

**jazz
& blues** report

**THE
BIG ONE**

**2009
GIFT GUIDE**

**HOLIDAYS
BIRTHDAYS
WHATEVER DAYS**

**SOME
CRAZY
GENRE JUMPING!**

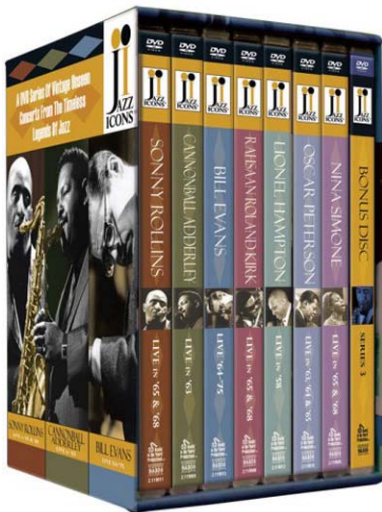
Jazz & Blues Report

35th Annual Gift Guide

This year we are returning to the stand-alone Gift Guide. While our regular issues will bring you the very latest additions, these pages also offer items reviewed over the past year which would make great gifts for any occasion. We'll be leaving it up for quite a while into 2010, and perhaps even adding items to it. This is by no means a best of jazz & blues for 2009. In fact, you'll find that a good number of entries here are not jazz or blues, but rather releases in other genres we've heard which certainly widens the scope of the gift guide to include friends and family members who don't necessarily share your particular musical interests, as well as anyone who has broad tastes in music themselves. You will find that while there are some single CDs included, most of the items here are multiple disc and boxed sets and live concert or documentary DVDs – all of which make perfect gifts. The first part up to page 10 are new releases being reviewed for the first time. Then we have reprints of many items from earlier 2009 issues back to a few from the 2008 Gift Guide. There are no special sections for jazz, blues or anything else, nor are they in any order of "importance." We just keep plopping them down for you...happy hunting!

2009

New Entries – Earlier 2009 Reprints Begin On Page 10



JAZZ ICONS DVDS

Naxos/Reelin' in the Years has just released its 4th series of Jazz Icons DVDs, making available more classic jazz performances by legendary artists. The DVDs are available singly or in a set that includes a bonus DVD with performances by Coleman Hawkins, Jimmy Smith and Erroll Garner. Hawkins is heard from London on a 1966 swinging set with Benny Carter, Teddy Wilson, Bob Cranshaw and Louis Bellson with Carter and Hawkins each getting a ballad feature (Hawkins on "Body and Soul"), while Bellson kicks off "Disorder at the Border," and his lengthy solo is the centerpiece for this performance. Garner is heard on a short three-song set from 1962 in Amsterdam with Eddie Calhoun on bass and Kellie Martin on drums with a lively "Where or When," and a rendition of "Misty." The video source material is a bit subpar here, but the performance is fine. Jimmy Smith, with Charles Crosby, drums and Nathan Page, guitar, have a 1977 half-hour set from Copenhagen in a very collaborative set opening with "Ode to Billie Joe," and including a brief "Mojo," and "Sonnymoon For Two." Ashley Kahn notes Smith

and trio seem restrained compared to the 1969 concert released in this latest batch of releases, suggesting Smith did not fully exploit the volume dynamics of the Hammond because of studio limitations at the TV studio. In any event, it is a worthy incentive for those wanting to purchase the entire collection. – Ron Weinstock

JIMMY SMITH

Jazz Icons: Jimmy Smith Live in '69 NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Among the latest in the Jazz Icons series of DVDs (Naxos/Reelin' in the Years) is the great organist Jimmy Smith from a French television broadcast of a 1969 performance at the fabled Salle Pleyel "Live in '69." While one might find incredulous Bob Porter's claim (in his foreword to the accompanying booklet for this CD) that it should be blasphemy to suggest that Smith was not one of the four or five greatest jazz musicians of the past fifty years, there can be no denying the greatness that Smith brought to jazz and really took the organ in jazz to new heights and was one of the jazz greats of the last half century.

He is seen with his trio of guitarist Eddie McFadden, who was on some of Smith's Blue Note dates, and drummer Charles Crosby, best known for stints with B.B. King and Roland Kirk. The Paris concert opens with a blistering "Sonnymoon For Two," followed by a sweet "Days of Wine and Roses," with lovely single note playing by McFadden as Smith adds some choice voicings before his own solo. Then the trio kicks off on a twenty minute plus rendition of "The Sermon," with McFadden's fleet bluesy solo as Smith pushes the guitarist's playing with fills and comps as the camera catches Smith's smiles of approval, before Smith launches his solo, with perhaps the most inspired playing from this evening, which is quite a lot. Church organ sounds open up "Alfie," as the trio takes the tempo down before concluding the first set with an upbeat "Satin Doll," with Smith sounding like a full big band. The second set opens with a hot swing-

ing rendition of "Organ Grinder's Swing," followed by some deep blues jazz organ as he rocks "Got My Mojo Working," with a very able vocal, and see Crosby's sticks superimposed on Smith's hands on the B-3. Smith opens "See See Rider" with some moody chords before stating the melody and getting down in the alley with McFadden playing some gritty blues. Another blues follows with a boogaloo groove before "My Romance" changes the mood, followed by a slightly slower rendition of "Satin Doll," that leads into the credits ending a truly superb video.

Ashley Kahn provides a full appreciation of Smith as well as places this performance in its context and the Reelin' in the Years Production folk have done a terrific job in transferring the original French TV broadcast to digital video and the sound is first-rate. Which is fitting because Smith and his trio are inspired throughout on an evening of great music (nearly 85 minutes).

Ron Weinstock

COLEMAN HAWKINS

Jazz Icons: Coleman Hawkins Live in '62 & '64

NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Among the latest in the Jazz Icons series of DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Ears) is the great Coleman Hawkins, "Live in '62 and '64," heard in nearly two hours and twenty minutes from performances at the 1962 Adolphe Sax Festival in Belgium and the 1964 BBC Jazz 625 program filmed at Wembley Town Hall in London. His daughter Colette provides the foreword to discuss her father who she notes is best described simply as a "pioneer." For the Belgium performance he is backed by French pianist George Arvanitas, bassist Jimmy Woode and drummer Kansas Fields. They kick things off with Hawkins' uptempo blues, "Disorder at the Border," followed by Hawkins' frothy tenor on "Autumn Leaves." "Lover Come Back to Me," comes at a brisk tempo, suggestive of the Dinah Washington rendition from the Dinah Jams disc. Hawkins returns with a lovely "Moonlight in Vermont," as well as a swinging rendition of the Jerome Kern classic "All the Things You Are," common ground for swing and bop players. The Belgium concert ends with a crisp version of Dizzy Gillespie's "Owl," with lovely camera work during Arvanitas's solo and as Hawkins and drummer Field trade fours.

The second and lengthier concert (about 80 minutes of music) is the BBC concert with an all star band that includes pianist Sir Charles Thompson, bassist Woode again, Papa Jo Jones on drums and Harry 'Sweets' Edison on trumpet, making for an All Star group who open up their set with "Disorder at the Border," taken at a bit more relaxed tempo. This is followed by a ballad medley spotlighting of "Lover Man/ Stella By Starlight/ Girl From Ipanema," with Hawkins showcased on "Lover Man," Thompson on "Stella," and Edison on "Girl From Ipanema," where his muted playing embellishes the bossa nova classic. Described as a dream band, they sound like it on "What Is This Thing Called Love," which includes Jo Jones' drum solo employing brushes. "Stoned" is a Hawkins blues with a sharp tone to it followed by another delicious ballad medley, Hawkins on "September Song," Thompson on "What's New?" and Edison on "Willow Weep For Me." Everybody contributes to Edison's classic blues "Centerpiece," with its composer probably most insightful player here before a spirited if ragged rendition of the Ellington staple "Caravan." As typical in the Jazz Icons DVDs, the pro-

duction is superb, sound great and an excellent booklet with annotation by Scott Deveaux as well as terrific photos and a montage of photos, album and magazine covers. This is a terrific DVD of some fine swinging mainstream jazz of the fifties.

Ron Weinstock

ERROLL GARNER

Jazz Icons: Erroll Garner Live in '63 & '64

NAXOS OF NORTH AMERICA DVD

"Live in '63 & '64," among the latest releases of the Jazz Icons series of DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Years), is devoted to Erroll Garner performances from Belgium in 1963 and Sweden in 1964, presenting about an hour of music. All the performances feature his classic trio of bassist Eddie Calhoun and drummer Kellie Martin. As John Murph notes in his essay in the accompanying booklet, Garner's omission from Ken Burns' Jazz TV series generated an outcry, but as Smithsonian jazz historian Reuben Jackson observed, "Garner is definitely an underappreciated figure."

He wrote "Misty," not a bad legacy but like Nat Cole, Jackson muses that his pianistic gifts have been basically ignored as has his orchestrative approach to the piano as well as his ability to entrance and captivate even novice listeners with his melodic sense as well as his two handed musical statements in his playing as on "Fly Me To The Moon," from Belgium. The Swedish performance of this tune is far different in how he states and develops the melody and his somewhat less aggressive attack. "Sweet and Lovely" is a jaunty number with some interesting stop time effects followed by the wistful opening to "It Might As Well Be Spring."

The Belgium performance includes a rendition of "Misty," while "Where or When" is more of a musical tour de force. "Thanks For The Memories," (like the latter number, and "Fly Me To The Moon," seen in both performances) is intriguing with his inclusion of stride, ragtime, boogie woogie and classical references. The Swedish performance included the lively "Mambo Erroll," with Garner's enthusiasm evident in his effervescent smile before he tenderly embraces "My Funny Valentine." It is striking how fresh his playing and interpretations are of the songs heard in both performances, which are lovingly presented for our enjoyment over 45 years later.

Ron Weinstock

ART FARMER

Jazz Icons: Art Farmer Live in '64

NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Art Farmer, "Live in '64," is represented in the most recent releases of the Jazz Icons series of DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Years) from a 1964 BBC broadcast on the Jazz 625 series. The flugelhornist is supported by the great guitarist Jim Hall (who had recently left Sonny Rollins), a young Steve Swallow on bass and Pete LaRoca on drums. Farmer had been a member of the legendary Roy Porter Big Band, recorded with Pete Johnson's Orchestra behind Big Joe Turner and recorded with Wardell Gray for Prestige before touring with Lionel Hampton's Orchestra in Europe and starting his own recording career and later starting the Jazztet with Benny Golson. By the mid-sixties he had his Quartet with Jim Hall. By this time, Farmer had started playing flugelhorn exclusively with its deeper,

warmer and more mellow tone and it blended well with Hall's guitar, whether chording or playing his exquisite single note runs.

The BBC program launched with the lovely ballad "Sometime Ago," where Farmer's lovely tone enhances the melody and there is a nice solo for Swallow with LaRoca on brushes. Kurt Weill's "The Bilbao Song," takes the tempo up a notch or two with some energetic playing and trading of fours by Farmer and LaRoca, nicely captured by the cameras. "Darn That Dream" is another lovely showcase for Farmer's ballad playing before launching into Sonny Rollins' "Valse Hot," which Farmer opens up with just the rhythm backing before Hall starts comping, leading into his own solo as the cameras capture the focus with which they play.

There is a nice solo from LaRoca, which the cameras capture from various angles. As Don Sickler observes in the accompanying booklet, "So in Love" is an unusual AABA composition with an unusual structure which the band changes from a 16 16 16 24 measure form to a 16 16 16 16 form. Hall's solo is a gem with contrasting camera angles focusing on his concentration playing, his hands and then him playing with Swallow's bass in the backing before Farmer comes back in and trades fours with LaRoca, cameras shifting their focus of the two and between them. "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," is a feature for Hall with some lovely guitar. The remainder of this hour long video is equally inventive and delightful, and the presentation is up to the level of other releases in this series.

Ron Weinstock

ART BLAKEY

Jazz Icons: Art Blakey Live in '65

NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Art Blakey's "Live in '65," among the most recent Jazz Icons DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Years), is the second in the series devoted to Blakey and is from a French TV broadcast, which credited the performance to Art Blakey and His New Jazz Men.

This 50 minute long video captures a relatively short-lived edition that included Freddie Hubbard on trumpet, Nathan Davis on tenor sax, Reggie Workman on bass, Jackie Byard on piano in addition to the leader's drums. As Michael Cuscuna observes in the accompanying booklet, everyone is playing at a high level. The program is built around two Hubbard originals, "The Hub" and "Crisis." Hubbard is blistering and Davis matches his intensity with Byard's piano providing a delightful counterpoint. In between the two originals is the standard "Blue Moon," a feature for Hubbard after which Blakey introduces the group. They conclude with a short "Theme." The video appears a bit grainier than others in this series. Not that this is unacceptable when viewing on a TV or a computer monitor from a slight distance. It just is not as sharp as others, and knowing the efforts at restoring the video and audio in this series, the source material must have had limitations. The audio is fine in any event and another worthy addition to DVDs of Blakey and the Jazz Messengers that are available.

Ron Weinstock

WOODY HERMAN

Jazz Icons: Woody Herman Live in '64

NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Woody Herman's "Live in '64," among the most recent Jazz Icons DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Years), is a terrific sample of his "Swinging Herd" from a BBC Jazz 625 broadcast.

The more familiar members (to 2009 listeners) of the 1964 Herd included, in addition to the leader's clarinet, pianist Nat Pierce, drummer Jake Hanna, tenor saxophonist Sal Nistico and trombonist Phil Wilson. The lack of recognition of most of the other members of the band does not diminish from the terrific music heard and seen on this DVD. There is first rate playing, arrangements and a varied repertoire played with strong musicianship and plenty of spirit. The performances range from modernized renditions of "After You've Gone" and "Jazz Me Blues," that are far removed from their Dixieland roots; swing classics like "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," and "Four Brothers;" standards "Day of Wine and Roses" and "Lonesome Old Town;" and big band reworkings of hard bop compositions, Horace Silver's "Sister Sadie," and Charles Mingus' "Better Git It In Your Soul."

Herman is outstanding as he opens "After Your Gone," while Nistico shows what a strong blues player he is on Nat Pierce's "That's Where it Is," with some nice playing from pianist Pierce as well. Wilson displays his amazing chops on the trombone on "It's a Lonesome Old Town," which is a tour de force for him. On the Mingus number, Nistico, trumpeter Tom Anastas and drummer Hanna smoke. They close on a rocking rendition of Louis Jordan's "Caldonia," which Herman first waxed in 1945 and it remained a staple of his band's repertoire until he passed away. It is a terrific and spirited performance, not as lively as Jordan's original perhaps, but still a fine closer to a strong big band jazz DVD.

Ron Weinstock

ANITA O'DAY

Jazz Icons: Anita O'Day Live in '63 & '70

NAXOS OF AMERICA DVD

Anita O'Day's "Live in '63 & '70" is among the most recent Jazz Icons DVDs (Naxos/ Reelin' in the Years), and presents the late great jazz vocalist from concerts in Sweden and Norway. As Doug Ramsey notes in his accompanying booklet, O'Day was the last of the great swing vocalists that emerged during the swing era who possessed perfect pitch and time and a virtually vibrato-less voice with horn-like phrasing that was immediately recognizable. First coming to public attention with Gene Krupa and then Stan Kenton, she was among those recorded extensively by Norman Granz and her renditions of "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Tea For Two," were among the highlights of the great jazz film, "Jazz on a Summer's Day."

By 1963 when the first of these two performances on this DVD was filmed, rock and roll was affecting the jazz market in the US. The earliest performance is from the concert stage at the Tivoli Grona Lund amusement park with a trio of Swedish pianist Goran Engdahl, Polish bassist Roman Dylag and her regular drummer, John Poole, opening with "Sweet Georgia Brown," taken at a slower tempo than usual, followed by a lively "Let's Fall in Love,"

and a ballad feature, “A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square.” Her rendition of “Fly Me to the Moon” is sparkling with Engdahl taking a delightful solo while “Honey-suckle Rose” opens initially as a duet with bassist Dylag before the rest of the trio join in. The backing is nice throughout until they close with a lively “Tea For Two.”

1970 captures her in Oslo at the beginning of a Norman Granz arranged tour with a French backing trio of pianist George Arvanitas, bassist Jackie Samson and drummer Charles Saundrais. Three songs are repeated from the earlier show, “Let’s Fall in Love,” “Sweet Georgia Brown,” and “Tea For Two,” yet the performances here vary dramatically from the earlier renditions in tempo and her delivery of the lyrics; showing like a great instrumentalist, she brought a fresh approach to her songs. In addition to these outstanding interpretations, a highpoint is a terrific medley of “Yesterday” with “Yesterdays.”

There is a bit less than an hour of music and performance here, but everything is of a high level. The camera work capturing the performances is solid and the sound is quite good. It is a DVD Anita O’Day fans will clearly want, and others may become fans of her from watching/listening to the classy, and sophisticated jazz singing here.

Ron Weinstock

Miles albums from 1949 to 1985 on the 70 CDs, all taken from the most recent issues with the extra tracks and up to date sound technology.

The DVD features the quintet with Shorter, Hancock, Carter and Williams live in Europe ’67. Shot in black & white, it is very much like the Jazz Icons series being released by Naxos. They perform 6 songs in Karishrue, Germany and 5 in Stockholm, Sweden.

All the discs are packaged in Japanese style mini-LP CD jackets replicating the original artwork. Included is a 250-page color book with an 11,000 word essay and annotations on every album.

There is much more, but to really get the gist of it all, you’ll want to go to <<http://www.miles-davis.com/news/the-complete-miles-davis-columbia-album-collection>> to get all the info you’ll need.

Bill Wahl

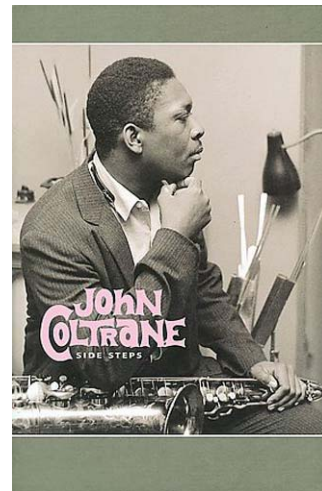


MILES DAVIS
The Complete Miles Davis
Columbia Album Collection
LEGACY / COLUMBIA BOX SET

Well the folks at Legacy have really come up with the big Miles box now. If you have the big bucks (\$364.98 list), and know someone who loves Miles Davis and you want to give them a gift that will leave a big impression, well then this 70-CD and 1 DVD set should certainly do the trick.

If anyone is thinking Christmas, there could be one problem. This massive set is apparently an Amazon exclusive, and according to Amazon’s the set was, but is not currently available and posted this statement: “We have been notified that there is a manufacturer defect with this product. We are working with the manufacturer to get this corrected and have the product available again. We will be notifying customers who have already ordered the product to alert them to the issue and offer a resolution.” So keep an eye on Amazon for updates on this situation.

But, to give a very brief rundown, the set contains 52



JOHN COLTRANE
Side Steps
PRESTIGE / CONCORD BOX SET

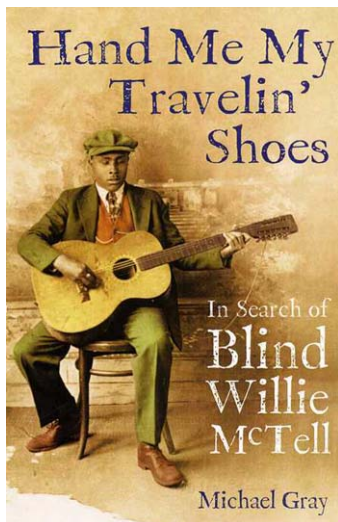
This is the third box set Prestige has issued for John Coltrane over the past few years. This one, a 5-CD set takes a look at his many sideman recordings for the label with such well-known artists as Sonny Rollins, Gene Ammons, Red Garland, Mal Waldron, Elmo Hope and many more.

A total of 43 tracks are presented, with many being in the 10-minute-plus range, such as the classic tour-de-force Tenor Madness from the Sonny Rollins album of the same name which clocks in at 12:18; and two longer songs with Red Garland – the title track from the album “All Morning Long” and “Lazy Mae” from the album “Dig It.”

All the music here was recorded between 1956 and 1958 and is presented in strict chronological order by session – as it should be. All are treated to 24-bit remastering from the original analog tapes for fantastic sound. Also included is a 72-page book with all the necessary info on the recording sessions and the songs culled from each. And, each of the albums represented is featured with front and back reproductions of the covers, the songs on each side of the LP and the original liner notes in full, most of which were written by Ira Gitler.

This collection of tunes would certainly make a great gift for a Coltrane fan for any occasion. You simply can’t go wrong.

Bill Wahl



HAND ME MY TRAVELIN' SHOES: IN SEARCH OF BLIND WILLIE MCTELL

By Michael Gray

CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS (448 PP)

Blind Willie McTell, like Robert Johnson and other legendary figures, never had a hit record. When he died in 1959, after decades of playing on the streets and clubs of Atlanta, Georgia, he was largely forgotten – but today is celebrated. Several of his songs, most notably “Statesboro Blues,” have become staples of blues and blues-rock. Mystery author David Fulmer made McTell a central character in “The Dying Crapshooter’s Blues,” inspired by one of McTell’s songs; and Bob Dylan wrote that “Nobody can sing the blues like Blind Willie McTell.” Among blues enthusiasts and scholars, the body of McTell’s music is second to none. With Michael Gray’s new book on McTell, “Hand Me My Travelin’ Shoes,” we get part social history, part biography and part travelogue as Gray takes the reader on his journey in uncovering the facts of McTell’s life.

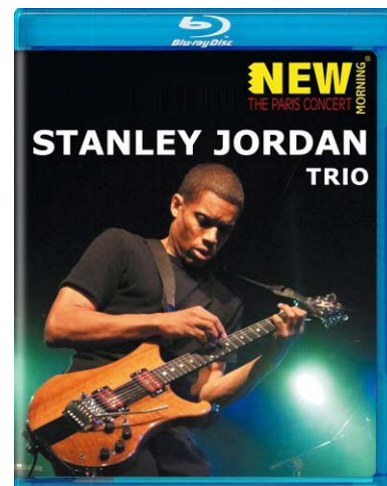
This is not simply a dry recitation of the life and music of Blind Willie McTell. He takes us back several generations to McTell’s ancestors, which include a slave owner who fought for the Confederacy and was even a prisoner of war. Using census materials, he comes across the many different spellings as well as the small rural Georgian communities, tracks what ancestors on both sides of McTell’s family did, and lived, and takes us through his birth, childhood and career as a musician who made a number of celebrated recordings during his life, yet was relatively forgotten when he passed. Using census records, old newspapers, and oral history he evokes the world McTell lived in, one of white supremacy, segregation and lynchings, yet one where McTell seemed to avoid the harshest aspects of the racist repression.

Gray tracks his life from upbringing, the school for the blind, and his homes in various communities including Statesboro and Atlanta. McTell, despite his handicap, was quite independent and able to negotiate the streets and buses of Atlanta quite well. We are taken to the places he lived, the women in his lives and how his reputation was sufficient to earn him a recording career. Gray does not over-romanticize McTell or his music. He recognizes its greatness and yet realizes that he was not a major record-

ing star in terms of record sales. He also is sober in discussing about McTell’s music as represented on recordings. He gives us the stories underlying how the sessions came about and discusses succinctly the recordings, where they took place and gives reasoned and thoughtful analyses.

His consideration of McTell’s recordings extends beyond the major commercial recording sessions for Victor-Bluebird, Okeh, Decca and others. He also considers the Library of Congress recordings made under the auspices of John A. Lomax. Gray spends some space noting that the original reissue of the Library of Congress recordings had significant omissions. The omissions were made because by leaving these bits of speech off, everything else would fit on one tape. This tape was the source of what was issued first on record, and later CD, as “The Complete Library of Congress Recordings.” However, this title is inaccurate because the reissues were not complete and the omissions were not trivial. For example McTell commented on songs or that he used to perform such as “I Got to Cross That River Jordan” that he sang and played with Blind Willie Johnson. Furthermore, McTell’s wife Ruby was at the session and added her comments in response to Lomax’s questions. So that the image many described of the patronizing Lomax as well as the image of McTell, Gray argues, is misleading because of what was omitted.

Despite Gray including his own journey of visiting where McTell lived, walking the dusty country roads McTell walked, and visiting the buildings where McTell recorded and played, the book is still about McTell. Michael Gray has enriched us with Blind Willie McTell’s story and the legacy, and it’s a story well worth reading. *Ron Weinstock*



STANLEY JORDAN TRIO INAKUSTIK BLU-RAY (IMPORT)

Just watching guitarist/pianist Jordan perform his phenomenal “tap” technique across the fretboard or generate simultaneous creative cohesion on both axes would be justification for a video release. Lay upon that a set covering as wide a range of interesting material- from post-bop to Beatles, Bartok and Trane- as one is likely to catch in a single set and the result is an offering a couple notches above the typical concert video. This production offers an up-close and personal take at Jordan’s remarkable skill set that generates a “being there” experience most concert discs don’t deliver.

The facility Jordan displays in his dual-axe mode is expertly conveyed, visually speaking, on the trio's rendition of Horace Silver's classic "Song For My Father". Of his bandmates- drummer David Haynes and bassist Charnett Moffett- it's the latter who on occasion snatches the spot-light from the charismatic bandleader by way of both Moffett's skill and on-stage intensity.

Very nice camera work. A video for music lovers.

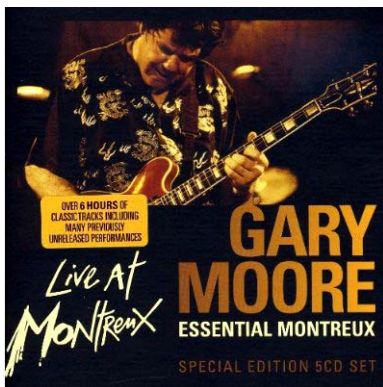
Duane Verh

**AUTOUR DU BLUES
MEETS LARRY CARLTON
AND GUEST ROBBEN FORD
INAKUSTIK BLU-RAY (IMPORT)**

Autour Du Blues may be renowned for their studio work but this assemblage of top-flight French players can also serve up a solid set on stage as evidenced by this tasty and fun-spirited concert session, part of this label's New Morning series of Paris performances. That studio time might further account for the ease with which they transit from one distinctive groove to the next behind their American guests, a prime example being the creative transitions behind Carlton taking the blues standard "Got My Mojo Workin' " to some unexpected, fresh-sounding regions. Solo slots by several in the host crew stand up well alongside the stars and the label might consider adding more info on them for the Stateside-bound copies of this disc.

Kudos to the director for shot selections that prioritize the players' actual craft over clever visual moves.

Duane Verh



**GARY MOORE
Essential Montreux
EAGLE RECORDS 5-CD SET**

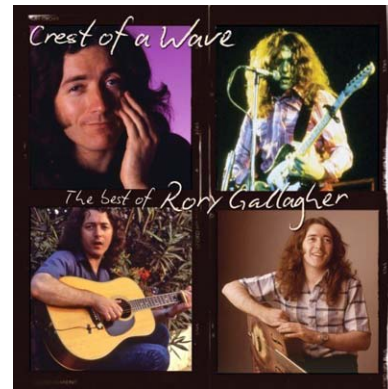
For those who can't get enough of this Northern Ireland-bred blues rocker a remarkable feast awaits in this five-disc set. Each disc represents a different year's performance at the Montreux Jazz Festival, ultimately tracing a time-line in Moore's evolution. The first two, from 1990 and 1995 respectively, are packed with blues perennials, a number of which Moore is closely associated with himself nowadays such as Otis Rush's "All Your Love" and the Jimmy Rogers-popularized "Walkin' By Myself". He doesn't forget his mates on the British Isles either, covering John Mayall's "Key To Love" and "Stop Messin' Round", from the Peter Green era of Fleetwood Mac. Moore reliably serves up solid blues play with adequate touches of flash and balances things with his seasoned, almost Clapton-esque vocals. An Albert Collins cameo is a tasty

plus.

On the third disc, from 1997, Moore heads straight into rock territory. "I've Found My Love In You ", a very moody, Jeff-Beck-like instrumental is a high point as is the mood-matching "Parisienne Walkways".

A return to the blues is documented on Discs Four (1999) and Five (2001), with reprises of much of the early sets sounding both matured and further energized. Moore's uncredited backup is solid on every track. Hard core fans could hardly as for "moore".

Duane Verh



**RORY GALLAGHER
CREST OF A WAVE- THE BEST OF RORY GALLAGHER
EAGLE RECORDS 2-CD SET**

The late Irish guitarist Rory Gallagher's blues-rock roots ran as deep as those of any of the legendary axe handlers from the British Isles. And from the mid-60's with the trio Taste, then through the following three decades, and particularly through his highly successful 70's, Gallagher shared the guitar-god status of Clapton, Beck, Page *et al* with those in the know.

His famous turn-down of the Rolling Stones' offer to replace Mick Taylor seems unsurprising in retrospect when sampling this two-disc collection. The variation found in his songwriting- at times embracing pop, siding up to jazz at others- strongly suggests Gallagher was obviously focused on song crafting as well as playing; a creative urge that would likely not have been well-served as a junior partner in the Jagger-Richards firm.

Crest Of A Wave nicely showcases both Gallagher's incisive electric lead work and masterful acoustic work that could have separates him from the blues-rock pack; an excellent intro to a musician worth knowing about.

Duane Verh

**JOHN MAYALL
Tough
EAGLE RECORDS**

Over his near half-century of recording, John Mayall has opted for change often enough to suggest it's essential to his craft. The erstwhile Brit blues-meister has moved over the years from conventional amplified lineups to acoustic groups; from four-piece to big bands and back. His current crew, assembled just this year, does suggest the septuagenarian has settled on a few matters in the past couple of decades- a small-group format and American sidemen.

Also consistent is Mayall's penchant for blues of a most personal nature. There doesn't seem to be much on the

man's mind that he's shy about sharing. Mayall is as likely to offer his views on the recent economic malaise and the state of the airwaves as he is to assess his love life. The keyboard-grounded sound of his recent recordings is still a mainstay, courtesy of Mayall and returning band member Tom Canning. Guitarist Rocky Athas, drummer Jay Davenport and returning bassist Greg Rzab, however, steer things a bit further from r&b, closer to rock. Standout tracks include "Playing With A Losing Hand", "That Good Old Rockin' Blues" and "Tough Times Ahead". Nice work.

Duane Verh

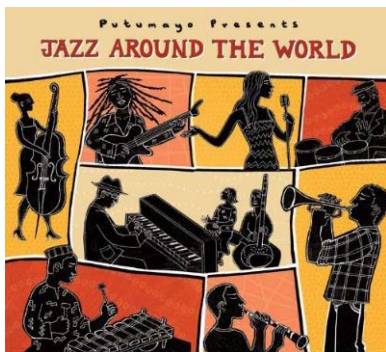
KENNY G An Evening Of Rhythm Romance EAGLE DVD

Kenny G spent his early career as the saxophonist with the Jeff Lorber Fusion known as Kenny Gorelick. When he went solo, he dropped the orelick from his name, and his sound went from funky and passionate to smooth and romantic. Yes, he got slammed by many fans and most all critics – and for good reason, but, hey...it is what it is, or was actually. And what it was was a way for Kenny to make loads of money; while, though unintentionally, bringing new listeners, mostly young women, from pop music to light jazz. That's a start on bringing new fans to the real thing. And that part is the good thing.

That said; this new DVD, filmed at San Diego's Marvellous venue Humphrey's By The Bay, would be a hot item to give to anyone you might know who is a current Kenny G fan. It has 16 songs, which I'd have to guess includes all his hits, well performed, filmed and recorded along with three Christmas songs as bonus tracks and an interview.

You probably can't get any smoother than this.

Michael Braxton



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Putumayo Presents Jazz Around The World PUTUMAYO

Here is a single CD that is quite different and would make a unique gift for a jazz fan. Putumayo has gained quite a reputation for its world music compilations over the years. You can pretty much buy any one of them and find it to be an enjoyable listen. This new collection is no exception, except that instead of world music, it is jazz as interpreted by musicians around the globe.

There are not many names most will recognize, other than South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela and fusion drummer Billy Cobham, who was actually born in Panama and has been working with the Cuban group Asere, and

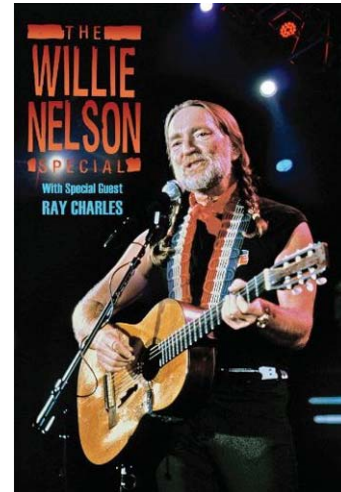
they are together for a track here. But that makes no difference.

Whether it be an instrumental or a vocal track; a jazz standard or an original – the music here is uplifting and different. It is not bop, or swing or jazz-rock – it is world jazz. Try it out at

www.putumayo.com/en/ if you like as they have all tracks to sample. You might check out some of their world music compilations as well while you are there.

Enjoy it!

Bill Wahl



WILLIE NELSON Willie Nelson Special (with Ray Charles) EAGLE ROCK DVD

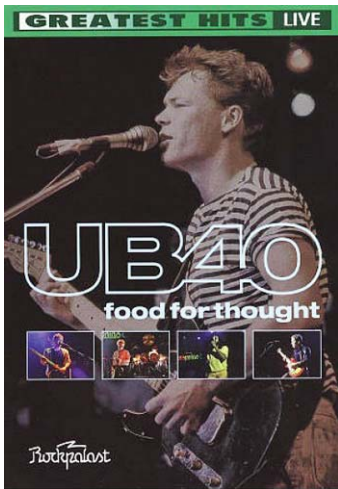
Well we did say we'd be crossing genres in the gift guide, but wait...that is not at all unusual for Willie Nelson. The country singer/guitar player and magnificent songwriter is featured for this one hour concert special filmed at the Austin Opry House in 1985.

He and his band open with "On The Road Again" and "Always On My Mind" before the great Ray Charles comes onstage to join Nelson on piano and vocals for five songs, including "Angel Eyes," "I Can't Stop Loving You" and "Georgia On My Mind." Willie's band leaves during Ray's appearance while the players who take over are decidedly better suited to the combination of jazz and blues the two deliver during their set together. When Ray exits, Willie's band comes back on for the remaining sic songs as we go back to a more country mode.

Another fine Willie Nelson collaboration on DVD, and it is well done both in terms of audio and video. The most recent pairing was Willie with Wynton Marsalis. *Bill Wahl*

UB40 Food For Thought EAGLE DVD

Back in the early eighties UB40 was quite different than we know them today. They were a very political British reggae band that mixed in some R&B and a bit of ska. They wrote their own songs each carrying a definite message. In fact, the band's name is an acronym for Unemployment Benefit form 40, which is on the cover of their first album in 1980. They were a great band with fresh energy and ideas. So good in fact, that I took a chance on bringing them to play a large



nightclub I was booking back in Cleveland in 1983. At that time they had a cult following, but lucky for us people drove as far as 600 miles for the show. It was packed to the gills. Sardine city, but the show was incredible.

Then a year or so later something awful happened. In 1983 they released an album, which was on A&M in the U.S., and the single was “Red, Red Wine.” Their sound had gone commercial.

That aside, this DVD, which was filmed in 1981 for German Television’s Rockpalast and the disc’s subtitle – “Greatest Hits Live” is actually accurate for us fans of these early years. Their best albums were “Signing Off” (1980), “Present Arms” (1981), UB44 (1982) and “UB40 Live” (1983). Those first two albums are well covered here with tunes such as “Present Arms,” “Tyler,” “Silent Witness.” “Burdon of Shame,” “Madame Medusa” and ten more. The band is in fine form and fully-charged. Lots of pros; the only cons being the sound is not real good at times, and the same with the video – but then it was 1981. But overall, it is decent and is not really a problem due to the band’s energy and being able to see them perform this music from their best years. By the way, this has been released twice before but those are no longer in print, and there does seem to be improvements in sound and video over the previous issue I have.

A definite bet for anyone who was into UB40 before they went off to that other place.

Bill Wahl



THE ZOMBIES Odessey & Oracle 40th Anniversary Live Concert MVD VISUAL DVD

Here comes another DVD destined to suit many baby boomers. While most younger folks probably never heard of the band, we slightly riper people remember them well, or the songs that is.

This was a short-lived band that broke up after recording their classic 1968 album “Odessey & Oracle”. In 2008 the band reconvened at

the Shepherds Bush Empire in London to remake the album’s music – live after a 40-year break. They did a fine job.

The first part is comprised of old Zombie songs; and others by singer Colin Blunstone; and more material from the band Argent, formed by Zombie Rod Argent after the breakup.

For my taste, the Odessey & Oracle material on the second part is the treat. Al Kooper does the intro and tells how he was working at Columbia Records and heard the label owned the U.S rights to it, but were going to scrap it. He helped urge them to change their mind, and the last three

songs here will tell you why they were glad they listened – “Time of the Season.” “Tell Her No” and “She’s Not There.” The label even had another hit with “She’s Not There” when Santana reprised it a few years later.

This is nice nostalgic music and is very well filmed and recorded and the band still has it. Take note all Zombies Fans!

Bill Wahl



ELVIS PRESLEY Elvis 75: Good Rockin’ Tonight LEGACY / RCA

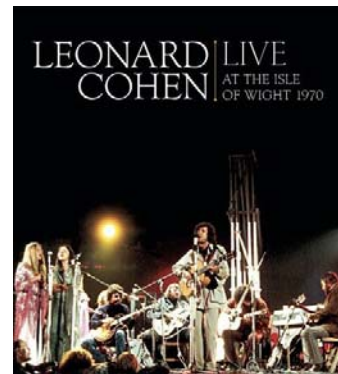
Legacy Recordings is set to release this 4-CD overview of Elvis Presley’s recording career on December 8, just in time for the holidays. This set commemorates Elvis’ 75th birthday on January 8.

The 100 digitally restored masters include hit singles, rare cuts, album tracks, live performances and all 30 of his number 1 singles, which are, of course, too many to list here.

Also enclosed is an 80-page booklet with rare photos and a 7,000-word essay, The set kicks off a year long run of Elvis catalogue reissues. His 75th birthday celebration will take place January 7 through 10 at Graceland in Memphis.

Go to amazon.com and check this set out for a full listing of all the songs over the four CDs. And, you should be able to sample them as well. A great gift for an Elvis fan.

Bill Wahl



LEONARD COHEN Live at the Isle of Wight 1970 LEGACY / COLUMBIA DVD+CD SET

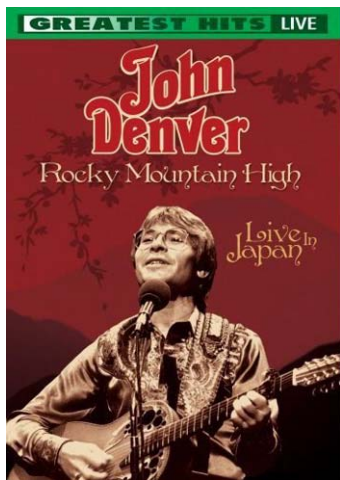
The many folks who were into Leonard Cohen’s early years will be good candidates for this just-released Cohen live set from the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival in the UK.

The CD features 13 songs, which were on his two early Columbia albums along with some poems. Some of the songs he performed that night were “Suzanne,” “So Long Marianne,” “Bird On A Wire,” “Hey, That’s No Way To Say Goodbye,” “Famous Blue Raincoat,” “You Know Who I Am” and “The Stranger Song.”

The DVD, which I believe (but am not sure) is seeing its first release here contains several songs, with Judy Collins introducing “Suzanne” and Joan Baez confronting festival violence. The video was produced by Murray Lerner, who produced the award-winning documentary “Festival” about the Newport Folk Festival. There are also 2009 interviews with Judy Collins, Joan Baez and Kris Kristofferson. Also enclosed is a booklet with some short essays and photos.

While dating back 40 years, while not poor, you won’t get the sound quality heard on his studio albums from back then, but Cohen’s energy takes the lead here and his fans will find this set quite a treat.

Bill Wahl



JOHN DENVER
Rocky Mountain High:
Live In Japan
EAGLE ROCK DVD

This DVD was sent to us by mistake, but the chief said let's do it anyway as there are probably John Denver fans on some gift lists out there, so why not pass it along. Besides, we are far from being snobs!

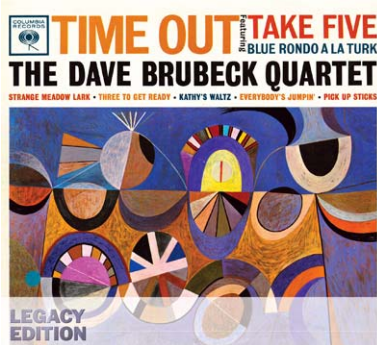
Actually, those fans should find this concert recorded live at the Nippon

Budokan in Tokyo in 1981 very much to their liking. He's heard with his band on 18 songs, four of which were number one hits, and most, if not all, of which will be familiar to those who followed him.

Denver is heard mostly on acoustic guitar, but also electric and violin. He died in a crash while flying his experimental plane off the coast of California near Monterey in 1997. At the time of his death he was one of the most popular pop acoustic artists of his time. *Michael Braxton*

EARLIER 2009

Here are some reprints of reviews from issues earlier in 2009 which would make some more gift ideas...



DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET

Time Out - Legacy Edition
COLUMBIA LEGACY CDS + DVD

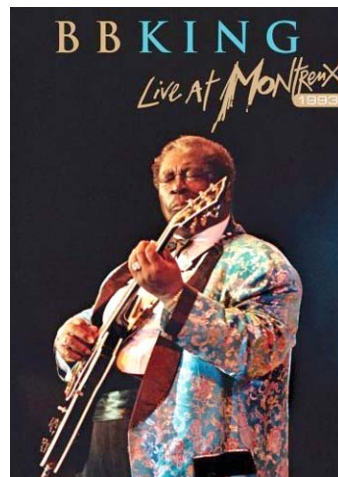
Columbia Legacy is currently celebrating 1959 – *The Greatest Jazz Year*, and one of the Legacy Edition sets featured is the classic Brubeck Quartet album *Time Out*, which reached number two on the charts and is the first jazz album to sell a million copies. It also stayed on the charts for over three years.

Brubeck was known for odd time signatures and this album spawned a hit in 5/4 titled “Take Five,” which continues to get lots of airplay today. With the warm, melodic and instantly recognizable sound of the late Paul Desmond’s alto, the music here is as bright today as it was 50 years ago. Some of the other tunes are “Blue Rondo a la Turk,” “Kathy’s Waltz,” “Three To Get Ready” and “Pick Up Sticks.”

In addition to the entire original album wonderfully

treated to today’s audio technology, the Legacy Edition offers a second CD with live performances of the quartet recorded at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1961, ’63 and ’64. Here the band stretches out more offering up eight songs and closing with an extended version of Desmond’s “Take Five.”

A third disc, a DVD, is included with an interview with Brubeck and some performance video of the quartet. Topping the package off is a booklet with a lengthy essay by Ted Gioia and many black and white photos of the band and its members. A fantastic package for all Dave Brubeck fans, and more. *Bill Wahl*



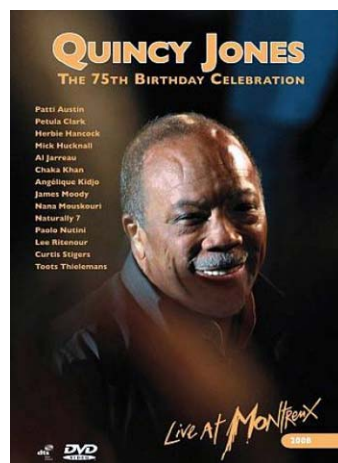
B.B. KING
Live at Montreux 1983
EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

Having heard BB King many, many times in various concert venues over the years, I can easily testify that he and his band were in great form on this night in Montreux. While he sits down for most of his performance these days, he was on his feet and rockin’ n’ rollin’ while electrifying the crowd and taking those

vibes back in from them. After the traditional opening songs from his band, BB came out and delivered thirteen gems, including “Let The Good Times Roll,” “Chains Of Love,” “Caldonia,” “Since I Met You Baby,” “Aint Nobody Home,” “Why I Sing The Blues,” “Rock Me Baby” and the closer, “The Thrill Is Gone.”

His nine-piece band sounded great for this 99-minute set, and especially outstanding was James Toney on piano and Hammond B3. Sadly, Toney, who had worked with BB for 30 years, passed away at the age of 65 in his hometown, Las Vegas, in 2007.

In closing, both the audio and video production on the DVD is fantastic. The picture quality on an HD TV is impressive, and the audio is offered in stereo, Dolby 5.1 and DTS. A fine choice for a BB King fan. *Bill Wahl*



QUINCY JONES
The 75th Birthday
Celebration Live at
Montreux
EAGLE EYE MEDIA
2-DVD SET

This new 2-DVD set from Eagle features Quincy Jones’ 75th birthday celebrated onstage at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2008. Quincy was seated in the first row of the audience for 30 performances, mostly arranged by Quincy,

from a wide variety of musicians such as James Moody,

Toots Thielemans, Patti Austin, Herbie Hancock, Lee Ritenour, Angelique Kidjo, Al Jarreau, Ledisi, Chaka Khan, and Naturally 7, and he obviously enjoyed every minute of it. The musicians backing the various artists were the Montreux House Band, consisting of Greg Phillinganes and David Delhomme on keyboards, Paul Jackson Jr. on guitar, Nathan East on bass, John Robinson on drums and Paulinho da Costa on percussion. Also on hand when needed was the Swiss Army Big Band.

After Montreux leader Claude Knobs does the introduction, things get off to a great start with Patti Austin singing “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly,” backed by Herbie Hancock and the house band. Next up, James Moody is featured on three songs, one sung by Rahsaan Patterson and two by Patti Austin. A definite highlight is Moody and Austin singing “Moody’s Mood.” Moody is one of the evening’s highlights!

Most of the performances here are vocals, and luckily Patti Austin sings many of them. She, in fact, is the shining star of Quincy’s birthday bash, handling with ease everything she takes on. Another star is harmonica master Toots Thielemans as his offerings were a fine gift for Q. The two discs have many more highlights for sure, such as Naturally 7’s take on Michael Jackson’s “Billy Jean,” and Angelique Kidjo’s version of “State of Independence.” While I could have done without Freda Payne’s 2 tunes, Mick Hucknall’s 1 and a few others, overall there is a lot to like here. The sound and video is top notch as well. But the gold star definitely goes to Patti Austin.

Bill Wahl

mances of T-Bone Walker’s “Cold Cold Feeling” followed by Fenton Robinson’s “You Don’t Know What Love Is.”

Jimmy’s band included Dave Spector’s guitar as well as his own. Pianist **Aaron Moore** with just Kenny Smith on drums is heard playing in the vein of Roosevelt Sykes (The DVD has an extra performance).

Up next Nick Moss and Richard Kreher join Stroger and Smith to support **Little Arthur Duncan** on “Pretty Girls Everywhere” reworked to the “Scratch My Back,” melody with the DVD adding an enthusiastic rendition of “I Got to Go.”

Lurrie Bell is front and center for “Don’t You Lie to Me,” with an equally strong “Reconsider baby,” on the DVD, and his guitar enhances **Shirley Johnson**’s blues shouting on “As the Years Go Passing By.”

Eddie Shaw rocks out on “For You My Love,” and Jimmy Reed’s “Sun is Shining,” with his raspy gutbucket sax backed by Bell’s slashing guitar and Roosevelt Purifoy’s barrelhouse piano. Some of Shaw’s earliest recordings were issued on Delmark.

The music concludes with **Tail Dragger**’s pastiche of Howlin’ Wolf, “Tend to your Business,” with Big D on harp; and “My Woman is Gone,” with Billy Branch on harp.

The DVD also includes Barry Dolins reading a Mayoral Proclamation and many will echo Jimmy Johnson’s hope that Koester keeps producing blues for another 55 years.

The DVD as indicated has several performances not on the CD, and has the usual quality of Delmark DVD’s, which is keeping the focus on the music and the musicians. If one were only going to purchase one, I would recommend the DVD.

Ron Weinstock

IT AIN'T OVER!

DELMARK CELEBRATES 55 YEARS OF BLUES AT BUDDY GUY'S LEGENDS IN CHICAGO

LURRIE BELL / JIMMY JOHNSON / ZORA YOUNG / TAIL DRAGGER / LITTLE ARTHUR DUNCAN

AARON MOORE / EDDIE SHAW / JOHN ROBINSON / DAVID SPECTOR / SHIRLEY JOHNSON - SEE US FIRST



DVD
WHERE THE MUSIC LIVES

DELMARK RECORDS 55TH ANNIVERSARY

It Ain't Over DELMARK DVD OR CD

“It Ain’t Over!” is the title of a new Delmark CD/DVD that is subtitled “Delmark Celebrates 55 Years of Blues at Buddy Guy’s Legends in Chicago.” That should be pretty descriptive of the contents in

the CD, with an hour of music; or the DVD with 79 minutes of music and more. It may be true that some of the more memorable and great artists that Delmark brought to us are no longer with us as Junior Wells, Carey Bell, Magic Sam and more have passed on. Still Delmark continues to document the living blues scene of today and this CD and DVD from March 2008 bring forth some memorable performances that show the fire still burns.

Zora Young opens with a strident “Til The Fat Lady Sings,” with the house band on most of this that includes Lurrie Bell’s guitar, Bob Stroger’s bass and Kenny Smith’s drums.

This band sits back while **Jimmy Johnson** and band follows up with two excellent Albert King-tinged perfor-



ANITA O'DAY The Life of A Jazz Singer RED DVD

This DVD follows one-of-a-kind jazz vocalist Anita O’Day’s career from the early days when she worked with Gene Krupa, Roy Eldridge, Stan Kenton, Louis Armstrong and Hoagy Carmichael through many adversities she fought to overcome (including years of heroin and alcohol addiction, failed marriages, abortions and arrests) to her interviews, performances and final recording in her eighties.

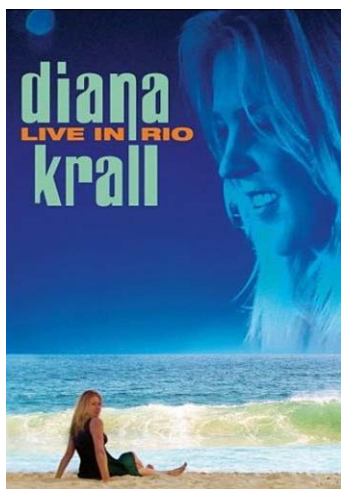
Watching the documentary, one gets a real sense of what O’Day was all about and why she describes jazz as “a free-lance sketch.” The engrossing program is visually well-constructed and interspersed with interviews with O’Day, critics, musicians, contemporaries and friends, as well as performance clips and more. Included is a clip of her historic 1958 Newport Jazz Festival performance of “Sweet Georgia Brown.”

Directed by Robbie Cavolina and Ian McCrudden, the 31-chapter, 130-minute documentary on the life of O’Day brings together numerous film and television clips and, under the Extras section, adds 90 minutes of uninterrupted bonus performances and interviews clips includ-

ing O'Day singing with the Gene Krupa Orchestra ("The Boogie Blues," "Let Me Off Uptown"), with Stan Kenton ("Tabby the Cat"), with Art Ford's Jazz Party ("Body and Soul"), two concert performances of "Let's Fall In Love," and a 1963 performance of "Tea For Two" with a trio in Sweden.

The basic 2-disc set includes 45 minutes of musical performances from film and 45 minutes of outtake interviews with Anita with a 32-page booklet containing essays from author Jim Gavin and jazz critic/author Will Friedwald, a chapter from O'Day's autobiography (*High Times Hard Times*) and 16 pages reproduced from her personal scrapbooks. It is also available in a deluxe limited edition set containing a fabric covered, 160-page hardbound book.

One of the most detailed, informative and interesting musician retrospectives, this documentary reveals the tough, feisty nature of the ultra-talented singer who died in 2006. Trumpeter Denny Roche best describes O'Day: "Anita was not a singer; she was a musician who used her voice as an instrument." *Nancy Ann Lee*



DIANA KRALL

Live In Rio

EAGLE VISION DVD

Pianist/vocalist Diana

Krall kicks it with her quartet and a full orchestra on this 18-tune concert performance DVD filmed live in Rio de Janeiro. Guitarist Anthony Wilson, bassist John Clayton and drummer Jeff Hamilton provide first-rate accompaniment and solos. Many of the tracks are from Krall's 12th studio CD release, *Quiet Nights*

(Verve) but re-imagined here with the breadth of her influences.

The quartet launches the array of standards with a rousing, upbeat version of "I Love Being Here With You," with everyone taking fine solos and Krall bending the lyrics. "Let's Fall In Love," starts as a slow ballad with guitar-vocal melody head before the tempo shifts to a bouncy beat when Clayton and Hamilton join in with Krall at the keys. The quartet also plays "Frim Fram Sauce," "Cheek to Cheek," "Let's Face the Music and Dance," and others. The foursome also plays the Brazilian standard "So Nice," with Krall singing the lyrics in English. The audience joins in, singing the Portuguese lyrics to "The Girl/Boy from Ipanema."

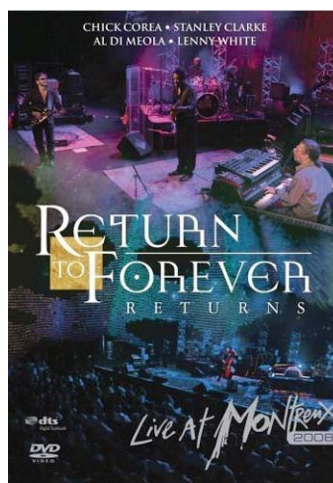
Backing Krall's soft vocals, the Rio Di Janeiro Orchestra—conducted by Ruria Duprat with arrangements by Claus Ogerman—enhances gems such as "Where Or When," "Too Marvelous For Words," "I've Grown Accustomed to His Face," "Walk On By," "You're My Thrill," "Every Time We Say Goodbye," and more.

Some of the quartet performances will remind you of the Ray Brown quartet's swinging grooves. Camera work is excellent, geared to the moods of the songs and

aptly capturing the action with close-ups. Interspersed with performance shots are Rio beach scenes, panoramic views of landscapes, urban street and night scenes, and more. A very informative bonus feature, "Conversations," includes interviews with the musicians, detailing their stay in Rio de Janeiro, Krall's attraction for the Latin jazz styles, a discussion of the bossa nova, Krall's early influences, and other topics. The DVD also includes a new video for "The Boy From Ipanema."

This is one of the best performance videos to come across my desk – a true keepsake that's as visually exciting as it is aurally. It's available on both DVD and Blu-ray. *Nancy Ann Lee*

Editor's Note: In late October Eagle released a special Edition 2-CD set of this concert with a second CD including more live performances from Canada, Spain and Portugal and also the 4 song Rooftop Sessions which was previously only available on the Blu-ray edition. *BW*



RETURN TO FOREVER

Returns

Live At Montreux 2008

EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

Following last month's excellent dual-disc release of this fusion supergroup's 2008 reunion is this Montreux Jazz Festival performance, a splendid set only briefly represented on the CD set. The here-and-now energy evident on the audio package, however, is found in abundance here as

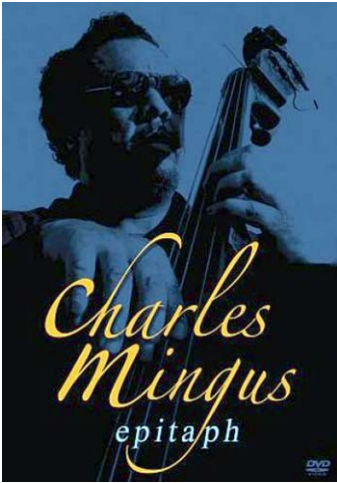
well.

Opening in electric mode with RTF classics including "Hymn Of The Seventh Galaxy" and "Vulcan Worlds", the band sets a congenial but extremely businesslike on-stage tone that endures through the entire program. This foursome is here to make music, pure and simple. As strong as the electric moments are, the acoustic segment may be the more captivating half of this set. Each of the four in turn delivers engaging solo stretches in this section; Al Di Meola and Stanley Clarke are especially dazzling, Chick Corea and Lenny White particularly inventive. The video direction is more quickly paced than most in Eagle's Montreux series- not surprising given this is a much more recent performance than most in this collection- but the quick cuts don't distract and mostly follow where the music leads. This should rate with the very best video offerings of the year.

Duane Verh

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CHARLES MINGUS

Epitaph

EAGLE EYE MEDIA

On June 3, 1989 in Alice Tully Hall in New York City's Lincoln Center, a 30-musician orchestra conducted by Gunther Schuller performed the world premiere of the Charles Mingus masterpiece, *Epitaph*. This DVD documents that exhilarating 18-movement, 130-minute sold-out concert performance and offers an opportunity to hear this

astounding work and to see the musicians who first brought it to life.

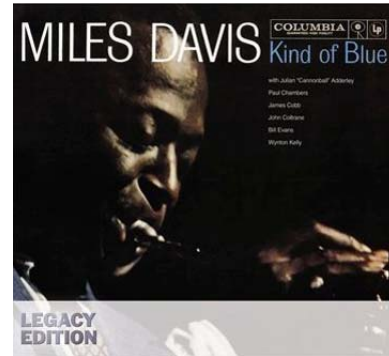
The concert was originally produced for television and aired in the U.K.. Camera work is excellent with well-timed close-up shots of the musicians and instruments. Musicians include: Trumpets: Randy Brecker, Wynton Marsalis, Lew Soloff, Jack Walrath, Joe Wilder, Snooky Young; Trombones: Eddie Bert, Sam Burtis, Paul Faulise, Urbie Green, David Taylor, Britt Woodman; Tuba: Don Butterfield; Alto Saxophones: John Handy, Jerome Richardson, Bobby Watson; Tenor Saxophones: George Adams, Phil Bodner; Baritone Saxophones: Gery Smulyan, Roger Rosenberg; Contrabass clarinet: Dale Kleps; Bassoon: Michael Rabinowitz; Piano: Sir Roland Hanna, John Hicks; Bass: Reggie Johnson, Edwin Schuller; Guitar: John Abercrombie; Vibraphone: Karl Berger; Drums: Victor Lewis; Percussion: Daniel Druckman.

Schuller's conducting brings out the many moods of the treasured masterpiece. Some movements swing, others are somber in tone. There are densely layered portions and light, playful parts. Musicianship is excellent and soloists excel.

The piece was discovered after bassist-composer Mingus' death in 1979. Andrew Homzy (director of the jazz program at Concordia University, Montreal) was in Sue Mingus' apartment cataloguing Mingus' manuscripts in 1985 and discovered about 20 pieces for a large jazz orchestra with the title (or subtitle) of "Epitaph" written on them. Mingus had written the movements 30 and 60 years prior to the 1989 performance. The measures on all the scores were successively numbered, which led them to believe that Mingus intended for them to work together as an extended composition. Mingus believed it would never be performed in his lifetime and said that he "wrote it for my tombstone." The score required completion, extensive editing and reconstruction and, when finished, was 500 pages and 4,000 measures.

I attended the April 22, 1990 Tri-C JazzFest (Cleveland, Ohio) performance of *Epitaph* (with slightly different personnel) but am delighted to have this keepsake DVD of the New York premiere. A 12-page color booklet with historic photos accompanies the DVD. The final DVD is well-organized with on-screen titles and an interactive list of the movements so you can chronologically or ran-

domly watch or just play your favorite movements over and over. Notes, originally by Gunther Schuller for the double-CD released in 1990 were edited for the DVD by Andy McIntyre and include a brief summary of each movement. The Columbia/Sony CD appears to be discontinued. That makes this well-produced DVD documenting the genius of Charles Mingus all that more valuable. —
Nancy Ann Lee



MILES DAVIS

Kind Of Blue: 50th Anniversary Deluxe Set

COLUMBIA / LEGACY EDITION 2-CD SET

Columbia/Legacy reissued the classic Miles Davis album "Kind of Blue" late last year just in time for the holidays, in a box collectors set which included 2 CDs, a DVD and an LP. It listed for just over a hundred dollars, but Legacy has recently released a Legacy Edition version with the two CDs, but not the DVD or LP for a list price of 19.98.

One of the finest jazz recordings of all time, "Kind of Blue" was originally released in 1959, and has been issued several times since CDs appeared on the market in the mid 1980s. While the original CD incarnation sounded quite awful, as most albums transferred to CD did back then, each subsequent release offered improved sound as technology advanced. This new release offers the best of today's sound technologies, plus a host of extra tracks.

Disc One contains the original five album selections – "So What," "Freddie Freeloader," "Blue In Green," "All Blues" and "Flamenco Sketches" followed by an alternate take of "Flamenco Sketches," which was previously issued on the first Columbia Miles Davis box set in 1988, "Miles Davis: The Columbia Years 1955-1985." Then there are what is known as 'studio sequences' for each of the five titles, and one 'false start.' These range from anywhere between 11 seconds to close to two minutes and give an insight into the way in which Miles and the musicians related in the studio as these songs were being recorded.

Now these were not just ordinary musicians by any means. Anyone familiar with this album knows this was an all-star cast of musicians who remain legends of jazz today. Miles was joined by Cannonball Adderley on alto sax, John Coltrane on tenor sax, Bill Evans on piano, Paul Chambers on bass and Jimmy Cobb on drums. Wynton Kelly replaces Evans on piano for "Freddie Freeloader" only.

Disc two contains six additional tracks with the same musicians. The first five are from a May 1958 studio ses-

sion which were scattered over various albums, but were issued together on the Legacy box set “Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961” back in 2000.

While Bill Evans and Cannonball were on those tracks, the final piece, track 6, has Cannonball out and Wynton Kelly replaces Evans on piano. This is an over 17-minute performance of “So What” performed live at the Kurhaus, Den Haag, Holland from April of 1960, and it is quite a blowout, with Coltrane really taking off. This is the first authorized release of this track, and it is quite the finish to this gem of a set of CDs.

This Legacy Edition also comes with 24-page booklet with song information, lineups, essays, black and white and color photos, Bill Evans’ liner notes from the original 1959 LP release and more.

In short, this is a must-have album for every jazz fan, and the Legacy Edition will give you the most bang for the buck by far.

Bill Wahl



TITO PUENTE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Dance Mania

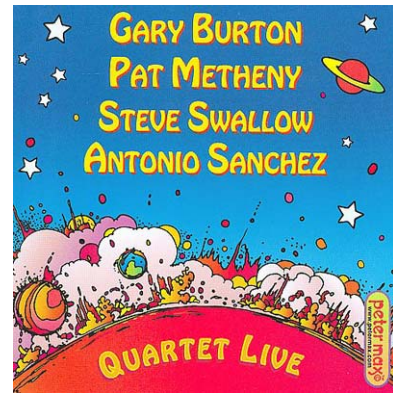
RCA / DISCOS / LEGACY EDITION 2-CD SET

By the time bandleader/percussionist/composer Tito Puente recorded and released for RCA the original Latin-jazz albums, (*Dance Mania* and *Dance Mania Vol. 2*) he had recorded numerous singles for Tico Records. A series of albums for RCA Victor gained him wider appeal during the mid-1950s when there was a resurgence of Latin music in the USA and the release of a number of commercial Latin tunes by pop artists such as Perry Como (“Papa Loves Mambo”), Rosemary Clooney (“Mambo Italiano”), Perez Prado (“Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White”).

Puente’s group played Manhattan’s Paladium in multi-band dance marathons before he released what he once referred to as “just another album.” The dance album was a big hit. Presented on this two-disc reissue are 24 digitally re-mastered mambos, cha-chas, and rumbas recorded between 1956—1960. The attractively packaged set includes 21 bonus tracks and a 24-page booklet with historical photos, original album art, tune listings with personnel, and extensive notes by Charles L. Granata and Joe Conzo.

The superb fare fittingly celebrates Puente’s vibrant band, providing danceable music enhanced by Spanish vocals, brassy section work, and top-notch instrumental soloists.

Nancy Ann Lee



GARY BURTON PAT METHENY STEVE SWALLOW ANTONIO SANCHEZ

Quartet Live

CONCORD JAZZ

When this all star quartet toured in mid 2007, they hit very few cities in the U.S. Oakland, CA was one of them, where this new CD was recorded over two nights in June at Yoshi’s jazz club. Another was Buffalo, N.Y., where they were the first concert to be held at singer Ani Defranco’s renovated stone church. I was lucky enough to be at that concert.

Since I had heard the show I knew exactly what to expect. Having liked both Burton and Metheny for decades, hearing the two back together along with bassist Steve Swallow and Metheny’s drummer Antonio Sanchez was my biggest musical treat of that year. Yes, there were goosebumps, and those goosebumps were revisited when I put this CD in and cranked it up on a 90-minute trip that seemed like fewer than 15. Sanchez, who was a baby when the other three were playing together, was a good choice... for whatever the reason.

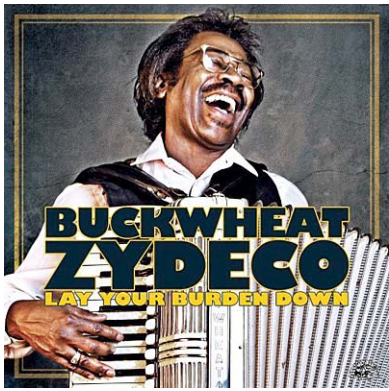
Kicking off with Chick Corea’s “Sea Journey,” from Burton’s “Passengers” album on ECM the band takes you on an 11-song trip you’ll find yourself repeating again and again. The level of musicianship, camaraderie, communication and high spirits combined with the bright melodies, gorgeous ballads and well-chosen repertoire makes this a journey to remember.

Some of the other songs are Carla Bley’s “Ohlos de Gato” and “Syndrome;” Keith Jarrett’s “Coral,” Duke Ellington’s “Fleurette Africaine (Little African Flower),” plus three from Metheny and two from Swallow. Burton contributes a single song, “Walter L.” You can check out the full song list and sample some tunes at Amazon and other sites. I do believe you’ll like what you hear.

I had no idea a CD would be coming from that 2007 tour. This one is on my list for best of 2009.

Bill Wahl





BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO
Lay Your Burden Down
 ALLIGATOR

From Clifton Chenier forward, modern zydeco artists have never shied away from simpatico pop music styles and no Louisiana man these days is more comfortable with this mix than Stanley Dural aka Buckwheat Zydeco.

As much a classic soul/r&b balladeer as bayou stomper, who can mess with the rock as well, Monsieur D. (or Z., if one prefers) stands as one of the swamp sound's most widely appealing ambassadors.

His versatility is in full evidence on *Lay Your Burden Down*, covering Memphis Minnie by way of Led Zeppelin ("When The Levee Breaks") and flirting with ska ("Let Your Yeah Be Yeah") and siding up to Captain Beefheart ("Too Much Time"). The brawny organ, guitar and rhythm backing Dural's accordion on "Levee" sets the stage for this highly energized set and dashes of horns on "Yeah" further reveal the features of top-notch production both earthy and sharp.

For all the variation on *Burden*, Mr. Dural knows his way back to the bayou as evidenced on his own "Throw Me Something, Mister". This session sets a high bar for roots releases for the remainder of the year. Worth the money.

Duane Verh

**BACKSTORY IN BLUE:
 ELLINGTON AT NEWPORT 56**

John Fass Morton
 RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS

The last few years have seen a spate of books centered around a record album, telling the story about the artists and how the specific album came about and its impact. For example, Ashley Kahn has provided wonderful volumes devoted to "Kind of Blue" and "A Love Supreme." John Fass Morton's new book, "Backstory in Blue: Ellington at Newport 56" is on one level the story of the classic live recording by Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, but it goes even deeper into social history to examine not simply how the recording happened, but also discuss the impact of the Festival performance.

The performance at Newport is recognized as helping revive Ellington's prominence in the American music scene and Morton provides a valuable and concise sketch of Ellington's career, including his emergence in New York during the twenties; the prominent part he

played in the Swing era; how he was affected by the decline of the big bands and the shift in the direction of popular music; and the recording career including Ellington's aspirations which related to the writing and performance/recording of longer compositions.

Yet no longer enjoying the financial success allowing him to maintain the same level of a band, by 1955 Ellington had to accept a six week stint at the Aquacades in Flushing Meadows, the site of the 1939 World's Fair, which also led to him having to replace several band members lacking a local union card.

At this time Ellington was also frustrated with the record companies. While Columbia, which was popularizing the new LP form, enabled Ellington to record extended works including the now highly regarded "Masterpieces" and "Ellington Uptown," they were not commercial successes. And frustrated with the two major labels, Victor and Columbia, he signed with Capital but again met little success.

Ellington was an emcee at the 1955 Newport Jazz Festival, foreshadowing his performance the next year and by then had resigned with Columbia where he was reunited with George Avakian who had produced "Masterpieces" and had also produced successful recordings by Dave Brubeck and Louis Armstrong, and was behind the recording of Ellington and others at the 1956 Festival.

Morton weaves together Avakian's biography along with that of the members of the 1956 Ellington Band, the most interesting of which was tenor saxophonist Paul Gonsalves (of Cape Verdean descent), the birth and early history of the Newport Jazz Festivals and the story of Elaine Anderson, the blonde lady whose dance during Paul Gonsalves' tenor solo was part of the musical magic generated that July 1956 evening.

It is fascinating to read how Elaine Lorillard, wife of an heir of a tobacco fortune, helped establish the festival in this most unlikely setting, a high society community. Then she helped sustain the festival against local opposition towards the earliest Newport Festivals.

This is where George Wein first started producing festivals, and there were a number of interesting tidbits including the fact that Wein created the Photographer's Pit for the first Newport Jazz Festival, something many working press at festivals take for granted.

We get to the magic evening and the performance of Ellington and others on the bill that night. Ellington's long-extended original work, Newport Jazz Festival Suite, had received lukewarm applause, and recognizing this he launched into Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue, with an interval where he would play piano before calling forth Gonsalves who launched into one of the most celebrated tenor saxophone blues solos of all time with the band spurred on as Jo Jones whacked a roll newspaper into his hand. As the audience reaction got more enthusiastic, Elaine Anderson started dancing in the aisle near the stage while Gonsalves kept preaching the blues.

Her dance was captured by the photographers in the Photo Pit and were included in coverage of the event as well as on the back cover of "Ellington at Newport 56." At the time her identity was not known, but Morton was able to uncover her story of a one-time Hollywood hopeful

starlet who had settled into the somewhat frustrating life of a wife and mother. And while this is going on, we learn how Avakian and others are dealing with the fact Gonsalves is not playing directly into the mike being used to record his performance, but fortunately into a microphone used by Voice of America for foreign broadcast and the recording of which years later would be used in some reissues of the album in the digital age.

Morton then discusses the aftermath of that night including the release of the recording, the impact of the album and press coverage of Ellington's performance on the revitalization of his big band, and what happened to the participants subsequently.

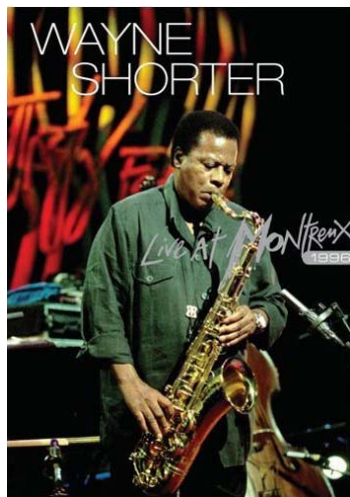
There is so much in this rich and varied story for Morton to tell us. Given the rich historical tapestry, there are places one might feel one is bogged down in detail, but not only would one be hard-pressed to find anything extraneous, but at a certain point the story told here takes over and you settle in for the ride.

Washington post book critic Jonathan Yardley authored the book's introduction and he notes that I have been blessed in many ways, probably more than I deserve, with a richly rewarding private life and a small but gratifying public one, but that night in Newport stands alone and apart.

It is to Morton's credit that he is able to convey some sense of the magic that made that night so unique and memorable.

This book will make those having the album listen to it a new, and for others hopefully lead them to discover that one magical evening in Newport, Rhode Island.

Ron Weinstock



WAYNE SHORTER
Live At Montreux
EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

A revealing glimpse Wayne Shorter's post-Weather Report phase is offered up on this well-paced program, culled primarily from the brilliant tenor & soprano saxman's 1996 Montreux Jazz Festival set plus some very tasty side trips. The approach of Shorter's group (keyboardist James Beard, guitarist David Gilmore,

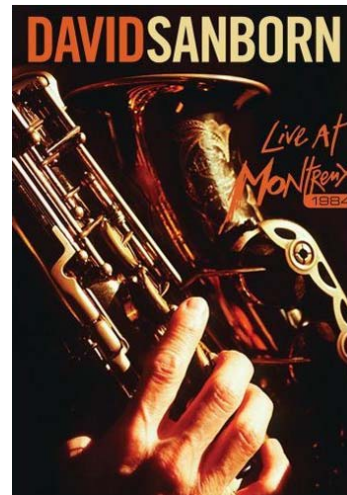
drummer Rodney Holmes and fellow WR alum, bassist Alphonso Johnson), touring off of his Grammy-winning release from that year, *High Life*, strongly suggests that the man was reintegrating with mainstream jazz with some major takeaways from the fusion and funk of his prior days with Weather Report in hand. Bassist Johnson most obviously reflects this, as do shape-shifting postures from "straight" jazz to rock from guitarist Gilmore and a fiery solo stretch from drummer Holmes midway through this tasty set.

Shorter's unique, post-bop persona, one of the few sax voices of the Coltrane era that maintained distinctly

individual regardless, is as apparent as ever on this set and the splendid extra material- a 1992 concert reunion of the late 60's Miles lineup w/Hancock, Carter, Williams plus trumpeter Wallace Roney and a '91 Hancock group with Stanley Clarke and Omar Hakim supplying rhythm.

The production is on par with Eagle Vision's other Montreux releases; it's video with true music fans in mind. The amount of shot selection cleverness is kept within tasteful limits and the sound is excellent. Shorter fans: do not hesitate.

Duane Verh



DAVID SANBORN
Live At Montreux 1984
EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

Alto saxophonist David Sanborn was one of the forerunners in the genre that is now known as smooth jazz. He made his debut as a leader in 1975 with an album titled "Taking Off" on Warner Bros. Along with his very successful solo career, he was also a much in demand studio musician, appearing on countless albums for a wide

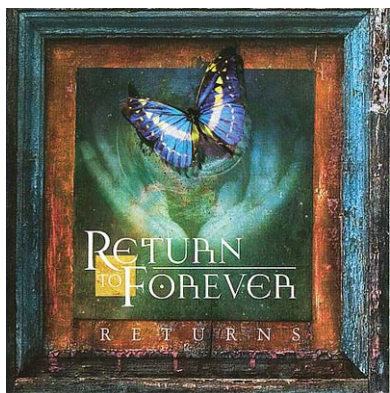
variety of artists. This 1984 performance at the Montreux Jazz Festival finds him leading a quintet that includes keyboard man Larry Willis and guitarist Hiram Bullock.

Opening with the slick and funky "Hideaway," Sanborn delivers a tasty and balanced set of funkies and ballads. After "I Told You So" and "Straight To The Heart," a different twist comes from guest vocalist Ricky Lee Jones, who sings one song here, "Autumn Leaves," in that unique RLJ style. Next up is a wild solo guitar piece from Bullock - and he is quite the showman as I saw in a concert with Miles back in the eighties, and you will witness here. This segues into "Rush Hour" which leads into "Piano Solo," a fine showcase for Larry Willis. The set closes with the sweet "Morning Salsa" and an extended version of "Smile." Sadly, Hiram Bullock passed away in 2008.

The bonus tracks here are three songs from his 1981 Montreux performance. His seven-piece band here, which included Mike Mainieri on vibes, Robben Ford on guitar and Marcus Miller on bass, delivers three songs, "Love Is Not Enough," "Lotus Blossom" and "Hideaway." As is the usual case with Eagle's Montreux series, the videography and sound quality is very good, especially given the fact that these shows were 25 and 28 years ago. Sanborn, who is still going strong today, has garnered hoards of fans, who should all be interested in this DVD.

Michael Braxton





RETURN TO FOREVER

Returns

EAGLE RECORDS

If there are some around who find classic fusion a bit quaint or *passé* in the 21st century, this double-disc “live” 2008 set by one of the genre’s most potent outfits will give them pause. Messrs Corea, DiMeola, Clarke and White lay down a pair of sets of RTF favorites infused with energy and freshness that defies any notion of a “dated” sound.

The two discs generally divide between the band’s electric and acoustic incarnations- the first one highlighted by high-voltage run-throughs of “Hymn of the Seventh Galaxy”, “Vulcan Worlds” and “No Mystery”; the second centered around material from their 1976 release, *Romantic Warrior*. The consistent mix of intelligence and intuition, whether romping at breakneck speed or in delicate, introspective moments, that was an RTF trademark is in evidence at all times. Highlights include a splendid Corea/DiMeola duet version of “Spain”, a Lenny White solo seasoned with a dash of “old school” swing, and a nod to the original RTF lineup w/Airto & Flora, “500 Miles High”.

While longtime fans should delight in these sounds it won’t be mere nostalgia- this music is hot right now.

Duane Verh



CHICK COREA AND HIROMI

Duet

CONCORD

This two-disc, live-recorded set features pianists Chick Corea and the rising Japanese jazz star, Hiromi Uehara, performing a mix of 12 originals and standards (six tunes each per disc) at the Tokyo Blue Note Jazz Club, originally released in Japan in 2007 on Universal.

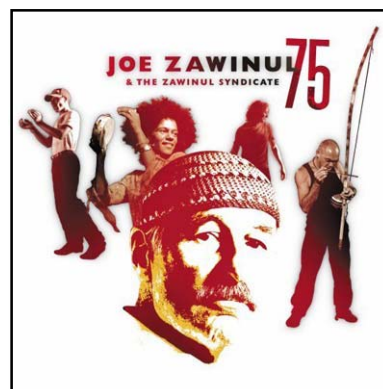
Disc 1 launches with a melodious flowing rendition of Bill Evans’ “Very Early,” showing what these two stellar pianists can accomplish when paired up together. They also perform Jobim’s “How Insensitive,” Lennon/McCartney’s “Fool On the Hill,” and Monk’s “Boliver Blues,” along with one original each.

Disc 2 serves up Gershwin’s “Summertime” as well as Corea’s “Windows,” “Do Mo (Children’s Song #12),” and a Spanish medley composed, in part, by Corea. Hiromi contributes “Old Castle, by the River, in the Middle of a Forest,” an invigorating 15-minute piece.

This is Corea’s first piano duet album since 1978 when he recorded *An Evening with Herbie Hancock & Chick Corea In Concert*.

Although there’s a generational difference between Corea and Hiromi, their masterful performances transcend any age or cultural differences. Corea and Hiromi first performed together at the 2006 Tokyo Jazz Festival and they perfected that alliance at this meeting, delivering about 115 minutes of dazzling, ivory-tickling music.

Nancy Ann Lee



JOE ZAWINUL & THE ZAWINUL SYNDICATE

75

HEADS UP 2-CD SET

A loss as great as that of Joe Zawinul would never be an easy one for the music world. Creative stars of his magnitude will always be rare. It’s great to behold him & his band in the splendid form heard on this final concert release, a celebration of the keyboard wizard’s birthday two months before his passing.

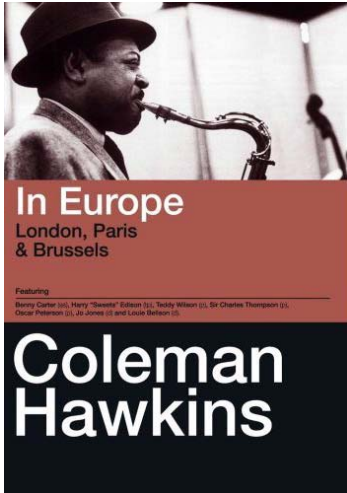
Conceptually the Zawinul Syndicate was the logical conclusion to Mr. Z’s half of the Weather Report equation. The fusing of his own jazz and classical background with musics of the Third World found its ultimate incarnation in the Syndicate’s international personnel roster. Space, texture and pulse stand on equal ground with melodic and solo conventions. While most every member gets their moment up front in a set well stocked with Weather Report favorites- particularly guitarist/vocalist Alegre Correa and vocalist/percussionist Aziz Sahmaoui- they each seem more like a component in the leader’s own mega-instrument; the ultimate shaping of the music coming from the man behind the keyboards.

The band ceaselessly dazzles with its ability to turn on a dime from deep sonic space exploration to razor-

sharp accents and transitions. And, with Linley Marthe, Zawinul showed his consistent knack for finding monster bass players. A powerful moment near the close of Disc Two is the addition of a separate performance of Zawinul's "In A Silent Way" one month later- and one month before his death- with longtime partner Wayne Shorter on soprano sax.

The vitality of this set makes the case that he was far from finished making great music. A more fitting farewell for such a relentless creator would be hard to imagine.

Duane Verh



COLEMAN HAWKINS
In Europe: London, Paris & Brussels
STANDING OH!VATION DVD

Coleman Hawkins, "In Europe: London, Paris & Brussels" is an import DVD that collects video from four different European locations with Jazz's first great tenor saxophonist heard in different group contexts from 1962 to 1966. The DVD contains

nearly two hours of performances from those shows as well as a bonus of almost a half hour in bonus performances from the 1960 TV film, "After Hours" with another group featuring Hawkins.

"In Europe" opens with a quintet that he co-leads with Harry 'Sweets' Edison with a group that includes Sir Charles Thompson on piano, Jimmy Woods on bass and Jo Jones on drums. Filmed in 1964 at London's Town Hall, the full group is featured on Wardell Grey's "Stoned." This is followed by ballad features for Hawkins ("September Song"), Thompson ("What's New" on which Hawkins is heard reciting the melody at the opening), and Edison ("Willow Weep For Me").

The full group is seen on Edison's blues "Centerpiece" before the set closes with the Ellington standard, "Caravan," which spotlights drummer Jones. The next set is from 1966's Royal Jazz Festival in London and has Hawkins in a quintet co-led with the great Benny Carter along with a terrific rhythm section of Teddy Wilson on piano, Bob Cranshaw on bass and Louis Bellson on drums. They launch into a swinging "Blue Lou" before short ballad features for Carter, "I Can't Get Started" and Hawkins "Body and Soul," before a lengthy romp on Hawkins' "Disorder at the Border," which gives everyone a chance to stretch out. Musically, these selections may be the highpoint of this video compilation.

A nice 1966 Parisian rendition of the standard "Moonglow" follows with Hawkins supported by Oscar Peterson on piano, Sam Jones on bass and Louis Hayes on drums is followed by an intriguing 1962 quintet date from Brussels with pianist George Arvanitas, guitarist Mickey Baker, bassist Jimmy Woode and drummer Kansas Fields.

The interesting program opens with an unaccompanied tenor sax solo from Hawkins, "Blowing For Adolphe Sax." The rest of the program includes a spirited "Disorder at the Border," "South of France Blues" (aka "Blues in G") and "Riff tide." "South of France Blues" is reminiscent of "After Hours" and is a chance for guitarist Baker, a respected session man on hundreds of sessions and the Mickey of Mickey & Sylvia fame, to shine in addition to Hawkins.

As if these performances were not enough, the 1960 TV show "After Hours" is included, with a sextet co-led with trumpeter Roy Eldridge, a rhythm section of guitarist Barry Galbraith, pianist Johnny Guarnieri bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Cozy Cole with vocalist Carol Stevens. Legendary NYC radio announcer William B. Williams does the voice over to set the scene of a late night after hours club where the musicians just pop in to play and if the setting is a little contrived, the music is very solid.

I would not be surprised if Standing Oh!vation is a successor to the Improv-Jazz series of DVDs and like those, the packaging is not very elaborate. It lacks the superb annotation that is characteristic of the Jazz Icons series of DVDs and the reproduction of the original film does not seem to be as good, but certainly the video here is quite satisfactory and the performances are quite welcome to have available. Fans of the Hawk and swinging jazz will enjoy these.

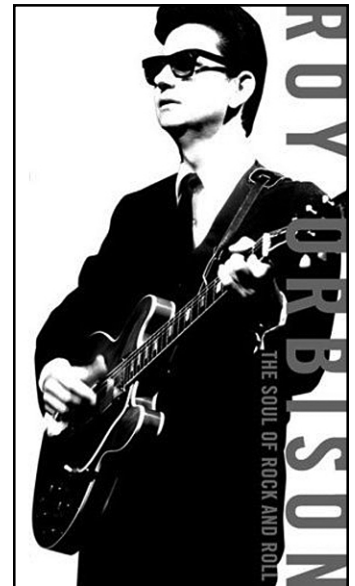
Ron Weinstock

ROY ORBISON
The Soul Of Rock And Roll
LEGACY BOX SET

Just recently released this fall on Monument/Orbison Records/Legacy, this 107 track set spread over four discs would make a very fine gift for any Roy Orbison fan you might know.

This set spans the entire career of the singer/songwriter from his early recordings with The Teen Kings in 1956 to a live version of "It's Over" from his final concert in Akron, Ohio in 1988. The set then closes with "We'll Take The Night," which is thought to have been recorded in 1987 but overdubbed in 1992. In between, these four discs are loaded with Orbison gems, mostly quite familiar, but some not so, spanning the 30-year period.

Also included are 12 previously unissued tracks, including the above-mentioned live "It's Over," an extended, over 9-minute solo acoustic track from 1956 - "Guitar Pull Medley: I Want You, I Need You, I Love You/ I Was The One/That's All Right/Mary Lou/You're My Baby," a version of Little Richard's "Tutti Frutti" (also from 1956), a live performance of "Land Of A Thousand Dances" from 1972 and eight demos.

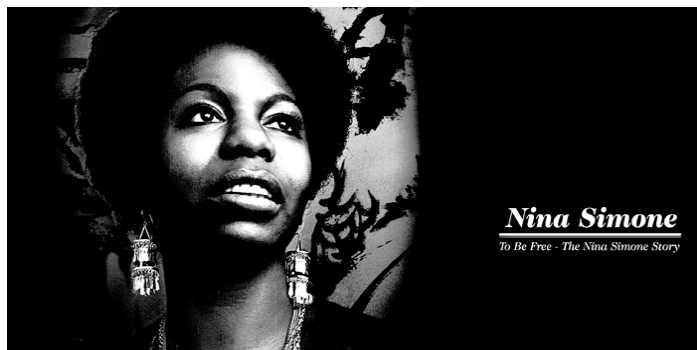


One track with the Traveling Wilburys and his recording of "In Dreams" from the movie "Blue Velvet" and his duet with k.d. Lang, "Crying" are also in the set, as well as cuts from Roy's final album, "Mystery Girl" and songs from the TV special "A Black And White Night Live," which found Orbison in the company of some very well-known guests. The final disc also includes some songs from his posthumous album, "The King Of Hearts" as well as his tracks from films such as "Insignificance," "The End Of Violence" and "Less Than Zero."

The enclosed 80-page book is loaded with color and black & white pictures with three sets of liner notes and testimonial statements from a long list of musicians, including k.d. Lang, Bonnie Raitt, Dolly Parton, Tom Petty, Elvis Costello, Neil Diamond, Eric Clapton, Bono, Chuck Berry, Tom Waits and many others. It also includes photos of the album, or CD, covers, or the 45-rpm discs for the early material, plus the recording dates and info.

Roy's widow, Barbara Orbison, was the executive producer for this release, and it was compiled by Roy's son, Roy Kelton Orbison Jr. It comes in a limited edition, very attractive longbox covered in white linen, and certainly has all the ingredients for a very classy gift. Nicely done!

Bill Wahl



NINA SIMONE

To Be Free: The Nina Simone Story RCA / LEGACY BOX SET

This 3-CD plus 1-DVD box set will be a welcome gem for anyone who likes the late, great singer/pianist Nina Simone. With 51 tracks, eight of which have never been released until now, this set covers her recording years from 1957 through 1978, plus one from 1993, on several labels such as Bethlehem, Colpix, Philips, RCA, PM, CTI and Elektra. There are also nine more performance clips on the fourth disc, a DVD that is an Emmy-nominated overview of Nina's music and career done back in 1970.

The music on the three CDs starts off with three songs recorded in 1957 for Bethlehem Records, including "Mood Indigo" and "I Loves You Porgy," followed by four for the Colpix label recorded in 1959 and 1960. Then, after the first of the previously unreleased tracks, "When Malindy Swings/Swing Low Sweet Chariot," which was recorded live at the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival, we hear seven tracks from her recordings for the Philips label in 1964-65; here she moves from jazz standards to songs such as "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" and Screamin' Jay Hawkins' "I Put A Spell On You," some with arrangements that included strings.

In 1967 she began a lengthy association with RCA Records, which is represented with 24 tracks finishing Disc

1, covering most of Disc 2 and a good part of Disc 3. In the mid part of Disc 2 we are treated to four 1969 tracks from a German concert Nina did with a guitarist Al Shakman, bassist Gene Perla and drummer Don Alias, plus added percussionists on the last two, later released on Perla's PM Records. After the fruitful RCA period, the third disc here ends with two previously unreleased tracks, "Nina" and "Zungo," recorded at Philharmonic Hall, NYC on July of 1973. Then there is the song "Baltimore" from her 1978 CTI album, and "A Single Woman," which she recorded for Elektra in 1993. Nina could take any song she felt like and make it her own unique vehicle. She was fantastic live, and would often change a particular song quite a bit from one performance to the next. Her repertoire included songs from several genres, from jazz to blues, R&B, gospel, folk, rock, pop, Broadway, movie songs, protest songs, French, African, Reggae and more. The fact that most of the tracks these discs are live makes this set an even more enjoyable experience. The previously unreleased tracks are treasures, including the songs mentioned above, plus her take on "Let It Be Me" and Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne" and others.

Then when you consider the DVD with footage from several rare performance, either in a studio or at clubs, and clips from some interviews with Nina giving an insight into her unique personality, you have an absolutely first class box set that would make a perfect gift for anyone you know who enjoys Nina Simone. If you fit that bill, then go ahead and treat yourself as well. If you really want to make statement, pick up a copy of the Jazz Icons Nina Simone DVD reviewed by Ron Weinstock in this issue and give them both together.

Sadly, Nina Simone, an artist who was always way ahead of her time, passed away in 2003 at the age of 70 at her home in the town of Carry-le-Rouet in Southern France. This set is Highly recommended.

Bill Wahl



MILES DAVIS

Kind Of Blue: 50th Anniversary Collector's edition COLUMBIA/LEGACY CD/DVD/LP BOXED SET

Columbia/Legacy continues in its longstanding tradition of releasing a Miles Davis box set in time for the holidays. This year the focus is on one of the all time finest jazz albums, "Kind of Blue." Originally released in 1959, this album has been issued several times since CDs appeared on the market in the mid 1980s. While the original CD incarnation sounded quite awful, as most albums transferred to CD did back then, each subsequent

release offered improved sound as technology advanced. This new release offers the best of today's sound technologies, plus a host of extra tracks.

Disc One contains the original five album selections – “So What,” “Freddie Freeloader,” “Blue In Green,” “All Blues” and “Flamenco Sketches” followed by an alternate take of “Flamenco Sketches,” which was previously issued on the first Columbia Miles Davis box set in 1988, “Miles Davis: The Columbia Years 1955-1985.” Then there are what is known as ‘studio sequences’ for each of the five titles, and one ‘false start.’ These range from anywhere between 11 seconds to close to two minutes and give an insight into the way in which Miles and the musicians related in the studio as these songs were being recorded. Now these were not just ordinary musicians by any means. Anyone familiar with this album knows this was an all-star cast of musicians who remain legends of jazz today. Miles was joined by Cannonball Adderley on alto sax, John Coltrane on tenor sax, Bill Evans on piano, Paul Chambers on bass and Jimmy Cobb on drums. Wynton Kelly replaces Evans on piano for “Freddie Freeloader only.”

Disc two contains six additional tracks with the same musicians. The first five are from a May 1958 studio session which were scattered over various albums, but were issued together on the Legacy box set “Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961” back in 2000. While Bill Evans and Cannonball were on those tracks, the final piece, track 6, has Cannonball out and Wynton Kelly replaces Evans on piano. This is an over 17-minute performance of “So What” performed live at the Kurhaus, Den Haag, Holland from April of 1960, and it is quite a blowout, with Coltrane really taking off. This is the first authorized release of this track, and it is quite the finish to this gem of a set of CDs.

The DVD included in the set is titled “Celebrating A Masterpiece: Kind Of Blue” and it incorporates material from the 2004 documentary “Made In Heaven.” It opens with a slew of musicians, producers and writers offering their views in one or two sentences on the greatness of the “Kind Of Blue” album, its impact on not just jazz, but music in general, its longevity, the music on the album, the musicians and the development of the songs. It offers black and white photos of the recording sessions, and very short excerpts of radio interviews with Bill Evans and Cannonball Adderley, both of whom have long passed on. Some of the people seen in the interview clips are Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, David Liebman, the late Shirley Horn and Jackie McLean, Horace Silver, Carlos Santana and hip-hop artist Q-Tip along with many more. There are also some very short clips of the band Miles’ band performing. Then there is a complete 26-minute black & white appearance on “Robert Herridge Theatre: The Sound of Miles Davis,” which was a CBS TV program broadcast in 1960. The first part features Miles, ‘Trane, Cannonball, Kelly, Chambers and Cobb playing a 10-minute version of “So What” followed by three songs with Gil Evans conducting an orchestra which featured Miles, ‘Trane, Chambers and Cobb. These songs, “The Duke,” “Blues For Pablo” and “New Rhumba” are heard on the “Miles Ahead” album in their original versions.

The DVD closes with 17 photos of the “Kind Of Blue” sessions taken by Columbia staff photographer Don Hunstein.

This special collector's edition also comes with the original 12-inch LP package with the record pressed on 180-gram blue vinyl. The set is packaged in a 12-inch slipcase box along with a 60-page ‘perfect bound’ book with essays, annotations, discographical data, photographs and an envelope with memorabilia. There is also a 33x33 foldout poster of Miles inside. I can't really comment on the box itself, or the CD packaging as I am working off an advance copy with just the discs due to time constraints with the release date, but it is out now as you are reading this.

So, in closing, this special collector's edition would make an excellent gift for any real Miles fans you might know. If you search the net, you should be able to find a decent price.

Bill Wahl



THE ULTIMATE GIFT FOR ANY BLUES FAN!

The advertisement features a large, stylized graphic of a cruise ship on a blue background. The ship is white with two smokestacks emitting white smoke. Above the ship, the text 'Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise' is written in a cursive font. Below the ship, the word 'BLUESIN'' is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text 'The World's Only Fully Chartered Blues Cruise!' is written in a smaller font, followed by 'BluesCruise.com • 888-BLUESIN' in a bold, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a black background.

LET'S GO

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