

42nd ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CRITICS POLL

# DOWN BEAT

*Jazz, Blues & Beyond*

## Nostalgia Rules

**Charlie Haden's  
'Always Say Goodbye'  
Wins Album of Year**

**Wynton Marsalis  
Wins Triple Crown**

**Frank Morgan Comes Clean**

**John McLaughlin  
Blindfold Test**

**How Us3 Busted  
Up the Charts**

Aug. 1994, \$2.50 U.K. £2.00 Can. \$3.25



## 16 CHARLIE HADEN

### 'Risk Your Life For Every Note'

by Fred Shuster  
Cover photograph by Teri Bloom

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**T**o say Charlie Haden is busy is the understatement of the year. The prolific musician/composer/teacher, named Acoustic Bassist of the Year in the 1994 Critics Poll (for the 13th time—see p. 24), recently completed albums with Ginger Baker and Bill Frisell, Kenny Barron and Roy Haynes, Abbey Lincoln, Hank Jones, and Toots Thielemans.

Quartet West, which includes saxophonist Ernie Watts, pianist Alan Broadbent, and drummer Larance Marable, was launched in 1986 as a way for Haden to be involved with the Los Angeles music scene after moving back to the city from New York. Haden credits his wife for sparking the concept for the band, which incorporates some of the '40s and '50s music that originally inspired him. The group's third album, the much-acclaimed *Haunted Heart*, was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1992. Quartet West's most recent release, *Always Say Goodbye*, was named Album of the Year in the current DB Critics Poll (see p. 20 and "CD Reviews" Apr. '94).

Haden's other consistent musical aggregation, the Grammy-nominated Liberation Music Orchestra, was designed to express solidarity with progressive political movements throughout the world. The 12-member big band is touring Europe this summer.

In addition, Haden is preparing to release a number of discs recorded during an eight-night tribute to him presented at the 1989 Montreal Jazz Festival. The first two CDs in *The Montreal Tapes*

series feature Haden with longtime comrades Don Cherry and Ed Blackwell, and with Paul Bley and Paul Motian. The other six nights were concerts where Haden played with Geri Allen, Pat Metheny, Jack DeJohnette, the Liberation Music Orchestra, and others.

Haden, who turns 57 on Aug. 6, was introduced to music as a child growing up in Springfield, Mo., where his family sang on a weekly country & western radio show. Bitten by the jazz bug, he picked up the bass at age 14 and, after high school, hopped a Greyhound to Los Angeles. Unhappy playing standards in a conventional manner, Haden wandered into a local jazz joint one night in 1957 where Ornette Coleman was improvising a new and exciting language on a plastic alto sax. Haden went to Coleman's house to tell the saxophonist that he thought the music he heard that night was "beautiful." Soon afterwards, Coleman, Haden, Don Cherry, and Billy Higgins formed the groundbreaking quartet that would pose questions every jazz musician of the time had to confront.

"The Coleman quartet's first recording session for Atlantic took place in Los Angeles on May 22, 1959, and from the first few notes it was evident that something truly fresh was going on," music critic Robert Palmer notes in the booklet accompanying the newly released Coleman box set, *Beauty Is A Rare Thing: The Complete Atlantic Recordings*. Discussing the track "Focus On Sanity," Palmer describes how Haden elaborates "on the minimal materials of the fanfare—a handful of chromatic intervals and a single



# C H A R L I E H A D E N

## 'Risk Your Life for Every Note'

By Fred Shuster

melodies. In technical terms, Haden isn't a virtuoso. His virtuosity lies on a higher level—in an incredible ability to make the double bass 'sound out.' Haden cultivates the instrument's gravity as no one else in jazz; with an unfathomably dark resonance and an earthiness of timbre, endowing even apparently 'simple' lines with an affecting quality. He is a master of simplicity, which is among the most difficult things to achieve."

Haden, who lives in Santa Monica, Calif., now leads his own musical family. Two of his 22-year-old triplet daughters, Rachel and Petra, play bass and violin in the alternative rock group That Dog, with sister Tanya playing cello on two tracks of the band's Geffen Records debut. And Haden's 26-year-old son, Joshua, is a bassist/singer/songwriter with the group Spain.

During a conversation in a Los Angeles coffeehouse, the easygoing Haden elaborated on his music, his teaching methods, what goes into being a musician "playing at the level of freedom," and what he thinks about today's crop of young jazz musicians.

**FRED SHUSTER:** *What can music teach a musician?*

**CHARLIE HADEN:** There are so many things you can learn. It teaches humility, and if you pick up on that, it's a type of humility that's very special. Music teaches that you'll not be allowed to play music unless you're humble. It teaches about being in the moment you're in and that there's no yesterday or tomorrow, there's only right now. And in that moment you have to see your insignificance and unimportance to the rest of the universe before you can see your significance or importance. The secret of playing music in a powerful and beautiful way is to have humility.

**FS:** *How do you relate that philosophy to jazz students at CalArts?*

**CH:** I say if they want to play music at the level of freedom, of beauty, you have to play as if you're willing to risk your life for every note you're playing. As if you're on the front lines. I tell young people it's especially important to strive to become a great human being, and if you work on that, then you'll be a great musician. I think the secret of this art form, as far as young musicians are concerned, is to discover your soul. No two people hear music the same way, just as no two people have the same fingerprints. Every person is unique. I help each student discover their sound, their melodies, their harmonies. The whole purpose is to get people to go into the world and play their music. I talk about what happens spiritually

melodic skip that might imply a modulation or chord change. With nothing more to work from, Haden begins to sketch the dimensions of a new world. . . . He is improvising from the flavor and feeling of the horn's introduction, and not from any regular chord structure. The solo is pure melodic exposition, but the relationships between the notes are closer to blues singing than they are to the fixed intervals of the piano keyboard."

Haden's upright bass tone still sings, whether he's deep in a duet mode with Pat Metheny or backing a fiery Joe Henderson. In 1982, he founded the jazz studies program at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia in order to sway jazz education away from clinics, big bands, and studios and toward a more creative and individual approach. With Haden at the helm, respected names such as James Newton, Jim Hall, Tootie Heath, and Branford Marsalis have taught seminars at the school.

As a composer, the bassist was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1970. Haden's composition "First Song," written for his wife Ruth, has been recorded by various artists, including Stan Getz, Abbey Lincoln, Geri Allen, and David Sanborn.

According to author Joachim Berendt, writing in *The Jazz Book*, Haden "revolutionized the harmonic concept of bass playing in jazz. He was the first bassist who consistently avoided playing changes or following pre-established harmonic schemes, but instead created a solid harmonic foundation out of the passage of independent

DENNIS KEELEY



MITCHELL SEIDEL

Charlie Haden with Chet Baker, circa 1982-'83

when you play, not what happens technically. I talk about the spiritual connection to the creative process. A lot of people are eager to hear that because mostly they get the technical stuff.

**FS:** *What prompted you to start the Liberation Music Orchestra?*

**CH:** It was started at a time when the Vietnam War was escalating and racial problems at home were severe. I wanted to voice my concern, and I had some folk music from the Spanish Civil War that I thought was beautiful, as is most music that comes from a people's struggle to live in a free society. I envisioned great jazz musicians being inspired by this folk music and improvising on it, which had never been done before. Carla Bley was and is instrumental in helping me with the project.

**FS:** *The orchestra was nominated for a Grammy in 1990 for the Dream Keeper album. Did you sense a dichotomy there?*

**CH:** It was a great honor, although I'm not sure I agree with everything that makes a Grammy possible. As with any awards situation, there's a lot of politics behind it, but it means at least my

peers in my field appreciate my music. Of course, so much good music is overlooked entirely.

**FS:** *How difficult is touring these days? I know you don't enjoy playing clubs. Is the concert hall situation any better?*

**CH:** Touring is hard, especially in the United States, because I want to present this music with the dignity and brilliance it deserves. I want the acoustics to be really great and the theater to be wonderful and comfortable. You wouldn't ask [Italian piano virtuoso] Maurizio Pollini to play in a jazz club. It's high time people saw this music presented at a high artistic level. I want to educate promoters and audiences to not settle for anything less than that. I know it's going to be an uphill battle, but hopefully I'm not going to wage it on my own.

**FS:** *During a spring college tour with the Liberation Music Orchestra last year, you often invited the participation of local children's choirs or young musicians from each city. What was the concept there?*

**CH:** It's a very valuable experience for young musicians or singers, because if they are involved in a jazz studies program, they usually only get to play big-band charts and they're never exposed to this type of music. I try to broaden their horizons. Every time, young musicians told me I'd changed their lives or the way they thought about improvising. It's a really good feeling because that's why I'm doing what I'm doing—trying to touch people's lives.

**FS:** *There's a certain nostalgic quality to Quartet West's music. What are the dynamics of the band?*

**CH:** There's something about this quartet that when we get together, we play at the height of our powers. It's a kind of telepathy that comes from a mutual respect for each other's creativity and ability to listen to each other. We all come from a variety of musical genres. Larance played with Charlie Parker and Bud Powell, Ernie has played with everyone from the Rolling Stones to Lee Ritenour, and Alan has played with and arranged for Woody Herman. Every album we make, we get closer together as human beings as well as musicians. The quartet is about bringing the feeling of promise and hope, and to make people aware of artists like Jeri Southern or the obscure material that inspired me. It's almost a way to be in places I wasn't able to be in originally, like recording sessions with Duke Ellington or Django Reinhardt. I think people are attracted to nostalgia, melancholy, beauty, and depth, to everything that takes them away from the madness and violence that's going on in the world right now. At some point, I want to do a live album because this band is so incredible on stage.

**FS:** *Your name will always be linked to Ornette's. Do you change your style or approach when you play a date with, say, Quartet West?*

**CH:** It's all beautiful music, man. Coleman Hawkins played just as free and deep as Ornette, because they approach music at this level of giving their life for it. The guys in Quartet West are the same.

## EQUIPMENT

Charlie Haden plays a 150-year-old French upright bass by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume with a pickup by Stephan Schertler. He uses Kaplan Golden Spiral gut strings for his G and D strings and Thomastik Spiro Core for his A and E strings. He also uses a Gallien-Krueger MB 200 amplifier.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

with Quartet West  
**ALWAYS SAY GOODBYE**—Verve 314 521 501  
**HAUNTED HEART**—Verve 513 078  
**IN ANGEL CITY**—Verve 937 031  
**QUARTET WEST**—Verve 831 673

with Liberation Music Orchestra  
**DREAM KEEPER**—Blue Note 95474  
**THE BALLAD OF THE FALLEN**—ECM 811 546  
**LIBERATION MUSIC ORCHESTRA**—Impulse! 39125

as co-leader  
**DIALOGUES**—Antilles 422-849 309 (Carlos Paredes)  
**AS LONG AS THERE'S MUSIC**—Verve 513 534-2 (Hampton Hawes)  
**ETUDES**—Soul Note 121162-2 (Geri Allen, Paul Motian)  
**AN EVENING WITH JOE HENDERSON, CHARLIE HADEN AND AL FOSTER**—Red 123215-2  
**MEMOIRS**—Soul Note 121240 (Paul Bley, Paul Motian)  
**OLD AND NEW DREAMS**—ECM 829 379-2 (Old And New Dreams)

with various others  
**FIRST SONG**—Soul Note 121222 (Enrico Pieranunzi)  
**SILENCE**—Soul Note 12172 (Chet Baker)

**BEAUTY IS A RARE THING THE COMPLETE ATLANTIC RECORDINGS**—Rhino/Atlantic R271410 (Ornette Coleman)  
**80/81**—ECM 843 169-2 (Pat Metheny)  
**THE SURVIVORS SUITE**—ECM 827 131-2 (Keith Jarrett)  
**WISH**—Warner Bros 9-45365-2 (Joshua Redman)  
**UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE**—Blue Note 99830 (Joe Lovano)  
**TIME ON MY HANDS**—Blue Note 92894 (John Scofield)  
**DISCOVERY**—Blue Note 95478 (Gonzalo Rubalcaba)  
**YOU GOTTA PAY THE BAND**—Verve 314 511 110 (Abbey Lincoln, Stan Getz)  
**DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME**—MCA 42229 (Michael Brecker)  
**POP POP**—Geffen 24426 (Rickie Lee Jones)  
**A NIGHT ON THE TOWN**—RCA 2041 (Bruce Hornsby)  
**ANOTHER HAND**—Elektra Musician 61088 (David Sanborn)  
**ON BROADWAY VOL 3**—JMT 849 157-2 (Paul Motian)  
**THE COLLEGE CONCERT OF PEE WEE RUSSELL AND HENRY RED ALLEN**—Impulse! A-9137

**FS:** *I understand the volume musicians play at these days is an issue with you because you've experienced ringing in the ears. Why does the noise level in concert halls and clubs seem to be rising?*

**CH:** It began to get serious with the advent of really big concert venues and the need to have music loud on stage so musicians could hear themselves. As the years go by, it's a conditioning that also affects the audience, who also want the music louder. A lot of people want something really strong to identify with, and volume gives them that sense of power. People have to know about this, because they can damage their hearing for the rest of their lives. I know a lot of musicians, myself included, who have to deal with this situation now.

One of the first things I teach at CalArts in discovering your sound is you have to be able to hear the sound of your reed, the sound of your embouchure, the sound of your skin on the strings, on the piano keys. You cannot communicate that to your instrument from your soul unless the volume is low and natural. In my classes, I want everyone to play soft so they can discover a sense of dynamics. Because once you start out at a very high volume level and stay there, you never get that sense of dynamics. The phenomenon of sound from the human being to the instrument is unbelievable.

**FS:** *With young jazz musicians getting their pictures in fashion layouts these days, what is your opinion of the new players on the scene, the way they are being marketed and their view of themselves?*

**CH:** People forget that many great musicians started young. Miles began playing with Bird when he was 18, Stan Getz was playing professionally when he was 15, and Don Cherry was 20 and I was 19 when we started with Ornette. It was a different climate in terms of marketing then. But the most important thing are the values attached to the players. Fresh, new innovation is what's needed in any art form. The great thing about so many young players today is they have self-esteem, partly as a result of being in control of their lives and because they don't abuse chemicals. Self-esteem is extremely important.

I am disappointed, however, to hear stories about a few of these young musicians' distorted egos and lack of humility. These people actually believe the hype that's being written about them, and they're using their inflated self-image as a basis for demanding exorbitant fees, for example, to appear as guest musicians on albums by jazz legends. The fact is, they should consider themselves honored and lucky to be asked to play with musicians of the caliber of a Sonny Rollins, Hank Jones, J.J. Johnson, Benny Carter, Max Roach, or Roy Haynes. I sincerely hope they don't forget that it takes humility to become

a great musician.

**FS:** *At a time when less and less jazz appreciation is offered in schools, are you optimistic about the future of the art?*

**CH:** It's up to all of us to make sure that arts and music education in the schools doesn't disappear. We have to start demanding it again—that it be part of everyone's education. A society—a world—without art and music is doomed as far as I'm concerned. Jazz has always been a minority art form

with a limited audience. That's one of the reasons why the musicians that play the music are so dedicated—because they know they're a minority and they have to persevere. Most musicians that play on the level of dedicating their lives to their music won't accept playing a type of music they don't believe in. As long as there are musicians who have a passion for spontaneity, for creating something that's never been before, the art form of jazz will flourish. **DB**

## New Directions...

### From AudioQuest Music



#### MOKAVE AFRIQUE

MOKAVE (Glen Moore, Larry Karush and Glen Velez) received worldwide praise for their first two releases on AudioQuest Music. Stereophile Magazine said of MOKAVE Vol. 2, "Clearly a contender for creative, improvised record of the year. A certifiable joy." With *Afrique*, MOKAVE'S group chemistry and compositional magic is at an absolute peak. AQ 1024



#### EDWARD SIMON GROUP BEAUTY WITHIN

Edward Simon is best known as the pianist in Bobby Watson's poll-winning group, Horizon. He also has received recent accolades as a finalist in the prestigious '93 Thelonious Monk competition. *Beauty Within* is a showcase for Simon's unique compositional synthesis of Latin music and power jazz. Edward is joined by bass genius Anthony Jackson and the phenomenal new drummer from Cuba, Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez. AQ 1025



#### BRUCE KATZ BAND TRANSFORMATION

The BRUCE KATZ BAND'S first release on AudioQuest Music was hailed as "a wildly energetic, exciting and enjoyable trip" by CD Review and "strictly a must buy" by Stereophile. Bruce Katz has virtuosic keyboard chops but more importantly he's a true original with a powerfully appealing style. *Transformation* is a breakthrough statement by one of the best new bands in jazz. AQ 1026



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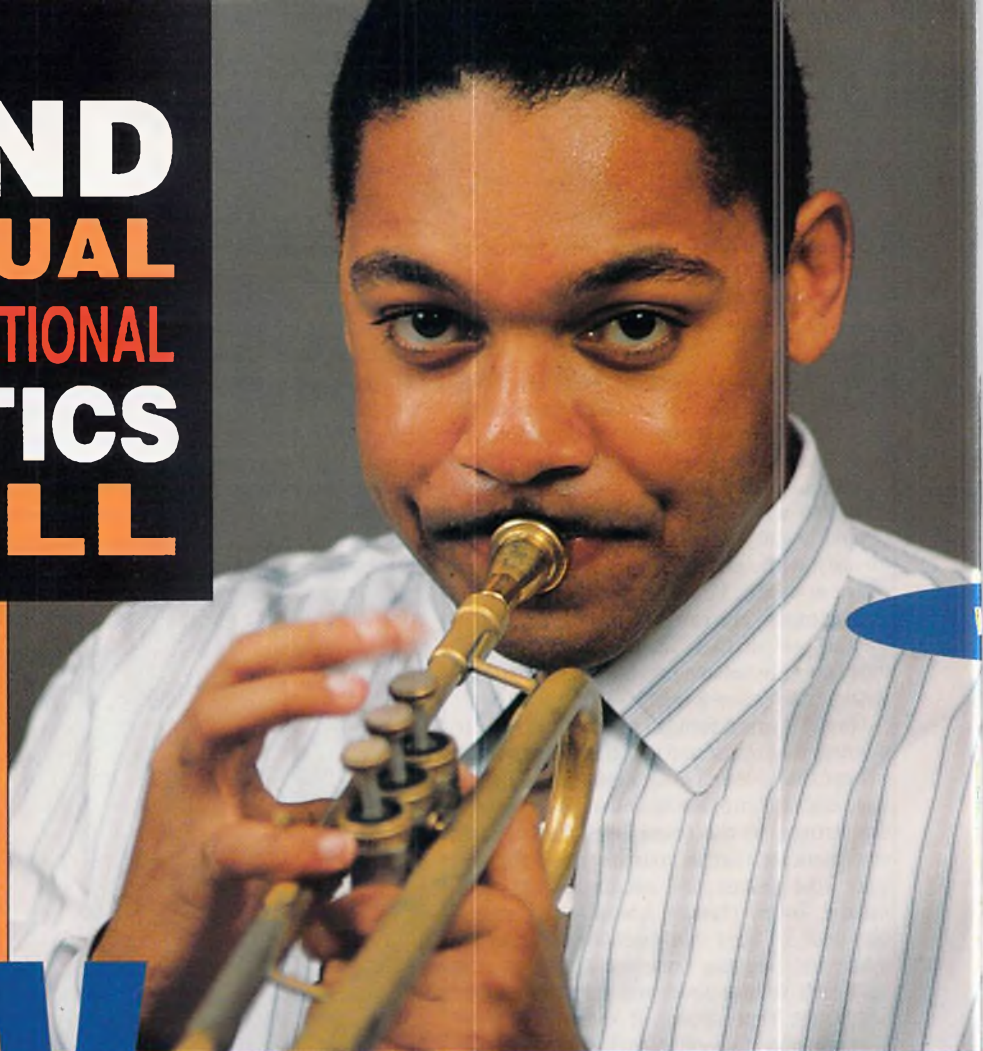
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# 42ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CRITICS POLL



# W

## Who's Influencing Who?

We know that **DB's** Readers Poll is in its 59th year, 17 years ahead of the Critics Poll. That's an easy one to figure. But what's more difficult to ascertain is who's influencing who, and are the polls all that different when it comes down to it.

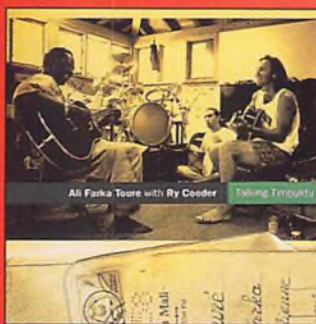
Consider, if you will, that certain poll favorites have been that way forever, it seems. Not only do top vote-getters like Milt Jackson, Steve Lacy, James Newton, Stephane Grappelli, Steve Swallow, Jimmy Smith, Joe Williams, B.B. King, and Toots Thielemans win in both polls, they kick ass in a way that becomes all too predictable. What's more interesting are the fads, like former killer J.J. Johnson holding onto his lead over upstart Ray Anderson by just two votes, or the recent tango between Tommy Flanagan and Kenny Barron. And there's the always-changing winners for Album of the Year, titan-toppers like Jackie McLean establishing some kind of dominance in the Alto Sax category, and, for the Critics Poll, the Talent Deserving Wider Recognition (TDWR) winners—this year's notables include Joshua Redman, Christian McBride, Vincent Herring, Maria Schneider, Nicholas Payton, Lewis Nash, Kevin Mahogany, and Joey DeFrancesco. That last list alone could make up one hell of a band.

You might say the TDWRs are the fun part, the part that lets critics "be critics," distinguishing their votes between established talent and rising greats in a way that gives them two shots at the same category. In fact, looking at who wins, you might say that if it weren't for those TDWRs, the critics aren't all that different from the readers of **DB**. And that, overall, the winners in both polls continue to reflect the times: a period of continued, relative conservatism. In this we can say with certainty: The readers influence the critics and vice-versa.

Accolades are in order, by the way, to ongoing winner and cover star Charlie Haden as he continues his hold on the top Bass player spot as well as for Jazz Album of the Year with his group Quartet West; and to Wynton Marsalis for his triple-crown win in the Jazz Artist of the Year, Trumpet, and Acoustic Jazz Group categories.

—John Ephland

BEAT  
DOWN  
DOWN



## WYNTON MARSALIS

### JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 65 Wynton Marsalis
- 57 Joe Lovano
- 53 Charlie Haden
- 49 David Murray
- 39 Benny Carter
- 39 Joe Henderson

#### TDWR

- 79 Joshua Redman
- 37 Joe Lovano
- 28 Bill Frisell
- 19 Henry Threadgill
- 18 Randy Weston
- 18 Cassandra Wilson

### TRUMPET

- 143 Wynton Marsalis
- 97 Lester Bowie
- 77 Tom Harrell
- 66 Roy Hargrove
- 46 Art Farmer
- 45 Clark Terry
- 40 Wallace Roney
- 35 Terence Blanchard

#### TDWR

- 61 Nicholas Payton
- 50 Roy Hargrove
- 47 Wallace Roney
- 39 Jack Walrath
- 35 Claudio Roditi
- 35 Malachi Thompson

### ACOUSTIC JAZZ GROUP

- 90 Wynton Marsalis
- 77 Charlie Haden's Quartet West
- 61 Art Ensemble of Chicago
- 56 Phil Woods
- 51 Modern Jazz Quartet
- 31 Bobby Watson

#### TDWR

- 34 Bobby Watson
- 28 Roy Hargrove
- 21 Ethnic Heritage Ensemble
- 21 Steve Lacy
- 18 Joshua Redman
- 17 8 Bold Souls

### JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 35 Charlie Haden, *Always Say Goodbye* [Verve]
- 32 Cassandra Wilson, *Blue Light 'Til Dawn* [Blue Note]
- 31 Randy Weston/Melba Liston, *Volcano Blues* [Antilles]
- 30 Joshua Redman, *Wish* [Warner Bros.]
- 29 Sonny Rollins, *Old Flames* [Milestone]
- 25 Wynton Marsalis Septet, *In This House, On This Morning* [Columbia]
- 23 Joe Lovano, *Universal Language* [Blue Note]
- 21 John Scofield/Pat Metheny, *I Can See Your House From Here* [Blue Note]

### BLUES ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 31 B.B. King, *Blues Summit* [MCA]
- 30 Charles Brown, *Just A Lucky So And So* [Bullseye]
- 27 Lucky Peterson, *Beyond Cool* [Verve]
- 23 Johnny Copeland, *Flyin' High* [Verve]
- 17 Charlie Musselwhite, *In My Time* [Alligator]
- 15 Robben Ford & the Blue Line, *Mystic Mile* [Stretch]
- 14 Joe Louis Walker, *Soul Survivor* [Verve]

### BEYOND ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 21 A.F. Toure/Ry Cooder, *Talking Timbuktu* [Hannibal]
- 20 U2, *Zooropa* [Island]
- 17 Donald Fagen, *Kamakiriad* [Reprise]
- 15 Bruce Hornsby, *Harbor Lights* [RCA]
- 15 Liz Phair, *Exile In Guyville* [Messidor]
- 13 Material, *Hallucination Engine* [Axiom]
- 13 Milton Nascimento, *Angelus* [Warner Bros.]
- 12 George Clinton, *Hey Man Smell My Finger* [Paisley Park]
- 11 Tom Waits, *The Black Rider* [Island]

### REISSUE OF THE YEAR

- 113 Ornette Coleman, *Beauty Is A Rare Thing: The Complete Atlantic Recordings* [Rhino/Atlantic]
- 51 Ella Fitzgerald, *The Complete Ella Fitzgerald Song Books* [Verve]
- 35 Joe Henderson, *The Blue Note Years* [Blue Note]
- 25 Don Cherry, *The Complete Blue Note Recordings Of Don Cherry* [Mosaic]
- 24 Sun Ra, *Allantis* [Evidence]
- 23 Django Reinhardt, *Djangology* [EMI/Blue Note]
- 22 Jackie McLean, *The Complete Blue Note 1964-66 Jackie McLean Sessions* [Mosaic]
- 22 Jelly Roll Morton, *The Complete Library Of Congress Recordings Of Jelly Roll Morton (Vols 1-IV)* [Rounder]

### RECORD LABEL OF THE YEAR

- 192 Verve
- 110 Blue Note
- 63 Mosaic
- 45 Black Saint/Soul Note
- 29 Concord
- 25 DeMark
- 24 Columbia
- 24 Rhino
- 23 ECM
- 22 GRP
- 14 Hat Art
- 12 enja

### BLUES ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 117 B.B. King
- 63 Buddy Guy
- 53 Charles Brown
- 51 John Lee Hooker
- 28 Robben Ford
- 24 Robert Cray
- 20 Otis Rush
- 19 Johnny Copeland
- 17 Albert Collins
- 34 Lucky Peterson
- 21 Joe Louis Walker
- 15 Gatemouth Brown
- 14 Charles Brown
- 13 Koko Taylor

### BEYOND ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 51 George Clinton
- 47 Aaron Neville
- 46 Sting
- 37 Ali Farka Toure
- 35 Salif Keita
- 32 Dr. John
- 31 Ray Charles
- 31 Milton Nascimento
- 23 Tito Puente
- 22 James Brown
- 21 Richard Thompson

#### TDWR

- 20 Salif Keita
- 15 John Hiatt
- 14 Liz Phair
- 13 Johnny Adams
- 10 Vernon Reid



### COMPOSER

- 65 Randy Weston
- 62 Muhai Richard Abrams
- 61 Henry Threadgill
- 60 Carla Bley
- 53 Wynton Marsalis
- 45 Benny Carter
- 40 Anthony Braxton
- TDWR
- 27 Bobby Watson
- 26 John Zorn
- 23 Julius Hemphill
- 21 Geri Allen
- 19 Bobby Previte
- 18 Marty Ehrlich





HYOU WIELZ

**ARRANGER**

- 77 **Carla Bley**
- 56 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 37 Jimmy Heath
- 36 Frank Foster
- 35 Bob Belden
- 35 Benny Carter
- 35 Melba Liston

- TDWR**
- 46 **Bob Belden**
- 22 John Zorn
- 20 Maria Schneider
- 20 Don Sickler
- 19 Slide Hampton
- 19 Melba Liston

**PRODUCER**

- 147 **Michael Cuscuna**
- 58 Giovanni Bonandri
- 42 John Snyder
- 30 Delfeayo Marsalis
- 21 Manfred Eicher
- 21 Bill Laswell
- 20 Orrin Keepnews



CHRIS CUFFARO

- TDWR**
- 37 **Hal Willner**
- 27 Delfeayo Marsalis
- 23 Craig Street
- 22 Nils Winther
- 17 John Snyder

**BIG BAND**

- 101 **Count Basie**
- 92 McCoy Tyner
- 65 Akiyoshi/Tabackin
- 64 Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra
- 58 Mingus Big Band
- 33 Muhal Richard Abrams

- TDWR**
- 38 **Maria Schneider**
- 34 Either/Orchestra
- 27 George Gruntz Concert Band
- 26 Jon Jang and the Pan-Asian Arkestra
- 22 William Breuker Kollektief
- 22 McCoy Tyner



TERI BLOOM

**ELECTRIC JAZZ GROUP**

- 96 **John Scofield**
- 72 Bill Frisell
- 50 Pat Metheny
- 46 Chick Corea's Electric Band II
- 40 Steve Coleman
- 40 Henry Threadgill
- 32 Ornette Coleman
- 32 Yellowjackets

- TDWR**
- 51 **Naked City**
- 33 Bela Fleck & the Flecktones
- 29 Bill Frisell
- 26 Steve Coleman & Five Elements
- 24 Curlew
- 24 Sonny Sharrock

**BLUES GROUP**

- 96 **B.B. King**
- 37 Robert Cray
- 27 Charles Brown
- 25 Holmes Brothers
- 18 JB Horns
- 15 Joe Louis Walker & Boss Talkers
- 14 Johnny Copeland

- TDWR**
- 35 **Cheatham's Sweet Baby Blues Band**
- 24 Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials
- 23 Robben Ford
- 21 Lucky Peterson
- 18 Roomful Of Blues



HYOU WIELZ

**BEYOND GROUP**

- 73 **Neville Bros.**
- 35 George Clinton
- 30 Los Lobos
- 22 U2
- 20 Tito Puente
- 18 Living Colour
- 16 Steely Dan

- TDWR**
- 25 **Morphine**
- 20 Greg Osby
- 15 Us3
- 13 Blues Traveller
- 11 David Sylvian/Robert Fripp
- 10 Salt 'N' Pepa

**SOPRANO SAXOPHONE**

- 249 **Steve Lacy**
- 98 Dave Liebman
- 95 Wayne Shorter
- 75 Jane Ira Bloom
- 69 Branford Marsalis
- 31 Bob Wilber
- 14 Evan Parker



RONALD HEARD

- TDWR**
- 83 **Jane Bunnett**
- 74 Jane Ira Bloom
- 43 Evan Parker
- 28 Courtney Pine
- 18 Greg Osby

**ALTO SAXOPHONE**

- 107 **Jackie McLean**
- 96 Phil Woods
- 81 Bobby Watson
- 68 Ornette Coleman
- 50 Frank Morgan
- 40 Benny Carter
- 31 Anthony Braxton

- TDWR**
- 79 **Vincent Herring**
- 54 Antonio Hart
- 46 Greg Osby
- 44 Steve Coleman
- 31 Bobby Watson

**TENOR SAXOPHONE**

- 153 **Joe Henderson**
- 133 Sonny Rollins
- 107 Joe Lovano
- 76 David Murray
- 39 Johnny Griffin
- 39 Joshua Redman

- TDWR**
- 72 **Joshua Redman**
- 47 Ralph Moore
- 39 Charles Gayle
- 39 Gary Thomas
- 36 Craig Handy
- 36 David Sanchez



HYOU WIELZ

**BARITONE SAXOPHONE**

- 173 **Gerry Mulligan**
- 151 Hamiet Bluiett
- 79 Nick Brignola
- 64 Ronnie Cuber
- 60 John Surman

- TDWR**
- 52 **Mwata Bowden**
- 47 John Surman
- 45 Joe Temperley
- 40 Gary Smulyan
- 36 Don Byron
- 32 Nick Brignola

**TROMBONE**

- 167 **J.J. Johnson**
- 165 Ray Anderson
- 142 Steve Turre
- 33 Curtis Fuller
- 25 Jimmy Knepper
- 20 Slide Hampton

- TDWR**
- 58 **Frank Lacy**
- 48 George Lewis
- 42 Fred Wesley
- 38 Robin Eubanks
- 29 Dan Barrett

**CLARINET**

- 144 **Don Byron**
- 112 Eddie Daniels
- 68 Alvin Batiste
- 55 Kenny Davern
- 53 Buddy De Franco
- 38 Marty Ehrlich
- 30 Phil Woods

- TDWR**
- 77 **Ken Peplowski**
- 52 Marty Ehrlich
- 39 Don Byron
- 26 Alvin Batiste
- 24 Louis Sclavis



HYOU VIELZ

FLUTE

- 141 James Newton
  - 87 James Moody
  - 81 Lew Tabackin
  - 68 Frank Wess
  - 42 Henry Threadgill
- TDWR**
- 70 Kent Jordan
  - 32 Frank Wess
  - 30 Jane Bunnett
  - 26 Dave Valentin

VIBES

- 213 Milt Jackson
  - 135 Bobby Hutcherson
  - 113 Gary Burton
  - 35 Lionel Hampton
  - 25 Terry Gibbs
- TDWR**
- 75 Steve Nelson
  - 63 Jay Hoggard
  - 59 Khan Jamal
  - 39 Brian Carrot
  - 37 Gust Tsilis

ACOUSTIC PIANO

- 84 Tommy Flanagan
  - 68 Cecil Taylor
  - 61 Kenny Barron
  - 60 Hank Jones
  - 55 Don Pullen
  - 54 Keith Jarrett
- TDWR**
- 57 Geri Allen
  - 46 Cyrus Chestnut
  - 38 Myra Melford
  - 37 Benny Green
  - 35 Marilyn Crispell



HYOU VIELZ

ORGAN

- 155 Jimmy Smith
  - 117 Joey DeFrancesco
  - 59 Jack McDuff
  - 48 Jimmy McGriff
  - 43 Charles Earland
  - 37 Don Pullen
  - 22 Barbara Dennerlein
- TDWR**
- 63 Joey DeFrancesco
  - 61 Barbara Dennerlein
  - 40 Don Pullen
  - 34 Dan Wall
  - 32 Amina Claudine Myers

ELECTRIC KEYBOARD

- 80 Joe Zawinul
  - 48 Herbie Hancock
  - 44 Chick Corea
  - 39 Wayne Horvitz
  - 30 Lyle Mays
- TDWR**
- 30 Lyle Mays
  - 29 John Surman
  - 27 Wayne Horvitz
  - 25 Adam Holzman



PETER BASTIAN

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

- 88 John McLaughlin
  - 73 Jim Hall
  - 68 Joe Pass
  - 52 Kenny Burrell
  - 50 Ralph Towner
  - 49 Howard Alden
- TDWR**
- 41 Fared Haque
  - 39 Howard Alden
  - 26 Leo Kottke
  - 26 Bereli Lagrene

ELECTRIC GUITAR

- 165 John Scofield
  - 115 Bill Frisell
  - 93 Pat Metheny
  - 47 Kenny Burrell
  - 34 Jim Hall
  - 30 John Abercrombie
- TDWR**
- 54 Mike Stern
  - 41 Sonny Sharrock
  - 40 Mark Whitfield
  - 32 Bern Nix
  - 26 Leo Kottke
  - 22 Kevin Eubanks

ACOUSTIC BASS

- 130 Charlie Haden
  - 88 Dave Holland
  - 80 Ray Brown
  - 50 Ron Carter
  - 42 Christian McBride
  - 36 Milt Hinton
- TDWR**
- 103 Christian McBride
  - 43 Anthony Cox
  - 27 Charnett Moffett
  - 27 William Parker

ELECTRIC BASS

- 154 Steve Swallow
  - 74 John Patitucci
  - 52 Bob Cranshaw
  - 47 Marcus Miller
  - 42 Stanley Clarke
- TDWR**
- 42 Bill Laswell
  - 33 Eberhard Weber
  - 28 Gerald Veasley
  - 21 Fred Frith



HYOU VIELZ

VIOLIN

- 163 Stephane Grappelli
  - 112 Billy Bang
  - 91 Leroy Jenkins
  - 50 Jean Luc Ponty
  - 45 John Blake
  - 33 Johnny Frigo
- TDWR**
- 50 Mark Feldman
  - 49 Claude Williams
  - 33 Jim Nolet
  - 29 Svend Asmussen

DRUMS

- 119 Max Roach
  - 112 Elvin Jones
  - 86 Billy Higgins
  - 82 Jack DeJohnette
  - 48 Roy Haynes
  - 36 Victor Lewis
  - 36 Tony Williams
  - 35 Andrew Cyrille
- TDWR**
- 50 Lewis Nash
  - 49 Victor Lewis
  - 48 Kenny Washington
  - 35 Bill Stewart
  - 30 Marvin "Smitty" Smith
  - 28 Ralph Peterson
  - 25 Joey Baron



HYOU VIELZ

PERCUSSION

- 90 Trilok Gurtu
  - 80 Airtio Moriera
  - 67 Tito Puente
  - 61 Jerry Gonzales
  - 58 Nana Vasconcelos
  - 42 Famoudou Don Moye
- TDWR**
- 43 Giovanni Hidalgo
  - 41 Kahil El' Zabar
  - 30 Jerry Gonzales
  - 28 Pancho Sanchez
  - 22 Marilyn Mazur

MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT

- 105 Toots Thielemans (harmonica)
  - 87 Steve Turre (conch shells)
  - 52 David Murray (bass clarinet)
  - 35 Bela Fleck (banjo)
  - 30 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- TDWR**
- 41 Steve Turre (conch shells)
  - 31 Don Byron (bass clarinet)
  - 22 Diedre Murray (cello)
  - 21 Tom Cora (cello)

MALE JAZZ SINGER

- 135 Joe Williams
- 88 Mel Tormé
- 86 Bobby McFerrin
- 56 Tony Bennett
- 55 Jon Hendricks
- 55 Jimmy Scott
- 46 Mark Murphy



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- TDWR**
- 77 Kevin Mahogany
  - 30 Jimmy Scott
  - 27 Tom Lellis
  - 25 Ernie Andrews
  - 24 Mark Murphy

## MALE SINGER (non-jazz)

- 73 Aaron Neville
- 67 Tony Bennett
- 42 Ray Charles
- 42 Frank Sinatra
- 25 Milton Nascimento

### TDWR

- 26 Salif Kelta
- 23 Charles Brown
- 22 Harry Connick Jr.
- 17 Dr. John



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## FEMALE JAZZ SINGER

- 159 Betty Carter
- 136 Abbey Lincoln
- 118 Cassandra Wilson
- 91 Sheila Jordan
- 48 Shirley Horn
- 24 Dee Dee Bridgewater
- 17 Ella Fitzgerald
- 16 Carmen McRae

### TDWR

- 50 Cassandra Wilson
- 37 Vanessa Rubin
- 29 Kitty Margolis
- 25 Roseanna Vitro
- 23 Shirley Horn

## FEMALE SINGER (non-jazz)

- 83 Aretha Franklin
- 49 Bonnie Raitt
- 44 Ruth Brown
- 29 k.d. lang
- 20 Etta James

### TDWR

- 24 Jane Siberry
- 19 Dianne Reeves
- 19 Lucinda Williams
- 10 Etta James

## VOCAL JAZZ GROUP

- 103 Take 6
- 85 Manhattan Transfer
- 70 Hendricks Family
- 39 Sweet Honey In The Rock
- 22 New York Voices
- 21 Jackie & Roy

### TDWR

- 45 New York Voices
- 33 Zap Mama
- 31 Sweet Honey In The Rock
- 18 Straight Ahead



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## THE CRITICS

Following is a list of critics who voted in **DB's** 42nd annual International Critics Poll. Eighty-three critics voted this year, distributing 10 points among up to three choices (no more than five votes per choice) in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. The participants were:

- Frank Alkyer:** editorial director. **DB**  
**Jon Andrews:** **DB**  
**Robert Baranello:** music editor. *NY: LI Update*  
**Peter Bastian:** jazz critic/photographer. Radio SR (Germany)  
**Chuck Berg:** Dir. of Media Studies, U. of Kansas; *Lawrence Journal-World; Jazz Educators Journal; JazzTimes*  
**Larry Birnbaum:** **DB**; *Pulse!*; *New York Newsday*  
**Bob Blumenhal:** **DB**; *Boston Globe; CD Review; Monitor Radio*  
**Philip Booth:** **DB**; music critic. *Tampa Tribune; Billboard*  
**Fred Bouchard:** **DB**; *JazzTimes; Boston Phoenix; CD Review; WMBR-FM (Cambridge)*  
**Michael Bourne:** **DB**; editor. *Hennessy Jazz Notes; WBGO-FM (Newark)*  
**Pawel Brodowski:** editor. *Jazz Forum (Poland)*  
**Thomas Conrad:** **DB**; *CD Review*  
**John Corbett:** **DB**; *The Wire; Option; Coda; New Art Examiner*; author. *Extended Play: Sounding Off From John Cage To Dr. Funkenstein*  
**Owen Cordle:** **DB**; *JazzTimes; Raleigh News & Observer*  
**Chip Deffaa:** *New York Post*; author. *Swing Legacy; Voices Of The Jazz Age, In The Mainstream*  
**Lauren Deutsch:** **DB**; photographer  
**John Diliberto:** host/producer. *Echoes (NPR)*; **DB**  
**Len Dobbin:** *Jazz Report (Toronto); Jazz Vine (Montreal)*  
**Bill Douthart:** photographer. **DB**  
**Jose Duarte:** Portuguese radio, press, television  
**Lofton Emenari:** Chicago Citizen Newspaper Group; *WHPK-FM*  
**Guudrun Endress:** editor. *Jazz Podium (Germany); Radio SDR (Stuttgart)*  
**Ed Enright:** associate editor. **DB**  
**John Ephland:** managing editor. **DB**  
**J.B. Figl:** programming committee/Chicago Jazz Festival  
**William Fowler:** Fowler Music Enterprises  
**Maurizio Franco:** *Musica Jazz (Italy)*  
**Jack Fuller:** president/CEO. *Chicago Tribune*  
**Gerard J. Futrick:** *Coda*  
**Alain Gerber:** *Compact Jazz & Blues*; Radio France  
**Linda Gruno:** **DB**; *Westword (Denver)*  
**Elaine Guregian:** **DB**; *Akron Beacon Journal*  
**Frank-John Hadley:** **DB**; *Jazziz; Record Roundup; Pulse!*; *Blues Wire; Boston Phoenix*; author. *The Grove Press Guide To The Blues On CD*  
**Michael Handler:** **DB**; *Jazz Now*  
**Dave Holland:** **DB**; *Pulse!*; *CD Review; Guitar Player; Keyboard*  
**Robert Hicks:** **DB**; *Jazziz; The Villager; Guitar Player; Bass Player; Coda; DCS News*  
**Geoffrey Himes:** **DB**; *Washington Post; Request*  
**Eugene Holley Jr.:** **DB**; *JazzTimes; American Music Center*  
**Randi Hultin:** **DB**; *Jazznytt; Jazz Forum; Jazz Journal*  
**Willard Jenkins:** Exec. Dir. National Jazz Service Organization  
**Niranjan Jhaveri:** *Jazz India*; Jazz Yatra organizer  
**Gene Kalbacher:** editor & publisher. *Hot House*; columnist. *CMJ New Music Report*  
**Leigh Kamman:** *The Jazz Image (Minnesota Public Radio)*  
**Peter Kostakis:** **DB**  
**Tom Krehble:** *CD Review*  
**Art Lange:** co-editor. *Moment's Notice; Jazz In Poetry And Prose*; president. Jazz Journalists Association  
**John Litweller:** **DB**; author. *The Freedom Principle; Ornette Coleman: A Harmolodic Life*  
**Jaap Ludeke:** Euro Jazz Radio (Netherlands)  
**John McDonough:** **DB**; *Wall St Journal*  
**Howard Mandel:** **DB**; *Pulse!*; NPR  
**Bill Milkowski:** **DB**; *Guitar Player; Swing Journal*; author. *Punk Jazz: The Life And Times Of Jaco Pastorius*  
**Dan Morgenstern:** director. Institute of Jazz Studies [Rutgers U.]  
**Michael G. Nastos:** **DB**; Jazz Editor. *All Music Guide; Cadence; Ann Arbor News; WEMU-FM (Ypsilanti, Mich.)*  
**Stuart Nicholson:** author. *Jazz—1980's Resurgence; Ella Fitzgerald; The Wire*  
**Dan Ouellette:** **DB**; *Pulse!*; *CD Review; SOMA; Piano & Keyboard*  
**Michael Point:** **DB**; *Austin American-Statesman*  
**Becca Pulliam:** producer. *JazzSet (NPR)*; *WBGO-FM*  
**Doug Ramsey:** *JazzTimes; Texas Monthly*; author. *Jazz Matters*  
**Howard Reich:** *Chicago Tribune*  
**Jim Roberts:** editor. *Bass Player*  
**Mark Ruffin:** jazz editor. *Chicago Magazine; WNUA-FM (Chicago)*  
**Robert D. Rusch:** editor. *Cadence*  
**Ben Sandmel:** **DB**  
**Gene Santoro:** *The Nation*  
**Mitchell Seidel:** **DB**; *Hot House*  
**Chris Sheridan:** **DB**; author. *Count Basie: A Bio-Discography*  
**Joel Simpson:** **DB**  
**Jack Sohmer:** **DB**; *JazzTimes; The Mississippi Rag*  
**Yves Sportis:** *Jazz Hot*  
**Stephanie Stein:** **DB**  
**David Steinberg:** *Albuquerque Journal*  
**Andrew Sussman:** jazz writer  
**Ron Sweetman:** CKCU-FM, Ottawa  
**Robin Tolleson:** **DB**; *Billboard*  
**Marc Weldenbaum:** senior editor. *Pulse!*  
**Ron Welburn:** **DB**; *JazzTimes*  
**Kevin Whitehead:** **DB**; *CD Review; Pulse!*; *The Village Voice; Coda*  
**Michael Wilderman:** photographer  
**Russell Woessner:** **DB**; *City Paper; Jazz Philadelphia*  
**Josef Woodard:** **DB**; *Musician; Entertainment Weekly; Los Angeles Times*  
**Scott Yanow:** **DB**; *JazzTimes; Jazziz; Cadence; Coda*  
**Shoichi Yul:** jazz critic  
**Mike Zwerin:** *International Herald Tribune (Paris)*

# Coming Clean

**FRANK MORGAN**

By K. Leander Williams

■ If you've been listening closely to altoist Frank Morgan in the decade since he made his miraculous leap from ex-con to jazz star, you may be more than a little startled by his new release, *Listen To The Dawn*. The emotive qualities and precision are still very much in evidence, but not the *edge*. No less than three of the tracks were recorded in duet with guitarist Kenny Burrell, who in addition brought in two fine original compositions and a great, unfamiliar piece by Duke Ellington. The added seasoning by bassist Ron Carter and drummer Grady Tate sustains the date's remarkable tranquility, creating an airiness that some might consider a far cry from the harmonic assault Morgan lifted directly from his mentor/idol, Charlie Parker.

When questioned about the change in scenery, Morgan laughed. "My life is a work-in-progress," he said matter-of-factly. "I don't think I have to tell you how sincerely music reflects one's mood. That's exactly what's happening. *Listen To The Dawn* is different from anything I've ever done before because I think I'm becoming more quiet, more peaceful, y'know. I'm not trying to blow the keys off the horn anymore."

It seems that right now, at 60, Morgan finally has every reason to loosen up a bit. In the stretch of three years, his post-stardom odyssey has taken him west, from the hustle of New York City to mile-high Albuquerque, New Mexico, and then back east to suburban Virginia, the place he now calls home. He's quite comfortable now, not least of which for the presence of a gracious individual who's invested considerable time and money in both his life and career. The grand opening of their jazz club, the Cafe No-Problem, is scheduled for September.

But another much more physically deci-



sive transformation occurred in Morgan's life late last year. When asked why his touring schedule had been reduced lately, the altoist paused audibly, as if to gather strength, and then bared his secret: "Well actually, man, since October I've been coming off methadone.

"I'm kind of ambivalent about telling you, in a way, but I don't want to keep it quiet," Morgan said, ending his confession.

For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the horrors of the drug culture, methadone, a substance that is administered legally by a physician, is the legal cure for heroin addiction. "I'd been on since about 1977," Morgan continued. "It served me well, but I was still something of a slave. I came off cold-turkey—against the advice of my doctors. But with the help of daily acupuncture sessions, body massage, and many different Chinese herbs, I was able to alleviate some of the pain—not all, but some.

"That's actually the story behind the tune 'Listen To The Dawn,'" continues Morgan. "The label was going to release just the quartets, but I didn't want it out like that because it was done before I'd started coming off the methadone. We'd already booked the duets with Kenny when a mutual friend of ours, Patricia Willard [one of Duke Ellington's former publicists], heard me on a gig near my home in Virginia. When I told her about the session, she said she remembered one of Kenny's ballads that would fit my sound perfectly. So I asked him to bring 'Listen To The Dawn' with him to the studio. I think we got it on the first take even though I had to read it on the spot."

Of course, the other two duo pieces, Rogers and Hammerstein's "It Might As Well Be Spring" and "Goodbye" by Gordon Jenkins, also suit the altoist well. Producer John Snyder, who reserved the final word on the album's repertoire, explained thus: "Frank gives up more, emotionally, in his playing than anyone I've ever worked with. Which is to say that if you believe music is supposed to be inspired from the heart, and that sometimes it may require [a musician] to relive difficult experiences repeatedly, then creating becomes a severely emotional proposition; you may not want to revisit some things. Despite all that I know has happened to him, I've never seen Frank play on automatic pilot."

Snyder also thinks that overall, the release stands as a superb document of Morgan's metamorphosis, helping the altoist to close the final door on a dismal chapter in his life. "You can actually hear it," says Snyder. "There's a mellowness to the duet stuff that you don't find on the second tune [Carl Perkins' 'Grooveyard'], for instance. That solo has a sort of jaggedness, a temper, to it. Listening to the whole record, it's almost like listening to the *two* Frank Morgans."



*"Listen To The Dawn is different from anything I've ever done before because I think I'm becoming more quiet, more peaceful. I'm not trying to blow the keys off the horn anymore."*



It's impossible to contemplate the career path of either of the Frank Morgans, however, without acknowledging the considerable impact of Charlie Parker. Bird's death left a void in jazz so big that only decades of subsequent innovation and legend could fill it; but that didn't keep the jazz world from hoping, or Morgan from trying. When his self-titled leadership debut appeared scant months later in 1955, it contained liner notes that went a long way toward proclaiming Morgan—then just 22 years old—Parker's heir apparent. "They built me up to be something I could never be," offered Morgan. "And at the time, I'd been under Bird's influence so long—since I was seven—I was too stupid to realize it. I'm

just coming to grips with the fact that trying to be Bird damned near killed me."

In the liner notes to *Mood Indigo*, Morgan's 1989 debut for Antilles, Snyder states that the label enlisted him as producer in order to "take a renowned bebop player and make a record with no bebop." Yet though Parker's influence on *Listen To The Dawn* may not be as direct as on Morgan's earlier work, his ghost still manages to seep through the cracks. When questioned about the inclusion of "Goodbye," a tune associated with Benny Goodman, his response was telling. "Well, I'd always wanted to learn the tune," he began. "But, y'know, it was actually Bird who made me start out on clarinet. He wouldn't allow me to start on saxophone. Of course, my father [Ink Spots guitarist Stanley Morgan] agreed. At the time, the wisdom of it escaped me and I was mad at [Bird] for years about that.

"To this day, though, I'm glad I've got that clarinet training, that embouchure control. I mean, you have to learn that shit from jump street—just to stop the damned horn from squeaking. It's as important for a saxophonist to know the mechanics of the instrument as it is for a driver to understand a car. Like any machine, you get in, turn the ignition, and then make it take you where you wanna go.

"That's why I'm so excited by these young cats," he brightened. "Wynton, Branford, all of them—but especially these bad-ass young alto players. Kenny Garrett, Antonio Hart, and Vincent Herring are just tearin' shit up. Some cats get on them about innovation and individuality, and so forth, but they're still learning, so that will come. Right now they practice hard, study the history of the music, and don't drink nothin' but Pepsi-Colas—nothin' that's gonna work against their craft. Watching them, I've sort of reversed the whole role-model thing."

DB

## EQUIPMENT

"I play a Selmer Super 80, the newest Selmer alto," Morgan states. "I use a Selmer mouthpiece and medium Rico reeds—number 3 1/2, sometimes 3. I'm looking for some better reeds, but the best cane is from Cuba; so ever since the Cuban trade has been cut off, you can't really get good reeds."

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*LISTEN TO THE DAWN*—Antilles 314 518 979  
*YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING*—Antilles 314 512 570  
*A LOVESOME THING*—Antilles 422 848 213  
*MOOD INDIGO*—Antilles 791320  
*REFLECTIONS*—Contemporary 14052  
*YARDBIRD SUITE*—Contemporary 14045  
*MAJOR CHANGES*—Contemporary 14039  
*DOUBLE IMAGE*—Contemporary 14035 (with George Cables)  
*BEBOP LIVES!*—Contemporary 14026  
*LAMENT*—Contemporary 14021  
*EASY LIVING*—Contemporary 14013

# Fire On The Clavé

**EDDIE PALMIERI**

By Howard Mandel

**E**ddie Palmieri is a dynamo at the piano: digging deep into a solo, rolling out the complex pattern of a montuno, and leaping from his keyboard to urge on his jazz-hot Afro-Caribbean orchestra as it tears through hip harmonic motifs set in rock-steady clavés to thrill smart listeners and swirling dancers alike. As he has since the '60s with such bands as La Perfecta and Harlem River Drive—and with successive generations of jazz players from vibist Cal Tjader to the final alumni of Art Blakey's college of musical knowledge—Palmieri rejects anything even slightly corny in Latin dance music, to enliven Afro-Caribbean traditions with a fervor for the here, the now, and an envisioned future.

Trim and neatly bearded in the prime of middle age, Palmieri doesn't call himself a jazz man ("I don't belong up there with Mr. McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, and Keith Jarrett"), much less a pianist ("I was classically trained by a great teacher, but not having pursued that training; I'm a piano player, maybe an Afro-Caribbean jazz piano player, with aspirations to develop my technique"). Yet he's created a double-edged sound by drawing on the talents of Hiram Bullock, Ron Carter, Bobby Colomby, Ronnie Cuber, Cornell Dupree, Jon Paddis, Steve Gadd, Steve Khan, Lou Marini, and Jeremy Steig as well as Chocolate Armenteros, Alfredo De La Fe, Andy and Jerry Gonzalez, Israel "Cachao" Lopez, Nick Marrero, Mario Rivera, Vinton Paz, and Barry Rogers. In *Palmas*, Palmieri's first U.S. release in five years, the three-time Grammy winner features trumpeter Brian Lynch, saxist (mostly alto) Donald Harrison, and trombonist Conrad Herwig in charts anchored by superb rhythm players: bongo and bata player Anthony Carrillo, congero Richie Flores, percussionist Milton Cardona, timbales player Jose Claussell, traps drummer Robbie Ameen, and bassists Johnny Torres and Johnny Benitez.

"The quality of my music comes from the musicians who are on my records," Palmieri explains in a flood of talk as cross-referential



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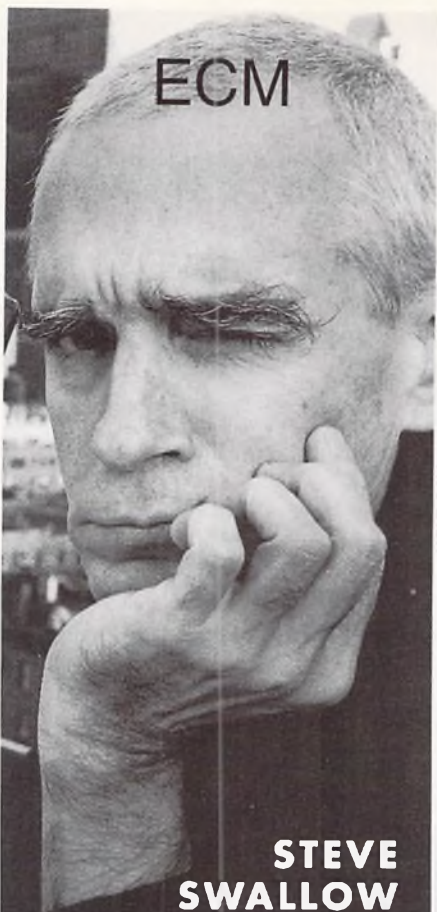
and urgent as his music. "But from the first album I recorded, the rhythmic structures have been there. You see, I don't *guess* I'm going to excite you; I *know* I'm going to excite you. It's because of structures that I sacredly maintain which are Afro-Cuban. That structure"—he's speaking of the drums' organization and repertoire of syncopations drawn from religious ceremonies that came from Africa to the New World via Cuba centuries ago—"will deliver tension and resistance leading to the climax in every composition.

"I knew it intuitively in my early years," says the enfant terrible of New York City's

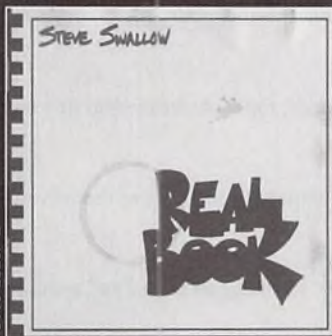
Palladium, Merengue Ed of the Catskills, the man also known as "the Sun of Latin Music." "As a student of Afro-Cuban music I found that all the different structures follow the same pattern, which always delivers that climax. No matter if I have a charanga [flute and violin] band or a big [swing era-size] orchestra like Beny Moré's or a [brass-heavy] conjunto like Arsenio Rodríguez's (he's the one who started this movement), I keep those structures sacred. For the last 10 years, during which I've orchestrated and arranged myself, I've never changed. I've just looked to extend it more.

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JOEL MEYEROWITZ

*"Palmas sets a precedent for how to extend jazz into the most incredible rhythmic patterns, the most exciting in the world, 40,000 years old!"*



world of jazz harmony. I was fortunate to be introduced to jazz harmonies and the Schilinger method by my teacher, the late Mr. Bob Bianco—Barry Rogers took me to him in 1965. Since then I've had the most incredible personnel on every album I've recorded." Palmieri's justifiably proud of recent bandmembers, including trumpeter Charlie Sepulveda, tenor saxophonist David Sanchez, and bongo-ist Giovanni Hidalgo—but he's fanatical about his current guys.

"On *Palmas* I have three great contemporary jazz players. Brian Lynch is the most incredible first trumpet player I've ever shared a bandstand with. Donald 'Duck' Harrison has just the most beautiful alto sound, the extension of Cannonball Adderley with that New Orleans thing. Conrad Herwig is the most incredible trombonist I have ever met—if I can't get him for an engagement I'd rather not have a trombonist, because most of them aren't prepared for the high range I write in, utilizing three-part harmony for the density I need.

"There are charts we follow, sure, but in their solos they're on their own, free to go on the ride. And the difference in my opinion"—between what Palmieri's done with his flexible, fiery front line and what he considers lesser efforts—"is that in what's been called Latin jazz, we've often liquified our rhythm section. Which is totally absurd.

"When Latin or Afro-Caribbean rhythms have been added to a jazz album, we've had a great jazz trio or quartet with a conga drummer. Nothing wrong with that, it's been done well—but that conga player is usually in a secondary or tertiary position throughout the album. Depending on who he is, he may get a solo. That is not what I have in *Palmas*. I've got three jazz musicians and five of my own, my exciting dance rhythm section. What I've done is an augmentation of what one percussionist, Chano Pozo, did in the '40s, when Mario Bauza introduced him to Dizzy Gillespie.

"You remember the power of that one

percussionist—a tumbero major, singer, dancer, player—to influence a jazz orchestra? Dizzy's band was not restricted. On the contrary, it had a structure through which to complement the incredible patterns that Chano Pozo offered it.

"He sang those patterns to them. He couldn't explain it musically, but these great musicians absorbed it. Geniuses like Dizzy were intrigued.

"For *Palmas* I didn't say we're going to do an Afro-Caribbean jazz record, the bongo player won't come, I'll only use the timbales player sometimes, but the conga player gets to meet the jazz drummer—that would have been totally out. No, *Palmas* sets a precedent for how to extend jazz into the most incredible rhythmic patterns, the most exciting in the world, 40,000 years old! From the continent of Africa, picked up by a culture that's two-to-one African, because the Spanish were influenced by the Moors, mixed with them, took their hand drums, and had a marriage of cultures for a thousand years."

Throughout *Palmas*, Palmieri's jazz horns don't merely fit into guaranteed structures—they're stirred to improvisational heights by those ancient rhythms. Says Harrison, whose Creed Taylor production is riding the sales and airplay charts, whose acoustic combo plays adaptations of Mardi Gras Indian themes, and who's learning how to work with a vocalist by gigging with Lena Horne, "Brian Lynch introduced me to Eddie while we were doing a tribute-to-Blakey tour in Japan. I'd seen him previously, I'd heard his music, and Brian said they were looking for a sax player, so I went to a rehearsal. It really struck me: I wanted to be a part of the rhythms his band was playing, because it's different than just hanging out and listening to that music. I wanted to *learn* it.

"I've had brief experiences with Latin music before, and I think the rhythms sort of

lay easy for me, coming as I do from New Orleans, because the rhythms there are African-based, same as Eddie's. I've had to change my inflections to fit the Afro-Caribbean or Cuban rhythmic aspects that assert themselves everywhere in Eddie's music. But it's broadened my whole approach. When you deal with the clavé enough, it becomes natural, same as if you're swinging—you know where the hi-hat is, and you can go as far as you can go from it.

"I listen to all the rhythms Eddie's got going—bongo, conga, the bassist, the piano—they're all important. So many rhythms coming at the same time opens you right up. The patterns are based on eighth notes and triplets, which is like what Charlie Parker was doing—Bird being one of the first guys to include both eighth notes and triplets in one line.

"Eddie's given me records with Cuban flutists and trumpeters and told me to concentrate on them. But I concentrate on everybody, including the singers. I'm trying to bring all of it into the situation. I haven't really got it under the microscope, but I've got the concept. I'm starting to fly around and make some turns.

"One thing I love about Eddie is his free

spirit. He goes for the music and listens to the musicians, the same way Art Blakey did, and of course, Duke Ellington, too. That's the concept of jazz, to discover the sound that's developing naturally. You have freedom on the bandstand working in Eddie's band. Why not use it?"

Trombonist Herwig, a veteran of big bands led by Toshiko Akiyoshi, Mario Bauza, Buddy Rich, Clark Terry, and lately Paquito D'Rivera, first toured with Palmieri's 11-piece traditional salsa dance orchestra in '86. Now he makes about 75 Palmieri gigs a year.

"Eddie's always used jazz soloing in the traditional format," Herwig says. "But with Brian in the band, and by eliminating the singers, we've got into more of a jazz context. The horns have moved up front, playing the melodies where the singers would be. And while the trumpet or sax plays a part, the other two of us play backgrounds. Then we switch up. There's a lot of freedom and interplay. In Salt Lake City recently, with half the audience jazz listeners and half on the dance floor, the scene was like with the Basie or Ellington bands that had people dancing.

"Eddie wants the music to be totally

inclusive. His piano is out of the classic Latin style, but the way he plays it is not so strict. I hear Monk in the way he's able to comp, more freely, even while the music retains its overall structure. The bass holds the timbale rhythm, so he won't lose the dancers the way bebop did.

"You have to have respect for the genre," Herwig says of working in any Latin heritage band. "It's a powerful, forceful music, and you have to have control of your air so you don't destroy your embouchure. It's tempting to float over the top of those rhythms, but to be true to the form you have to dip in and explore the rhythm patterns, which takes discipline. Floating over the top doesn't give you the strength you need to make something happen. The truth is that in Latin music everybody's a drummer, including the horn soloist."

Brian Lynch, who worked with Art Blakey as well as Palmieri from the end of 1988 until the Main Messenger's passing in October '90, had some gigs with Eddie where he was the lone horn amid a full Latin rhythm section. "We went from playing Eddie's songs with five horns to me trying to play all the parts I could remember myself," he says with an audible shudder.

*hat*  
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*"The truth is that  
in Latin music,  
everybody's a  
drummer, including  
the horn soloist."*

—Conrad Herwig,  
trombonist



"But Eddie's instrumental ensemble is the hippest jazz group I've ever played with, the hippest blowing gig. And I think his Afro-Caribbean jazz term is a cogent one. His format is the same as in any traditional Latin band, with the soloist blowing on the montuno pattern rather than on changes. All the chord changes in jazz sometimes get in the way of the Latin rhythmic format, and when there's conflict you often get watered-down jazz and watered-down Latin.

"So he's developed a way to keep all the elements at full tilt. Everything has a phrasing and rhythm; the solo construction becomes more apparent given the limited cyclical framework. People dance to our band, but you can play anything you want over it.

"I try to take things I derive from Eddie's concept of phrasing and apply them elsewhere, because it's got universal applications. His horn sections swing like a breezy way of playing straightahead.

"It might be that my most significant dimension is being informed by these experiences," Lynch suggests. "My composing has certainly been influenced by this relationship, and I have a feeling that in 10 years

Afro-Caribbean jazz is going to become the mainstream. There are lots of rhythmic resources that haven't been exploited in jazz so far, and this is a format to do so. Many people don't know it, but there are lots of players in the Latin world who've assimilated jazz and can put something extra into playing straightahead, too."

Is that what Palmieri's after? Though his efforts have resulted in the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) instituting a Latin Jazz category for next year's Grammys, that doesn't seem his sole aim.

"The last 10 years have been a disaster for our dance form," he contends, "with a lot of conventional Latin orchestras disregarding the structures I'm talking about. You can die of boredom dancing to them. There's no excitement, the whole focus is on the singer, the music's anti-climactic—and to me that's the worst sin, because the essence of a dance orchestra is to bring happiness to those who brought the rhythms and the scales out of their historic sorrows.

"You know, in a way the dancer is the enemy, the real enemy. That's how it was when the music started in Cuba, when the music imitated the dance of the rooster and the chicken. When I started playing at the tail end of the Palladium era, after Tito Rodriguez, Tito Puente, Machito, Joe Cuba, my brother Charlie Palmieri with his Orchestra Charanga, and Johnny Pacheco and all that, we were one-on-one with dancers who were so well-versed they were our challenge.

"It was between them and you. You wanted to get them to sweat so they would say at the end of an evening, 'Oh, Eddie, that was terrific, you knocked me out!' When I heard that, I knew I'd satisfied the dancing part of the listening audience. When I hear that, because of music we play—ah, then my soul is elated!"

DB

## EQUIPMENT

Eddie Palmieri prefers Yamaha CP-80 or Roland FP-8 model stage pianos for portability when he's on the road; at home he has a Bosendorfer grand and a Baldwin upright, the keys of which he had reweighted a few years ago. Palmieri also endorses the Yamaha PFP-100, a touch-sensitive keyboard.

Donald Harrison uses a Selmer USA alto sax with a Vandoren #45 classical mouthpiece and #5 reeds, explaining, "On Eddie's dates I need something like that to cut through the orchestra!"

He also has a Selmer Mark VI tenor and a Super 80 Selmer soprano, both equipped with Vandoren classical mouthpieces and stiff reeds. Conrad Herwig plays a Bach 16 trombone with a gold brass bell. He uses a New York Bach 12 mouthpiece with a deep cup and a conical bowl that's slightly smaller than mid spectrum. His mouthpiece is almost 75 years old, and according to current Bach numbers, slightly larger than current 12s. Brian Lynch plays a Monette 937 trumpet with a D2/STC 3 mouthpiece.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

PALMAS—Elektra Nonesuch 61649  
EDDIE PALMIERI—Barbaro 205  
LUCUMI MACUMBA VOODOO—Columbia 35523  
SUEÑO—Capitol/Intuition CDP 7 91353  
EXPLORATION (SALSA-DESCARGA-JAZZ)—Coco 151X  
UNFINISHED MASTERPIECE—Coco CLP 120  
THE SUN OF LATIN MUSIC—Coco CLP 109XX

SENTIDO—Coco CLP 103  
SUPERIMPOSITION—Tico SLP 1194  
EDDIE PALMIERI WITH HARLEM RIVER DRIVE LIVE AT  
SING SING—Tico 1303  
CHAMPAGNE (with Cachao)—Tico SLP 1165  
ECHANDO PALANTE (Straight Ahead)—Tico LP 1113  
THE NEW SOUL SOUND (w/ Cal Tjader)—Verve 8651



MALIK YUSEF

# Crime Pays

**US3**

By Brooke Wentz

**W**hen Blue Note Records approached Us3 in early 1992, hip-hop daredevils Mel Simpson and Geoff Wilkinson expected to be sued silly. Instead, they ended up with a sweet demo deal that led to their production of "Cantaloup (Flip Fantasia)," an instrumental dance tune that quickly became the highest-charted track in the label's history.

Us3 had sampled licks, illegally, from vintage Blue Note Records to produce "The Band Played The Boogie," a hip-hop single released on the independent Ninja Tune label in England. Amazingly, Blue Note *liked* what they heard, and decided to pick up on the whole project.

"We weren't actively looking to be signed by a big label," explains Tukka Yoot, Jamaican-born rapper and co-writer for Us3. "The next idea was to put out another single on

another independent. But when you get an offer from Blue Note, you don't turn it down."

Us3's debut album, *Hand On The Torch* (Blue Note 80883-2-5), which contains the single, consists of 13 songs that incorporate samples selected solely from the Blue Note catalog—Lou Donaldson, Big John Patton, Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers, Thelonious Monk, Herbie Hancock, Grant Green, Bobby Hutcherson, Horace Silver, Reuben Wilson, and Donald Byrd. The music is an aural concoction with layers of partying grunts and groans over infectious, rhythmic beats; no standard song forms can be heard, just a groove with rap lyrics, "lifted" background licks, and "live" horn melodies noodling in and out.

All royalties due to writers will be paid to original publishers, artists, or their estates, and to the numerous members of the group.

"There was quite a big input," explains Yoot. "There is the input of the producers—Mel Simpson and Geoff Wilkinson—the input of the jazz musicians, and the input of the rappers who basically wrote the material. Everyone gets their share."

The single—which reached number nine on the Billboard Hot 100, achieved gold status (sold over 500,000 units) in the United States, and has sold close to one million abroad—proves to have generated sales of old Blue Note recordings.

"One of the big aims of the project is to teach people about these old records," Yoot says. "We've heard from people who said their younger brothers went out and bought a Herbie Hancock album. That means a lot to us, especially from younger people who go check the original source of music. That's important." This makes Blue Note and stockholders happy, but what about those artists whose work generated such a venerable label?

"We have mixed feelings about the album being the biggest-selling Blue Note album," says Yoot. "It's great to have a hit record, but the other side of it is that not even someone like Herbie sold that many. That's a shame."

Blue Note president Bruce Lundvall, who signed Us3, describes the record as a dream come true. "Their music respectfully trans-

forms the classics of the past into urgent and viable music that speaks to today's listeners," says Lundvall.

**T**he ensemble Us3, which takes its name from a 1950s Horace Parlan Blue Note recording, formed in 1991 when London-based journalist and jazz agent Wilkinson teamed up with studio wizard and pianist Simpson. Simpson owned a studio called Flame that contained some of the newest sampling and sequencing equipment on the market. While Wilkinson busily booked the well-known London venue the Jazz Cafe, he witnessed the growth of collaborations between hip-hop and jazz artists, now a musical style known as "acid jazz."

Over the last couple of years, this sort of jazz-sampled dance music has caught on in other markets, including the United States, and has achieved its share of commercial success. Rapper Daddy-O, from the Bedford-Stuyvesant based hip-hop group Stetsasonic, sampled Lonnie Liston Smith's "Expansion" on the hit song "Talkin' All That Jazz." A Tribe Called Quest invited bassist Ron Carter to play on their album *The Low End Theory* and Branford Marsalis to accompany them live. Tribe's tune "Vibes And Stuff" contains a sample of Grant Green's "Down Here On The Sand." Rapper Keith Flam, a.k.a. Guru from the rap outfit Gang Starr, teamed up with Donald Byrd, Smith, Courtney Pine, Marsalis, Roy Ayers, and Ronny Jordan on his 1993 release *Jazz-MaTazz*. That same year also saw the release of Digable Planets' *Reachin' (A New Refutation Of Time & Space)*, a hard-hitting fusion of jazz and hip-hop. And, jazz musicians like Greg Osby, Marsalis, Max Roach, and Herbie Hancock all experimented with rap and hip-hop on their own recent recordings.

"We never claimed to be the first," says Ed Jones, Us3's British saxophonist/flutist. "A lot of rappers who use jazz in their samples use it primarily for bass lines. People are beginning to realize there is a lot to develop from the original sample. We are doing it in one way, and A Tribe Called Quest is doing it in a completely different way. They are using more samples from the '70s, like Freddie Hubbard, George Clinton, and Average White Band. There are unlimited possibilities.

"Although the album was conceived as a studio project, we wanted to work the piece out from the 'Cantaloope' sample [taken from Hancock's 'Cantaloope Island'] and see what we could do with it. But the project changed slightly since then. We now have a live band, and I see that's the way Us3 is going to develop. The band will take over the role of playing the sample, and now we are putting much more of a jazz element into it. The music will come from the band, not the samples."

The other 12 songs on the album include samples from "Alfie's Theme" performed by Patton, "Cool Blues" by Donaldson, "Crisis" performed by Blakey's Jazz Messengers, Monk's "Straight No Chaser," Green's "Sookie Sookie," "Goin' Down South" by Hutcherson, "Filthy McNasty" by Silver, and "Jeannine" by Byrd. Wilkinson and Simpson also invited guest musicians to play solos, such as saxophonist Steve Williamson, who can be heard on "Cruisin'."

"The musicians were called in after the samples were laid down," recalls Yoot. "I was actually called in to put down my vocals on top of the sample itself, which was running like a loop. Basically, it was a four-bar loop. When the vocals were put down, the producers found the sort of direction they wanted to take, and broke it up and slipped in the horns. So, it was done in layers."

Other musicians on the album are trombonist Dennis Rollins, guitarist Tony Remy, pianist Matthew Cooper, percussionist Roberto Pia, trumpeter Gerard Presencer, saxophonist Mike Smith, and Brooklyn-based rappers Kobie Powell and Rahsaan Kelly.

In addition to Yoot, Jones, Powell, and Kelly, the current nine-piece touring version of Us3 includes drummer Cheryl Alleyne, bassist Geoffrey Gascoyne, keyboardist Timothy Vine, trumpeter Dominick Glover, and saxophonist Tony Cofie. The band is currently completing a tour of the United States and England that included some opening performances for the British pop-reggae group UB40.

"[Us3] is to jazz what UB40 is to reggae," says Jonathan Rudnick, co-founder of Giant Step/Groove Academy, New York City's premier jazz-hiphop venue. "They have provided a point of reference about this music [jazz], and it is now up to them to make it last." **DB**

## JAZZ/RAP SUMMIT

**NEW YORK CITY**—Using the ancestral twin towers of rhythm and rhyme as their base, several practitioners of jazz and rap sat down recently and traded fours on the



Max Roach

things they have in common: improvisation, tradition, exploitation, and "the hood."

The panel discussion "Jazz and/or Rap: Tradition and the Break With



Q-tip

Tradition," part of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' "Speaking Out" series, included jazzmen Donald Byrd and Max Roach, rap activist Harry Allen, rapper Q-tip from A Tribe Called Quest, and Bert Caldwell, jazz buyer for Tower Records.

The panelists highlighted some of the shared musical and sociological factors that shaped both idioms. "Louis Armstrong comes from the same place as rap," said Roach, drawing a parallelism between present-day educational inequities and those that existed at the turn of the century. Roach also linked rap to the African-American linguistic tradition: to prove his point, he played a tape of a Lester Young interview from 1959, noting elements of Young's vernacular and slang that are present in rap music today. —Eugene Holley

## EQUIPMENT

In concert, Cheryl Alleyne plays a Pearl MLX drum kit with Sabian AA cymbals. Geoffrey Gascoyne plays a Music Man Sting-Ray bass guitar (tuned to C) with a Hartke bass amp and Hartke speakers. Timothy Vine uses a Fender Rhodes 73 with a Boss chorus pedal, a Hohner Clavinet D6 with a Crybaby wah-wah, and a Hammond B3 organ with Leslie speaker.

In the horn section, Ed Jones plays a Selmer Super Action IV tenor sax (1946) with a Berg Larsen 140/2 mouthpiece, and a Yanagisawa curved soprano sax with a Bari 8-star mouthpiece. Dominick Glover uses a Schilke X3 trumpet. Tony Cofie plays a Selmer Balanced Action alto sax (1935) with a Selmer C mouthpiece.

# Key

Excellent	★★★★★
Very Good	★★★★
Good	★★★
Fair	★★
Poor	★



## Wynton Marsalis

**IN THIS HOUSE, ON THIS MORNING**—Columbia C2K 53220: *PART I: DEVOTIONAL; CALL TO PRAYER; PROCESSIONAL; REPRESENTATIVE OFFERINGS; THE LORD'S PRAYER; PART II: HYMN; SCRIPTURE; PRAYER (INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER; IN THIS HOUSE; CHORAL RESPONSE); LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS; ALTAR CALL; ALTAR CALL (INTROSPECTION); PART III: IN THE SWEET EMBRACE OF LIFE; SERMON (FATHER; SON; HOLY GHCST); INVITATION; RECEPTIONAL; BENEDICTION; UPTEMPO POSTHUDE; POT BLESSED DINNER. (57:05/58:23)*

**Personnel:** Marsalis, trumpet; Wycliffe Gordon, trombone; Wessell Anderson, alto saxophone; Todd Williams, tenor, soprano saxophones; Eric Reed, piano; Reginald Veal, bass; Herlin Riley, drums; Marion Williams, vocal (9).

★★★★½

Marsalis' portrait of a black church service strikes one as the work of a brilliant arranger, an effective leader, and a functional-but-unmemorable melodist. If one looks here for the depth of Ellington or the emotional current of Mingus, writers who also took the gospel to heart, he is unmoved. But if he looks for kaleidoscopic instrumental combinations akin to Ellington's and the capacity to shape jazz combo performances in his own image, as Mingus did, then things swing. Such are the plusses and minuses of this two-CD, three-part suite.

The hornmen shadow every nuance in the leader's trumpet, and the rhythm section swings unselfishly. A listener could not wish for a tighter ensemble. As soloists, Gordon and Veal are the most Ellington-like, the least constrained. The trombonist scores with his rugged, plunger-muted lead on "Processional" and his growl on "Choral Response." The bassist's Jimmy Blanton-like turn on "Father" is another winner. One gets the feeling that Marsalis is too controlled in his playing, even on

"Call To Prayer," where he becomes an avant-garde muezzin (and mixes Mohammedanism with Christianity). The saxophonists are routinely dutiful—Hodges-like when required (Anderson on "Local Announcements") or Gonsalves-tinged (Williams on "Altar Call-Introspection")—and act as Marsalis' amen corner. Reed plays economically throughout, but breaks loose on "Holy Ghost" in the gospel-boogie manner of the late Richard Tee.

One question that bugs this reviewer: How long will we remember the melodic content of Marsalis' writing? Even Marion Williams' vocal on "In This House" is not especially memorable. Another troublesome issue is that Marsalis' dixieland passages sound too arranged (e.g., "Processional") when compared to Armstrong or the Condon gang.

If this were a church service, I'd be impressed with the theatrical trappings of that old-time religion, but I doubt if I'd be slain in the spirit.

—Owen Cordle  
(For a live review, see page 49.)

orchestral voicings, with the title track serving as Schneider's affectionate homage to a mentor. "Evanescence" starts from nostalgic warmth, slowly surging into Rich Perry's introspective tenor work, and culminating in Tim Hagans' evocation of Miles Davis, with muted trumpet over a minimal, pulsing backdrop. Increasingly, Gil Evans emerges as a role model for arrangers in the '90s, most notably Schneider and Bob Belden. (Their ensembles share several passages.)

Schneider alternates dynamic ensemble pieces like "Wyrgly" and "Dance You Monster To My Soft Song" with understated concerto-like arrangements framing her soloists. "My Lament" showcases Margitza's fluid tenor sax in a wistful, romantic environment, and "Gush" surrounds Tim Ries' probing soprano with a brooding setting reminiscent of Rodrigo's "Concerto de Aranjuez." Guitarist Ben Monder stretches from subtle, tasteful work on "Dance You Monster" to his over-the-top solo at the climax of "Wyrgly." —Jon Andrews



## Maria Schneider

**EVANESCENCE**—enja 8048 2: *WYRGLY; EVANESCENCE; GUMBA BLUE; SOME CIRCLES; GREEN PIECE; GUSH; MY LAMENT; DANCE YOU MONSTER TO MY SOFT SONG; LAST SEASON. (72:57)*

**Personnel:** Schneider, composer, conductor; Mark Vinci, alto saxophone, flute, alto flute, clarinet, piccolo; Tim Ries, alto and soprano saxophones, flute, clarinet; Rich Perry, tenor saxophone, flute; Rick Margitza, tenor saxophone; Scott Robinson, baritone and bass saxophones, bass clarinet, clarinet; Tony Kadleck, Greg Gisbert, Laurie Frink, Tim Hagans, trumpets, flugel-horns; John Fedchock, Keith O'Quinn, Larry Farrell, trombones; George Flynn, bass trombone, tuba; Ben Monder, guitar; Kenny Werner, piano; Jay Anderson, bass; Dennis Mackrel, drums; Emidin Rivera, Bill Hayes, percussion (6).

★★★★½

Maria Schneider has a terrific resume, having refined her composing and arranging skills as apprentice to Bob Brookmeyer, Mel Lewis, and Gil Evans. Her Jazz Orchestra sounds almost obsessively tight and polished, the product of regular engagements with Schneider conducting her compositions. Schneider's *Evanescence* is a sharp, accomplished debut with memorable writing and incisive solos, even more impressive for Schneider having produced the sessions herself, without support of a record label.

The impact of Evans' music is conspicuous through Schneider's precise and distinctive



## Roy Hargrove

**THE TENORS OF OUR TIME**—Verve 314 523 019-2: *SOPPIN' THE BISCUIT; WHEN WE WERE ONE; VALSE HOT; ONCE FORGOTTEN; SHADE OF JADE; GREENS AT THE CHICKEN SHACK; NEVER LET ME GO; SERENITY; ACROSS THE POND; WILD IS LOVE; MENTAL PHRASING; APRIL'S FOOL. (72:41)*

**Personnel:** Hargrove, trumpet, flugelhorn; Ron Blake, tenor, soprano saxophones; Cyrus Chestnut, piano; Rodney Whitaker, bass; Gregory Hutchinson, drums; special guest tenor saxophonists: Johnny Griffin (2,6), Joe Henderson (5,8), Branford Marsalis (3), Joshua Redman (9,11), Stanley Turrentine (1,10).

★★★★★

Two things can be assumed when an emerging young musician is featured with a number of seasoned professionals: either it's a gimmick to buffet a fledgling career, or it's a gambit to showcase considerable potential. When the trumpeter is Roy Hargrove and the guests are tenor saxists Johnny Griffin, Joe Henderson, Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman and Stanley Turrentine, the latter is the only choice.

And the gambit opens with a luscious rendition of Hargrove's "Soppin' The Biscuit," with Turrentine laying on a thick helping of melody as sweet as molasses. Later, on "Wild Is Love," Turrentine's characteristically robust and muscular tone softens, and his blend with Hargrove's flugelhorn settles gently into a most relaxing samba. "When We Were One" is a Griffin composition in search of a lyric, and Hargrove does his best to suggest a line or two

in his lovely statement of the theme, to which Griffin attaches the bridge. Griffin's mood here is subdued, deliberate with none of his trademark ebullience or declarative honks that surface on "Greens At The Chicken Shack." And notice how Hutchinson keeps the temperature under control on this sizzling pot.

Some years ago Clifford Brown and Sonny Rollins recorded a version of "Valse Hot." Hargrove and Marsalis offer almost a carbon copy of the arrangement, albeit with their own solos. It takes Marsalis a chorus or two before applying what has become his customary inventiveness. While effortlessly negotiating the harmonic contours of the tune, he establishes a pleasant niche for Blake's excursion. Blake is far more expressive on the beautiful "Never Let Me Go," as is bassist Whitaker, who knows how to maximize the minimal.

Shifting tempos is Henderson's forte, and this is apparent on "Shade Of Jade." After a tasteful fragment of "Siboney," Henderson leaps into the solo with his usual gusto and virtuoso, his bell-like notes abetting a facility that has earned him continuing praise. On "Serenity" there is more of the same, but here the emphasis is on the ensemble, though Hargrove's nimble solo, particularly his muted homage to Miles, and Chestnut's orchestral creation stand out.

Of Redman's two appearances, "Across The Pond" leaves the strongest impression. His solo evokes those fleeting images he must have gotten looking from a train window at the picturesque landscapes of Europe. In contrast to the hurtling train, the music is slow and languid, as if to halt the mad dash from one station to the other. Redman's sound is husky but tranquil, reflective without being maudlin.

It is always a treat to get just one major guest artist on a recording date—to snag five is miraculous. And for each a star. —Herb Boyd



## Jimi Hendrix

**BLUES**—MCA 11060: *HEAR MY TRAIN A COMIN'* (ACOUSTIC); *BORN UNDER A BAD SIGN*; *RED HOUSE*; *CATFISH BLUES*; *VOODOO CHILE BLUES*; *MANNISH BOY*; *ONCE I HAD A WOMAN*; *BLEEDING HEART*; *JELLY 292*; *ELECTRIC CHURCH RED HOUSE*; *HEAR MY TRAIN A COMIN'* (ELECTRIC). (72:31)

**Personnel:** Hendrix, guitar, vocals; Buddy Miles, drums; Billy Cox, bass; Mitch Mitchell, drums (5); Jack Cassidy, bass (5); Steve Winwood, organ (5).

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

When you get past the psychedelic mystique and showtime antics, the flamboyant clothes and enigmatic lyrics, Jimi Hendrix was at his

core a magnificent, honest bluesman. That point is driven home in this posthumous release, produced under the supervision of Alan Douglas and packaged as a tribute to blues guitar legends of yesteryear.

In his extensive, insightful liner notes, Michael Fairchild draws the connections between Jimi and a list of his blues heroes, from Son House and Robert Johnson to Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker, and, inevitably, to Albert King and Buddy Guy. Hendrix draws liberally from this wellspring of influences here while

adding something new to the blues vocabulary—the sheer power, distortion, and sustain that 200-watt Marshall amps gave him, plus the uncanny vocal quality he acquired on the wah-wah pedal. Several players, including Earl King and Earl Hooker, have tried spicing up their blues with wah-wah effects, but few have ever reached the expressive levels that Hendrix attains, perhaps best exemplified here on "Catfish Blues," a stinging rendition of Albert King's hit "Born Under A Bad Sign," and the playful shuffle "Jelly 292."

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Jimi puts his own stamp on a Muddy Waters classic with a grooving, funky version of "Man-nish Boy." And he digs deeply into an ex-cruciatingly slow blues bag on "Once I Had A Woman," building to a frenzied peak with distortion-laced licks that transcend the 12-bar tradition and boldly go where no one had gone before on the instrument.

With the exception of the electric version of "Hear My Train A Comin'," all of these tracks are recorded under casual conditions in the studio. The sound quality is excellent and Jimi's sense of sly humor comes across in his vocal phrasing and intuitive guitar accompaniment. And, of course, the solos are absolutely killin'. A must for blues fans and Hendrix aficionados.

—Bill Milkowski



### Chick Corea

**EXPRESSIONS**—GRP GRD-9774: *LUSH LIFE; THIS NEARLY WAS MINE; IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU; MY SHIP; I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TIME IT WAS; MONK'S MOOD; OBLIVION; PANNONICA; SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME; ARMANDO'S RHUMBA; BLUES FOR ART; STELLA BY STARLIGHT; I WANT TO BE HAPPY; SMILE.* (61:01)

Personnel: Corea, piano

★★★★

To stand alone without the aid and comfort of other musicians is the ultimate test for any artist. With nowhere to hide, Corea takes this test, and while he may not pass with flying colors, some of the colors he evokes are dazzlingly brilliant.

Among the most rewarding are the deep blues, all precious tributes to Thelonious Monk, Bud Powell, and Art Tatum. While he keeps "Monk's Mood" within its haunting milieu, he extends the dramatic lines, allowing himself room to develop several poignant motifs. Less ornate, but no less scintillating is his treatment of "Pannonica." Corea clearly understands the composition's melodic possibilities as well as the seemingly endless harmonic permutations. All these elements are neatly fused with additional speed and precision on Powell's rarely heard "Oblivion."

On "Blues For Art," Corea displays a deft, rolling ostinato; however, instead of Tatum's florid embellishments, the style conjures Meade Lux Lewis or Albert Ammons, which ain't half bad. Corea celebrates several other noted pianists while working his way through a list of well-known standards, some of them of questionable jazz pedigree such as Bela Bartok and Glenn Gould. Gould is brought to mind during a circuitous approach to "Stella By Starlight." Corea seems to probe "Lush Life"

with its composer, Billy Strayhorn, looking over his shoulder. There is even Strayhorn's way of suddenly breaking established patterns of rhythm, seeking new ways to state some time-worn clichés. If Kurt Weill is not summoned on "My Ship," Corea insinuates the lyricist, Ira Gershwin, with his calm, placid touch invoking sails of silk and sapphire skies.

But the album's *piece de resistance* occurs when Corea plays Corea, especially his lively romp on "Armando's Rhumba." Unlike the simple, uncomplicated handling of "Smile," the treatment here is festive and lavish, reminiscent of the assertiveness and flurry of incandescent chords that typified such rich plateaus as his "Tones For Joan's Bones." —Herb Boyd



### Bill Frisell

**THIS LAND**—Elektra Nonesuch 9 79316-2: *IS IT SWEET?; STRANGE MEETING; JIMMY CARTER (PART 1); JIMMY CARTER (PART 2); THIS LAND; DOG EAT DOG; AMARILLO BARBADOS; MONICA JANE; RESISTOR; JULIUS HEMPHILL; UNSCIENTIFIC AMERICANS; CARTOON; RAG; TAG.* (65:58)

Personnel: Frisell, electric guitar; Don Byron, clarinet, bass clarinet; Billy Drewes, alto saxophone; Curtis Fowlkes, trombone; Kermit Driscoll, electric, acoustic basses; Joey Baron, drums.

★★★★

Wending and rollicking through a landscape of dust bowls and sunny Main Streets, of calliopes and oompah bands in the park, *This Land* is an album of American music. Still, Frisell's vision is a modern, inclusive one: as he blends electric guitar and clarinet, so he conjures Charles Ives and Muddy Waters, John Philip Sousa, and Henry Threadgill.

Frisell's songs sometimes evoke familiar forms—a rag, the blues, a dirge, a cartoon ditty—but he always steps toward surprise, orchestrating a striking alto-trombone-and-bass-clarinet backdrop as on "Is It Sweet?"; shifting tense from past to present with a burning solo on the same song; effortlessly gliding the delightful "Rag" into waltz time; or slowly building the dirge-like "Julius Hemphill" to unleash high, close horns that ache with the tension of the blues.

It's a broad musical spectrum, and the band covers it artfully. Byron's improvisations fuse tradition and innovation. Drewes's alto is edgy-sweet, and Fowlkes speaks in growls, shakes, and falsetto tongues. Meanwhile, Baron titters and rattles, then joins Driscoll to nail a groove. And then there's Frisell—plaintively sweet, rough, and brittle, or steeped in the blues, but always compelling the band with a robust spirit.

—Suzanne McElfresh



### Milt Jackson

**THE PROPHET SPEAKS**—Qwest/Reprise 9 45591-2: *THE PROPHET SPEAKS; IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD; FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING; YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL; OFF MINOR; COME TO ME; WONDER WHY; REV-VITALIZATION; AH, SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE; SERIOUS GREASE; MY ROMANCE. BLUE MONK.* (73:33)

Personnel: Jackson, vibes; Cedar Walton, piano; John Clayton, bass; Billy Higgins, drums; Joshua Redman, tenor saxophone (1,3-5,8,12); Joe Williams, vocals (3,4,12).

★★★★ 1/2

### Modern Jazz Quartet

**A CELEBRATION**—Atlantic B2538-2: *BAGS' GROOVE; ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE; CHEROKEE (INDIAN LOVE SONG); INDIANA; COME RAIN OR COME SHINE; WILLOW; WEEP FOR ME; MEMORIES OF YOU; BLUES FOR JUANITA; THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU; EASY LIVING; DJANGO; DARN THAT DREAM; BILLIE'S BOUNCE.* (71:23)

Personnel: Milt Jackson, vibes; John Lewis, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay (3,5,6,8,10,12), Mickey Roker (1,2,4,7,9,11,13), drums; Phil Woods, alto saxophone (2,11); Illinois Jacquet (4,7), Jimmy Heath (8), Nino Tempo (12), tenor saxophone; Branford Marsalis, soprano (5), tenor saxophone (10); Wynton Marsalis (3,6), Harry "Sweets" Edison (4,7), trumpet; Freddie Hubbard, flugelhorn (9); Bobby McFerrin (1,13), Take 6 (1), vocals.

★★★★

New settings and fresh company stimulate Milt Jackson. On *The Prophet Speaks*, he is wound up, as we say. He lunges into almost every solo, playing with a giddy enthusiasm. All his familiar trademarks are present: a pervasive bluesiness, dappled melodic lines, ringing one-note passages, the flowing sweep of forward motion, the slow vibrato, the tone and touch that no other vibist has achieved. But they tumble out with an electricity that's missing on the good-but-constrained *Celebration*.

Jackson's company is magnificent on *Prophet*. Williams has the timbre, authority, diction, and sense of timing to wipe out any other jazz singer. And he uses them in three different and comprehensive ways: as a traditional blues shouter on his "Five O'Clock In The Morning," as a gentle giant balladeer on "You Are So Beautiful," and as the king of instrument-like scat on "Blue Monk." Redman, five decades younger than Williams, puts you in the mood of wonderful, furry tenor men such as Illinois Jacquet, Ike Quebec, Red Holloway, and even, at times, Scott Hamilton. You keep going back to his solo on "Five O'Clock," with its Clark Terry-like one-man call & response and gargantuan gliss. The rhythm section of

Walton, Clayton, and Higgins is, of course, fatter than Jackson's MJQ mates, and a tune such as Nicholas Brodsky and Sammy Cahn's "Wonder Why" shows how this new quartet can swing.

*Celebration* finds the venerable MJQ sharing its 40th anniversary with various guests, who largely conform to the group's refined ways. Lewis' "Django" catches Jackson in a more robust mood than the other cuts and illustrates how consummately Woods constructs a solo. In fact, all the saxophonists—Woods, Branford, Jacquet, Heath, Tempo—respond warmly to the MJQ's economy and restraint. The older Marsalis' soprano tone is particularly pleasing on "Come Rain Or Come Shine." Trumpeters Marsalis, Edison, and Hubbard have thoughtful turns, although "Sweets" isn't in the best of chops. McFerrin is typically playful and Take 6 is sleek and lush with the group. —Owen Cardle



## Mario Pavone

**SONG FOR (SEPTET)**—New World/Counter-Currents 80452-2: *GEORGE ON AVENUE A*; *3 M BLUES*; *DANCE OFF*; *CHAPULINES*; *SONG FOR M*; *CIRO (FOR NICK)*; *THE DOOR*; *B COUNT*. (50:24)

**Personnel:** Pavone, bass; Marty Ehrlich, alto saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet; Thomas Chapin, alto saxophone, flute; Peter McEachern, trombone; Bill Ware, vibraphone; Peter Madsen, piano; Steve Johns, drums.

★★★★★

## Anthony Braxton/ Mario Pavone

**NINE DUETS (1993)**—Music & Arts 786: *THE CALL*; *COMPOSITION No. 29*; *COMPOSITION No. 6(0)*; *I REMEMBER YOU*; *COMPOSITION No. 87*; *DOUBLE*; *COMPOSITION No. 65*; *COMPOSITION No. 135*; *STALEMATES*. (64:26)

**Personnel:** Braxton, alto and soprano saxophones, flute, clarinet, contrabass clarinet; Pavone, bass.

★★★ 1/2

Mario Pavone keeps you on your toes. *Song For (Septet)* hooks the listener with infectious melodies and unorthodox rhythms before turning to stylistic change-ups, unexpected twists, and intriguing harmonies. Each piece is loaded with details and surprises. Despite Pavone's out-jazz associations with Paul Bley, Bill Dixon, and the Thomas Chapin Trio, the bassist's follow-up to *Toulon Days* (1992) shouldn't scare anyone away. His smart, user-friendly compositions reward repeated listening. Fast-paced tunes like "Dance Off" and "George On Avenue A" challenge without sounding abstract or

inaccessible. Pavone expertly manipulates the tension between structure and freedom (favoring structure), and always maintains a strong sense of forward motion. Like Charles Mingus, an important influence, Pavone uses his bass to articulate and define his themes.

Despite having Chapin and Marty Ehrlich on hand, Pavone uses horns primarily to create unusual harmonies, and to accent his soloists. "3 M Blues," for example, utilizes a front line of muted trombone, flute, and alto saxophone. Most of the solo space goes to pianist Peter

Madsen and vibraphonist Bill Ware, both strong, lyrical players. Pavone's stop-start rhythms, combined with his use of vibes and flute faintly echo Eric Dolphy's *Out To Lunch*.

Pavone's encounter with Anthony Braxton shifts the focus back to the bassist's skills as a player, particularly when coping with Braxton's compositions. Braxton creates tonal variety throughout *Nine Duets* by deploying his full array of instruments. He reserves the alto saxophone for Pavone's compositions and more traditional materials. Pavone shapes and

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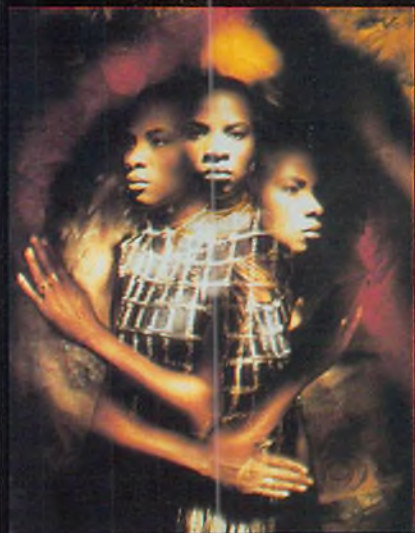
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## CD REVIEWS

directs "The Call," with Braxton's breathy, stuttering alto following the bassist's lead. Braxton sounds lyrical and playful on "I Remember You," much improved over a conservative 1985 version. The most structured tracks are, not coincidentally, the most successful ones. Braxton's "Composition No. 29" is nearly static, with Braxton sputtering and growling on contrabass clarinet, relying on Pavone's bass to push the piece forward. Ultimately, enjoyment of the set depends on the listener's patience with Braxton's choices at the upper and lower extremes of the sonic range.

—Jon Andrews



### Bob Moses

**TIME STOOD STILL**—Gramavision R2 79493:  
*PRELUDE; FELONIOUS THUNK; TIME STOOD STILL; JACO; GREGARIOUS CHANTS; ELEGANT BLUE GHOSTS; LOST IN YOUR EYES; WORD FROM THE RA; MBIRA TANZANIA; BLACK EAST BLUES; DEUSA DO AMOUR; ONCE IN A BLUE MOON; PRAYER.* (60:24)

**Personnel:** Moses, drums, talking drum, keyboard, mbira, voice; Rob Scheps, tenor and soprano saxes, flute; Miles Evans, trumpet; Brian Carrot, vibes; Matthew Garrison, Wesley Wirth, Yossi Fine, bass; Bill Martin, Ben Wittman, percussion; Duke Levine, guitar; Jamshied Sharifi, keyboards; Jimmy Slyde, tap (6); Rafael Moses, rap, alto sax (8); Bob Gay, alto sax solo (6,12); Ole Mathisen, soprano sax solo (7); Luciana Souza, voice (7,9,11); Evan Ziporyn, bass clarinet (7,12); Stan Strickland, tenor sax, voice (3,13); plus the Boston Illharmonic.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Leave it to Moses, a multi-directional shamanistic groovulator, to pull all the pieces together. On *Time Stood Still*, another sprawling production of De Mille-ian scale, he seamlessly blends Monk, funk, rap, tap, hip-hop, bebop, big band, blues, Bahia, Tanzania, and the avant garde into one organic package while paying homage to the spirits of Gil Evans, Charles Mingus, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and Jaco Pastorius.

Moses and Michael Gibbs are credited with the luscious horn arrangements (performed by the 11-piece Boston Illharmonic) on the mysterious "Lost In Your Eyes," the gorgeous samba "Deusa Do Amour," and Harold Vick's haunting anthem, "Prayer." The title track, subtitled "Africa And Back In A Day," features Moses' log-drum groove against a King Sunny Adé-meets-Jon Hassell backdrop. And just as the piece lulls you into a mesmerized state of 12/8 tranquility, it explodes into a playful Brazilian percussion jam. Moses likes to throw the listener curves like that.

Check the cleverly placed "Epistrophe" excerpt on his rap number, "Felonious Thunk." And feel the spirit of the late bassist on "Jaco," a

brooding, lyrical tribute to Moses' friend and musical companion. Tap dancer Jimmy Slyde puts in an appearance on the hip-hop-flavored "Elegant Blue Ghosts," which ties a '90s street esthetic to an old vaudevillian tradition. Few besides the endlessly imaginative Moses could pull that off.

—Bill Milkowski



### Igor Butman

**FALLING OUT**—Impromptu 1031: *STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL SIBERIA; SAMBA DE IGOR; IT COULD BE COOL; SIBERIAN MONK; PEACE; LETTER FROM PAT; FALLING OUT; KLMFK ON THE FLY; POLUSHKO POLYE; MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE.* (65:36)

**Personnel:** Butman, tenor, soprano saxophones; Lyle Mays, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

### Vlad West

**SAY HELLO TO RUSSIA**—ALVE Publishing and Recording Co.: *FAR AWAY; BLACK SNOW; ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE; GIANT STEPS; ALONE WITH YOU; GEE; SAY HELLO TO RUSSIA; STELLA BY STARLIGHT; PROTECTION.* (46:22)

**Personnel:** West, tenor, soprano saxophones; Harold Danko, piano, synthesizer; Jay Anderson, bass; Adam Nussbaum, drums.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

The Russians are coming: diplomacy by saxophone.

Butman, the more Westernized, flexes a full shapely tone and motific ideas. His "KLMFK On The Fly" is a full-tilt jazz joyride; 180 degrees away, "Polushko Polye" visits a primal folk source and primal melancholy. This juxtaposition of liberation and longing shapes the improviser. Compositionally, it comes into play with his "Letter From Pat" (Metheny?). "read" on soprano, and "Samba De Igor," on tenor, his main horn. Two standards, "My One And Only Love" and Horace Silver's "Peace," show that the Russian can invest American song with warmth and convincing expression. His tenor models are vaguely evident, at best: perhaps Ernie Watts and Mike Brecker. The rhythm section is a polished one. Mays with a springy rebound of chordal and linear ideas, Gomez with a song of smooth steps, and Smith finding elbow room aplenty.

West (nee Sermakashev), who inspired the movie *Moscow On The Hudson*, seems less refined, an uninhibited sort whose lines jostle each other and whose tone often becomes a claustrophobic whine. In this, he resembles Von Freeman with a touch of Harold Land. But this malleability of tone and line are part of the attraction, as is his determined drive. As a composer, he demonstrates an affinity for the



classic Coltrane quartet on "Far Away" and "Black Snow." There's Trane in his solo on "Giant Steps," naturally, but more Freeman and Land in "All The Things You Are" and "Stella," the only other non-West tunes here. The rhythm section is a bit looser—appropriately so—than Butman's trio. Danko displays an admirable range, exemplified by a certain dreaminess on "Alone" and full rhythmic blows on "Gee." Anderson and Nussbaum are a Haden and DeJohnette pair: strong anchor, splashy wave.

For the saxmen and company, three-and-a-half leaning toward four stars —*Owen Cordle*



### Connie Crothers/ Lenny Popkin

**JAZZ SPRING**—New Artists 1017: *SWINGSHINE; NEW MOOD; BEYOND A DREAM; STUDIO MEMORY; SOUL SAYER; ORIGIN; JUST YOU; THEATRE PIECE; JAZZ SPRING; TIME STEP. (67:09)*

**Personnel:** Crothers, piano; Popkin, tenor sax; Carol Tristano, drums; Cameron Brown, bass.

★★★

### Max Roach/ Connie Crothers

**SWISH**—New Artists 1001: *SYMBOLS; LET 'EM ROLL; SWISH; CREEPIN' IN; BALLAD NO. 1; TRADING. (43:06)*

**Personnel:** Roach, drums; Crothers, piano.

★★★

The influence of Lennie Tristano's teachings survives into the '90s, with the Connie Crothers/Lenny Popkin Quartet a principal exponent. *Jazz Spring* melds contrasting approaches, with mixed results. Crothers can be a forceful, percussive pianist, prone to dark, minor chords delivered with a stabbing attack. Popkin favors the tenor saxophone's upper register, and plays smoothly in a style somewhat suggestive of Lee Konitz. As an accompanist, Crothers maintains tension, but sounds stern and hard-edged, almost at odds with the group's bright, upbeat approach. As a soloist, Crothers adopts a more expansive, introspective persona. On the CD's best tracks, "Jazz Spring" and "Beyond A Dream," she exhibits a lighter touch, unraveling elaborate melodic lines. In this mode, she interacts effectively with Popkin's tenor.

Crothers and Popkin's compositions are mostly vehicles for playing, with "Soul Sayer" a meandering variation on "Body And Soul." The sound mix accentuates the high end, giving

short shrift to the rhythm section of Cameron Brown and Carol Tristano, and reinforcing Crothers' tendency to overwhelm her colleagues. It's good to hear Brown again on bass—he's kept too low a profile since the breakup of the Don Pullen/George Adams Quartet, where he was so effective.

*Swish* reissues Crothers' 1982 duets with Max Roach, who is definitely *not* a student of the Tristano school of passive drumming. The relative freedom of the duet setting fits the

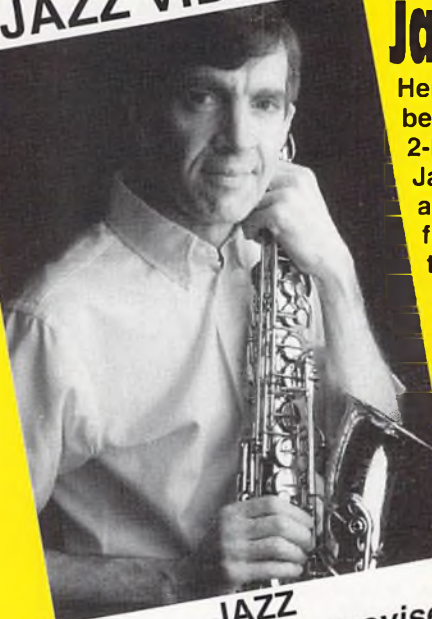
tension and energy of Crothers' uninhibited playing much better. Roach is always fascinating in a duet, where he expands his role, occupying the open spaces in unexpected, always musical ways. Here, he focuses on different elements of the drum kit with each piece to give the largely improvised performances their distinctive character. The ways in which Roach reacts to and provokes Crothers are reminiscent of Roach's *Historic Concerts* (1979) duets with Cecil Taylor. —*Jon Andrews*

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**Bill Watrous**

**A TIME FOR LOVE**—GNP/Crescendo GNPD 2222: *LOW LIFE; THE SHADOW OF YOUR SMILE; A TIME FOR LOVE; CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE; EMILY; WHERE DO YOU START; THE SHINING SEA; ZOOT; NOT REALLY THE BLUES.* (50:28)

**Personnel:** Watrous, Doug Inman, Bob McChesney, Rich Bullock, trombone; Dennis Farias, Wayne Bergeron, Ron Stout, trumpet; Sal Lozano, Phil Feather, Bill Liston, Bruce Eskovitz, Bob Carr, saxes; Shelly Berg, piano; Lou Fischer, Dave Carpenter, bass; Randy Drake, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

The rating is for Watrous' lovely, fluid, high-register trombone. The rest of this tribute to Johnny Mandel doesn't quite achieve the same status, although it's beautiful enough, in a "mood music" sort of way. The recording makes

the drums sound like oatmeal boxes. The charts, by Berg or Basie-arranger Sammy Nestico, are solid, functional backdrops for this trombone recital. —Owen Cordle



**Gonzalo Rubalcaba**

**RAPSODIA**—Blue Note 7243 8 28264 2 2: *CONTAGIO; CIRCUITO II; TRIBUTO; SANTO CANTO (HOLY CHANT); MOOSE THE MOOCHE; CHANCELERA; RAPSODIA CUBANA.* (54:40)

**Personnel:** Rubalcaba, piano, electronic keyboards; Felipe Cabrera, electric bass; Julio Barreto, drums; Reynaldo Melian, trumpet; Mario Garcia, computer programming.

★ ★ ★

On his fifth Blue Note outing, the well-regarded pianist celebrates his Cuban *montono* and *danzon* lifeblood from the vantage point of electronics, as he had back in 1985 on a Cuban-only album titled *La Nueva Cubana*. Rubalcaba draws colors from his synthesizers as a kindred spirit of Zawinul, forming layers of artificial suspense or delicacy. Thankfully, his marvelous piano is often present to rain down torrential eloquence or shower affecting lyricism on an uneven program that has a half-dozen originals surrounding a vigorous electro-acoustic shake-up of Bird's "Moose The Mooche." His Havanan band, Grupo Projecto, is hot picante at lickety-split tempos.

—Frank John Hadley



**Tito Puente**

**IN SESSION**—TropiJazz/RMM 81208: *TEACH ME TONIGHT; FLIGHT TO JORDAN; IN A HEARTBEAT; UN POCO MAS; THUNDERBIRD; MIAMI GIRL; OBSESION; TIGIMO + 2; TRITONE; MOODY'S MOOD FOR LOVE.* (60:24)

**Personnel:** Puente, timbales; Mongo Santamaria, congas; Dave Valentin, flute; Mario Rivera, tenor, soprano saxes; Hilton Ruiz, piano; Giovanni Hidalgo, congas, bongos, shekere; Charlie Sepulveda, trumpet; Ignacio Berroa, drums; Ardy Gonzalez, bass; James Moody, vocal (10).

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

**MASTER TIMBALERO**—Concord Picante 4594: *OLD ARRIVAL; ENCHANTMENT; SAKURA SAKURA; AZU KI KI; ESPRESSO POR FAVOR; NOSTALGIA IN TIMES SQUARE; CHOW MEIN; CREME DE MENTHE; SUN GODDESS; VAYA PUENTE; MASTER TIMBALERO; BLOOMIDIC.* (57:11)

**Personnel:** Puente, timbales, timbalito, vibes, marimba, percussion; Johnny Rodriguez, Jose "Papo" Rodriguez, bongos, percussion; Jose Madera, congas, percussion; Ray Vega, Ite Jerez, trumpet, flugelhorn; Mario Rivera, piccolo, flute, soprano and tenor saxes; Bobby Porcelli, soprano, alto, and baritone saxes; Michael James Turre, baritone sax; Sam Burtis, Jeff Cressman, trombone; Sonny Bravo, piano; Bobby Rodriguez, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★

Like the Energizer bunny, Puente keeps going and going, performing and recording at a pace that belies his 71 years. The onetime Mambo King is now the reigning monarch of Latin jazz, commanding not one but two top-flight ensembles: the Golden Latin Jazz All Stars, composed mainly of other band leaders, and the Latin Jazz All Stars, his regular touring group. The former smokes on *In Session*, a loosely arranged set of standards fueled by strong solo work and magnificent percussion, while

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"I never went to music school. Most of what I learned came from Bill Fowler's pages. I used to wait for every issue." Hans Zimmer

the latter cooks on *Master Timbalero*, a tightly charted trip through a tasty range of material that emphasizes collective over individual prowess.

Less star-studded than on their previous album, the Golden gang compensates with the nonpareil percussion team of Santamaria, Hidalgo, and Puente. Dave Valentin, Mario Rivera, and Charlie Sepulveda create remarkably full sonorities on mellow arrangements by Hilton Ruiz and Marty Sheller, but their driving improvisations, buoyed by the drums' precise crackle, carry most of the momentum. Time stands still on amazing conga breaks by Santamaria (on "In A Heartbeat") and Hidalgo (on "Miami Girl"), and when all three percussionists jam over Andy Gonzalez' bass on "Tigimo + 2," the effect is mind-boggling, as Puente flaunts his rock-solid chops without a trace of superfluous flash.

The non-Golden guys get less room to stretch, partly because there are more of them, but they solo with crisp authority, especially the underrated Rivera, the only other member of both groups. Here, though, the accent is on teamwork, with a gleamingly polished repertoire that runs from mambos to bebop to a Japanese folk tune. Compositions by Horace Silver, Charles Mingus, Erroll Garner, Charlie Parker, Gil Lopez, Hilton Ruiz, and Puente himself are all stamped with Tito's stylistic signature, still contemporary-sounding after

nearly 50 years. The title track is the only timbal workout on the album, which might more accurately have been titled *Master Musician*.

—Larry Birnbaum



## Mike Stern

**IS WHAT IT IS**—Atlantic 82571-2: *SWUNK*; *A LITTLE LUCK*; *WHAT I MEANT TO SAY*; *SHOWBIZ*; *BELIEVE IT*; *WHEREVER YOU ARE*; *HA HA HOTEL*; *SIGNS*; *55 DIVE*. (56:40)

**Personnel:** Stern, guitar; Jim Beard, keyboards; Will Lee, bass; Harvie Swartz, acoustic bass (6); Dennis Chambers (1-5), Ben Perowsky (6-9), drums; Michael Brecker (1,2,5), Bob Malach (7-9), tenor sax.

★ ★ ★ ★

After flirting with finesse on last year's excellent

*Standards (And Other Songs)*, Stern has returned to the fusion fray with a vengeance on *Is What It Is*. His guitar is set on stun for the funky shuffle-swing opener, "Swunk," which is cast in Stern's familiar "Upside Downside" bag. It's a groove he likes to play on and he positively kills here, recalling some of the rock-flavored intensity he generated on his last Brecker Brothers tour.

The guitarist exercises tasteful restraint on the bittersweet ballad "What I Meant To Say" and something of a Metheny-esque heartland quality on the anthemic "A Little Luck," which features some lyrical tenor work by Brecker. But he's at his most authoritative burning his way through angular, funk-fusion heads like "Showbiz," the driving "Ha Ha Hotel," and "55 Dive," where the fuzzbox is always close at foot for those screaming Roy Buchanan-meets-Nicholas Slonimsky solos.

On the somber ballad "Wherever You Are," Stern momentarily puts his distortion licks on the shelf in favor of some simple, understated acoustic guitar work. Ben Perowsky's sensitive brushwork and Harvie Swartz's basslines set a luxurious tone here while producer Jim Beard orchestrates a lush string section on his synths. Will Lee helps make the pocket feel good in an almost subliminal way throughout, whether he's hooking up with Chambers or Perowsky. His ostinatos on "Signs," for example, are simple but particularly effective. —Bill Milkowski

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## Better Halves

by Josef Woodard

**T**he liberation of attitude is by no means complete. Equal time is hardly at hand. But, whereas once female jazz musicians fought a hard and often vain battle to gain attention in the male-dominated market, albums by women leaders—on various instruments, in various stylistic directions—can be found in increasing numbers. This selected sampling of recent jazz releases by women leaders who are relatively new on the scene is, by no means, a comprehensive compendium—which is a good sign, to be sure.

Be not misled by the ironic title: drummer/composer **Carola Grey's** *Noisy Mama* (Jazzline 1130; 58:46; ★★★½) is noise with a cause, and an appealing sense of restraint. The young German-born drummer keeps a solid pulse and, as a composer, shows a good flair for post-hard-bop and Latin-flavored quintet writing. When Grey does deign to play a solo, as on the introduction to "Bedsidestory," tasteful phrasemaking is the order of the day, rather than bashing. In the band, pianist Mike Cain contributes considerable potency, and the



Marlene Rosenberg: a big, friendly sound

front-line horns of trumpeter Ralph Alessi and tenor saxist Craig Handy support the integrity of the collective whole rather than setting off on their own. An auspicious maiden voyage.

Without a doubt, vocalist **Gabrielle Goodman** has polished pipes and a bold delivery, but on *Travelin' Light* (JMT 314 514 006; 51:12; ★★★), what she fails to do is travel lightly. Actually, what sets this album apart is the company she keeps, sometimes serving to show her up in terms of subtlety rendered. On

the rolling Latin pulse of "Cherokee," for instance, star soloist Gary Thomas puts his tenor sax through some measured but intense paces, while Goodman goes for easy crowd-pleasing high-register gusto. On a cool reading of "Over The Rainbow," Kevin Eubanks lays down some tender guitar lines for a vocal that, while assured, gets lost in soulful abandon and overkill. On this set of standards and Latin-esque originals, Goodman impresses the most when she's not going over the top.

With *I'll Be Back* (Red Baron 57330; 49:58; ★★★), flutist **Ali Ryerson** follows up her debut of last year with a stronger and more focused effort. Ever-impeccable pianist Kenny Barron and bassist Cecil McBee give Ryerson a sure-and-steady support system. Drummer Danny Gottlieb brings a rhythmically different dynamic to the session, what with his hints of Latin and rock energies. Ryerson bodes well in the reflective mood-mode of Horace Silver's "Peace" and the sultry trajectory of her original bossa tune, "Nobody Knows." While not distinguished by any particular sense of daring, the album is a fine-enough showcase for a musician showing promise.

From the muted opening strains of "My Funny Valentine" to the haunting, gorgeous

1



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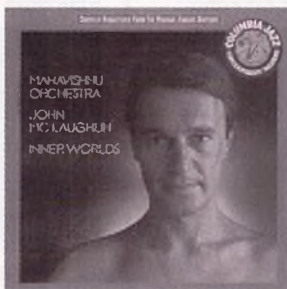


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6



**George Benson "It's Uptown With The George Benson Quartet"** CK 52976  
This 1966 album shows why Benson was considered the most exciting new guitarist on the jazz scene.

take on "My One And Only Love," a breeze of warm sophistication and accomplished pianism comes through on the **Lynne Arriale** Trio's *The Eyes Have It* (DMP 502; 62:21; ★★★★★). All is not soft and dreamy: "Witchcraft" becomes an adventure in accelerando and rubbery tempo. Bassist Jay Anderson and drummer Steve Davis are there as both rhythmic glue and improvisers, helping the leader breathe new life into standard turf and such originals as Arriale's soothing, soothed title cut. Arriale's Bill Evans-ish approach to the piano is all about taking time, going with a cool energy flow, and sacrificing neither expressive passion nor intelligent interpretation.

Chicago-based bassist **Marlene Rosenberg** has played with a host of notable jazz names—Joe Henderson, Ed Thigpen, and Frank Morgan among them—as well as navigating in other, diverse musical waters. Versatility proves to be a shining virtue on her *Waimca* (Lake Shore Jazz 004; 49:59; ★★★★★½), presenting Rosenberg as composer-of-note and nimble, musical conversationalist. She produces a big, friendly sound, but is also a thoughtful player, comfortable with the middle space between locking in and stretching out. Drummer Mark Walker is flexible in ap-

proach, and pianist/arranger Dennis Luxion offers the occasional sonic seasoning to the mostly guitar-trio format. At the melodic center, guitarist David Onderdonk displays a tasteful range of expressions just to the left of the mainstream. He leans toward vocal-like, cerebral phraseology, as on the title cut, a dark beauty in wistful waltz time.

Midwestern vocalist **Jackie Allen** makes a good impression on her debut outing, *Never Let Me Go* (Lake Shore Jazz 005; 55:26; ★★★★★½), not by showboating but by exercising the fine art of understatement. She sails easily over a swung version of "I Didn't Know What Time It Was," a model of lustrous tone and clear-headed energy, then eloquently waxes blue on the title tune. Rhythm-section support by pianist Willie Pickens, bassist Larry Gray, and drummer Robert Shy is reliable and perhaps too straight-down-the-middle, but no matter: the real focus is Allen's voice, delivered compellingly and with restraint in her pocket.

Another strong Chicago-based vocalist, **Joanie Pallatto** has a run-in with the mixed-bag syndrome on *Who Wrote This Song?* (Southport 0021; 74:33; ★★★★★). Now slick and Brazilian-inflected, now loose and swinging, now with straight inflection à la Broadway, now

with more jazz-oriented elasticity, the album follows a swerving programmatic path. After the Michael Franks-in-Brazil-esque opener, "No One Can Agree On Life," Pallatto slides into a jazz mode to tackle Betty Carter's "Tight," with a cooler head than Carter brings to the song. "Suite For Dizzy" features a four-part vocal mesh on Gillespie's "Con Alma." Guests include guitarist Fareed Haque, keyboardist Howard Levy, and, most notably, cult hero Bob Dorrough, whose drawing, vocalic hipness on "Along Comes Betty" and pensive piano on his own composition "Love Came On Stealthy Fingers" are clear highlights.

The **Cercie Miller** Quartet's *Dedication* (Stash 580; 65:53; ★★★★★) announces the re-cording debut of a saxophonist out of Boston—one of the rare horn player/leaders who happens to be a woman. On this fairly conservative swing/Latin outing, Miller starts out with an up version of "My Shining Hour" and moves through an agreeable set that also includes six original tunes, including a snaky tribute to New Orleans, "New O," with guest trumpeter Tiger Okiyoshi. If showing some of the unevenness and tentativeness of a young player, Miller is still an obviously gifted work-in-progress, and *Dedication* is a solid first effort. **DB**



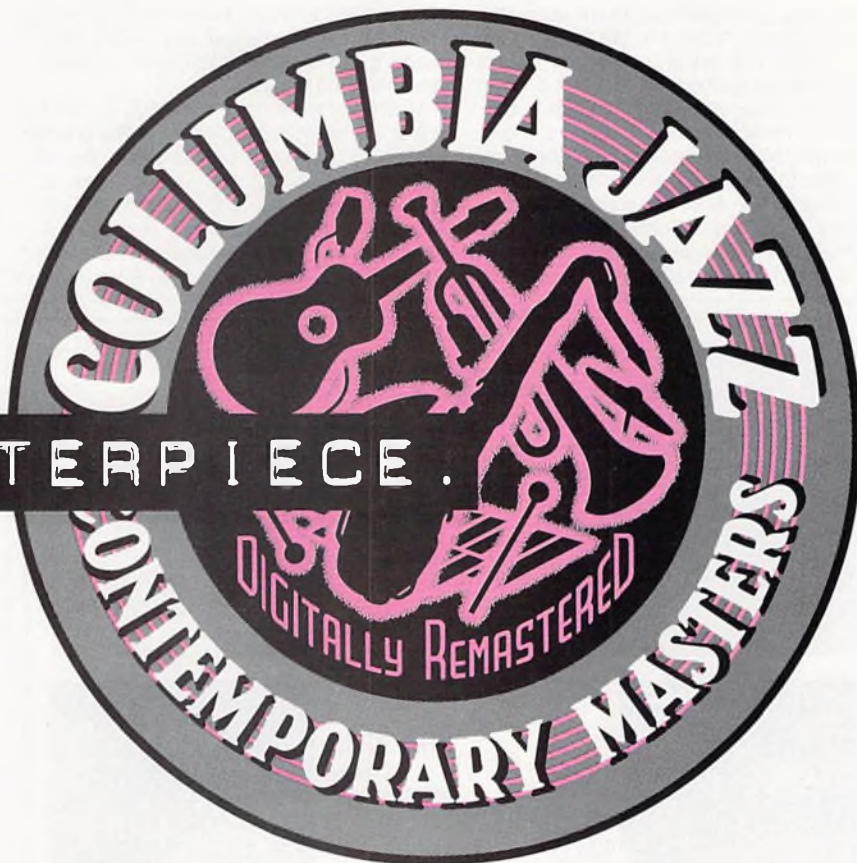
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## Some Strings Attacked

by Robin Tolleson

There's a healthy new crop in from some of our fine-fingered friends, several quite satisfying. Take **Herb Ellis' Texas Swings** (Justice 1002-2; 52:11; ★★★½), for example. The veteran jazz guitarist comes riding in on some of the most fun, laid-back, down-home western-swing vehicles, each given a slight twist by the band, featuring pianist Floyd Domino and members of Bob Wills' Texas Playboys. They put a good-ol'-boy swing on Bird's "Billie's Bounce" (mis-labeled on the CD), add some jazzy flourishes to the reverential steel guitar on "The Old Rugged Cross," while the 72-year-old Ellis adds a couple of originals. He rips sharp blues licks on "Country Boy," adds a combination of pointed lead and rhythmic flourishes to a jump "Sweet Georgia Brown" along with steel guitarist Herb Remington, and scampers happily behind guest picker Willie Nelson on "America The Beautiful." At times it's as much fun as Andy and Barney strumming on the front porch.

**Steve Masakowski's What It Was** (Blue Note 80591; 53:15; ★★★★★½) is an alarmingly good musical statement from this New Orleans guitarist. The compositions, almost all his own, have a strong, grounded feel. You never get the feeling that he's in a hurry to get through with any of them. His guitar playing is always stretching things harmonically, and his 7-string guitar gives him a larger tonal palette to play with. This is modern jazz played with a knowledge of what's gone on before, and effectively mixes electric and acoustic personnel on swing, second-line, Southern soul, and samba. The guitarist is there through it all offering up lines that take your ear somewhere unexpected. Playful comrades include bassist



Leni Stern: patience and ingenuity

James Genus, Michael Pellerera on keys, and drummer Rick Sebastian.

**Fareed Haque's Sacred Addiction** (Blue Note 89662; ★★★★★) combines pop (nice arrangements to Phil Collins' "Another Day In Paradise" and the Thom Bell classic "I'll Be Around"), jazz influences (acoustic bass throughout), and rhythms that fuse several worlds, such as the Mideastern-meets-hip-hop "Blue People." Haque is an exceptional player—his acoustic work on "Too Much To Tell" runs a wide range of emotions and styles, and "The Captain's Refrain" has a haunting beauty. This release, featuring Buzzy Feiten, Patrice Rushen, and Tom Brechtlein, among others, is intelligent and inspired.

**Mostly Standards** (Arta 0038-2; 57:52; ★★★★★½) presents Czech guitarist **Rudy Linka** with some distinguished friends in duo settings. John Abercrombie, Gil Goldstein, and Mike Formanek add their talents to Linka's acoustic and electric guitars, and there is a natural ease to the partnerships. Formanek's light touch blends well, and Abercrombie

seems to be having a great time on an "up" "My Funny Valentine." Goldstein's interplay on "Short Story," the only trio piece, has just that right pinch of disrespect. Linka is an extremely fluid player, quick-witted, and not afraid to veer off the harmonic path.

Despite having moments of forward momentum, **Chris Flory's City Life** (Concord Jazz 4589; 58:47; ★★½) is an altogether uninspiring release. The arrangements are nothing out of the ordinary, and on a heavily covered tune like "Besame Mucho," that spells trouble. The playing, likewise, though not bad or insensitive, isn't distinguished. Flory fuses a nice solo on his tune "Drafting," kicking his mates with stinging leads and chordal punctuation, but he and his band (piano, bass, and drums) seem more at home on a sophisticated, less challenging vehicle like the Lane-Lerner standard "Come Back To Me." They could all benefit from more chance-taking and tonal variety.

**Michael Musillami's Glass Art** (Evidence 22060-2; 64:21; ★★★) packs some firepower with the guitarist joined by Randy Brecker, Ray Drummond, pianist Kent Hewitt, and drummer Steve Johns, among others. The material is played proficiently, with contributions coming from all around, but there's a predictability at times that not even a fine Brecker trumpet solo or Thomas Chapin alto foray can salvage. Musillami shows talent as a composer, but needs to let the music breathe more. He plays above and below the changes with conviction and chops, but the overall sound is sometimes heavy-handed.

As for **Leni Stern's Like One** (Lipstick 89017; ★★★★★), the heavyweight lineup includes tenor man Bob Malach, Russell Ferrante on keys, bassist Alain Caron, and drummer Dennis Chambers. Stern shows patience and ingenuity soloing on the opening "Bubbles," and has become quite good at painting an original tonal picture on electric and acoustic—her style can't be easily traced. Ferrante proves to be a great choice with some thinking, breathing solos, and Chambers elevates several endings into the heavens in trademark style. "Low Blow" is some great funk with Malach all over the place. Stern's covers of "Every Breath You Take" and "Court And Spark" are disappointing only because the arrangements don't go anywhere special.

**John Scofield and Pat Metheny** conspire together on *I Can See Your House From Here* (Blue Note 27765; ★★★★★½), along with bassist Steve Swallow (who doesn't dare get in between the guitarists) and drummer Bill Stewart, whose stickwork is way ahead of his brushwork this time out. The guitar harmonies on "Everybody's Party" and "No Way Jose" are played with an effective, loose passion. It sounds like they've gone back and doubled lines in solos, too—sometimes with a sax sound, for example. Scofield is the more soulful and bluesy of the two. "Quiet Rising" almost never does, with Metheny droning on, but when "One Way To Be" kicks in, Scofield is again on the prowl, and his loose, gangly solo helps bring out a similarly good excursion from Metheny. These are undoubtedly two of the most influential jazz guitarists of the last 15 years, and yet this one is the perfect example of the whole being somewhat less than the sum of its parts.

DB

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## Acid Trips

by Larry Birnbaum

**A**cid jazz, a.k.a. hip-hop jazz, promised to breathe some fresh air into today's stifflingly retrospective scene, but as the movement develops it seems more and more to resemble the funky electric jazz of the '70s. Some of that music was unfairly dismissed by critics and deserves a second hearing, but much of it was just a crassly commercial attempt to keep up with the dance-floor trends of its time. As contemporary dance music reaches further afield for exotic textures to embellish the same leaden backbeat, jazz looms as an increasingly viable alternative. And with the success of the Digable Planets' album *Reachin'* and later Us3's single "Cantaloup," everybody wants to get in on the action.

Of a current batch of recent releases, *Groove Collective* (Reprise 2-45541; 66:27; ★★★★★) comes closest to realizing acid jazz's creative potential. *Groove Collective* is the 10-piece house band of New York's floating Giant Step club, and their tight-wound, Latin-tinged grooves reflect the experience of settling live jazz under dancers' feet. Raps by percussionist Nappy G and singing by guests Diosa Gary and Lisa Hickey add spice, but most of the album is instrumental, with atmospheric jams that feature searching post-bop solos by flutist Richard Worth, keyboardist Itaal Shur, saxophonist Jay Rodrigues, trumpeter Fabio Morgera, trombonist Josh Roseman, and vibist Bill Ware, who contributes an extraordinary workout on "Whatchugot." More typical of the current state of acid jazz is *The Jazzhole* (Mesa/BlueMoon R4/2 79194; 46:13; ★★★), the self-titled debut of a New York-based ensemble built around the core quartet of keyboardist Warren Rosenstein, vocalist Marlon Saunders, guitarist John Pondel, and multi-instrumentalist Keven DiSimone. An eclectic potpourri of rap, soul, reggae, new-jack swing, and jazz, the album lacks any coherent focus, but the group's execution is solid, and their scattershot strategy pays off on the unlikely but effective reggae-jazz fusion of "Time Of The Season."

The *Solsonics*, from Los Angeles, take a more conventional approach on *Jazz In The Present Tense* (Chrysalis/ERG 8 28104 2; 54:11; ★★½). Here, jazz takes a back seat to funk, and instrumentals are largely overshadowed by humdrum urban-contemporary songs with tritely uplifting lyrics. The highlight is a reggae version of Freddie Hubbard's "Red Clay," the album's only non-original composition. Another L.A. outfit, the *Pacific Jazz Alliance*, pursues a similarly funky course on *Cool Struttin'* (Planet Earth 50100-2; 45:54; ★★★). If anything, the jazz feeling, aside from Andre Black's Miles-ish trumpet and Daris Atkins' Benson-esque guitar, is even less pronounced, but songs like "Disappearance Of The Man" and "No Brain," drawing respectively on Marvin Gaye and Al Green, are deeper and more soulful.

England's *Incognito* comes closer to quiet storm than acid jazz on their third album, *Positivity* (Talkin Loud/Verve Forecast 314 522 036-2; 66:25; ★★½). Singer Maysa Leak has a rich, insinuating voice reminiscent of Anita Baker's, and she knows how to scat, but band-



Pacific Jazz Alliance

leader Bluey Maunick's bland, laid-back tunes are no jazzier than, say, Sade's. Japan's *United Future Organization*, by contrast, digs into jazz poetry on *United Future Organization* (Talkin Loud/Verve Forecast 314 518 166-2; 47:33; ★★½). The core group of three deejays is augmented by a shifting ensemble of musicians and vocalists, including Jon Hendricks, who sings his own bluesy ballad "I'll Bet You Thought I'd Never Find You" over a hip-hop beat. There's also French and English rap, assorted Latin and Oriental percussion, a samba, some Miles-style trumpet funk by Kimiyoshi Nagoya, and a ghostly sampled

reading by the late Jack Kerouac.

First-generation fusioners Michal Urbaniak and Lenny White have jumped on the hip-hop bandwagon with their quartet *Urbanator*, whose self-titled album (Hip Bop 7 38572 800123; 51:26; ★★½) features such guests as Herbie Hancock, Marcus Miller, Kenny Garrett, the Brecker brothers, and comeback hopeful Tom Browne. But neither the slick chops of the brand-name talent nor the labored raps of Muckhead can dispel the stale aroma of aging has-beens looking to cash in on the latest fad.

Second-generation free-jazzer *Zane Massey*, the saxophonist son of the late trumpeter Cal Massey, cut his first solo album, *Brass Knuckles*, in 1992, exploring post-Ayler landscapes with bassist Hideji Taninaka and drummer Sadiq Abdushahid. But on *Spirit Of Grand Central* (Bart 1002; 48:32; ★★★), the same musicians, plus guitarist Yoshiki Miura, take an entirely different tack, combining hackneyed standards like "Autumn Leaves" and "Blue Moon" with rap, soul, and salsa, all performed without a trace of irony in a rapturously middle-of-the-road style. Maybe the band just wants to get off New York's mean streets, where they eke out a subsistence playing for spare change, but Massey is a superb tenor player with a gorgeous tone and a felicitous sense of phrasing who deserves a much better shot than this.

DB

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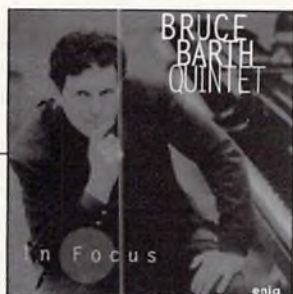
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**Bruce Barth**

**IN FOCUS**—enja 8010-2: *I Hear Music; ESCAPADE By Night; NEFER BOND; I GOT IT BAD; IN SEARCH OF . . .; PINOCCHIO; LOUISE; PERSISTENCE; WILDFLOWER; SECRET NAME.* (62:10)

**Personnel:** Barth, piano; Steve Wilson, alto, soprano saxophones; Scott Wenhold, trumpet; Robert Hurst, bass; Lewis Nash, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Pianist Barth digs deep to his true soul in the keyboard language he uses to run commen-

taries through six rich originals (alas, a few conclude arbitrarily) and four evergreens (Ellington's "I Got It Bad," Billie Holiday's "I Hear Music," Wayne Shorter's "Pinocchio" and "Wildflower"). Self-assured and full of ideas, the New York-based pianist refers to the Blue Note '60s in his swinging phrases but without ever giving in to cliché. Abetted by drummer Lewis Nash and more pick-of-the-litter young lions, Barth has made an uncommonly strong first album.

—Frank-John Hadley



**Marty Ehrlich**

**CAN YOU HEAR A MOTION?**—enja 80522: *THE BLACK HAT; THE WELCOME; PICTURES IN A GLASS HOUSE; NORTH STAR; ODE TO CHARLIE PARKER; READING THE RIVER; ONE FOR ROBIN; COMME IL FAUT.* (54:51)

**Personnel:** Ehrlich, clarinet, alto and soprano saxes; Stan Strickland, tenor sax. flute; Michael Formanek, bass; Bobby Previte, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

This is Marty Ehrlich's third quartet record for enja, all of which include longtime reed associate Strickland and drummer Previte. With two cuts dedicated to fellow clarinetist and composer John Carter ("The Black Hat" and "Reading The River"), in whose octet Ehrlich played, *Can You Hear A Motion?* signals its interest in the episodic, suite-like chamber jazz of which Carter was a specialist. Ehrlich is as wonderful a composer as he is an improviser, which is saying something. Sensitive to coloristic possibilities and the strengths of his comrades, he revels in unison reed lines, striking tempo shifts, and subtle gradations of mood.

"North Star," a piece dedicated to Thurgood Marshall, fittingly mixes stately integrity with buoyant swing. Formanek is the third in a hat trick of strong bassists (with Anthony Cox and Lindsey Horner) that Ehrlich has used on quartet records; his unaccompanied solo on "North Star" displays his assurance and wealth of ideas, as well as his subterranean, perfectly balanced tone and attack—no aggravating treble or overused glissing. Jaki Byard's "Ode To Charlie Parker" is given a relaxed undolphyish reading, without percussion; Previte also sits out on the gorgeous through-composed "Pictures In A Glass House," the most chamberesque cut on the disc. Ehrlich and Strickland play a saxes-only duet version of Ornette Coleman's "Comme Il Faut." For a taste of the lyricism and bite of Ehrlich's hornwork, check his lone alto intro to an older tune of his, "The Welcome."

This is a welcome addition to Ehrlich's important and growing opus.

—John Corbett

**BACK BEAT**  
music from the ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK

featuring  
TERENCE BLANCHARD  
DAVID McMURRAY  
ERIC REED  
DON WAS  
ARTHUR "BUSTER" MARBURY  
LUIS CONTE  
MARK GOLDENBERG

JAZZ SCORE COMPOSED AND PRODUCED BY DON WAS

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## Jazz Portraits

by Howard Mandel

**J**ames Lincoln Collier is a provocative writer, and **Jazz, The American Theme Song** (Oxford, New York; 326 pp., cloth) demonstrates his merits alongside his flaws. Perhaps both can be summed up in one phrase: Collier is unafraid to speculate.

Jazz "criticism"—which has ranged from musical analysis through discography, historiography, hagiography, and virtual mythology—has traditionally accepted speculation of musically associated social and cultural issues into its fold. Amiri (Leroi Jones) Baraka's classic *Blues People* is no less useful and insightful for its questionable proposal of "facts" as for its author's quite debatable perspective. Similarly, Collier raises fascinating and important questions, even though his logic may be manipulative, his supporting evidence selective, his conclusions distasteful or flat-out wrong.

"Jazz happened in America, and it could only have happened there," Collier begins, outlining the specific conditions that gave rise to the sound? style? genre? that he never pinpoints with a definition. Primary to his theories regarding jazz' development is the impact made by the white audience and commercial imperatives superseding what might be considered "purer" artistic impulses of the music's major black innovators.

While it is refreshing to read music criticism that takes into account the real-world context of American music's gestation, it is dismaying that Collier will not allow the possibility that musicians with such humanist propensities as Armstrong and Ellington could have not only transcended their circumstances but could infuse audience-pleasing moves with much more enduring feeling. He also has a double standard at work: Collier seldom imputes cynical or low motives or ambitions to the white musicians playing "dixieland" and the swing-era stars fronting big bands whom he favors in his discussions.

Nowhere in this volume of new writing does Collier let the musicians speak for themselves, instead often trying to give voice to what musicians (and other critics) don't say. His ideas on soloists' improvisations are valuable, his chapter on scientifically observable attributes of "hot rhythm" (indebted to the lab work of his son) is unique, and his discussion of the semipro jazz world is right-on sympathetic. As a semipro himself, and an oft-published jazz writer whose academic credentials and subjective viewpoint have drawn ire from all his sets of colleagues, Collier has a love-hate relationship with other players, jazz journalists, administrators of jazz institutions, and



Louis Armstrong: didn't he transcend his circumstances, and play with great feeling?

slight interest in today's modernists or middle-class, urban listeners of any race. Still, his *Jazz* is stimulating, its issues not to be ignored.

Chip Deffaa, in **Traditionalists And Revivalists In Jazz** (Scarecrow Press/Institute of Jazz Studies, Metuchen, N.J. & London; 391 pp., cloth) goes directly to those overlooked, seemingly out-of-fashion professionals one assumes Collier admires. Deffaa's portraits of Vince Giordano, Terry Waldo, Carrie Smith, Vernel Bagneris, and 10 other musicians and some "restorers of vintage recordings" are essentially cleaned-up interview transcripts, and would be more vivid had Deffaa permitted himself to comment on his subjects' often clashing assertions and self-regard. Although several of the musicians speak at length on rather taboo topics (Eddy Davis, for instance, of the security of mob support), the run-on quotes become tiresome during lengthy reading sessions; paraphrase and summation would have been welcome, too. We wait to be guided by a credible critic (and Deffaa is qualified) toward these players' recordings, and to learn more about their positions vis-à-vis the larger jazz world. This is fine source material, but it's up to us to determine where these preservationists fit in.

Seattle writer Paul de Barros artfully balances interview testimony, historical research, and narrative perspective in **Jackson Street After Hours** (Sasquatch, Seattle; 239 pp., cloth), a handsome, large-format tome illustrated with archival photos and graphic ephemera as well as Eduardo Calderon's very warm portfolio of portraits. The result is an elegant rethinking of the very concept of "local scene." Many cities could be studied in the same manner, to shed the light of common experience on matters of morals, manners, functional esthetics, and urban change.

We get a well-rounded depiction of the evolution of Seattle over a century through de Barros' history of jazz as an entertainment, commercial industry, and personal pursuit. Here is the influence of the gambling den and speakeasy, the vaudeville theater and University of Washington, ab-

sences imposed by the Armed Forces and quick but significant visits to town by touring bands. We learn more about Quincy Jones and Ray Charles, of course, but also the names of some of Seattle's unsung jazz masters, and glean even more about how music interacts with daily life.

**The Duke Ellington Reader** (Oxford, New York; 536 pp., cloth), edited by former Columbia professor Mark Tucker, is a treasury reflecting years of attention by diverse commentators on a singular jazz life. The book should resuscitate the reputation of '30s critic R.D. Darrell (also one of Collier's heroes) even as it highlights Ellington's own language skills. The accumulation of eyewitness and expert accounts from Abel Green's 1923 New York review of the Washingtonians through Max Harrison's 1991 revision of his "Reflections on Ellington's Longer Works," with a gratifying concentration of writing from the mid-'30s to early '60s, comes at Ellington from every angle, including interviews with and impressions of his longest-tenured sidemen. Beware: this book is not a whitewash. Considerable diversity of opinion is expressed, which Tucker puts in context with brief, introductory remarks.

**New York Hot, The Album Cover Art Of East Coast Jazz Of The '50s And '60s** (Chronicle, San Francisco; 111 pp., paper) reproduces in loving, full color nearly 200 iconographic images from the Prestige, Riverside, and Atlantic catalogs, plus a smattering from Verve, Mercury, Columbia, Savoy, Impulse!, and even ESP. If you're a deconstructionist, the full-sized, single-page prints are suitable for framing—just select your favorites from the camp of Philly Joe Jones' *Blues For Dracula* to the hieroglyphics and headlines of Mingus' *Oh Yeah*. Among the subtexts of this collection are lessons in typography and page design, and how to photograph (mostly black) men with (and without) horns. Throughout these jacket covers, jazz is presented as forthrightly accessible though tending toward abstraction, and as moody, urbane, earthy, sensuous, sexy, sophisticated, serious fun. Just as it still is; though CDs are almost too small to truly feature such art. **DB**

## 1 Tal Farlow

"Gibson Boy" (from *LEGENDS OF GUITAR—JAZZ, VOLUME 1, Rhino, 1990/rec. 1954*) Farlow, electric guitar; Barry Galbraith, rhythm guitar; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Joe Morello, drums.

The soloist has to be Tal Farlow, but who is he playing with? Farlow has a very lyrical way of improvising. I haven't listened to him for years, but I recognized him from the first note because of his sound. He certainly had an effect on me. The only guy who played like him was Jimmy Raney. But this is definitely Tal. We've all got our stock phrases. As soon as you play them, you betray yourself. That's not a criticism. It's just the way it is. I thought it was him, but I wasn't sure because I never heard Tal play with another guitarist before. Star rating? 3½ stars. I've heard Tal play better. This piece is a little too discreet.

## 2 Al Di Meola

"Egyptian Danza" (from *CASINO, Columbia, 1992/rec. 1978*) Di Meola, electric guitar; Steve Gadd, drums; Anthony Jackson, bass; Barry Miles, keyboards.

It's Al Di Meola, right? Al's a peculiar kind of phenomenon. He's a guitar player with amazing technique and unbelievable means on his instrument. But one thing I always miss in Al's playing is America. He's American, but I don't hear much of his culture in his music. On this track the music sounds Greek, then Argentinian. He plays cultural hopscotch. It's not so much that I want Al to play straight jazz here, but I'd like to hear more American influences in his music. Technically, he gets a 4. But I have to take off a star for lack of roots.

## 3 Frank Sinatra

"Night And Day" (from *SINATRA AND SEXTET: LIVE IN PARIS, Reprise, 1994/rec. 1962*) Sinatra, vocals; Al Viola, guitar.

That's Frank. I'm crazy about him. Frank just grabs me. You can hear the guitar in the background. Cling, cling. It's very nice, but Frank's a monster. It's his phrasing. He's so elegant and so eloquent. This is a cheap trick asking me to listen to the guitarist. He does accompany Frank admirably, but it's difficult for me to identify him. The chords he uses are all standard voicings. That's disappointing because Frank deserves better. With a little work he could have made some nice substitutions. Basically, this guy's just reading his part. He didn't do enough work to accompany my man Frank. So, Frank gets 5 stars; and the guitarist 3—he gets 1 star off for a bit of clumsiness in the middle and at the end, and another for not working hard enough.

## JOHN McLAUGHLIN

by Dan Ouellette

John McLaughlin's storied career has covered a lot of musical territory from his early days in the '60s as electric guitarist for Georgie Fame's rocking Blue Flames to last year's gorgeous acoustic-guitar homage to Bill Evans, *Time Remembered*. Best known for his seminal jazz-rock fusion band Mahavishnu Orchestra, the virtuoso soloist has also explored the melding of acoustic jazz guitar and Indian classical music with his band Shakti, toured with guitarists Paco de Lucia and Al Di Meola, and composed two critically acclaimed concertos for classical guitar and orchestra. Most recently, McLaughlin has been touring with his latest trio, the Free Spirits—featuring volcanic drummer Dennis Chambers and Hammond organ ace Joey DeFrancesco—in support of their new album, *Tokyo Live* (Verve).

In addition to being one of the featured performers at this year's 15th Fes-



BETTINA REHMS

tival International De Jazz De Montreal, McLaughlin also received the fest's first annual Miles Davis Award, presented in honor of an international musician who has contributed to the renewal of jazz.

This is McLaughlin's first Blindfold Test, which took place while the Free Spirits was playing at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco.

## 4 Derek Bailey

"Scaling" (from *LEGENDS OF GUITAR—JAZZ, VOLUME 1, Rhino, 1990/rec. 1985*) Bailey, guitar.

This guy should take his guitar to a luthier and have him work on it for a week. If it's not prepared guitar, his instrument needs an overhaul. This piece is pretty meaningless to me. Contemporary music has a tendency to deform tonality as we know it. So very little appeals to me unless it's by someone like Julian Bream, who plays a beautiful instrument with a beautiful tone.

Who is this? I know Derek. He's a charming guy. He's been doing this spontaneous, free improvisation all his life. But this doesn't say anything to me. There's no meaning, no rhythm, no tone, no melody, no swing. So what's left? Emptiness? Chaos? I'm not against chaos. I think the chaotic principle is very important in life because it has a lot to do with the unpredictable. But this piece is predictable right to the end. I'm sure he's playing with strong intention, but unfortunately it doesn't reach its mark in me. 1 star.

## 5 Kenny Burrell

"Out There" (from *SUNUP TO SUNDOWN, Contemporary, 1991*) Burrell, guitar; Cedar Walton, piano; Rufus Reid, bass; Lewis Nash, drums; Ray Mantilla, percussion.

I have no idea who this is. But whoever it is,

he doesn't have it together on this track. The soloing is very jerky. The phrasing is awkward. There are lots of stops and starts. I think the piano player has it together more than the guitarist. I'll give this 2 stars for the effort.

## 6 Ronny Jordan

"Bad Brother" (from *THE REBIRTH OF COOL, 4th & Broadway/Island, 1993*) Jordan, electric guitar; other personnel unlisted.

Is this Ronny Jordan? Very curious. He's done a dreadful version of Miles' "So What," but at least he's playing Miles' music. As for this track, I like the opening a lot. In spite of my own reservations, I like what he's doing. I'm intrigued by the combination of conceptions he's working with. But he hasn't developed stylistically yet. On this track, he's playing like a poor man's Wes Montgomery. Plus, instead of the disco beat, I'd like to hear something a little more revolutionary. If he's going to make advances conceptually, why not get someone like Prince to really set him on a radical path?

Stars? Musically, it's pretty boring. I'll take 2 stars off for that. I think he should work on his instrument more. It's not good enough to just play Wes' licks today. You've got to be your own man. So I'll take off another star. Which leaves him 2. But conceptually, it reminds me of my crazier days. And I admire him for that. So plus 1 star. That gives him a 3. DB