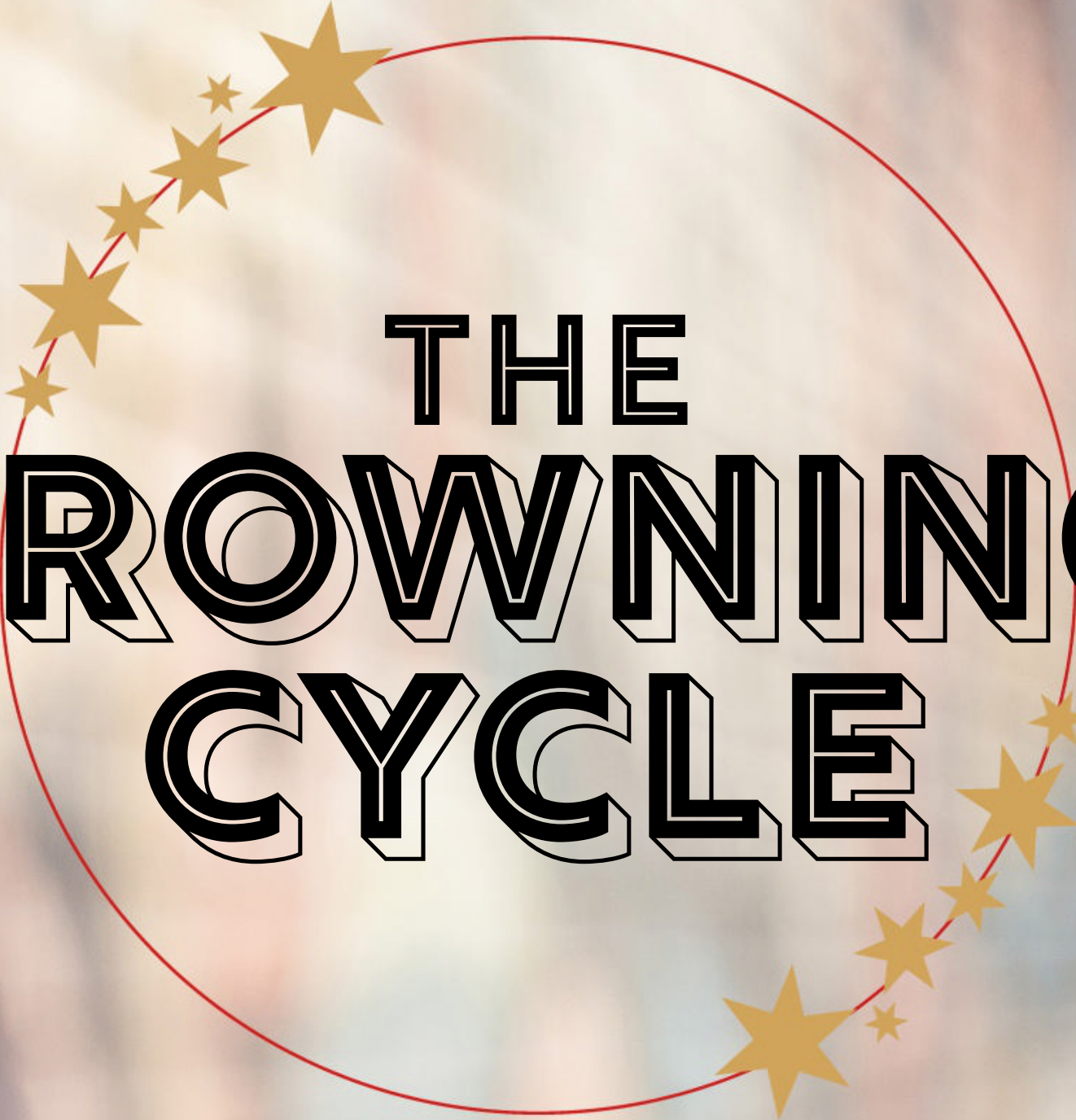
relations that the saxophonist fashioned into a live musical piece for the Kennedy Center in February. Personalizing Weldon Johnson's work in a way he can't do with science fiction ("yet"), Turner speaks of the intimate connection he felt to the author's biracial plotline.

"I know about this because my mother and two of my great-aunts could pass for white," Turner says quietly. "And they never were able to be in touch with their Black relations again—I never even realized people wrote books about passing until this. It was as moving and intellectually stimulating as any science fiction I've read."

Turner's creative pursuits, as they play out across *Return from the Stars*, can be seen as an advanced art exercise, a series of dry, icy William S. Burroughs-esque cut-ups that give off the vibe of disorientation and chance, in which everything is slightly askew, harmonically speaking. They're nebulous. And yet they're oddly peaceful.

"It's always going to be intellectual, what I do—intellectual, psychospiritual, and emotional," he says. "You set certain parameters, and within that you have to create. I happen to think that those brackets push you to think to a greater extent. You're in a box, and you have to figure how to get out. Or you don't have all of the faculties to do what you need to do ... Now what happens? What are you going to make? When you engage the intellect, you engage the psychological states, purposefully." **JT**





THE CROWNING CYCLE

With *12 Stars*, tenor saxophonist
MELISSA ALDANA ends a career
phase—and begins a new one

BY JACKSON SINNENBERG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDUARDO PAVEZ GOYE



The *12 Stars* band (L to R): Pablo Menares, Sullivan Fortner, Aldana, Kush Abadey, and Lage Lund

IT'S A COLD MARCH Friday night in New York City, but the crowd inside the Village Vanguard crackles with warmth as it engages with the robust music of Melissa Aldana's quintet. A hallowed basement room that's generally as quiet as you'd expect jazz's mother church to be is full of clapping, whistling, cheering, even whooping by the end of the 75-minute set, all of which is made up of material from Aldana's new album *12 Stars*, which has just hit streaming services today (the album's physical release is scheduled for later in April). This is also the Chilean saxophonist's first-ever run headlining the Vanguard, which has attracted much younger and more diverse crowds than normal for the club—especially a lot of students, according to one server that night.

You can see the energy course through Aldana on stage. Her generation's inheritor of the lineages of Sonny Rollins and Mark Turner, she's a prominently physical player, constantly rocking to

the beat; rising on her toes and crouching over in turn as she explores higher and lower tones during solos; leaning constantly into the music. "My knees are so sore!" she exclaims outside the OYO Midtown on Sunday, the last day of her Vanguard run, when we meet to talk about these two major events in her life.

In an Instagram post that same day, Aldana writes that her week at the Village Vanguard "has been one of the most beautiful weeks of my life." However, she's intensely aware of the responsibility she has when she's on that stage. "It's like a church," she says. "I was so nervous before playing there ... and then I open my eyes on stage and there's [a picture of] Joe Henderson just looking at me!" Adding to the pressure was the fact that she had never played any of the music live before; *12 Stars* was completely written and recorded during the pandemic without being workshopped in front of audiences.

Aldana first went to the Vanguard 12 years ago to see Kurt Rosenwinkel

and Mark Turner perform. She had just moved to New York, shortly after graduating from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. "I remember telling myself, 'Wow, if I ever play at the Vanguard, I want to have a band that is so killing!' You know? I just want to have something solid to say with a group of people."

According to her bandmates, she's been working on that last part for a while. "When I got to New York, Melissa was already making a name for herself and already at the tip of everyone's tongue," says Kush Abadey, who has played drums with Aldana since 2018 and previously worked alongside her in an ensemble class led by Ralph Peterson at Berklee. "At the same time, I feel like, although she had a voice of her own, she was still trying to find exactly what she wanted to sound like; exactly what she wanted her music to represent."

"She's always been super, super natural melody-wise," adds bassist Pablo Menares, a fellow Chilean who has been playing with Aldana since 2011 and is

**"WHEN I'M PLAYING, I'M
JUST OPENING MY HEART
TO EVERYONE. THERE'S
NO COLORS, THERE'S NO
GENDERS, THERE'S NO
CULTURES, THERE'S JUST
THE BEAUTY OF THE
MOMENT."**



her longest-running and most consistent collaborator. "Everybody in the band, we want to play with her [because] it's such a strong voice."

FOR FOUR OF THE SIX nights she was at the Vanguard, Aldana was in fact joined by the killer band that plays on *12 Stars*: Sullivan Fortner on piano (Fabian Almazan sat in beautifully for the first two nights), Lage Lund on guitar, Abadey on drums, and Menares on bass. The music this quintet creates is dynamic, a study in contrasts. Their first song that Friday night, "Falling," also the album's opening number, showed this proof of concept up close. Fortner and Lund balanced lush yet delicate harmonies while Menares and Abadey held the rhythm with a quiet intensity. On top of the band, Aldana performed the kind of solo one might expect an improviser to close a set with: dexterous runs up and down the horn, deep honking tones that require a near full-body commitment. Her brawny, brash, angular solo conjured the best parts of Sonny Rollins' work, driving against the delicacy of her band; Fortner followed with a solo that mixed crooked chords with a sweet-honey, gospel-soul melody. Seventy-five minutes of this and it's easy to see why the crowd was on its feet hollering by set's end.

It was a true moment of accomplishment for Aldana, who, like nearly every human being, suffered her own sea of troubles during the first years of the COVID-19 pandemic. That journey is encapsulated in the LP's title track, which she began writing at the

pandemic's outset and then finished shortly before the quintet headed into the studio this past winter. At just three minutes, it's less a traditional jazz vehicle for improvisation and more like a traditional pop song or classical piece: a statement wholly contained within itself. Triumphant, dream-like, with bitter-sweet hints of melancholy, "12 Stars" ends with an ease that suggests a deeper kind of closure. It's a good encapsulation of where Aldana sees her life at the moment.

She named the album and song *12 Stars* after the third major arcana (one of 22 major arcana or trump cards) of the traditional tarot deck: the Empress, who wears a crown of 12 stars. Although Aldana identifies with the Empress—as representing her "essence," those dozen stars came to stand for much more. In particular, they stood for her own growth, both during the pandemic and throughout her time in New York. "To me it was crazy, because that tune represents ... going through so many major changes. And then I was hearing an interview and I said something like, 'Yeah, I've been in New York 12 years.' Twelve years, 12 stars, you know?"

Aldana's career took off in earnest nearly 10 years ago when she won the Thelonious Monk (now Herbie Hancock) International Jazz Competition for saxophone at age 24, fulfilling the dreams of her father, a Chilean saxophonist, who made it to the semifinals in 1991. At the time, she was recording and playing with her Crash Trio with

Menares and drummer Francisco Mela, a lean outfit (and part of a proud tradition of saxophonists with "chordless" groups) that Aldana saw as a means to become stronger musically. In a 2020 interview she did with me for CapitalBop, she told me, "The reason why I played trio so many years is because I felt I had to do it in order to grow as a musician. ... [In a trio] you are so naked out there and you really have to learn to be strong when it comes to say your story. I wanted to become stronger with harmony; I wanted to become stronger with rhythm; I just wanted to be strong on my own ... to look at myself and become freer."

The results of all that trio work could be heard on Aldana's 2019 album *Visions*, which was based around a series of compositions she'd been commissioned to write by the Jazz Gallery, focusing on self-acceptance (a theme that continues into *12 Stars*) and the art and life of Mexican surrealist painter Frida Kahlo. The record maintains the lean, muscular sound of the trio years but adds bright bursts of color from vibraphonist Joel Ross and pianist Sam Harris. Aldana performed selections from *Visions*, as well as *12 Stars*, with the New York Youth Symphony Jazz at Dizzy's Club only a day after her Vanguard run ended. The new arrangements by Jim McNeely revealed further layers of depth and texture, marking out what Aldana had built in micro as her first forays into more ambitious composition.

12 Stars completes the work she started on *Visions*, opening up new harmonic territories for her. Part of this is thanks to the co-production from Lage Lund, but a lot of it rests on what happened to Aldana during the pandemic. As the world fell apart for all of us, so did hers, but on a very immediate and personal level. She divorced her husband, fellow saxophonist Jure Pukl, and found herself questioning the direction of her life. You can get a sense of what came next from the album, which she says documents her experiences in 2020: great uncertainty led her to tarot, which in turn led her further inward than she had gone before.

ALTHOUGH ALDANA SAYS SHE relates to tarot's Empress, the only one of the major arcana explicitly named on her album is the Fool, which is either the first, numbered zero, or the last, numbered 22. "The Fool" talks about initiating yourself in the journey," Aldana

explains. “It talks about the person who likes to do things his way; he’s impulsive and he just doesn’t care. The Fool, on the second arcana—the Magician—grows up ... To me, I did feel like the Fool many times in a way where you become ... just very self-aware. I thought I knew myself, but not at all.” What she became more aware of, she says, was her sensitivity and empathetic nature, which had been seen as negative traits in the society and time she was raised in. Playing music, for her, is an affirmation of those traits.

“When I’m playing, I’m just opening my heart to everyone,” she explains. “One of the things I figured out is that it’s one of the moments, the precious moments, where I am very present, which is very hard to be in the city. There’s no colors, there’s no genders, there’s no cultures, there’s just the beauty of the moment—and with the audience, the beauty of sharing that moment. So that is why I love playing so much: It is a moment of nothing but everything at the same time.”

Aldana expresses this mindset through the pen on *12 Stars*’ “Intuition,” as well as “Los Ojos de Chile,” which she wrote to honor both a 2018 series of massive protests in Chile and her own newly renewed sense of connection to her home country (she recently voted for the first time in a Chilean election). You can also see her proud sensitivity on display whenever she takes the bandstand. After our interview in March, I tagged along to see Aldana rehearse for her show the next day with the New York Youth Symphony Jazz. In between takes, she was constantly checking in on the group of about 18 teenagers, making sure they all felt comfortable with the arrangement, their parts, and the tempo. It felt significant for her to be more vocally concerned about the students than herself.

There’s another side to Aldana’s journey. “The Fool,” she notes (the track on *12 Stars*, not the tarot card), starts simple and grows more complex as it develops. This, perhaps subconsciously, reflects how she has deepened her approach to playing since the start of the pandemic. She changed her practice regime—which can be six to seven hours each day—to be more intentional. The three most important elements for her are sound, time, and ideas, and she’ll spend about a third of her practice time on each. For sound, she works on long tones; for time, she works with a metronome. The ideas portion is where she pursued the biggest change.

“THE MUSIC IS JUST IN A DIFFERENT PLACE, AND IT WILL BE THE NEXT MONTH AND EVERY TIME WE PLAY.”

“Ideas was the part where I used to transcribe. I don’t transcribe as much anymore or at least with the same purpose. When I transcribed Sonny, for example, I transcribed him for four years but I never analyzed what he did. I memorized everything. I never wrote anything down. I memorized hundreds of solos ... I just want to keep playing, like ‘How will it feel to play like Sonny?’” Now she devotes time to looking at the way Rollins and other musicians she admires structure their solos. She also puts down the horn more to sit at the ivories.

“I remember right before the pandemic she was commissioned to write a saxophone quartet with the PRISM Quartet and she was also taking harmony lessons ... and she was also studying piano,” Menares recalls. He says all of her work came together when she was workshoping the tunes of *12 Stars* with him and Abadey in 2020: “She *can* play piano now; it’s amazing! She went into this whole more complete thing where harmony-wise she can play everything she writes and is more in command of everything. It’s like part of this whole new world she dove into.”

Aldana sees harmony as key to how she wanted to convey her pandemic experience through music. “It’s hard because I don’t have lyrics to express a specific story or emotion,” she explains. “But I think understanding harmony and voice leading well is a way to create emotions. So [with] a lot of the music, the way I’m trying to tell

Recording *12 Stars*



the story is by the tension, the colors, the direction of the music itself.”

LAGE LUND HAD BEEN playing live with Aldana for years before *12 Stars*; she turned to him at first to add arrangements to some of the album’s tracks. “Melissa started sending sketches of the things she had written for me to look at,” he says on a call from St. Louis in late March, where he’s on tour with a piano-less version of Aldana’s Vanguard band. “Some of the tunes, like ‘12 Stars’ or ‘The Fool,’ were pretty much finished. But other tunes were not fully formed yet. I sat down and spent some time with them; sometimes [I] made some more subtle changes like voicing of the harmony or the forms. Sometimes it would be pretty drastic. I would try and get to the core of each tune and really figure out what that



specific kind of sonic world should feel like. ... At some point I realized, ‘Well, I guess I’m producing this record.’”

Lund cites his own *Terrible Animals* as a possible reference point for their work. For that album, Lund’s group cut the tracks in a couple of days, but “after that I did some post-production where I layered some more textures and sonically added other elements. I think she liked that approach.”

“I’m one of his biggest fans,” Aldana says of Lund in a follow-up phone call in early April. “I really love his playing. I just wanted to learn about writing from his own process and what he’d do with my music.” She says Lund added “so many layers of colors” and took the time to “shape the music with much more detail than I could. ... He made me aware

of a lot that can be added, like counterpoints, inner lines, and inner voices that create a certain emotion.”

Lund cites “Intuition” as a song that he reworked significantly from the sketch he received. “I think I made the harmony move twice as slow and the melody move twice as fast, something like that,” he recalls. “I liked the harmony and the melody but it hadn’t found its true character yet. So I bent some of the elements like that. I [also] wanted to make sure nothing was too rigid, so that we could play them quartet or we could play them duo. They didn’t hinge on a specific orchestration.”

That was a wise and prescient move, as Aldana has spent significant portions of March, April, and May touring across the United States and Europe without a pianist and in various quartet

configurations—sometimes with the *12 Stars* band and sometimes with only as much of it as possible. When I spoke to the band members in late March, they all felt a newness to the music, as it continued to evolve in the quartet format. Aldana, for her part, has been grateful to be on the road, to connect with audiences (she seems to attract younger crowds wherever she goes, a healthy thing to see for jazz in places like Ohio or Utah), and to be a part of that evolution: “Since I played New York, I just feel like the music has been growing and growing and growing. We’re all in a mindset where we want to try different things every day. The music is just in a different place, and it will be the next month and every time we play.” By the sound of it, Melissa Aldana will be too. **JT**

ANCESTRAL VOICES

KENNY GARRETT
reflects on generations
past, present, and future

By David Fricke
Photography by Hollis King





Depending on how he looks at it, Kenny Garrett's latest album, *Sounds from the Ancestors*, has been out for an eternity or an instant. Recorded in November 2019, before the pandemic, the alto saxophonist's 17th album as a leader was finally issued last summer during a brief window between COVID variants, allowing Garrett to tour with his band and the new music for a few weeks before Omicron forced live music off the rails again.

"When the album was released, I felt like, 'This thing has been around a long time,'" he says on a sunny late-winter afternoon, sitting outside a coffee shop near his home in a northern New Jersey suburb. "Even now, things are moving but they're not moving—not full force like it once was."

Actually, Garrett is fresh off a plane from Los Angeles, where he was a special guest the night before at a concert celebrating Wayne Shorter. "We have plans to keep moving," he insists. "But I want to keep focused on *Sounds from the Ancestors* because I feel it's a snippet of what the music can do. Once we open it up in performance, it can be more than that."

Combining a core band—pianist Vernell Brown, Jr., bassist Corcoran Holt, drummer Ronald Bruner, and percussionist Rudy Bird—with a cast of guests including trumpeter Maurice Brown and legendary fusion drummer Lenny White, *Sounds from the Ancestors* is a wide-ranging, richly textured account of Garrett's life in roots and lessons, from his earliest memories of music in Detroit, his hometown, to key friendships and schooling with the late trumpeter Roy Hargrove ("Hargrove") and drumming magus Art Blakey ("For Art's Sake"). "It's Time to Come Home" opens the record with an Afro-Cuban flourish steeped in Garrett's stage encounters with the Cuban pianist Chucho Valdés. "When the Days Were Different" evokes the sensual crossroads of church and street corner in Garrett's favorite boyhood singles by Marvin Gaye and Aretha Franklin. And Garrett credits trumpeter Woody Shaw, pianist McCoy Tyner, and vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson—"that generation of musicians"—with "the way I'm hearing the chords, harmonically what I'm trying to get across" in the jubilant turbulence of "What Was That?"

Ironically, Garrett admits, "the pandemic allowed me to look at some things on the album that I wouldn't have noticed. Usually, when you put a record out, you're

traveling, and it ends up being 'You gotta move this out.'" With touring suspended, "I had a chance to look at the songs: 'It would be interesting to add some Yoruban chants or some keyboards here.' It gave me time to think about the music."

Garrett's reflective energy on *Sounds from the Ancestors* also runs through this conversation as the saxophonist, 61, recalls formative tenures with Blakey and Miles Davis; friendships and collaborations with pianist Chick Corea and saxophonist Pharoah Sanders; and the loss of so many friends and giants during the pandemic. He also notes one surprising side effect of the last two years.

"As musicians have slowed down, we get a chance to really talk now," Garrett claims. "Before, I would see Wynton Marsalis in passing, whereas when I saw him last year in the south of France, we actually had a conversation. Same thing with Terence Blanchard and Joe Lovano—you can talk." He laughs. "That's been different."

JT: The title of your album is *Sounds from the Ancestors*, not *Sounds for the Ancestors*. What's the distinction?

KENNY GARRETT: The concept came about because I was thinking of when I was a kid, how at Thanksgiving I would hide all of my 45s until Christmas Day. And on Christmas Day, I would play this music, my favorite records, and it would fill me up and carry me into the next year. That's how much I loved the music that was touching me like Aretha, B.B. King, and the Reverend James Cleveland. There was a radio personality, Martha Jean "The Queen" [born Martha Jean Jones, a pioneering R&B and gospel DJ on Detroit's WJLB in the '60s and '70s]. She would come on every day at 12 o'clock and play this James Cleveland song, which was kind of sad. I wanted to write music that would reflect on that past, the sounds from our ancestors.

Did the concept take on more weight with the pandemic? Wallace Roney and Ellis Marsalis were just two of many musicians who died of COVID in the first weeks.

Losing Wallace—that one shocked me, even though I knew he was having health issues. I had known him since I was 17. We first met through [pianist] Geri Allen. She was at Howard University but coming home to Detroit to play with [trumpeter] Marcus Belgrave. She told Wallace, "Why don't you come to Detroit with me? There's a guy you should meet, same age as you."

We ended up on the same path in our careers. We both played with Miles; we played together with Chick and [drummer] Roy Haynes [on 1997's *Remembering Bud Powell*].

In the beginning, it was frightening. You realize it's bigger than anything you understand. And with all of the people we were losing, I started to think, "You have to carry it on." I felt an even stronger push to move the music. Wallace, Ellis Marsalis, then Chick [who died of cancer in February 2021], these musicians who had always been there: You start to cherish the moments you had with them and also to cherish what is ahead.

It's strange to think of Hargrove as your ancestor as you were a decade older.

We traveled the same path. We played together on a Charlie Parker tribute with Roy Haynes, *Birds of a Feather* [2001], and I would always see him on the road. Roy was always there, and I thought his contribution to his generation was important. He did his part.

Writing a tune for him was a matter of giving people an opportunity to hear him now. There's a whole bunch of musicians who slip through the cracks like my friend, [pianist] Mulgrew Miller [who died in 2013]. He's part of the ancestors too. When we talk about ancestors, we often talk about people who were popular. You think about Miles, John Coltrane, or Cannonball Adderley. But Mulgrew Miller contributed a lot to the music. He wanted to live the life like Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, and Barry Harris.

What did you learn from Blakey? You'd been on the road for almost a decade when you joined the Jazz Messengers.

Once you got in the band, you learned the legacy of the chair you were sitting in. But what I really learned is how to become a leader. Art Blakey gave us an opportunity to write music and to present it to the people.

I went to two different schools, Miles Davis and Art Blakey. Art Blakey was grass roots and teaching—like how to build a solo. You had two choruses with Art, and by the second chorus, he's playing a press roll. He's comin' at you. You got two choruses to tell your story. I play with Miles Davis, and I have 10-minute solos. It was different disciplines. I learned how to say it with Art. With Miles, now you get to play it as long as you want!



Regarding Davis, what do you remember of the July 1991 show in Vienne, France that came out last year as *Merci Miles!*? It was only three months before his passing.

For me, it was an everyday thing—you hit the bandstand and play it like it is the last night. If you played something for Miles that caught his ear, he would perk up and want to hear more. Music was something to live for. A lot of people ask, "How did you play with Miles?" A lot of times when Miles and I were playing, we were thinking about B.B. King [laughs]. If we were playing a blues, it was, "Okay, just play it like B.B. would." To Miles, it was all just music.

Yet I'm fascinated by your choice of Pharoah Sanders as a second saxophonist on [2008's] *Sketches of MD: Live at the Iridium*, an album named after a tribute to Davis but featuring a pivotal figure in '60s free jazz. At the time, Davis was very critical of that movement.

Pharoah—he's one of my mentors, my heroes. We also did [2006's] *Beyond the Wall* together with Bobby Hutcherson. To me, it's like Pharoah's a preacher. He has this spirit, and it resonates. When he's on the bandstand, I'm hearing his voice—which is the voice of Coltrane and that experience. But I know he's open to different kinds of music. When we did *Sketches of MD*, it was because he wanted to do a record with me live.

How did you first meet Sanders?

I remember first hearing Pharoah not musically, but his voice. I was playing at Kimball's East in San Francisco. I had a record out, [1990's] *African Exchange Student*. And I could hear somebody—I didn't see him—say, "Yeah, I'm here to see Kenny Garrett." That was a trip. We hooked up after the gig. And every time he'd come to New York, I had to show up with my saxophone: "Don't show up without it." He would always say to me, "You remind me of John Coltrane."

I know what you've been playing, what you've been practicing."

You had ancestors close to home. Your stepfather played saxophone, and your biological father was a singer.

Music was always there. My stepfather's influences were Stanley Turrentine, Maceo Parker, and Joe Henderson. They became my guys because of what I heard from him. My biological father came from the church. He was a deacon. Matter of fact, he lived right across the street from Aretha Franklin's church. When I went to visit, that church was there. So I had the gospel music connection. But my father also grew up singing doo-wop. I never knew why I loved music like that. Eventually, I realized, "Oh, it's coming from my father."

You first went on the road in 1978 with the Duke Ellington Orchestra under the leadership of his son Mercer, who was literally carrying on the work of his ancestor—this transformative body of American music.

What was it like to be in a band led by someone so close to the source?

I was 18 years old. I had a great experience because the lead alto player, Harold Minerve, who was Johnny Hodges' protégé, and [alto saxophonist] Norris Turney took me under their wings. They wanted to

make sure I understood. I wasn't cognizant of Ellington so much. I came out of high school to travel with that band. But I got to play with [trumpeter] Cootie Williams and Barrie Lee Hall, Jr., who was Cootie Williams' protégé. I mean,

"I just feel like I tell my story. I tell my truth. And I hope that people hear that."

that's something to think about. I was learning the music firsthand, and it wasn't in school. I went to their university, the University of Duke Ellington.

Then, just a few years later, you made two albums with Freddie Hubbard and Woody Shaw, *Double Take* [1985] and *The Eternal*

***Triangle* [1987]. What was it like to be the alto-sax voice between those two trumpets and personalities?**

I played with both of their bands, so I think I was there to bridge it up [*laughs*], to be the intermediary. They'd been trying to do a record like that for a long time. We were supposed to be rehearsing, but Freddie wouldn't be there. Or Freddie would show up and Woody wouldn't come in. They finally worked it out. I think for Woody, the late '70s, early '80s, would have been a better time. At that point, Woody was at the peak of his playing. He was real clear about his concept. By the time he and Freddie got it together, it was still good, but he wasn't well [health-wise]. Still, it was great. I cherish that memory.

Shaw also played on your first album as a leader, *Introducing Kenny Garrett* [1985]. The mentor became your sideman.

Mulgrew Miller and [bassist] Tony Reedus, my roommates, had played in his band. So Woody knew he would be in the company of those musicians. I just wanted to have Woody on my record. I never even thought about it—that I was the leader.

You were a jazz artist signed to a major label, Warner Bros., for more than a decade, starting with *Black Hope* in 1992. How





did your relationship with the company change over that time?

Records were selling in high numbers then. Pat Metheny and Joshua Redman were selling 150,000 copies of an album. That was considered successful. It was also a time when the labels were telling musicians what they needed to do. I was already established. I was a young musician, but I had an

idea. But I did it because of a bootleg record that was out at the time [1994's *Stars and Stripes*] with me, Brian Blade, and [bassist] Charnett Moffett. It said we'd played live at Fat Tuesday's [in New York City]. I'd never played at Fat Tuesday's. We'd gone to Germany, and I wanted to record there, just to listen back to what we were doing. But someone bootlegged it. So I did *Triology*.

music." That's what music is about.

I find it ironic that your own records have been nominated for five Grammy Awards, but your only win has been as a member of another group, playing fusion: 2009's *Five Peace Band Live with Chick Corea and John McLaughlin*.

[Laughs] I think I was there because of my relationship with Chick, doing different projects with him. When he was putting this Five Peace Band together, he just had me in mind. He knew what I could bring to the table. I don't think John knew because we had never played together.

I'll tell you a funny story with John. Chick was open. He says, "This is a five-piece band. You have something to say? You can grab the mic and talk." So we were playing at the Tokyo Blue Note, and I thought, "I'm gonna grab the mic." I started speaking Japanese, and the crowd goes crazy. Chick goes, "What was that? You should speak every night, whenever you feel like it." But John looked at me like, "No, you don't have to do that." [Laughs]

Chick was my friend. I used to call him, and we'd talk about music. He always had ideas for me: "I want you to do this." As a matter of fact, we were supposed to do a record together, but we never got to it. I'm pretty sad about that.

With his passing, Corea has become one of the ancestors you celebrate on your album. Now, at 61, you're passing your own lessons and life experiences on to younger musicians. Do you think of yourself as an ancestor in that way—or do ancestors have to be gone to have that relationship with us?

[Long pause] That's a good question. Most of the time, I think of an ancestor as someone who's gone. As far as my role, I just feel like I tell my story. I tell my truth. And I hope that people hear that. I find a lot of musicians coming up to me, like Kamasi Washington, Terrace Martin, and Ambrose Akinmusire, telling me, "You've changed my life. Thank you for helping our generation."

I'm honored by that, because I feel I've contributed to the music as Miles did and Coltrane. I'm not saying, "Choose this." This is the way I live. If this resonates for you, perfect. Sometimes when you're coming up, you don't get a chance to hang on to something, to listen, because everybody's moving so much. But the pandemic, it slowed people down. Maybe they're saying, "Hold on a second, that guy Kenny Garrett—he's a guy we gotta keep an eye on." **JT**

"In the beginning, [the pandemic] was frightening. You realize it's bigger than anything you understand. And with all of the people we were losing, I started to think, 'You have to carry it on.'"

understanding of what I wanted to do. They wanted me to play standards. It was, "Let a producer do this, let's take a look at that." No, I want to play my music. I'm a composer. Once I did [1997's Grammy-nominated] *Songbook*, they left me alone: "Okay, he's all right. Let him do what he wants."

Was [1996's] *Pursuance: The Music of John Coltrane*, which you made with Metheny, your idea or the label's?

That was actually my manager at the time, Robin Burgess. I was going to do a record with Pat, but there wasn't enough time to prepare it. So my manager said, "Why don't you do a Coltrane record?" I was like, "On alto saxophone?" I'd never thought of doing that. Playing Coltrane on alto is different. I'm not in a tenor key. But I called Pat, and Pat said, "Yeah, I'm game." I called [drummer] Brian Blade, who played with me on *Black Hope*, and [bassist] Rodney Whitaker, who was from Detroit. I'm glad I did it, but it wasn't my concept.

[1995's] *Triology*, which was dedicated to Sonny Rollins and Joe Henderson, was my

When you appeared on the rapper Guru's 1995 album *Jazzmatazz, Volume II: The New Reality* and worked with Q-Tip from A Tribe Called Quest on his 2009 solo release *Kamaal the Abstract*, did you see yourself as a hip-hop musician or a jazz musician playing hip-hop?

I can't separate it. My teacher was Miles Davis. I embrace it like that. When I played with Guru, basically it was "I'm going to play some music. If that's what's going on underneath, that's interesting." With Q-Tip, he wanted to be more artistic. He wanted to see the other side, so it was an exchange. That's the beautiful thing about jazz.

It was the same thing with [singer] Jennifer Hudson when she came down to the Blue Note on her birthday [during Garrett's run of shows at the New York club in September 2021]. I felt that in doing her homework on Aretha [for Hudson's starring role in the biopic *Respect*], she found out where Aretha was coming from in jazz and gospel. When Jennifer came on the bandstand, she wasn't sure what to do. But she was open to receiving: "I want to learn about this

The cover art features a vibrant red background with stylized white line drawings of jazz instruments. On the left, a saxophone is depicted with intricate detail. In the upper right, a trumpet is shown. In the lower right, a tuba is illustrated. The title 'JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE 2022' is prominently displayed in the center-right in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. The word 'JAZZ' is the largest, followed by 'FESTIVAL' and 'GUIDE' in slightly smaller sizes, with '2022' at the bottom in a similar font style.

JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE 2022

2022 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all listings in this directory are even more subject to change than usual, and we are unable to guarantee the accuracy of any listing beyond press time. Please check festival websites to confirm.

Africa

Cape Town International Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Capetown, South Africa
capetownjazzfest.com

Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival

TBA
Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa
joyofjazz.co.za

Asia

Borneo Jazz

TBA
Coco Cabana in Marina Bay, Miri, Sarawak, Borneo
jazzborneo.com

Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival

TBA
Jakarta, Indonesia
javajazzfestival.com

Jazzmandu

October 13-19, 2022
Various venues, Kathmandu, Nepal
jazzmandu.com

Seoul Jazz Festival

TBA
Jamsil Olympic Park, Seoul, Korea
seouljazzfestival.com

Tokyo Jazz Festival

May 20-22, 2022
NHK Hall, Tokyo, Japan
tokyojazzfestival.com

Australia

Brisbane International Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Brisbane
bijf.com.au

Brisbane Vocal Jazz Festival

TBA
Brisbane Jazz Club, Brisbane
brisbanejazzclub.com.au

Castlemaine Jazz Festival

June 10-13, 2022
Various venues, Castlemaine
castlemainejazzfestival.com.au

Melbourne International Jazz Festival

October 14-23, 2022
Various venues, Melbourne, Victoria
melbournejazz.com

Canada

Barrie Jazz & Blues Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Barrie, ON
barriejazzbluesfest.com

Beaches International Jazz Festival

July 2-24, 2022
Kew Gardens Bandshell and other venues, Toronto, ON
beachesjazz.com

Edmonton International Jazz Festival

June 26 - July 3, 2022
Various venues, Edmonton, AB
edmontonjazz.com

Festival international de Musique Actuelle Victoriaville

May 16-22, 2022
Various venues, Victoriaville, QC
fimav.qc.ca

Gibsons Landing Jazz Festival

June 26, 2022
Gibsons Landing, BC
coastjazz.com

Guelph Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Guelph, ON
guelphjazzfestival.com

Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival

September 13-18, 2022
Various venues, Fredericton, NB
harvestjazzandblues.com

Kaslo Jazz Festival

July 29-31, 2022
Kaslo Bay Park, Kaslo, BC
kaslojazzfest.com

Medicine Hat Jazzfest

June 20-26, 2022
Various venues, Medicine Hat, AB
medicinehatjazzfest.ca

Montreal International Jazz Festival

June 30 - July 9, 2022
Various venues in Montreal, QC
montrealjazzfest.com

Prince Edward County Jazz Festival

August 16-21, 2022
Prince Edward County, Pickton, ON
pecjazz.org

Quebec City Summer Festival

July 7-17, 2022
Various venues, Quebec City, QC
feq.ca

TD Halifax Jazz Festival

July 12-17, 2022
Festival tent & other venues, Halifax, NS
halifaxjazzfestival.ca

TD Ottawa International Jazz Festival

June 24 - July 3, 2022
Confederation Park & other downtown locations, Ottawa, ON
ottawajazzfestival.com

TD Toronto International Jazz Festival

June 24 - July 3, 2022
Various venues, Toronto, ON
torontojazz.com

TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival

June 24 - July 3, 2022
40 indoor & outdoor venues, Vancouver, BC
coastaljazz.ca

TD Victoria International Jazzfest

June 24 - July 3, 2022
Various venues, Victoria, BC
jazzvictoria.ca

TD Winnipeg International Jazz Festival

June 14-19, 2022
Various venues, downtown Winnipeg, MB
jazzwinnipeg.com

Trenton Big Band Festival

TBA
Downtown Trenton and Centennial Park Amphitheatre, Trenton, ON
trentonbigbandfestival.com



The 18th Annual DC JAZZFEST

August 31 - September 4

Tickets now available for purchase!

Details at dcjazzfest.org | Follow us @dcjazzfest

Capital Sounds, Global Reach

Christian McBride & Inside Straight • Cindy Blackman Santana Band

Orrin Evans and the Captain Black Big Band • Dianne Reeves

The Baylor Project • Emmet Cohen Trio

Donvonte McCoy • 2021 DCJazzPrix Winners Giveton Gelin Quintet and Dayramir Gonzalez & Habana enTRANCé

Heidi Martin • Patrick Zimmerli with special guests Chris Potter and Clarence Penn • Vox Sambou

LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award Winner guitarist Dan Wilson Trio • and more!

**Lineup subject to change*



The Washington Post



DISTRICT WHARF



Galena-Yorktown FOUNDATION

SHADD



The DC Jazz Festival®, a 501(c)(3) non-profit service organization, and its 2022 programs are made possible, in part, with major grants from the Government of the District of Columbia, Muriel Bowser, Mayor; the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs program and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, Office of Cable Television, Film, Music & Entertainment; and with awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Galena-Yorktown Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Compass of Greater Washington, Gillon Family Charitable Fund, The Leonard and Elaine Silverstein Family Foundation, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, The Dallas Morse Coors Foundation for the Performing Arts, The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, and The Venable Foundation. ©2022 DC Jazz Festival. All rights reserved.

2022 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE

Cruises

JazzFest at Sea

TBA
TBA
jazzfestatsea.com

The Smooth Jazz Cruise on Land

September 17-18, 2022
The Factory, St. Louis, MO
thesmoothjazzcruise.com

Europe

Aarhus Jazz Festival

July 9-16, 2022
Various venues,
Aarhus, Denmark
jazzfest.dk

Barcelona Voll-Damm International Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues,
Barcelona, Spain
barcelonajazzfestival.com

Belgrade Jazz Festival

October 26-30, 2022
Various venues,
Belgrade, Serbia
bjf.rs

Bohemia Jazzfest

July 11-19, 2022
Various venues, Prague and
other cities, Czech Republic
bohemiajazzfest.com

Bucharest International Jazz Competition & Festival

July 1-9, 2022
Various venues,
Bucharest, Romania
jazzcompetition.ro

Copenhagen Jazz Festival

June 24 - July 10, 2022
Various venues,
Copenhagen, Denmark
jazz.dk

Django Reinhardt Festival

June 23-26, 2022
Various venues,
Fontainebleau, France
festivaldjangoreinhardt.com

Europafest

July 1-9, 2022
Various venues, Bucharest
and Sibiu, Romania
europafest.ro

Festi Jazz International Rimouski

TBA
Various venues, Rimouski,
Quebec, Canada
festijazzrimouski.com

Festival de Jazz de Vitoria-Gasteiz

July 14-18, 2022
Various venues, Vitoria, Spain
jazzvitoria.com

Funchal Jazz Festival

TBA
Santa Catarina Park,
Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
funchaljazzfestival.com

Göttinger Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues,
Göttingen, Germany
jazzfestival-goettingen.de

Guimarães Jazz

TBA
Various venues,
Guimarães, Portugal
guimaraesjazz.pt

Heineken Jazzaldia

July 21-25, 2022
Plaza Trinidad and Kursaal,
San Sebastian, Spain
jazzaldia.eus/en/

International Jazz Festival Saalfelden

August 18-21, 2022
Various venues,
Saalfelden, Austria
jazzsaalfelden.at

Istanbul International Jazz Festival

July 4-20, 2022
Various venues,
Istanbul, Turkey
iksv.org

Jazz & the City

October 13-16, 2022
Various venues,
Salzburg, Austria
salzburgjazz.com

Jazz a Juan

July 6-19, 2022
Juan-Les-Pins, France
jazzajuan.com

Jazz a Vienne

June 30 - July 13, 2022
The Roman Theatre and other
venues, Vienne, France
jazzavienne.com

Jazz Fest Wien-Vienna

June 23 - July 17, 2022
Roman Theatre, Vienna, Austria
viennajazz.org

Jazz Festival Willisau

August 31 - September 4, 2022
Festhalle, Willisau, Switzerland
jazzwillisau.ch

Jazz in Marciac

July 24 - August 16, 2022
Marciac, France
jazzinmarciac.com

Jazz in the Park

September 1-4, 2022
Central Park Cuj, Napoca
Cluj, Romania
jazzinthepark.ro

Jazz Open Stuttgart

July 7-17, 2022
Various venues,
Stuttgart, Germany
jazzopen.com

Jazzascona

June 23 - July 2, 2022
Various venues, Ascona,
Switzerland
jazzascona.ch

Jazzfest Berlin

November 3-6, 2022
Haus der Berliner Festspiele,
Berlin, Germany
berlinerfestspiele.de/jazzfest

Jazzfest Bonn

May 1-28, 2022
Various venues, Bonn, Germany
jazzfest-bonn.de

Jazztage Dresden

October 23 - November 13, 2022
Ostra Dome, Ballsport
Arena, Dresden, Germany
jazztage-dresden.de

Kalott Jazz & Blues Festival

July 1-2, 2022
Various venues, Tornio, Finland
kalottjazzblues.net

Kongsberg Jazz Festival

July 6-9, 2022
Various venues,
Kongsberg, Norway
kongsbergjazz.no

Leopolis Jazz Festival

TBA
Culture Park, Lviv, Ukraine
leopolisjazz.com

Moers Jazz Fest

June 3-6, 2022
Moers, Germany
moers-festival.de

Montreux Jazz Festival

July 1-16, 2022
Auditorium Stravinski,
Miles Davis Hall, Seaside,
Montreux, Switzerland
montreuxjazzfestival.com

Nattjazz Bergen

May 27 - June 5, 2022
USF Verftet, Bergen, Norway
nattjazz.no

North Sea Jazz Festival

July 8-10, 2022
Ahoy, Rotterdam, Netherlands
northseajazz.com

MONTCLAIR JAZZ FESTIVAL
2022
PRODUCED BY JAZZ HOUSE KIDS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CHRISTIAN McBRIDE

MINGUS

CRIM BLUES
BASS

FREE LIVE JAZZ

SUMMER SERIES SOUNDCHECK CONCERTS
Wednesday, July 13 + 27
6:00 - 9:00 pm

BLOCK PARTY + DJ BROTHER MISTER
aka CHRISTIAN McBRIDE
Saturday, August 13
12:00 - 10:00 pm

GRAND FINALE BLOOMFIELD AVENUE DOWNTOWN JAMBOREE
Saturday, September 10
1:00 - 9:00 pm

VISIT Montclair, NJ

PRESENTING SPONSOR
bdp holdings llc

MJF INFO

Facebook Instagram Twitter YouTube



Umbria Jazz 22

Perugia, July 8-17

www.umbriajazz.com



2022 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE

Oslo Jazz Festival

August 13-21, 2022
Various venues, Oslo, Norway
oslojazz.no

Pori Jazz Festival

July 8-16, 2022
Various venues, Pori, Finland
porijazz.fi

Rendez-Vous de L'Erdre Festival

August 22-28, 2022
On the Erdre's banks, Nantes, Loire Atlantique, France
rendezvouserde.com

Riverboat Jazz Festival

June 22-26, 2022
Various venues, Silkeborg, Denmark
riverboat.dk

Sildajazz

August 10-14, 2022
Various venues, Haugesund, Norway
sildajazz.no

Souillac en Jazz

July 16-23, 2022
Souillac, France
souillacenjazz.fr

Stockholm Jazz Festival

October 14-23, 2022
Various venues, Stockholm, Sweden
stockholmjazz.com

Tampere Jazz Happening

November 3-6, 2022
Various venues, Tampere, Finland
tamperejazz.fi

Umbria Jazz Festival

July 8-17, 2022
Various venues in Perugia, Italy
umbriajazz.com

We Jazz

TBA
Various venues, Helsinki, Finland
wejazz.fi

Ystad Sweden Jazz Festival

August 3-6, 2022
Ystad, Sweden
ystadjazz.se

United Kingdom & Ireland

Brecon Jazz Festival

August 1-31, 2022
Brecon, Wales, UK
breconjazz.com

Glasgow Jazz Festival

June 15-19, 2022
Various venues, Glasgow, Scotland, UK
jazzfest.co.uk

Guinness Cork International Jazz Festival

October 28-31, 2022
Various venues, Cork, Ireland
guinnessjazzfestival.com

Isle of Wight Jazz Weekend

September 15-18, 2022
Newport, Isle of Wight, UK
iwjazzweekend.co.uk

London Jazz Festival

November 11-20, 2022
Various venues, London, UK
efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk

Mostly Jazz, Funk & Soul Festival

July 8-10, 2022
Moseley Park, Birmingham, UK
mostlyjazz.co.uk

Scarborough Jazz Festival

September 23-25, 2022
Scarborough, UK
scarboroughjazzfestival.co.uk

The Bath Festival

May 13-22, 2022
Various venues, Bath, UK
bathfestivals.org.uk

Whitley Bay International Jazz Festival

November 4-6, 2022
Village Hotel, Whitley Bay, UK
whitleybayjazzfest.com

United States

MIDWEST

Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival

August 4-6, 2022
Rhythm City Casino's Events Center in North Davenport, IA
bixsociety.org

Cheese Capital Jazz & Blues Crawl for the Arts

TBA
Downtown Plymouth, WI
plymoutharts.org

Chicago Jazz Festival

September 1-4, 2022
Citywide and Millennium Park, Chicago, IL
www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/chicago_jazz_festival.html

Detroit International Jazz Festival

September 2-5, 2022
Downtown Detroit, MI
detroitjazzfest.org

Elkhart Jazz Festival

June 16-19, 2022
Downtown Elkhart, IN
elkhartjazzfestival.com

Fox Jazz Fest

September 3-4, 2022
Jefferson Park in Menasha, WI
foxjazzfest.com

Glenn Miller Jazz Festival

June 9-12, 2022
Glenn Miller Birthplace Museum, Clarinda, IA
glennmiller.org

Grand Hotel Labor Day Jazz Festival

September 2-5, 2022
Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, MI
grandhotel.com

Hyde Park Jazz Festival

September 24-25, 2022
Various venues, Chicago's Southside, IL
hydeparkjazzfestival.org

Iowa City Jazz Festival

July 1-3, 2022
Various venues, Iowa City IA
summerofthearts.org

Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival

June 1-4, 2022
Downtown Sedalia, MO
scottjoplin.org

South Bend Jazz Festival

TBA
Century Center, South Bend, IN
southbendjazzfestival.com

Summer Solstice Jazz Festival

June 17-18, 2022
Downtown East Lansing, MI
eljazzfest.com

Twin Cities Jazz Festival

June 24-25, 2022
Mears Park Lowertown neighborhood in downtown St. Paul, MN
twincitiesjazzfestival.com

W.C. Handy Music Festival

July 22-31, 2022
The Shoal, Florence, AL
wchandymusicfestival.com

NORTHEAST

92Y Jazz in July Festival

July 20-29, 2022
92nd St. Y, New York, NY
92y.org

Blue Note Jazz Festival

June 1-30, 2022
Various venues, New York, NY
bluenote.net

Burlington Discover Jazz Festival

June 3-12, 2022
Flynn Theater and other venues, Burlington, VT
flynnvt.org

39th Annual Norfolk Waterfront

JAZZ FESTIVAL

presented by
OptimaHealth

40th
ANNIVERSARY SEASON
FestEvents™

Friday & Saturday, August 26 & 27
5pm-11pm Daily | Town Point Park
Downtown Norfolk Waterfront, VA

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 757-441-2345 OR VISIT FESTEVENETS.ORG

OptimaHealth

THE CITY OF
NORFOLK

SOUTHERN
DRIVING SOUTHERN.COM

VIRGINIA
IS FOR LOVERS

NG

This is a rain or shine event. Norfolk FestEvents reserves the right to move the festival to Norfolk Scope Arena if unfavorable weather is forecasted. No Refunds.



TOWER OF POWER Friday at 9:30pm



PIECES OF A DREAM Friday at 7:30pm



PETER WHITE & VINCENT INGALA Saturday at 7:30pm



CHRIS STANDRING Friday at 5:30pm



ALTHEA RENE Saturday at 5:30pm



BRIAN CULBERTSON Saturday at 9:30pm



PETER WHITE & VINCENT INGALA Saturday at 7:30pm

Hampton Roads' longest-running outdoor Jazz Festival.

#FestEvents

#NFKJazzFest



/@FESTEVENETS



VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL

Jazzfest

JUNE 24 - JULY 3, 2022

BLUES | R&B/SOUL | WORLD BEAT | ROOTS

BUDDY GUY

GREGORY PORTER

**RANKY TANKY
W. LISA FISCHER**

CÉCILE MCLORIN SALVANT

BRUBECK BROTHERS

SAMARA JOY

GOGO PENGUIN

THE SUFFERS

DELVON LAMARR ORGAN TRIO

LOUIS COLE BIG BAND

GHOST-NOTE

CHA WA

IMMANUEL WILKINS | AMANDA TOSOFF W. EMILIE-CLAIRE BARLOW

JULIAN LAGE | LAILA BIALI | LUDIC | HILARIO DURAN | ASTROCOLOR

JOEL ROSS GOOD VIBES | LES FILLES DE ILLIGHADAD | SUNNA GUNNLAUGS

DAN WILSON | LARNELL LEWIS | GIVETON GELIN | JACK SEMPLE

ELIZABETH SHEPHERD & MICHAEL OCCHIPINTI

AND MANY MANY MORE...INCLUDING FREE PERFORMANCES!

OVER 300 MUSICIANS | 70 PERFORMANCES | 10 STAGES

TICKETS AVAILABLE BY VENUE:
RMTS.BC.CA
HERMANNSJAZZ.COM
VICTORIAEVENTCENTRE.CA

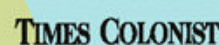
FESTIVAL INFO AT:
JAZZVICTORIA.CA

PRODUCED BY
THE VICTORIA
Jazz Society
JAZZVICTORIA.CA

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



PRESENTING MEDIA SPONSORS



10 HOT DAYS AND NIGHTS OF THE COOLEST MUSIC IN TOWN

2022 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE

Capital Jazz Fest

June 3-5, 2022
Merriweather Post
Pavillion, Columbia, MD
capitaljazz.com

Clifford Brown Jazz Festival

June 15-18, 2022
Rodney Square, Wilmington, DE
cliffordbrownjazzfest.org

DC Jazz Festival

August 31 - September 4, 2022
Various venues,
Washington, DC
dcjazzfest.org

Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition and Festival

May 5-7, 2022
Jazz at Lincoln Center,
New York, NY
academyjazz.org/ee/

Exit Zero Jazz Festival (Spring)

May 13-15, 2022
Various venues, Cape May, NJ
exitzerojazzfestival.com

Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival

June 25-26, 2022
Saratoga Performing Arts
Center, Saratoga Springs, NY
spac.org

Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz

July 15-17, 2022
Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT
hartfordjazz.org

Litchfield Jazz Festival

July 29-31, 2022
Thomas S. Parakos
Arts & Community
Center, Litchfield, CT
litchfieldjazzfest.com

Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival

May 6-17, 2022
Kennedy Center,
Washington, DC
kennedy-center.org/
whats-on/explore-by-
genre/jazz/2021-2022/
mary-lou-williams-jazz-festival

Montclair Jazz Festival

September 10, 2022
Downtown Montclair, NJ
montclairjazzfestival.org

Monty Alexander Jazz Festival

September 1-3, 2022
Avalon Theater, Easton, MD
avalonfoundation.org

Musikfest

August 5-14, 2022
Downtown Bethlehem, PA
musikfest.org

Newport Jazz Festival

July 29-31, 2022
International Tennis Hall
of Fame and Ft. Adams
State Park, Newport, RI
newportjazz.org

Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival

September 15-18, 2022
Various venues, Pittsburgh, PA
pittsburghjazzfest.org

Rockport Jazz Festival

TBA
Shalin Liu Performance
Center, Rockport, MA
rockportjazzfestival.com

Syracuse Jazz Festival

TBA
Syracuse, NY
syracusejazzfest.com

Vision Festival

June 21-26, 2022
Various venues, New York, NY
artsforart.org

Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival

June 17-25, 2022
Various venues, Rochester, NY
rochesterjazz.com

SOUTHEAST

Artspllosure

May 21-22, 2022
Art Market, Hillsborough
Street, downtown Raleigh, NC
artspllosure.org

Atlanta Jazz Festival

May 28-29, 2022
Piedmont Park, Atlanta, GA
atlantafestivals.com

Clearwater Jazz Holiday

October 13-16, 2022
Coachman Park, Clearwater, FL
clearwaterjazz.com

Duck Jazz Festival

October 8-9, 2022
Duck Town Park, Duck, NC
townofduck.com

Jacksonville Jazz Festival

May 26-29, 2022
Downtown Jacksonville, FL
jacksonvillejazzfest.com

Low Country Jazz Festival

TBA
Charleston Gallard
Center, Charleston, SC
lowcountryjazzfest.com

Norfolk Waterfront Jazz Festival

August 26-27, 2022
Town Point Park, Norfolk, VA
festevents.org

Satchmo Summerfest

July 30-31, 2022
French Quarter, New
Orleans, LA
satchmosummerfest.org

Savannah Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Savannah, GA
savannahjazz.org

Spoletto Festival USA

April 27 - May 12, 2022
Various venues, Charleston, SC
spoletousa.org

Suncoast Jazz Festival

November 18-20, 2022
Sand Key Resort,
Clearwater Beach, FL
suncoastjazzfestival.com

WEST

Arizona Classic Jazz Festival

November 3-6, 2022
Crowne Plaza San Marcos
Golf Resort, Chandler, AZ
azclassicjazz.org

Bakersfield Jazz Festival

TBA
CSU, Bakersfield, CA
bakersfieldjazzfest.com

Ballard Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Seattle, WA
ballardjazzfestival.com

Catalina Island Jazztrax Festival

October 13-16/October
20-23, 2022
Avalon Casino Ballroom,
Avalon, CA
jazztrax.com

Cathedral Park Jazz Festival

July 19-22, 2022
Cathedral Park, Portland, OR
jazzoregon.org

Denton Arts & Jazz Festival

October 7-9, 2022
Quakertown Park, Denton, TX
dentonjazzfest.com

Earshot Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Seattle, WA
earshot.org

Festival at Sandpoint

July 28 - August 7, 2022
War Memorial Field,
Sandpoint, ID
festivalatsandpoint.com

Healdsburg Jazz Festival

June 13-19, 2022
Various venues, Healdsburg, CA
healdsburgjazz.org

PITTSBURGHJAZZFEST.ORG

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2022

TICKETS ON SALE: MAY 9TH


Citizens[™]
Presents
PITTSBURGH
INTERNATIONAL **Jazz**
FESTIVAL 2022

**RON CARTER QUARTET • STANLEY CLARKE BAND
INCOGNITO FEATURING MAYSA LEAK • LEDISI
AVERAGE WHITE BAND • THE BUSTER WILLIAMS QUARTET "SOMETHING MORE"
VANISHA GOULD • MELISSA ALDANA • ORRIN EVANS TRIO • NATE SMITH + KINFOLK
CHRISTIAN SCOTT ATUNDE ADJUAH • AYMEE NOVILO AND GONZALO RUBALCABA • DAN WILSON
SAMARA JOY FEAT. PASQUALE GRASSO TRIO • LAURIN TALESE • AND MORE!**



Presents

SYRACUSE JAZZ FEST

CLINTON SQUARE • DOWNTOWN SYRACUSE
Thursday, June 23rd • Friday, June 24th • Saturday, June 25th



SYRACUSEJAZZFEST.COM
VISITSYRACUSE.COM

3 Nights! 30 Bands! 20 Clubs!

MARILYN MCCOO & BILLY DAVIS
AVERAGE WHITE BAND • DAVID SANBORN
NATHAN WILLIAMS & THE ZYDECO CHA CHA'S
BONEY JAMES • THE URBAN KNIGHTS
SHEILA JORDAN • HARVIE S • RONI BEN-HUR
SALT CITY JAZZ COLLECTIVE

FREE ADMISSION!



2022 INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE



Nubya Garcia at the
2022 Big Ears Festival

Hollywood Bowl Jazz Festival

June 25-26, 2022
Hollywood Bowl, Hollywood, CA
hollywoodbowl.com

Houston International Jazz Festival

TBA
Various venues, Houston, TX
houstonjazzfestival.org

Jazz Aspen Snowmass Jazz Experience

June 23-26, 2022
Downtown Aspen, CO
jazzaspensnowmass.org

Jazz Aspen Snowmass Labor Day Experience

September 2-4, 2022
Snowmass Town Park,
Snowmass, CO
jazzaspensnowmass.org

Jazz Port Townsend

July 25-31, 2022
Fort Worden State Park,
Port Townsend, WA
centrum.org

Juneau Jazz & Classics

May 8-14, 2022
Various venues, Juneau, AK
jazzandclassics.org

Long Beach Jazz Festival

August 12-14, 2022
Rainbow Lagoon Park,
Long Beach, CA
longbeachjazzfestival.com

Monterey Jazz Festival

September 23-25, 2022
Monterey Fairgrounds,
Monterey, CA
montereyjazzfestival.org

Oregon Coast Jazz Party

September 29 - October 2, 2022
Hallmark Resort Newport,
Newport, OR
coastarts.org

Prescott Jazz Summit

TBA
Downtown Prescott, AZ
prescottjazzsummit.net

San Francisco Jazz Festival

June 8-19, 2022
Various venues, San
Francisco, CA
sfjazz.org

San Jose Jazz Summer Fest

August 12-14, 2022
Downtown San Jose, CA
sanjosejazz.org

Sun Valley Jazz Jamboree

October 12-16, 2022
Sun Valley Resort,
Sun Valley, ID
sunvalleyjazz.com

Telluride Jazz Festival

August 12-14, 2022
Telluride Town Park,
Telluride, CO
telluridejazz.org

Vail Jazz Party

September 1-5, 2022
Various venues, Vail, CO
vailjazz.org

West Texas Jazz Party

June 2-4, 2022
Odessa Marriott Hotel &
Convention Center, Odessa, TX
wtjs.org



Cruises

Blue Note at Sea

January 13-20, 2023
Cruise departs from Ft.
Lauderdale, FL; Ports
of Labadee, San Juan
and St. Thomas
bluenoteatsea.com

The Jazz Cruise

January 6-13, 2023
Cruise departs from Ft.
Lauderdale, FL; Ports of Costa
Maya, Cozumel and Nassau
thejazzcruise.com

The Smooth Jazz Cruise: 23.1 Sailing

January 20-27, 2023
Cruise departs from Ft.
Lauderdale, FL; Ports of
Grand Cayman, Costa
Maya and Cozumel
thesmoothjazzcruise.com

The Smooth Jazz Cruise: 23.2 Sailing

January 27 - February 3, 2023
Cruise departs from
Ft. Lauderdale, FL;
Ports of Costa Maya,
Cozumel and Nassau
thesmoothjazzcruise.com

The SuperCruise XV

January 15-22, 2023
Cruise departs from San
Juan, PR; Ports of call: Ponce;
Tortola; St. Croix; St. Maarten
capitaljazz.com

United States

NORTHEAST

Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival

February 17-19, 2023
Rockville Hilton, Rockville, MD
midatlanticjazzfestival.org

Winter Jazzfest

TBA 2023
Various venues, New York, NY
winterjazzfest.com

SOUTHEAST

Big Ears Festival

March 30 - April 2, 2023
Various venues,
Knoxville, TN
bigearsfestival.org

French Quarter Jazz Festival

April 13-16, 2023
French Quarter, New
Orleans, LA
frenchquarterfest.org

North Carolina Jazz Festival

February 2-4, 2023
Hotel Ballast, Wilmington, NC
ncjazzfestival.org

Tucson Jazz Festival

TBA 2023
Various venues, Tucson, AZ
tusconjazzfestival.org

A poster for the 2022 VISION Festival NYC. It features two musicians, Wadada Leo Smith and Oliver Lake, playing saxophones. The text 'ON VISION' is at the top in large letters. Below it, 'JUNE 20 - 26' and '2022 VISION FESTIVAL NYC' are prominently displayed. It also mentions 'in Person & Streaming'. At the bottom, it says 'Festival lineup and tickets: artsforart.org/vision'. There are small circular logos for 'ARTS FOR ART' and 'ARTS FOR ART'.



detroit Jazz FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY

ROCKET
Mortgage

CHUCHO VALDÉS
2022 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

DIANNE REEVES
ABDULLAH IBRAHIM
VIJAY IYER
NUBYA GARCIA
AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE

LABOR DAY WEEKEND

To support the largest, free jazz festival in the world and foster the history and development of jazz please text DJFF to 243725. Your contribution is greatly appreciated!

Get the Detroit Jazz
Fest LIVE! app.





A pair of Audioengine A1s

Power to the Speakers

Speakers with built-in amps promise sonic superiority. So why do some audiophiles still prefer traditional passive models?

BY BRENT BUTTERWORTH

Visit a pro audio retailer and almost every studio monitor speaker you see will have amplification built in. But visit a high-end audio store and you'll see mostly old-school passive speakers, which have to be connected to an amplifier. Audio production professionals might wonder why the consumer audio industry hasn't embraced a technology that's been the norm in studios for at least 20 years—but audiophiles have their reasons...

Pros switched to powered (also known as "active") monitor speakers primarily because of the precision they offer. With the electronics built into the speakers, manufacturers can tune them to near perfection—and even add a switch to simulate the sound of classic studio monitors like the Auratone and Yamaha NS-10. But audiophiles have been skeptical

that a speaker with amps built in could match the sound quality of separate speakers and amps.

For years, consumer audio manufacturers who understood the advantages of powered speakers were continually frustrated by the commercial failure of the active models they offered. But in the last five years or so, the rise of streaming services—which many powered speakers can access without any additional components other than a smartphone—have prompted audiophiles to give powered designs a fresh listen.

THE ADVANTAGES OF ACTIVE

Powered speakers offer many technical advantages over passive models. Engineers have to tune passive speakers through the use of large, imprecise

resistors, capacitors, and inductors. But most powered speakers are tuned using equalization circuits that take their place in the signal chain before the amplifier. Because the signal levels at this stage are much lower, engineers can use smaller, more precise components. Many of them use digital signal processing, which gives engineers even more flexibility and allows extremely precise tuning of the speaker, as well as the addition of modes that can compensate for the acoustical effects of placing a speaker near a wall or in a corner. Even relatively simple models, like the \$199 Audioengine A1, have internal limiter circuits that prevent the speakers and amps from being damaged when you crank them full-blast—something you can't safely do with separate amps and speakers.

All speakers with more than one driver (i.e., a woofer, a tweeter, and maybe a midrange driver) use a crossover to route the desired sonic frequencies to each driver. In passive speakers, this involves a crossover made with the same imprecise components noted above. But the better powered speakers use separate amplifiers for each driver, and a more



ACTIVE EFFICIENCY

Most active speakers carry power ratings in the double digits—maybe 50 watts—but 80 to 200 watts is more the norm for separate amplifiers. Why? Because powered speakers are more efficient; they don't have big, power-sucking passive resistors, capacitors, and inductors. Also, separate amps need to be oversized to some extent, because the designer doesn't know what speakers you'll use with them.

Top: KEF's LS50 Wireless IIs in a range of colors; bottom: the SVS Prime Wireless, with and without cover

precise active crossover circuit that can achieve a near-perfect blend between the different drivers.

Manufacturers have recently started to augment their active speakers with streaming technologies, such as Apple AirPlay 2 and Google Chromecast. These features not only let you access your favorite streaming services, such as Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora, and TuneIn Radio, but they also let you use the powered speakers as part of a multiroom audio system, playing the same music in multiple rooms of the house. Most of these models also include Bluetooth for easy, direct streaming from phones and tablets. Some of the most acclaimed examples include the \$2,799 KEF LS50 Wireless II and the \$599 SVS Prime Wireless.

Perhaps the feature that will appeal most to city-dwelling jazz fans, though, is that these feature-packed active speakers require no other components—the speakers *themselves* are the system, with content streamed wirelessly from the internet or mobile devices rather than played from traditional devices like CD players and turntables. However, all of these speakers have inputs that allow connection of traditional source devices. Some even have HDMI inputs that let them connect to a TV, so they'll work like a soundbar—although with much better sound.

THE PROS OF PASSIVE

But there *must* be a good reason why most audiophiles still use traditional

passive speakers, right? Actually, there are several.

The first and most obvious is that audiophiles enjoy mixing and matching components in pursuit of the most pleasing sound—something that's impossible to do with active speakers. They also like the much broader selection of high-quality passive speakers now available; exotic touches like horn and ribbon tweeters, full-range drivers, and open-back designs are rarely found in powered speakers.

Another advantage is that passive speakers don't go out of date. Even 50-year-old classics can adapt quite well to new technologies and sources, while a state-of-the-art 2022 powered model may not be compatible with whatever new audio technologies have emerged by 2032.

The third, and perhaps most important, reason for the continued popularity of passive speakers is that as products, powered speakers can be about as exciting as a refrigerator—they're practical appliances designed to do their job well, not to be sexy. I doubt even the most technically minded audio engineer would deny that owning a pair of elite high-end speakers paired with a tube amp and preamp delivers a sense of satisfaction no powered speaker could ever match. **JT**



The Gibson Theodore, from 1957 sketch to 2022 reality; below: the Certificate of Authenticity booklet with photo of Ted McCarty

Introducing the Theodore

A lost-in-time electric guitar design makes its debut at last

BY MAC RANDALL

Unless you're a certified guitar nerd, the name Ted McCarty (1909-2001) probably means nothing to you. But no matter who you are, there's little doubt that you're familiar on some level with his work. As president of Gibson from 1950 to 1966, he helped develop a series of electric guitars that have become classics of American instrument design, including the ES-335, the Les Paul, the SG, the Firebird, the Flying V, and the Explorer.

Interestingly, like his fellow innovator and rival Leo Fender, McCarty wasn't a guitarist himself. He was, however, an inveterate doodler, known for drawing sketches of instruments to keep his mind focused during phone calls and long, boring business meetings. Every once in a while, these spur-of-the-moment sketches turned into something more.

That seems to have been the case with one drawing in the Gibson archives—signed with McCarty's initials and dated March 18, 1957—of an electric guitar with a body shape reminiscent of a small tulip. Having evolved well past the doodle stage, it contains fairly detailed notes about specs: how long the neck should be, what type of wood to use for the body, instructions on



fingerboard inlays and binding.

When this drawing was made, McCarty was rethinking his company's entire electric guitar line. Although it had earned some style points with the solid-body, single-cutaway Les Paul, Gibson was still commonly associated with acoustic guitars and hollow or semi-hollow archtop models like the L-5 and the ES-175, which now seemed pretty old-fashioned when put next to Fender's curvy new Stratocaster. McCarty wanted to push Gibson's visual sensibilities forward, and he would soon do so with the futuristic Flying V and Explorer, both of which were introduced in 1958. (Another daring design from this period, the Moderne, wasn't put into production until 1982.)

His drawing of March 18 didn't have

quite as radical a look as those instruments, which may have something to do with why it never went any further, not even reaching the prototype stage. But interesting old ideas have a funny way of getting rediscovered. On March 18, 2022, exactly 65 years after McCarty put pencil to paper, Gibson introduced a real wood-and-strings version of his long-forgotten design, the first entry in its newly launched Gibson Archive Collection.

With a nod to McCarty's full first name, it's called the Theodore.

Lightweight and armed with a pair of P-90 pickups, the Theodore has—as specified in the original sketch—an alder body in either natural, cherry, or ebony finish with double Florentine cutaways and a walnut center strip, as well as a “scimitar” headstock similar to that of the Explorer. According to Gibson, only 318 of these guitars have been made (3/18, geddit?). Each Theodore comes with a vintage-style hardshell case, brown on the outside and pink on the inside, along with a leather strap, a print of the McCarty sketch, a 1957-style catalog print, and a Certificate of Authenticity booklet. This unusual piece of alternative history can be yours for \$4,999 (MSRP). **JT**

5 FOR THE ROAD

► We Have a Pulse

Spector has expanded its NS Pulse series of electric basses with the introduction of the **NS Pulse II**, available in four-, five-, and six-string versions. Its distinguishing features include a swamp ash body with highly figured quilted maple top, a three-piece roasted maple bolt-on neck with Macassar ebony fingerboard (yes, we did say “roasted,” a process that provides enhanced stability and resonance), a locking bridge, EMG active pickups, and a TonePump Jr. preamp.

\$1,299.99 (four-string) MSRP |
spectorbass.com



▲ Moments of Clarity

Getting rid of stray noise from vocal recordings—whether it’s coming from traffic outside or the whirr of an air conditioner—can be trying. **Waves Audio**’s new noise reduction software plugin, **Clarity Vx**, addresses this problem by first isolating vocals from ambience and background noise and then removing those hums, hisses, and buzzes in real time and at the highest fidelity, without leaving any weird sonic artifacts. And you don’t need an engineering degree to figure out how to use it.

\$149 MSRP | **waves.com**



► Echoes of Glory

A couple of issues back, we reported that Roland would roll out some special products to celebrate its 50th anniversary, and here’s a very special one indeed: the **BOSS RE-202 Space Echo**, a digital footpedal iteration of the company’s vaunted 1974 tape echo device. If you know the original RE-201 Space Echo, the knobs and 12-position mode selector here will seem quite familiar—as will the sounds (now in stereo too, and with no tape heads to maintain).

\$399.99 | **boss.info**

► A Stay-at-Home Trip

In the wake of the pandemic, many musicians turned to **JackTrip Labs**’ Virtual Studio to rehearse and perform together remotely in an online environment with high sound quality and low latency (time delay). Now the company’s subscription-based platform has added a new feature called **Soundscapes** that uses a cloud-based signal processing engine to replicate various audio environments, including large and small halls, cathedrals, and rehearsal rooms—giving your virtual performances a deeper sense of realism.



Subscriptions \$0-1,000 per month | **jacktrip.com**

► Back to Venus

For more than 20 years, the **Mapex Venus Series** all-in-one drum kit has been off the market, but now it’s back, in a five-piece poplar shell pack with matching snare drum, a complete set of stands and pedals, cymbals, a throne, and even a pair of sticks. The price may be entry-level, but Venus kits use the same bearing-edge technology as pro-level Mapex drums do. Available in four sparkle colors: Black Galaxy, Blue Sky (pictured), Aqua Blue, and Crimson Red.



\$699 online | **mapexdrums.com/us**



"Found his center": Gerald Clayton

Gentle on His Mind

The softer side of Gerald Clayton

GERALD CLAYTON

Bells on Sand

Blue Note



Themes of meditation, solitude, and reflection fill Gerald Clayton's second Blue Note release, a surprising issuance from that reservoir of classic '50s/'60s jazz profundity and contemporary jazz fireballs. Throughout, the pianist surrounds himself with a cast that reflects the music's unlikely alliances: Charles Lloyd on saxophone, father John Clayton on bass, Justin Brown on drums, and 24-year-old Portuguese multi-instrumentalist and composer Maro on vocals. "Together, they explore the impact and abstraction of time," the liner notes state.

Bells on Sand is a collection of ethereal sketches connected by quietude. Yawning arco bass and lullaby-worthy piano adorn the opening track, "Water's Edge," followed by the equally sober "Elegia." The warm, expressive vocals of Maro uplift a lovely piece by Catalan composer Federico Mompou, "Damunt de tu Només les Flors," which has all the weight and grandeur of a later-period Antônio Carlos Jobim. The song floats like dappled sunlight on a still pond.

Clayton turns the classic standard "My Ideal" into a gentle solo romp. The dollops of lush electric keyboard in the dreamy funk of his Roy Hargrove dedication, "That Roy," are extended skyward by Brown's feathery touch. Another Clayton/Brown duet, "Rip," curiously recalls '70s fusion and claustrophobia, the duo stretching out to gently shake, rattle, and roll. Maro's sensuous vocal beauty (Don Was, sign this woman!) returns on Clayton's mesmerizing, flowing "Just a Dream." Lloyd comes aboard for "Peace Invocation," the master musician giving the entire album weight and focus.

As the world struggled with COVID in 2021, Gerald Clayton went inside, hunkered down, and found his center. *Bells on Sand* is certain proof of life.

—KEN MICALLEF

STEVE SLAGLE

Ballads: Into the Heart of It

Panorama

Recorded in a single day at a New Jersey studio, Steve Slagle's first all-ballads collection in a four-plus-decade career finds the alto and soprano saxophonist moving seamlessly between standards (Tadd Dameron's "If You Could See Me Now"),



not-so-standard covers (Stevie Wonder's "Kiss Lonely Goodbye"), and a handful of originals.

Choosing Miles Davis and Bill Evans' "Blue in Green" as the opening gambit might seem a less than daring pick, but Slagle makes sure to customize it. Synth orchestration by Richard Sussman (who also appears on two other tracks) brings a slightly off-center eccentricity to the core melody, and Slagle's soulful soloing gives the arrangement a contemporary edge that never suggests 1959.

Three more non-original compositions follow, a redrawing of Monk's "Reflections" being particularly sweet. Slagle and pianist Bruce Barth, with assistance from Randy Brecker on trumpet, take their time pushing the melody this way and that over its eight-and-a-half minutes, the fine rhythm section of bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Jason Tiemann giving the tune just enough swing a quarter of the way in to keep it lively.

Brecker turns up twice more on the recording, on the Slagle originals "The Heart of It" and "Big Mac" (the latter billed as a bonus cut). Anything but a

ballad, "Big Mac"—a triple-headed tribute to the deceased McCoy Tyner and Jackie McLean, as well as the living guitarist Andy McKee, according to Dan Bilawsky's illuminating liner notes—is a cooker.

Why Slagle decided to close out the album with a track that defies its theme is his business, but be glad he did. It suggests another possible direction in which this talented player/composer might consider heading; if he does, hopefully he'll call back the personnel that helped make *Ballads: Into the Heart of It* such a richly textured joy.

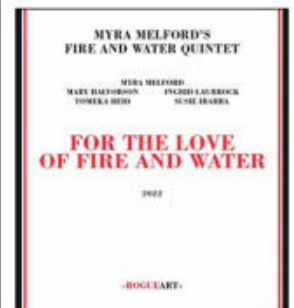
—JEFF TAMARKIN

MYRA MELFORD'S FIRE AND WATER QUINTET

For the Love of Fire and Water

RogueArt

For the Love of Fire and Water takes its name and inspiration from a series of works by artist Cy Twombly. Pianist Myra Melford doesn't attempt to create music that translates the images into sounds. Instead she sees a parallel between Twombly's habit of drawing in the dark and her own approach to the piano, since both disciplines are built on gesture and energy. Like a stroll through a gallery, the



10 tracks pull visitors into the art, with music that sounds alternately aggressive and understated depending on the track.

The quintet convened for the project includes established leaders in improvised

music, all of them women: Mary Halvorson (guitar), Tomeka Reid (cello), Ingrid Laubrock (soprano and tenor saxophones), and Susie Ibarra (drums, gongs). Melford forgoes titles for the individual tracks, designating each one with a Roman numeral. This setup makes the album feel like a continuous suite even as it moves from free group improvisation into pensive sections and a passage where plinks, pops, and creaks break through the silence.

After the opening movement, in which Melford's bandmates eventually join in with her rapid piano lines, the group often breaks into subgroups, sometimes running wild but usually following a riff that the pianist introduces on her instrument's lower end. "III" begins with Laubrock's soprano in a cat-and-mouse exchange with Halvorson, before offering room to the other three players for a free romp. Ibarra's Filipino gongs and cymbal rolls add dimension to a slow piano/cello melody in "IV." The members of the quintet bring a collective spark to the music, but Melford is the most dynamic of all. Even when she delves into a Cecil Taylor-esque flurry, the fire of her lines still sounds welcoming.

—MIKE SHANLEY

JOEL ROSS *The Parable of the Poet*

Blue Note

While it's no surprise that Chicago-to-Brooklyn transplant Joel Ross is a smooth-operating protégé of fellow vibraphonist Stefon Harris, it is shocking how far Ross has gone beyond that initial influence. After romanticizing postbop traditionalism on his two earlier Blue Note recordings, 2019's *Kingmaker* and 2020's *Who Are You?*, the vibraphonist/

composer crafts a sweeping, spacious suite of seven redolent movements with this *Parable*.

Ross once again welcomes alto saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins to his impressionistic setting and, together with trumpeter/one-time boss Marquis Hill, they create a wall of noirish sound most cinematic—like Jerry Goldsmith's *Chinatown* score sprinkled with holy water. On occasion, Ross' teaming with Wilkins hosts a deep and abiding nod to latter-day, spiritualized Coltrane. With that, it would be too easy to state that Ross' first movement, "Prayer," as well as the closing "Benediction," benefits from such



sonic communalism. Yet it's true. These moments hum like a cantor's moan.

The elegiacally slow and undulating "Choices" starts as a team in eight-player unison and breaks down into quiet chaos before the last teardrop falls. A subtone-blown tenor saxophone line from María Grand and a dramatic trickle from pianist Sean Mason lifts the repetitious melody from its solid, staid place. The Möbius strip syncopation from Grand, a player handsomely highlighted throughout Ross' third Blue Note album, is another delightful lyrical element, and one made flightier still by flutist Gabrielle Garoon.

Going back to *Chinatown*, Wilkins and Ross make "Wail" and "THE IMPETUS (To Be and Do Better)" into something twilight and truculent. Here and there, a detective film's motives are hidden within another

detective film's motions, like *The Thin Man* wound through *Farewell, My Lovely* with Ross' vibraphone always ringing twice. And then some.

—A.D. AMOROSI

DEXTER GORDON

Soul Sister

SteepleChase

In 1962, Dexter Gordon was in fine fettle physically and musically. Clean and sober since his final release from prison on drug charges several years earlier, he'd signed with Blue Note in 1961 and had since made some of the most esteemed recordings of his career. His gigs, though, were in a slump. So when London club owner Ronnie Scott offered Gordon a gig that September, he jumped at the opportunity. What began as a month-long U.K. residency turned into a 14-year European residency, during which Gordon would rejuvenate his performing career, his international reputation, and his life.

Until now, though, we've had little documentation of what his



music sounded like during his first few years as an expatriate. Hence these two sets, recorded live in Copenhagen in 1963 and in the Oslo studio of NRK (Norwegian public radio) in 1962, are invaluable additions to Gordon's recorded legacy. Especially notable is the presence of then-16-year-old bassist Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen on the live Copenhagen set.

Gordon is at full power and full swing, effortlessly negotiating

the songs' harmonic and melodic structures with his legendary pinpoint timing and burnished, voice-like tone; inserting sly quotes ("Blues in the Night," "Summertime," "Pop Goes the Weasel[!]") at opportune moments; sounding every bit like a man restored. The set list consists mostly of material he'd recorded recently. The exceptions are "A Night in Tunisia," tinged with playful exoticism and sinewy grace, and the mid-tempo blues "Stanley the Steamer," which he wouldn't record under his own name until 1969's *The Tower of Power!*

Any addition to the monumental legacy of Dexter Gordon is notable. One such as this, powered by the unceasing inspiration and deep-running soulfulness that defined both the music and the man, is cause for celebration.

—DAVID WHITEIS

LYNNE ARRIALE TRIO

The Lights Are Always On

Challenge

Can instrumental music that's uniformly relaxed and occasionally tinged with melancholy still create a sense of urgency and express joy? Those are the seemingly contradictory feelings evoked by the affecting melodies, accomplished individual performances, and seamless ensemble work showcased on *The Lights Are Low*. The album is pianist Lynne Arriale's 16th release as a leader and second fronting a trio with drummer E.J. Strickland and Dutch bassist Jasper Somsen.

The collection of 10 Arriale originals was inspired by the healthcare workers who have persevered on the front lines of the COVID pandemic, even while risking infection—not unlike

the 9/11 heroes, as she explains in the CD package's lavish, informative 16-page booklet. The title track, specifically honoring Tacoma surgeon Dr. Prakash Gada, offers



a chiming, circling melody, built on a stair-stepping bass line and a pretty, unhurried piano improvisation, the first of many on the album.

Nearly every track honors a person or group who proved inspiring during the Great Disruption of pandemic times. "Sisters," honoring those women fighting against gender inequality, thrives on gospel-blues grooves and chordings; loping opener "March On,"

honoring activists battling institutional racism and sexism, features the first of Somsen's chewy, conversational upright solos and some creatively filled open space for Strickland.

Arriale pays tribute to American patriots too, with the stately, pastel-hued "Honor" for Lt. Colonel Alexander Vindman; the multicolor "The Notorious RBG" for the late Supreme Court Justice; and the hymnlike "Walk in My Shoes" for the late Congressman and civil-rights champion John Lewis. The trio closes with the lush ballad "Heroes." Like the aptly titled "Sounds Like America"—do I hear Copland?—it's imbued with strains of folkish Americana, melodies that Arriale effectively voices, unravels, and then puts back together again. Can we do the same thing with our country?

—PHILIP BOOTH

SteepleChase

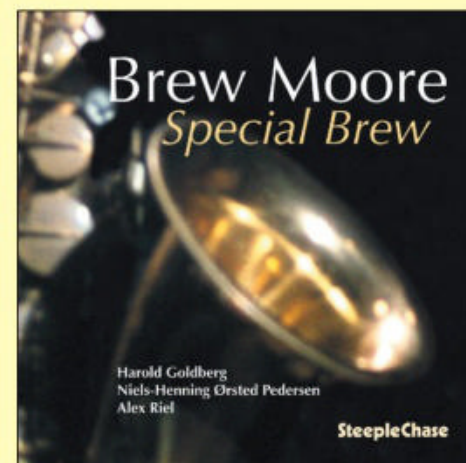
Complete catalog: www.steeplechase.dk

NEW RELEASES

CD - DOWNLOAD - STREAMING



SCCD 31931



SCCD 36042

US distribution: **Stateside**
www.statesidemusic.com - email: info@statesidemusic.com

"Deeper than ever": Avishai Cohen



EDITOR'S PICK

AVISHAI COHEN

Naked Truth

ECM



Israel-born trumpeter Avishai Cohen is one of the most consistently rewarding bandleaders on the ECM roster. His sound has only grown more personal, haunting, and lyrical—and his accompanists are consistently sympathetic. For his latest offering, he's going deeper than ever. The poem he recites at its conclusion says it all: "Departure," by Israeli poet Zelda Schneurson Mishkovsky,

translated from Hebrew by himself and stage director Sharon Mohar.

What a startling meditation on leaving everything behind and accepting the finality of death. "Part from all work and art, from rituals, from rain and from all that is pleasing to the eye," Cohen reads. "It is necessary to part from Knowing-Good-and-Evil of this world, since other terms of good and evil are there."

Pianist Yonathan Avishai's spellbinding theme to "Naked Truth – Part 2," one section of an eight-part suite that precedes "Departure," sounds exactly like that latter verse, tunneling through a plane both comforting and unsettling. Bassist Barak Mori and drummer Ziv Ravitz add subtle color; Cohen plays sparsely and yearningly, adding a very human ache to the proceedings.

"Everything that I came to assemble for the album revolved around those eight notes," Cohen explains of that composition in the press release. "And all the possibilities within them."

He certainly found them. But at a mellow and compelling 35 minutes, the album never derails or meanders. And while there may not be a crashing finale, that's the nature of this journey—identifying the unadulterated reality of all things.

In her list of what to leave behind, Mishkovsky tears us away from everything: "From the physical movement and from the inner movement. From love and from hate. *From music.*" Certainly, the latter is something we all must give up when we shuffle off our mortal coils. But as Cohen's transfixing art reminds us, it would be difficult not to look back.

—MORGAN ENOS

ADAM LARSON

With Love, From Chicago

Outside In

Adam Larson is a young saxophone virtuoso brimming with justified confidence. He self-produced his first record while still in high school, graduated with two degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, and is now on a conservatory faculty. Yet *With Love, From Chicago*, his sixth album, has a humility that leavens the abundant music theory and prodigy's ego.

For this trio record, Larson enlists a pair of Windy City stalwarts: bassist Clark Sommers and drummer Dana Hall. On the opener, Larson's "Angolan Babysitter," Hall engages Larson in spirited call-and-response, then delivers a lengthy solo. The next three compositions are by Sommers, and all of



them (but especially "The Time You Forgot You Knew") create crucial space for his woody tone.

Fostering a genuine ensemble over a leader/sidemen dynamic better showcases Larson's talents. His tenor can move with quicksilver fluidity, but, like early Donny McCaslin or Joel Frahm (he's studied with both), the unpredictability impresses more than the speed. His phrases variously tumble and veer, feint and plunge, or suddenly rear up and poise like an alert animal. There is heart in the technique: On Sommers' ballad "In Waiting," Larson's vibrato unearths the emotional complexity of determination amid uncertainty.

Larson's tour de force is on the title

song from the 1948 movie *Portrait of Jenny*. The plush, bittersweet blues conjures Lester Young; the playful sidebars and tempo shifts are reminiscent of Sonny Rollins. But if you're looking for joyrides, the trio chops and tosses Monk's "We See" at a puree pace.

It's not surprising that *With Love, From Chicago* is Larson's best album to date. And it won't be surprising if his next one—the second of his planned triplet of tributes to cities influential to his development, utilizing rhythm sections from those locales—is better still.

—BRITT ROBSON

JAZZ SABBATH

Jazz Sabbath, Vol. 2

Blacklake

A cross between Black Sabbath and the Bill Evans Trio with a Spinal Tap timeline, Jazz Sabbath is the brainchild of pianist Adam Wakeman, who's toured with both Black Sabbath and its original vocalist Ozzy Osbourne. The bandleader is the son of Rick Wakeman, the notoriously gifted and humorous former keyboardist for Yes—which makes the group's absurdist, fictitious concept



(of a 50-year-old jazz trio having had its compositions plagiarized by the heavy metal heroes, with Wakeman listed as Milton Keane, upright bassist Jerry Meehan as Jacque T'fono, and drummer Ash Soan as Juan Také) more plausible. The acoustic trio released its self-titled debut in 2020; *Vol. 2* is

likewise a collection of seven Black Sabbath favorites.

A gifted interpreter, Wakeman gives the churning opening anthem "Paranoid" a creative intro that makes the track unrecognizable until 90 seconds in, after which, complete with a horn section, it goes full-on New Orleans second line. The subsequent "Snowblind" follows suit, with Soan's brushwork lightening what was originally a typical Sabbath slow dirge. Tongue-in-cheek additional characters (electric pianist Allen Kees and electric guitarist Angus Guitaropoulos on the former, Hammond organist Leighton B'zard and acoustic guitarist Wes Tostrayer on the latter) increase the Spinal Tap elements.

Formulaic but effective, the core trio shifts "Behind the Wall of Sleep" from a 6/8 ballad into a sashaying jaunt midway and turns the haunting "N.I.B." into a pleasant swing number. Only the dramatic closer "Black Sabbath," with Meehan approximating Geezer Butler's electric bass line, approaches the darkness of one of the original compositions stolen from "London's most successful underground jazz trio" in 1969.

—BILL MEREDITH

DAVID VIRELLES

Nuna

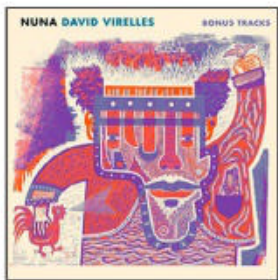
Pi

Like most of his recent work on the ECM and Pi labels, pianist/composer David Virelles' *Nuna* is an attempt to join Cuban folkloric and traditional elements with deconstructed melodies and modern extended harmonies. It's mostly a solo piano program, although three pieces feature percussionist Julio Barreto, best known for his work with Gonzalo Rubalcaba. (Virelles also plays percussion,

beginning the album with a dark, mysterious marimbula solo.)

The music slips and slides in and out of genre. Virelles wears his influences on his sleeve: Chopin and Scriabin, but also the lesser-known Algerian pianist Mustapha Skandrani and Ethiopia's Emahoy Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou. There are nods on the album to several Cuban composers, including Mariano Mercerón and Sindo Garay, and an homage to the underrated, sophisticated pianist Bola de Nieve. That's a pretty broad palette to work from, but it's all filtered through his contemporary, modernistic sensibility. Much of Nuna sounds like a composer walking you through his process and improvising in the moment. There are times, as in the composition "Tessellations," when he plays with a phrase, then turns it upside down and inside out: abstraction that leads to defragmentation.

High points include the whispered prayer of "Rezo"; the gorgeous, harmonically wandering "Ocho"; and the sepia-tinged "Al Compás de Mi Viejo Tres," with its surprising deceptive cadences. The dense,



restless "Simple Answer" is anything but. There is a staggered mambo, a fractured clave on "Pórtico," and beautiful truth unfolding on the closing "Casa." Virelles describes *Nuna* as "a metaphor for the piano as an ancient instrument." But in such creative hands, it's simultaneously contemporary and futuristic.

— LARRY APPELBAUM

ANNA LAURA QUINN

Open the Door

Outside In

Anna Laura Quinn's debut album doesn't sound like the work of an ingenue. Her first full-length release artfully threads the jazz needle, paying direct tribute to her formative influences while establishing her own winsome identity as a savvy vocalist and arranger with an appealing sound, unflinching taste, and expansive palette of influences. She produced *Open the Door* and crafted the arrangements, which tend toward the understated and make excellent use of veteran New Orleans



guitarist Ed Barrett. Their duet on Ellis Marsalis' exquisite ballad "Cry Again," a luscious harmonic steeplechase he wrote with Sarah Vaughan in mind, is worth the price of admission alone.

Quinn opens the album with a stripped-down version of Abbey Lincoln's "Talking to the Sun" that captures the sturdy folk magic of her music. The title track, an abject late-night plea by Betty Carter, features a gorgeous arrangement inspired by Ethio-jazz legend Mulatu Astatke, a combination that pays steep harmonic dividends. Quinn provides her own background vocals on a brief but captivating a cappella version of the Sammy Fain/Bob Hilliard gem "Very Good Advice"—a technique she revisits on Ellington and Strayhorn's sublime "The Single Petal of a Rose," a duet with the impressive baritone saxophonist Kate Campbell-Strauss.

Set to a quietly predatory guitar line with insinuating bari fills, her slinky take on "Love for Sale" inextricably tethers the song to the sex trade without turning explicitly lascivious.

Bay Area jazz fans might be familiar with Quinn from her 2018 EP *I Feel a Sudden Urge to Sing!* or her regular appearances with San Francisco mandolinist Michael Zisman's Americano Social Club. In recent years she's been earning a master's degree in jazz studies at the University of New Orleans, and *Open the Door* announces the graduation of a vocalist fully equipped to make an important contribution.

—ANDREW GILBERT

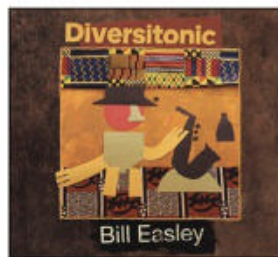
BILL EASLEY

Diversitonic

Sunnyside

The concise liner note for this album begins, "*Diversitonic* is not meant to be rocket science.... It is simply a statement by a 76-year-old woodwind player, who has been paying his bills and paying his dues by blowing air through pipes for 62 years."

Such modest understatement is rare in liner notes. Also rare are albums whose amiable melodicism



and light swinging energy are this easy to live with.

Like most professional musicians (which Easley has been from the age of 14), he has taken the work he could get. He has played with established leaders (George Benson, Mercer Ellington, James Williams) and built a résumé deep in

singers (Dakota Staton, Jimmy Witherspoon, Etta Jones, Chris Connor) and organists (Jimmy McGriff, Joey DeFrancesco, Charles Earland). But he also worked with Isaac Hayes, in studios, and in Broadway shows. He has moved around a lot. Besides New York, he has hit Pittsburgh, Memphis, and even Fairbanks, Alaska. Recently he landed in Durham, North Carolina. He uses players from that local scene on *Diversitonic*.

Easley plays tenor and alto saxophones with the careless grace of someone who has been doing it all his life. Most of the tunes here are older than Easley, and most are taken medium-up. "I Should Care" gently percolates and "Isfahan" is lilting. Easley has a gruff, warm tone on tenor ("When Lights Are Low") and a pretty, singing sound on alto ("Things Ain't What They Used to Be"). On both horns, he is a relaxed, natural, flowing improviser. There is only one slow song, Duke Ellington's "I Didn't Know About You." Easley holds and releases each successive phrase with spot-on ballad timing.

In a world full of late-night jazz, *Diversitonic* is morning music. Take it with your coffee. It will jump-start your day.

—THOMAS CONRAD

FERGUS MCCREADIE

Forest Floor

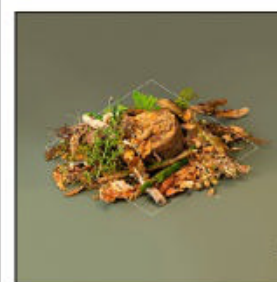
Edition

Scottish native Fergus McCreadie ignites his new trio album with a flurry of precisely placed notes, rich harmonies in forest fire motion. The pianist has stated how he wants *Forest Floor* to oppose his previous set, *Cairn*: the immobility of the inert versus the nutritious panoply of the ecosystem.

So "Law Hill" defines the rules of en-

gagement, and indeed the battlefield, but leaves one end open for further exploration. And indeed "The Unfurrowed Field" spins around a simple song, something a child might make up, hiking, soon after lunch, a toe-tipping trip into uncharted terrain by dinner. Bassist David Bowden uses his solo here as formal statement for some other figures, and variations, he'll work in later down the line. It's an ecosystem unto itself, alive and worming its way into nested systems.

"Morning Moon" features an even lighter touch, McCreadie experimenting with how little pressure he needs to draw sound; Bowden comes in behind him sounding sage, bowing silvery, chiming harmonies off the piano intervals. As far as drummer Stephen Henderson, he owns branches cracking, limbs



groaning softly with the weight of grackles, gentle ticking noises signifying the forest settling into itself—although he can own furious, fuse-driving power when the boss decrees.

From the coldness of stone to the multiplicity of life, wherever it's found—where are these guys gonna end up next? Outer space? I'd sure love this band assaying, say, sunrise from around the Earth's rim, or the continents through the clouds. Maybe the sinister unassailable of the nearest black hole to Earth—a phenomenon code-named "The Unicorn," if that's any help. An enormous silent sucking sound. Sounds like a start.

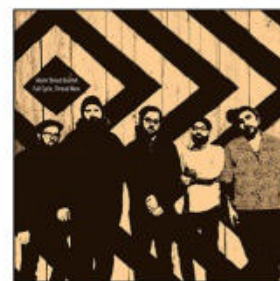
—ANDREW HAMLIN

ADAM SHEAD QUINTET

Full Cycle, Thread New

Shifting Paradigm

Chicago's fertile improvised-music landscape is chock full of A-listers and Adam Shead—a multidisciplinary artist, composer, improviser, and powerhouse drummer—is one of them. The hectic, rapid-fire din he turned loose on this year's *Volumes & Surfaces* is a blast



of free-jazz fury well worth your time.

On *Full Cycle, Thread New*, Shead also delves into improvisational freakouts, but they're just a few pieces of a sprawling stylistic puzzle. With Shead leading the charge, wielding a highly versatile approach that hurdles from delicately busy restraint to turbulent onslaught, his formidable quintet—Jeff Kimmel (clarinets), Ishmael Ali (cello, electronics), Matt Piet (piano), and Andrew Scott Young (double bass)—is a force to be reckoned with. And the fact this set was recorded live (at Chicago performing arts center Constellation) makes it an even more impressive feat.

With a focus on "concepts of reformation, regeneration," and other themes, *Full Cycle, Thread New*'s single long-form composition (in three marathon movements) exudes spiritual renewal vibes of sorts. As the three pieces unfurl with free-floating ease, Shead and company cast a spell on the listener with a pulsating, entrancing momentum. While thick textural layers



“Serious attention to sound”: Natalie Cressman (L) and Ian Faquini

EDITOR'S PICK

NATALIE CRESSMAN & IAN FAQUINI

Auburn Whisper

GroundUP



It's no exaggeration to say that Brazilian music brought trombonist Natalie Cressman and guitarist Ian Faquini together. Having first played beside one another as young children while attending Brazil Camp in northern California, they both would go on to establish successful careers in music. Years later they connected at that very same retreat in the redwoods, eventually devel-

oping a personal and professional relationship that birthed 2019's beautifully understated *Setting Rays of Summer* and this exquisite follow-up.

Crafted in 2020, when touring was canceled, *Auburn Whisper* evinces a more deliberate process of creation than its precursor. With ample time to write and ready access to Cressman's father's home studio, the duo was able to flesh out more elaborate and sophisticated arrangements, layering and molding their music with an ear for fine detail. Whereas *Setting Rays of Summer* spoke to sheer beauty, *Auburn Whisper* points to greater possibilities in production.

Right from the opening “Afoxé pra Oxum,” where guitar gently grooves on an Afro-Brazilian *ijexá* rhythm while Faquini's (Portuguese) lead vocals are supported and surrounded by Cressman's angelic harmonies and horn, it's clear that there's serious attention to sound and design in these settings. The title track, with Cressman's singing at center stage, confirms that initial takeaway, featuring sweet single-note guitar lines and richly arranged trombone(s). The airy and elegantly shaped “Already There,” serving as the pair's “pandemic anthem,” dances gracefully to a pulse of pure acceptance. Whether exploring folkloric angles, finding their way through a world turned upside down, building on shared experiences, or looking to points beyond, Cressman and Faquini stay in step throughout this bewitching 13-track program. As singers, songwriters, instrumentalists, and sonic sculptors, these two always come up aces together.

—DAN BILAWSKY

and dense complexities are applied, addictive melodies always rise to the top. On “Mvt. ii,” the quintet channels Monk with some hard-charging bebop stylings; Piet's otherworldly piano work shines, met by Kimmel's soaring clarinet lines and Ali's sci-fi-ish swooshes and streaks. Acing a gamut of drone, bebop, free improv and more, *Full Cycle, Thread New* is an all-embracing epic to behold.

—BRAD COHAN

ERIC WUBBELS/
CHARMAINE LEE/WESTON
OLENCKI*Field of Action/
contraposition*

Out of Your Head

Field of Action/contraposition might seem like an album split between two different acts, and in some ways it is. On the other hand, pianist Eric Wubbels is the mainstay throughout the program. Both acts reside in the gray area



where improvisation meets new music composition, and each comes with its own set of built-in intensities and sonic allure.

The first half pairs the pianist with electronics artist/vocalist Charmaine Lee. “Screen,” which kicks things off, sounds like the roar of a jet engine, which purrs loudly for several minutes, punctuated occasionally by the whir of airplane blades and radio static. Lee figures more prominently in the next three tracks, imitating test patterns, adding percussive sounds and a few vocal outbursts. On

“Tether” and “Index,” Wubbels' free playing almost seems cut up when the piano mingles closely with the electronics. Beyond its dynamic blasts, this music eventually reveals a structure that welcomes even as it feels unsettling.

In *contraposition*, on side two, Wubbels plays prepared piano with trombonist Weston Olencki. Their collaboration can get equally as intense as what preceded it, but it feels a little easier going down. Wubbels' rapid opening salvo in “IMAGE” seems to fuse Cecil Taylor and Philip Glass. The jittery “ESSAY” sounds composed even as both men move together through choppy terrain. Olencki reveals some expansive techniques, bending pitches with mutes and embouchure. When he sticks a bassoon reed in his mouthpiece in the closing “NEGATIVE,” he wails like a distorted guitar. Here, Wubbels plays chords slowly, eventually ending the piece on what sounds like a cliffhanger. Like many releases on the independent Out of Your Head label, it might leave the listener wondering what just happened—and going back for a deeper look.

—MIKE SHANLEY

MICHAEL
LEONHART
ORCHESTRA*The Normyn Suites*

Sunnyside

Before you even play a note of *The Normyn Suites*, you know, at the very least, that it's going to be an interesting listen. With a guest list that spotlights Elvis Costello, Bill Frisell, Joshua Redman, Donny McCaslin, Chris Potter, Nels Cline, Catherine Russell and others, how can it not be? A read through the liner notes, revealing that the music is an elegy to Leonhart's late

15-year-old dachshund Normyn, ensures that this is one you've got to hear.

Costello, Redman and rapper JSWISS feature on the opening “Shut Him Down,” but it's the arrival of the first of the two “Normyn Suites,” a five-parter following the path from “Denial” to “Acceptance”—and subtitled “Soundtrack to The Five Stages of Grieving”—that ignites the program. Leonhart always thinks big on his orchestral creations, and this one, pieced together over nearly two years, is no exception: There are more than 70 musicians in all in the credits, Leonhart listing himself as just another trumpeter among a dozen.

Each component of the suite, all of it so cinematic and imbued with movement, is sufficiently distinctive while serving the



whole; it's impossible not to get swept up in its grandeur, or to appreciate the love that went into its creation. The six sections of the second “Normyn Suite,” this one called “Love and Loss,” takes a deeper dive into the emotional push-and-pull of devastating loss. “May the Young Grow Old,” the first section, featuring Larry Goldings' organ, gives way to the more introspective “Waking from Sedation” (one of four tracks featuring Frisell) and onward to its conclusion. A pair of quartet tracks featuring McCaslin—one titled “Kenny Dorham,” the other “Wayne Shorter”—follow; they necessarily feel detached from the main suites but offer a welcome sendoff.

—JEFF TAMARKIN

ANGELA VERBRUGGE

Love for Connoisseurs

Gut Strings

Based in British Columbia's picturesque capital Victoria, jazz vocalist and songwriter Angela Verbrugge introduced herself with 2019's captivating debut *The Night We Couldn't Say Goodnight*. That project covered a lot of ground, leading off with two originals that, in hindsight, offered a telling glimpse of her prowess and ambition. Focusing entirely on original material, written mostly in collaboration with veteran musicians, her second album *Love for Connoisseurs* establishes



Verbrugge as a jazz artist mining everyday life for lyrical nuggets.

Well integrated into her capable band with pianist Miles Black, bassist Jodi Proznick, drummer Joel Fountain and saxophonist Dave Say, she applies her considerable wit and winsome sound to songs that tend to focus on the vicissitudes of romance. She turns pianist Ray Gallon's intricate tune "Enough's Enough" into an exasperated list of offenses by a slobby housemate. Hopefully their collaboration detailing the exploits of a boorish cad, "Jive Turkey," refers to someone else. On the all-too-topical "Quarantine" they take a left turn from an "All Blues"-like intro into a forbidding portrait of life in the pre-vaccination phase of the pandemic.

Clearly a student of the American Songbook, Verbrugge takes a swing at a variety of familiar tropes and

more often than not makes solid contact. Writing with bassist Neal Miner, she crafts "This Is Manhattan," a graceful addition to the subgenre of love letters to Gotham. They also team up on the midtempo Timmons-esque groover "Mr. Right." Vancouver saxophonist Saul Berson supplies the playful tango "Not Here, Not Now," which in Verbrugge's hands is an ode to regret and missed amorous opportunity. The album closes with the "Maybe Now's the Time," a loping Mose Allison-style number written with Miles Black that turns the bebop velocity down three notches. No maybes. For Verbrugge, now is definitely the time.

—ANDREW GILBERT

JIM O'ROURKE AND MATS GUSTAFSSON

Xylophonen Virtuosen

Trost

When Mats Gustafsson puts the reed to his lips in a group like the Thing, his saxophone unleashes searing post-Ayler wails that rival any electric guitarist in the shredding department. The extremely prolific performer has another side too: one that traps quieter sounds somewhere between the pads of his horn and the bell. Guitarist Jim O'Rourke has ties to both indie rock and experimental/improv music. He too enjoys spare playing, letting the visceral approach take precedence over actual fretwork. With their like-minded backgrounds, the duo's set of improvisations should yield some compelling interactions.

Xylophonen Virtuosen was recorded and originally released in 1999; this edition presents the entire uncut session. "Telexing Jun" begins the set

with O'Rourke intoning a spare rubato melody, with hardly any sustain. Gustafsson joins cautiously after a few minutes, eventually using a technique that sounds like he's playing backwards. The nine-minute exposition isn't exactly a dialogue, though they move



together intuitively.

Unfortunately the forward motion of that piece doesn't continue through the other tracks. The duo often sounds like they're abandoning ideas before they have a chance to catch fire. O'Rourke moves to accordion a few times, produces wheezing drones, and quickly returns to the guitar. Gustafsson slaps his sax pads or simply blows air. At one point he sounds like he's having an asthma attack, while O'Rourke noodles away, oblivious. A few times, they launch a rolling crescendo where O'Rourke taps the fretboard and Gustafsson employs slap-tongue tricks and percussive splattering. But these moments last 90 seconds at most. Then it's off to more noodly terrain or, in the case of a few tracks, dead air. This type of restrained improv can be impressive in a live setting, but without the visuals, something—call it humor, cohesion or climax—is missing.

—MIKE SHANLEY

HELGE LIEN TRIO

Revisited

Ozella

As pianist Helge Lien announces proudly in the publicity material, he put this together as "a hybrid of studio- and

concert-recordings. Miraculously, however, you can't hear that." He wanted the entire program running as a continuous 50-minute piece, which he got. The compact disc gatefold carefully labels the original source for each tune—both its original Helge Lien album, and the source for the version furnished here.

No producer credited (although I suspect the leader himself). With the assistance of re-recording engineer Rune Boro, sound engineer Louise Lavoll, recording assistant Eivind Stromstad, and mixer Asle Karstad, you get one of the most impeccably rendered trio sets in recent memory—your head's not in the audience, not at the lip of the stage, but right in the middle betwixt Lien's keyboard, Johannes Eick's softly plucked bass, Knut Aalefjaer's sideways-sounding



brushwork over the cymbals. Not a whole lot of get-up-and-go pep, although "Folkmost Revisited," does suggest some funk in its thicker moments, the parts that sound like a party-down chorus in between spritely delicacies. "Krystall Revisited," and Aalefjaer's still angling for that funk, although Lien quite soberly, sensibly, leads him out into mediation, focus, and the slightest noises any of the three can make and still register as present, through the microphone. It's like an underwater soundscape: not soggy, but removed from the surface, absented from all care up top, concerned only with this world's richness. No place to live, sad but true. An exquisite visit, though.

—ANDREW HAMLIN

KEITH TIPPETT/JULIE TIPPETTS/PHILIP GIBBS/PAUL DUNMALL

Mahogany Rain

577

Recorded at the Victoria Rooms, Bristol, England, in 2005, this unusual concert album sounds alternately like four musicians improvising; four gerbils playing in a cage; four erector sets toppling on their maker; and four lost souls finding peace, comfort, and solace in random



attractions. Performed by the late pianist Keith Tippett, vocalist Julie Tippetts, guitarist Philip Gibbs, and saxophonist Paul Dunmall—with the Tippetts (a married couple for 50 years) adding a bewildering variety of percussion instruments, from pebbles and seedpods to thumb pianos and Tibetan singing bowls—*Mahogany Rain* was originally recorded "for a small 100-copy release," the liner notes state. "The single extended [63-minute] track on *Mahogany Rain* offers an hour of mesmerizing improvisational sound, sparsely composed and deeply experimental."

Mostly extemporaneous, the music follows a path of no path, only adhering to the deep concentration and playfulness of each musician, each attentively following the internal mental linkage of the group, resulting in something rather profound. In lesser hands and voices, *Mahogany Rain* might be avant-garde gibberish. But this collage of eerie vocal quavers, percussion

rolls, sighs, and rattles interspersed with electric bass doodles and beautiful saxophone playing makes one's ears perk up, the music's sound unlike anything else, certainly nothing conventional. At every turn, the U.K. masters explore the boundaries of sonic self-interrogation. The music rises and falls, never attacking the ears but soothing the soul, each unusual bend in this road less traveled leading to more novelties, rabbit holes as appealing as watching a sunset, your toes playing in the ocean, your mind lost at sea.

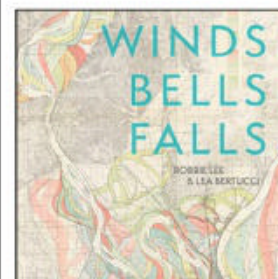
—KEN MICALLEF

ROBBIE LEE & LEA BERTUCCI

Winds Bells Falls

Telegraph Harp

Over the course of their respective career arcs, Robbie Lee and Lea Bertucci have continuously gone against the grain. The experimental-minded, multi-instrumental pair—as solo artists or through their myriad collaborations—have pushed the boundaries of explorative sound design and free improvisation with idiosyncratic aplomb. *Winds Bells Falls* demonstrates their telepathic connection and penchant for sculpting otherworldly environments. Partially recorded during Bertucci's residency at Brooklyn's Pioneer Works in 2019 in another unique setting (a studio inside a shipping container), these nine psychedelic experiments are like



magical rainbows splattered on a blank canvas.

They're also a real team effort. Lee feeds sounds culled from

"A dreamlike quality":
Marta Sanchez



EDITOR'S PICK

MARTA SANCHEZ

SAAM (Spanish American Art Museum)

Whirlwind



It's entirely appropriate that the final song on pianist Marta Sanchez's fourth quintet recording is titled "When Dreaming Is the Only," as there's a dreamlike quality to most of the music here. Not fairy tales, mind you—far from, in fact—but there's a floating narrative in the way the music glides; it's reminiscent of the way dreams rarely follow rigid sequences.

Abetting this graceful movement is an ensemble well versed in the pianist's unique style. Alto saxophonist Alex LoRe and tenorman Roman Filiú bring terse counterpoint in their play, and the rhythm section of bassist Rashaan Carter and drummer Allan Mednard adds savvy propulsion to Sanchez's richly textured music. A highlight of SAAM is "Marivi," a song dedicated to Sanchez's mother, who passed away during the international lockdowns. Vocalist Camila Meza, trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, and synthesist Charlotte Greve guest, bringing a gentle warmth and subdued grief to the proceedings ahead of Sanchez's intricate solo. A distinctive solo is also a feature of "If You Could Create It," and when she returns to her mother's passing on "December 11th." But for the most part, Sanchez doesn't demand the spotlight; her band sounds like a unit of equals.

This quintet has been Sanchez's principal project since the pianist relocated from her native Madrid to New York City 11 years ago. Rather than assimilate her style into the Gotham jazz panoply, she's used the time to hone it and make it sound more hers. The title of the recording is a riff on the Smithsonian American Art Museum, but it could just as easily stand for the Sanchez American Art Museum: It's an expertly curated presentation of an original voice.

—MARTIN JOHNSON

medieval and baroque woodwinds, early 1900s-era bells, chimes, and other gizmos in his stash to Bertucci, who wrangles a dizzy array of blips, bleeps, and dings from a reel-to-reel machine. What the duo transmit is an alien mix of musique concrète, free improv and noise, but a feather-light one that whizzes around like a pleasant breeze.

Winds Bells Falls begins with "Glitter and Gleam," which sums up the bright mood of the record. It sublimely captures the vibe of a mangled bedtime lullaby as Bertucci manipulates Lee's celeste (also called a bell-piano) tones to create a woozy, pinballing dreamscape. "Meiosis" and "Twine and Tape" dart about in similarly playful fashion. Meanwhile, on "Mitosis" and "Azimuth," Lee and Bertucci spew out gnarly, belching convulsions that wouldn't be out of place at a noise-music festival. *Winds Bells Falls* is like *Beaches and Canyons*-era Black Dice teaming up with the late great electronic-music pioneer Pauline Oliveros for a set.

—BRAD COHAN

MELISSA ERRICO

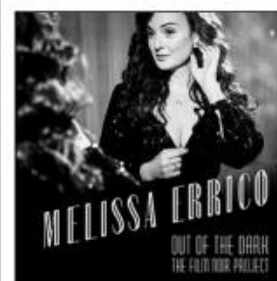
Out of the Dark: The Film Noir Project

Ghostlight

Melissa Errico isn't a jazz singer, but for the past two decades she was the vocalist of choice for Michel Legrand and Stephen Sondheim, collaborating with both composers on various recordings, projects, and stage productions. She knows her way around a lyric. Her new album *Out of the Dark* is a pandemic project that focuses on material ostensibly written for or inspired by film noir. It's ripe territory for a singer who can inhabit a song, and as a Tony Award-nominated actress she plunges

into the role, offering charcoaled impressions of ill-fated romance, obsession, and thwarted dreams.

Pianist Tedd Firth's bespoke arrangements maintain the emotional continuity as the album unspools like a saloon song cycle, a gimlet-eyed dreamscape that thrums to Bob Mann's guitar chords and Joe Locke's vibes. With a lyric by *New Yorker* writer Adam Gopnik, the album's creative consultant, David Shire's "Farewell, My Lovely" (from Robert Mitchum's 1975 take on Chandler's Mar-



low) is a gem. But by the time the program closes with another find, Dorcas Cochran and Lionel Newman's "Again" (introduced by Ida Lupino in the 1948 noir *Road House*), the project seems to have taken a detour away from the, well, dark.

Errico knows this territory—she recently co-curated a film festival of noir classics at New York's French Institute Alliance Française—but the album's net is cast too wide. She imbues "Blame It on My Youth" and "The Man That Got Away" with the requisite ache, but they're torch songs without a hint of menace. Rather than redemption, *Out of the Dark* could have used a double shot of cynicism and hard-boiled attitude (Paul Williams' neglected "The Long Goodbye" would have fit the bill).

—ANDREW GILBERT

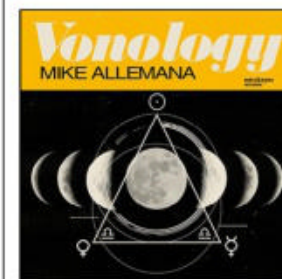
MIKE ALLEMANA
Vonology

eyes&ears

Guitarist Mike Allemana is a beacon of the Chicago jazz

scene who may be equally well-known for his scholarship: He's an ethnomusicologist who's researching Windy City icon Von Freeman. Yet there is nothing dry or academic about *Vonology*. It's an octet record featuring five Allemana originals, paying tribute to Freeman's philosophy and spirit—which, as the saxophonist's bandmate for 15 years, Allemana had ample opportunity to absorb—more than his oeuvre. Maybe that's why at every turn it feels so vital and arresting.

It feels restless too. Bookended by the sublime, mass-like opener "Welcome. Enter" and closer "The Mentor's Benediction," the album veers in between these brackets from moody mystery ("The Mediator") to tender ballad ("Communion and Renewal") to stirring suspense ("Libra Channeling"), embracing on equal terms straight-ahead bebop and Freeman's idiosyncratic avant-garde approach. (That said, "Libra Channeling" bears more than a passing hint of fellow Chicagoan Henry Threadgill's aesthetic, suggesting perhaps a new breadth to Freeman's influence.) Allemana himself can



turn on a dime from rich mellifluousness to uncertain tonality; so can cellist Tomeka Reid, giving him a partner with whom to interact on (in particular) "The Mediator" and "Communion and Renewal."

Vonology isn't billed as a suite per se, but it flows like one. A vocal choir appears on the first and last tracks, but the real choir—or maybe Greek chorus—

is in the four-horn line of trumpeter Victor Garcia, trombonist Kendall Moore, and saxophonists Greg Ward and Geof Bradfield. They make gorgeous ensemble statements on each track, then proceed into counterpoint and commentary. At the climax of "The Mentor's Benediction," after vocalist Bill Brickey's quasi-sermon, their freeform chatter becomes akin to a joyful noise (with Allemana joining in for good measure). Surely that's what Von was after all along.

—MICHAEL J. WEST

TORD GUSTAVSEN TRIO

Opening
ECM

Tord Gustavsen's career has been unusual. His first two albums on the ECM label, *Changes* (2003) and *The Ground* (2005), sold over 200,000 copies between them. It happened because Gustavsen is a Svengali of the piano. He draws you into his encompassing atmosphere of rapt contemplation. His music feels soothing at



first, but the depth of his emotional exposure requires creative listeners. To participate with Gustavsen on his journey is to embrace one's own emotional exposure.

His most enduring achievements are his ECM trio albums. *Opening* is the fifth. Gustavsen's bassists have changed over the years, but his drummer has stayed the same: The underrecognized Jarle Vespestad, with his suggestive shading and precisely placed meaningful details, is something of a Svenga-

li himself.

Another unusual aspect of Gustavsen's career is its continuity. His aesthetic domain has remained remarkably stable. *Opening* is 12 tracks but it is one whole. The elemental melody of "The Longing" sounds elusively familiar. Perhaps it's a hymn you heard as a child, or perhaps it's a love song you can almost remember. In fact it's new, an alternative to silence, barely a form. Steinar Raknes, the trio's new bassist, threads poignant counterlines through it.

There are tunes like "Findings II" that Gustavsen describes as "freely improvised." They are like flowerings of momentary lyricism, but so are his finely wrought notated pieces, like "The Circle." All of Gustavsen's music sounds like spontaneous composition. He is always feeling his way into his songs. What makes him special is that along the way he finds so much beauty. His quiet chord chains can sound hesitant, but they cohere into firm resolutions, and his melodies, wherever he finds them, are revelations of breaking light. *Opening* will attract some late-arriving new members into the Tord Gustavsen cult.

—THOMAS CONRAD

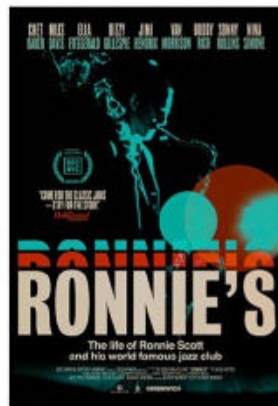
VIDEOS

Ronnie's

Greenwich Entertainment

"It's a little nest of happiness. All the recent wounds are all healed here ... because there's always somebody blowing something beautiful and blowing a kind of unconscious poetry that only good music can speak to you." Well, if that's how Mel Brooks describes your club, surely you must be doing things right! The iconic comedian and filmmaker speaks

these words in an archival interview midway through *Ronnie's*, a new documentary about the London jazz club Ronnie Scott's written and directed by Oliver Murray. Perhaps best known for his controversial 2019 film about Rolling Stones bassist Bill Wyman, Murray weaves together interviews with British broadcasters, writers, photographers, and jazz musicians, as well



as great American players like Sonny Rollins, alongside gorgeous footage of performances from the club over 60 years to demonstrate its importance in the history of jazz, especially in the United Kingdom.

Except Murray cannot simply tell the story of this physical space without also focusing on the life and work of the man who lent his name to it: Ronnie Scott, the great British tenor saxophonist turned club proprietor. When Scott was at the peak of his life as a touring performer, the "jazz clubs" of Soho tended to be more seedy bars run by businessmen; Scott and partner Peter King sought to do the then-unheard-of in London and create a jazz room truly catering to musicians and fans.

Focusing on Scott's life and his relationship to the club injects a lot of humanity into the film, which underscores why Ronnie Scott's has the gravitas it does in the jazz world. Murray takes care to pull audio that expounds on how welcoming Scott made the space for everyone

involved, from first-time attendees to stars. Singer George Melly, for example, remarks that the club "just won't offer total mediocrity or cocktail jazz. And I think that impresses people."

"I loved my time in London when I played there," Rollins remarks in an interview for the film. "The club was a very special place: The music gets into the room, the atmosphere. It's magical."

That magic is demonstrated over 142 minutes through a series of performances captured at Ronnie Scott's from 1965 to 2019, which are the real delight. Scott plays "Caravan" alongside Ben Webster in '65; Nina Simone croons softly in '85; Buddy Rich bangs out a dynamic solo in '69; Rollins himself dominates the stage in '75; and Jimi Hendrix gives his last known public performance (audio only) in 1970.

It's nuggets like the tape of Hendrix that help establish the significance of Scott's in history, and not just for bits of trivia. During footage of Miles Davis performing at the club in 1969, the film establishes that Davis found bassist Dave Holland by attending one of his gigs at Scott's; Scott negotiated with U.S. and British musicians' unions to open up a clear path for Americans to play U.K. venues regularly; photographer John Fordham notes that having so many British musicians play alongside the likes of Rollins, Webster, and countless others "raised the standard for British jazz."

Ronnie's is not a maudlin letter to a time or place long gone, nor simply a victory lap for a well-established name brand, but a celebration of a vital place in music history and a testimony to why it still earns its place in the pantheon.

—JACKSON SINNENBERG

WE BUY OLD RECORDS!

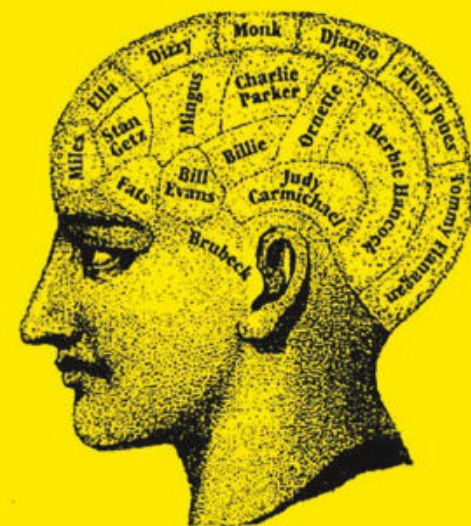
WE MAKE HOUSE CALLS ANYWHERE IN THE USA

CALL US TOLL FREE

888-993-4673



LP's, 45s, 78 & 12"
No Collection is too Large!



judy carmichael's
jazz inspired



UPCOMING GUESTS

NATE NAJAR
DON STIERBERG
RUSS PHILLIPS
BOB RUMMAGE

On NPR and your
favorite podcast
platform or at
jazzinspired.com

Tim Lefebvre's Favorite Flavors

The bassist sings the blues of blue smoke and a holy dry rub

BY MICHAEL GELFAND



Bassist Tim Lefebvre makes no bones about it: For cooking, his comfort zone is outside. The kitchen belongs to his wife, singer/songwriter/keyboardist Rachel Eckroth. “She’s way better inside sauteeing and baking things for people,” he says. “I’m just a gorilla who throws meat on the grill.”

A self-taught cook who cut his teeth slinging steaks over an open flame while living in New York and Los Angeles during the '90s and early 2000s, Lefebvre refined his passion for outdoor cooking after a relatively recent move to Arizona. Once he realized he had easy access to one of that state’s greatest natural resources—mesquite wood—his grilling chops, so to speak, reached a new level.

“We’ve got lots of mesquite trees here, so I started gathering up all the dead branches lying around, cut them up into grill-size pieces, and started cooking over it for that smokiness and intense heat,” he says. A key Christmas gift from his wife sealed the deal: a hot smoker. “Like many meat-eaters, I always thought smoke added a great taste to food, but once I started doing it myself I got into it, and it’s evolved from

there. Now it’s gone beyond putting a meal on the table. After experimenting around the edges, now there’s definitely an element of self-satisfaction. I know what to do to meat, just like I know what to do on the bass—there’s a parallel there.”

Indeed, throughout his musical career, whether as part of saxophonist Donny McCaslin’s bands or in Bedrock 3 with keyboardist Uri Caine and drummer Zach Danziger back in 2001, Lefebvre has frequently pushed tasty foundational grooves into the hot smoker of his own creativity, picking up layers of additional spice from subtle octave effects and more deliberate char from ring modulator pedals like the Electro-Harmonix Frequency Analyzer.

His use of ring modulation is more than just an experimental flourish; it’s actually become a writing tool. “I co-wrote ‘Fly My Spaceship Now,’ a song on Donny McCaslin’s upcoming record, using eight bars of isolated bass from a recording of a ring mod pedal demo I did. Problem is, now I have to figure out the settings I used and where I played it on the neck for when we start playing it live.”

Luckily, cooking is much more synonymous with recipes than pedal settings, and Lefebvre didn’t miss a beat when asked to offer up the recipe for one of his favorite meals to prepare. “Without a doubt, the best meal I’ve ever cooked is pulled pork,” he says. “I’ll throw a pork butt with a dry rub into the smoker for eight hours and just let it go. I’ve thought about making my own dry rubs, but after I tasted the rubs made by this place in Texas called Meat Church, there’s no reason to bother. The recipe they use with their dry rubs (see summary below) is just nuts—the best I’ve ever had, period, better than any restaurant.”

Smoker and reliable thermometer required, ring modulator optional. **JT**

Find the complete recipe at meatchurch.com/blogs/recipes/pulled-pork.

Meat Church Pork Butt

- 1 bone-in pork butt (8-10 lbs.)
- 1 container Meat Church dry rub (The Gospel, Holy Gospel, Honey Bacon, or Deez Nuts)
- 1 container Meat Church Honey Hog hot rub
- 1 stick European or Irish unsalted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup apple juice or cider vinegar
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- Yellow mustard
- 1 half steam pan & foil to cover

Prepare your smoker at a temperature of 275° Fahrenheit; medium-smoke wood such as hickory or pecan recommended. Remove all excess fat from the pork butt.

Slather the pork in yellow mustard. (This allows the seasoning to adhere more quickly and will not affect the flavor.) Season all sides of the pork liberally with dry rub; give it some time to “sweat out” so the seasoning can fully adhere.

Place the pork directly on the smoker grate, fat side down. Cooking should

take approximately eight hours, depending on weight; plan on an hour per pound at most. Spritz every hour with apple juice or cider vinegar.

Once the meat turns a mahogany color with an internal temperature near 165°—around the six-hour mark, just before it begins turning very dark—remove it from the smoker and place it in a half steam pan. Apply a liberal coating of the hot rub, then top with the brown sugar and pats of butter. Cover the pan tightly with foil and return to the smoker.



Continue smoking the butt until it reaches an internal temperature of 205°. Allow it to rest for 30-45 minutes, then shred or pull the meat off the bone—continually tossing in its own juices—and serve.

Buying with Confidence Has Never Been Easier



With Sweetwater's Guitar Gallery, it's easy to find the exact instrument to make your music sing. Search by over 15 parameters to compare thousands of our professionally inspected, two-year-warranted models. Scrutinize multiple high-resolution photos of every individual guitar in our temperature- and humidity-controlled environment. Once you decide, add in-house, factory-certified customizations to almost any aspect before we carefully repack and ship it to you in ready-to-play condition. Your fingers will love you!

**Shop now at [Sweetwater.com/GuitarGallery](https://www.sweetwater.com/GuitarGallery)
or call your Sweetwater Sales Engineer at (800) 222-4700.**



Fender
American Original '60s
Telecaster Thinline
– Aged Natural



D'Angelico
Deluxe Mini DC Limited Edition
Semi-hollowbody
– Rust



Guild
X-175 Manhattan Special
Hollowbody
– Malibu Blue

DEDICATED SALES ENGINEER
Helping you buy music gear with confidence

FAST, FREE SHIPPING
Even on the small stuff

FREE TECH SUPPORT
Got a question? We're here to help

FREE 2-YEAR WARRANTY*
Total Confidence Coverage™ Warranty

*Please note: Restrictions may apply. Please visit [Sweetwater.com/warranty](https://www.sweetwater.com/warranty) for complete details.

Cut thin.

To stay out
of your way.



legere.com

Légère[™]
REEDS LTD.
FREEDOM *to* PERFORM