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# jazz & blues report

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**The 2006 Rock and Roll  
Hall of Fame & Museum  
American Music  
Masters Series**

**ROY ORBISON**

# jazz & blues report

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# ROY ORBISON

*American Music Masters Series*

## Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Announces Eleventh Annual American Music Masters Series "Only the Lonely: The Life and Music of Roy Orbison"

**Weeklong tribute coincides with Sony/Legacy re-release  
of Orbison's music, the performer's 70th birthday  
and the Museum's "Haunting and Yearning" Exhibit**

It is time again for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's annual American Music Masters Series weeklong tribute. Though not jazz or blues, Roy Orbison carved a niche all his own and became a true legend of American music.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and Case Western Reserve University will celebrate the legacy of Roy Orbison during the Eleventh Annual American Music Masters Series this October 30 through November 4. This 2006 American Music Masters series, "Only the Lonely: The Life and Music of Roy Orbison," will pay tribute to a performer who has been described as "rock and roll's Caruso."

Orbison was a pioneer of the dark, sophisticated and solitary side of rock and roll. He possessed a three-octave range and sang in a soaring, operatic tenor. A balladeer with a timeless quality to his music, Orbison specialized in heartbreaking musical meditations on the subject of love. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987 and would have been 70 on April 23, 2006.

Though the Texas-born singer/guitarist briefly recorded for Sun Records where he had one modest hit, "Ooby Dooby," Orbison never really fit in with the rowdy rockabilly crowd. Early on, he enjoyed success as a songwriter, placing songs with Jerry Lee Lewis, the Everly Brothers and Buddy Holly. After signing with Nashville-based Monument Records in 1960,

his own career took off. Orbison's sumptuous, sophisticated pop hits include "Only the Lonely," "Blue Bayou" and "It's Over." On the rock and roll side, he cut his biggest hit, "Oh, Pretty Woman," in 1964.

The 11th Annual American Music Masters week begins on October 30 and extends through November 4. The schedule of events includes:

**Monday October 30:** Roy Orbison on Film! A special screening of *Black and White Night*, preceded by a showing of rare television clips of Orbison performances. This event will take place at 7 p.m. in the Museum's 4th Floor Theater and will be open to the public. The evening will be introduced by the Rock Hall's Warren Zanes, vice president of education and public programs. This event is free with a reservation. Email [education@rockhall.org](mailto:education@rockhall.org) or call 216.515.8426 to RSVP.

**Tuesday, October 31:** An Evening with Bill Dees. With Roy Orbison, Bill Dees co-wrote "It's Over," "Oh, Pretty Woman," "Ride Away" and more. Dees will be the subject of an in-depth interview in the Museum's 4th Floor Theater at 7 p.m. This event is free with a reservation. You can either Email [education@rockhall.org](mailto:education@rockhall.org) or call 216.515.8426 to RSVP.

**Wednesday, November 1:** Orbison from Every Angle: Panel Discussion with special guests in the Museum's 4th Floor Theater at 7:00 p.m. This event is free with a reservation. Email [education@rockhall.org](mailto:education@rockhall.org) or call 216.515.8426 to RSVP.



**Thursday, November 2:** An Evening with Joe Melson With Roy Orbison, Joe Melson wrote such Orbison classics as "Uptown," "Only the Lonely," "Blue Angel," "Crying," "Blue Bayou" and many more. He will be the subject of an in-depth interview in the Museum's 4th Floor Theater at 7:00 p.m. This event is free with a reservation. Email [education@rockhall.org](mailto:education@rockhall.org) or call 216.515.8426 to RSVP.

**Friday, November 3:** At Wilbert's in Cleveland! Live Interview at 8:00 p.m. with Fred Foster, producer of Roy Orbison's Monument-era hits, followed by live music in honor of Roy Orbison. Music will be provided by the Ryan Humbert Band and the Truly Lover Trio. Tickets are \$5 and will be available at the door or in advance at Wilbert's.

**Saturday, November 4:** Daylong Conference at Case Western Reserve University's Ford Auditorium, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Participants will include Billy Pat Ellis of the Teen Kings (one of Roy's first groups), Virgil Johnson of the Velvets, a vocal group discovered by Orbison, Grammy-winning author Colin Escott, former Sun Records engineer Cowboy Jack Clement, Sun Records guitar slinger Roland Janes, Fred Foster, former members of Orbison's road bands, including Buddy Buie, Rodney Justo, Terry Widlake, and Bucky Barrett, author Chet Flippo, and author Peter Lehman. Tickets are \$30 will be available to Museum members starting Friday, September 21 through Ticketmaster and the Museum box office. Tickets for the general public will go on sale Wednesday, September 27 also through Ticketmaster and the Museum box office.

**Saturday, November 4 - 8 p.m. at Playhouse Square's State Theater:** A tribute concert, in honor of the great Roy Orbison. The concert will feature Raul Malo (formerly of the Mavericks), Ricky Skaggs, the Velvets, Patty Griffin, the Crickets (with Sonny Curtis), Mandy Barnett, Cowboy Jack Clement and Billy Burnette, who will serve as the bandleader for the night. More surprise artists will be announced over the coming weeks. Tickets are \$30, \$40 and \$50. Museum members can purchase tickets for the tribute concert at 216.515.8427 starting Thursday, September 21. Tickets go on sale to the general public on Wednesday, September 27 through [tickets.com](http://tickets.com) and at Playhouse Square.

**Roy Orbison Exhibit Currently Open at Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum:**

An exhibit, entitled "Haunting & Yearning: the Life and Music of Roy Orbison," opened to the public on April 19, 2006 in the Museum's Circular Gallery. The exhibit includes handwritten lyrics and set lists, production notes, handbills, clothing, rare records, instruments, pieces from Orbison's model plane collection and other personal artifacts. It will remain open through December 31, 2006.

The exhibit coincides with the release of Legacy Records Roy Orbison Reissue Project. The first Legacy releases are Black & White Night, the 1987

star-studded concert originally aired as an HBO-Cinemax special, and the long-awaited The Essential Roy Orbison, the first-ever "best of" collection spanning Orbison's entire career. Black & White Night and The Essential Roy Orbison are currently in stores.

During his remarkable career, Roy Orbison received multiple Grammy awards including the prestigious Lifetime Achievement award and is also a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame. In 1990, two years after his death, Roy received a Grammy for best male vocalist for his performance of "Oh! Pretty Woman" from Black & White Night. The love and respect for the writer and singer, Roy Orbison, didn't end the day he died in December of 1988, and it is still ongoing.

The singer was enjoying a successful comeback, on his own and with the Traveling Wilburys, when he died of a heart attack on December 6, 1988.

The American Music Masters series, a co-production of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, celebrates the lives and careers of artists who changed the shape and sound of American culture. Each year, the series explores the legacy of one of those pioneering figures in a range of events that includes Museum exhibits, lectures, films, a major conference and a tribute concert benefiting the Rock Hall's Education Department. Drawing together experts, artists, fans and friends, these events aim to provide new perspectives on some of the most beloved and influential musicians of the past century. The American Music Masters® series began in 1996 when the museum paid tribute to Woody Guthrie with a 10-day celebration of his life and legacy. Other American Music Masters® series honorees have included: the father of country music, Jimmie Rodgers in 1997; blues legend, Robert Johnson in 1998; rhythm and blues pioneer, Louis Jordan in 1999; the legendary Muddy Waters in 2000; the "Empress" Bessie Smith in 2001; Hank Williams, the first country western superstar in 2002; Buddy Holly in 2003; folk-blues artist Lead Belly in 2004; and Sam Cooke in 2005.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is the nonprofit organization that exists to educate visitors, fans and scholars from around the world about the history and continuing significance of rock and roll music. It carries out this mission both through its operation of a world-class museum that collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets this art form and through its library and archives as well as its educational programs.

The Museum is open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. On Wednesdays the Museum is open until 9:00 p.m. Museum admission is \$20.00 for adults, \$14.00 for seniors (60+), \$11 for children (9-12) and children under 8 and Museum members are free.



# Bruce Hornsby at Cleveland's Allen Theatre



## Hornsby celebrates release of 'Intersections: 1985-2005' Career Retrospective with Solo Concert and Boxed Set Giveaway

Three-time Grammy winner Bruce Hornsby will appear in a special solo performance at the Allen Theatre, Playhouse Square Center, on Wednesday, October 11 at 8 p.m.

With more than 10 million records sold over his 20-year musical career, Hornsby draws from a wide array of musical influences, including jazz, pop, classical, bluegrass, and rock. His debut album, **The Way It Is** (recorded with his band the Range), went triple platinum and generated three Top 20 hits in 1986. That same year, Bruce Hornsby and the Range took home the Grammy for Best New Artist. Two more Grammys would follow: in 1989, when the single "Valley Road" (from the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's **Will The Circle Be Unbroken, Volume 11**) earned Best Bluegrass Record-

PAGE FOUR

ing; and in 1993, as "Barcelona Mona" (created with Branford Marsalis for the Barcelona Olympics) took home the award for Best Pop Instrumental.

In addition, Hornsby has played on more than 100 records, with the likes of Bob Dylan, Don Henley, Bob Seger, the Grateful Dead, Bela Fleck, Willie Nelson, and Bonnie Raitt – just to name a few. His songs have been performed and/or recorded by a variety of artists, including Willie Nelson, Don Henley, Tupac Shakur, Bob Dylan, Chaka Chan, Huey Lewis, Sara Evans and Leon Russell.

To celebrate his 20-year music career, Hornsby is embarking on a special solo tour, which will come to Playhouse Square Center's Allen Theatre on October 11.

Hornsby has also completed a deluxe box set collection, entitled *Intersections: 1985-2005*, released via RCA Legacy. The diversity of material on *Intersections* reflects the adventurousness of Hornsby's live performances, and this is where the box set and the upcoming tour dates will, well, "intersect" – as a special gift to each of the fans who have supported Hornsby's musical journey, each ticket for the upcoming solo concert includes a free copy of the *Intersections* box set (retail value \$49.95) which will be distributed to concert goers on the night of the concert. Save your ticket stubs; they will be used to redeem your box set!

To purchase tickets, (\$40 & \$35) you can visit the Playhouse Square Center Ticket Office, call 216.241.6000 or go online at [www.PlayhouseSquare.org](http://www.PlayhouseSquare.org). For group sales, please call 216.664.6050.

Photo of Bruce Hornsby by Jimmy Jenner, Jr. courtesy of Sony/BMG Records.

## Monterey Jazz Festival receives grants for restoration of historic archive recordings

**MONTEREY CA** – Dizzy Gillespie began a storied history when he opened the first night of the first Monterey Jazz Festival on October 3, 1958, blowing the "Star Spangled Banner" and introducing Louis Armstrong to the stage. In the 50 years since

then, the same caliber of talent has graced the stages in Monterey, and each year's performances have been recorded for future use. But while the Monterey Jazz Festival has retained its vibrancy as it approaches its golden anniversary in 2007, the festival's archival recordings have been deteriorating. Efforts are well underway to restore these historic records.

To help preserve the Monterey Jazz Festival's audio recordings, several significant grantors have stepped forward with support totaling over \$350,000. The Monterey Jazz Festival is proud to announce that its archive collection has received a \$225,000 award in funding from the Federal Save America's Treasures Fund, in addition to \$93,393 from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and \$40,000 from the GRAMMY Foundation® in 2005. These grants comprise the bulk of a half-million dollar, multi-year MJF Archive Preservation Project in partnership with Stanford University to digitally reformat, catalogue, safely store, and make accessible the half-century of analog tapes in long-term facilities for future generations.

"I am excited about the grant support we have received from Save America's Treasures, the GRAMMY Foundation® and NHPRC," said MJF General Manager Tim Jackson. "These significant grants enable us to access our important jazz recordings and provide a testament to both the legacy of the Monterey Jazz Festival and the great artists who have performed here."

The collection of MJF recordings is an American treasure of irreplaceable live recordings of the greatest jazz musicians from the past half-century. Within the first decade alone, festival archivists collected one hundred audio recordings that include the 1960 debut of Jon Hendricks' "Evolution of the Blues" and Duke Ellington's "Suite Thursday"; the 1962 performances of Louis Armstrong and Harry James and the first appearance of Miles Davis in 1963. Appearing alongside these legends were fellow jazz masters Dave Brubeck, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Ben Webster, Quincy Jones, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Woody Herman, Coleman Hawkins, Gerry Mulligan, Thelonious Monk, and Jimmy Giuffrè.



The Monterey Jazz Festival Archive Collection has been housed in the Stanford University Archive of Recorded Sound (ARS) since 1985. The archives currently include over 1,200 sound recordings, 370 moving image materials, and paper-based records measuring a total of 130 linear feet. The MJF archives have high research value and will be accessible to the public as their condition improves.

Lauding the support from Save America's Treasures, NHPRC and GRAMMY Foundation®, legendary pianist and 2006 MJF Commission Artist Dave Brubeck said, "It's unfortunate that we have lost so many jazz greats over the years . . . but it's wonderful to know that their music lives on in recordings. It's exciting to me that the digital technology now available will insure that future generations may access, enjoy and learn from our musical history."

Noted pianist Shelly Berg – who works closely with the Monterey Jazz Festival's Education Programs and serves as Chair of Jazz Studies at USC's Thornton School of Music— agrees with Brubeck's assessment. "The Monterey Jazz Festival has been a beacon for jazz music, showcasing the world's greatest artists to enthralled audiences for decades," says Berg. "The recorded history amassed by the festival is a priceless resource."

The Monterey Jazz Festival thanks Save America's Treasures Fund, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and the GRAMMY Foundation® for its generous support and is proud to collaborate with the Stanford University Archive of Recorded Sound on this historic endeavor.

## Blue Note Records Releases Classic Jazz Tracks as Ringtones

**NEW YORK** – EMI Music's legendary jazz label Blue Note Records has begun releasing ring tones featuring riffs from some classic recordings by legendary artists including Thelonious Monk, Herbie Hancock, Art Blakey and Chet Baker. Part of a new program called "The Best of Blue Tones", this marks the first time these tracks have been made available for the mobile platform, and it will give jazz fans an opportunity to personalize their mobile lives with the classic jazz tracks they know and love.

"Jazz fans of any age can be part of the mobile music phenomenon now. 'The Best of Blue Tones' lets fans use classic recordings like 'Dat Dere', 'Straight no Chaser' or 'My Funny Valentine' to jazz up their phone and express their personality," said Bruce Lundvall, President of EMI Jazz & Classics. "It's also a great example of how we continually keep the Blue Note vault relevant."

Lundvall worked closely with members of the Blue Note team to personally select the first installment of ringtones, even helping to identify the unique hook that should be used for each track.

"We've only just scratched the surface of the classic Blue Note catalog with this first batch," said Jeff Zakim, Director of New Media for Blue Note. "Jazz buffs are in for a real treat as this is just the first of many ringtones we plan to make available."

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Founded in 1939, Blue Note built one of the most distinctive jazz catalogs throughout the 1950s and 60s, due to the impeccable A&R instincts of founder Alfred Lion who signed many of the giants of the music when they were still unknowns, and the crystalline sound quality engineered by the legendary Rudy Van Gelder.

Blue Note was consistently on the cutting edge of jazz, starting with the label's early bebop recordings of Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis and Clifford Brown, and going on to define the now-famous "Blue Note Sound" with the incomparable hard bop sessions of Art Blakey and Horace Silver, the funky jazz hits of Lee Morgan and Herbie Hancock, and the grooving soul jazz of organists Jimmy Smith and Lonnie Smith. Blue Note also now oversees the great Pacific Jazz catalog, which is home to classic cool jazz recordings by such west coast musicians as Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan.

The following classic Blue Note tunes are starting to be made available to major carriers in the US and will be made available internationally shortly as part of "The Best of Blue Tones" program:

Art Blakey - Dat Dere  
 Art Blakey - Moanin'  
 Clifford Brown - Daahoud  
 Clifford Brown - Joy Spring  
 Herbie Hancock - Cantaloup Island  
 Herbie Hancock - Watermelon Man  
 Blue Mitchell - Fungii Mama  
 Thelonious Monk - Straight No Chaser

Lou Donaldson - The Blues Walk  
 Lou Donaldson - Alligator Boogaloo  
 Hank Mobley - The Turnaround  
 Kenny Burrell - Chitlins Con Carne  
 Chet Baker - My Funny Valentine  
 Gerry Mulligan - Bernie's Tune  
 Lee Morgan - The Sidewinder  
 Miles Davis - Move  
 Ornette Coleman - Broad Way Blues  
 Ronnie Laws - Always There  
 Jimmy Smith - Back at the Chicken Shack  
 Sonny Clark - Cool Struttin'  
 Lonnie Smith - Son Of Ice Bag  
 Bobby Hutcherson - Ummh  
 Freddie Hubbard - Crisis  
 Horace Silver - Song For My Father

Visit Blue Note Records at [www.bluenote.com](http://www.bluenote.com).

## 2006 International Songwriting Competition Deadline Quickly Approaching

Have Your Songs Heard By Tom Waits, Brian Wilson, Robert Smith (The Cure), Craig Morgan, Cassandra Wilson, and Many More!

The deadline for ISC is quickly approaching, so enter your songs now!

Entries must be postmarked on or before October 16

One of the largest and most prestigious songwriting competitions in the world, ISC gives away over \$150,000 in cash and prizes to 56 winners. The Overall Grand Prize includes \$25,000 (US) in cash - the largest cash Grand Prize of any songwriting competition in the world - and \$20,000 in prizes. If that's not enough, ISC also gives away a full scholarship to Berklee College of Music's Five-Week Summer Performance Program to the First Place winner of the Teen category. ISC is open to both amateur and professional songwriters of every level, and all musicians, artists, and songwriters are invited to submit their original songs.

ISC provides the perfect opportunity for artists, bands, and songwriters looking to gain recognition and have their songs heard by some of the most influential members of the music industry, including the top executives of 14 record labels and legendary artists such as Tom Waits, Brian Wilson (Beach Boys), Robert Smith (the Cure), Jerry Lee Lewis, and Rosanne Cash, just to name a few.

"We've always been impressed with the talented songwriters who participate in the ISC. This is a great A source to find new artists." - Monte Lipman (President, Universal Records).

Pitchfork, one of the music industry's leading tastemakers, adds, "If ambushing your favorite bands with UPS'd cassettes and CD-Rs tossed on stage hasn't gotten your band noticed yet, the 2006 International Songwriting Competition should be right up your alley...Hell, the ISC is parked in your alley giving away free ice cream...Sheesh, talk about the chance of a



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# THE RUDY VAN GELDER EDITIONS

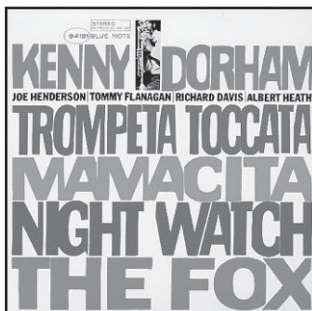
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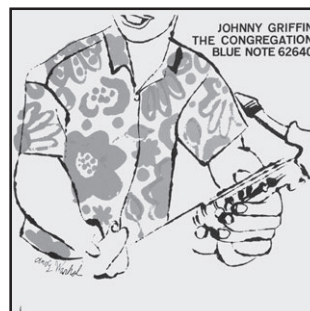
From 1953 to 1967, Alfred Lion produced a body of work that ranks as the most innovative series of recordings in modern jazz. Almost all of these masterpieces were documented by the extraordinary Rudy Van Gelder; a self-taught engineer who more than set a new standard. Devoid of caution or timidity, he captured the full power and rich sound of jazz ensembles with dazzling clarity. His contribution to the focused approach that Blue Note took at every stage of any album was immeasurable. Decades later, Rudy agreed to take a second look at the original recordings, bringing them into the digital domain with the same skill and focus. More RVG Editions have just been released. If you think you've heard these gems before, listen again.



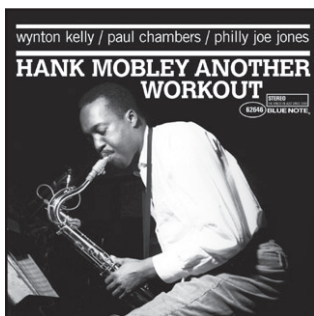
*Royal Flush, Donald Byrd*



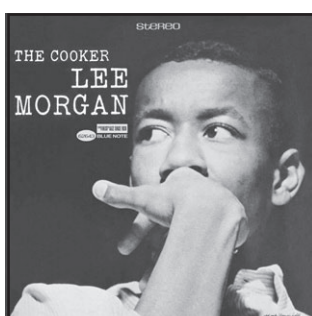
*Trompeta Toccata, Kenny Dorham*



*The Congregation, Johnny Griffin*



*Another Workout, Hank Mobley*

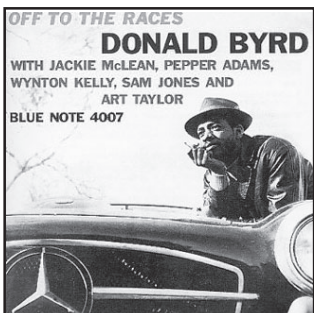


*The Cooker, Lee Morgan*

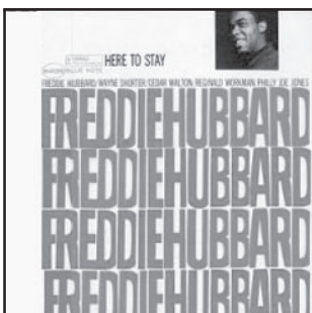


*It Might as Well be Spring, Ike Quebec*

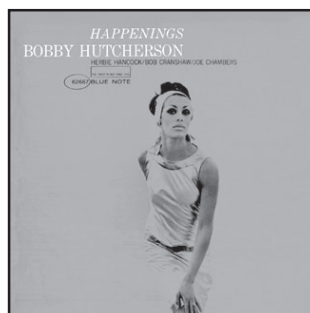
## Plus...Six More RVG Titles Just Released September 12



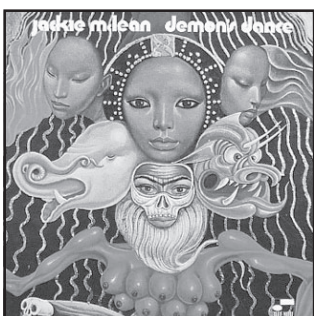
*Off to the Races, Donald Byrd*



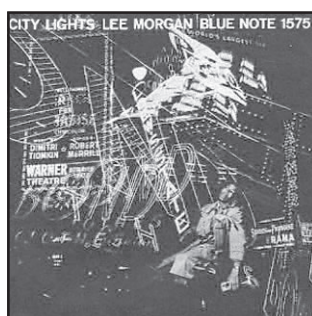
*Here to Stay, Freddie Hubbard*



*Happenings, Bobby Hutcherson*



*Demon's Dance, Jackie McLean*



*City Lights, Lee Morgan*



*Doin' the Thing at the Village Gate, Horace Silver*

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lifetime."

In addition to the cash and prizes, ISC winners also benefit greatly from the industry exposure and media attention of winning a competition as prestigious as ISC. Over 450 publishing companies, record labels, and film and TV companies requested a copy of the recently released ISC 2005 Compilation CD (which included songs by the Grand Prize and First Place winners).

Many ISC entrants' careers have flourished since winning ISC: Patrice Pike (from CBS TV's *Rock Star: Supernova*); Tara Slone (from CBS TV's *Rock Star: INXS*); Carbon Leaf (signed to Vanguard Records); Amanda Palmer of Dresden Dolls (signed to Roadrunner Records); Tomi Swick (signed to Warner Music Canada); Andrew Bird (signed to Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe Records); Deb Talen and Steve Tannan of *The Weepies* (signed to Network Records); Chris Sernel of *Escape From Earth* (Winner of the MTV/COKE "Make It Real" Contest); Michael Flynn (signed to J Records); Troy Verges, Blair Daily and Gordie Sampson (their song "Paris" is featured on Faith Hill's latest album); Dave Berg (he co-wrote recent hit singles by Reba McEntire and Rodney Atkins); and more.

The complete list of ISC 2006 judges includes:

**Recording Artists:** Brian Wilson; Tom Waits; Rosanne Cash; Sean Paul; Mark Chesnutt; Jerry Lee Lewis; Frank Black (Pixies); Robert Smith (The Cure); Cassandra Wilson; Isaac Brock (Modest Mouse); Medeski Martin Wood; Craig Morgan; John Mayall; John Scofield; Amy Ray (Indigo Girls); Darryl McDaniels (Run DMC); MercyMe; Macy Gray; Charlie Musselwhite; Peter Hook (New Order); Blue Man Group; Tiësto; and Jeff Stinco (Simple Plan)

**Music Industry Executives:** Charlie Walk (President, Epic Records); Monte Lipman (President, Universal Records); Mona Scott-Young (President, Violator Records); Cameron Strang (President, New West Records); Steve Lillywhite (Sr. VP A, Columbia Records and Producer - credits include U2, The Rolling Stones, Dave Matthews Band,

Phish, Peter Gabriel, and more); Alexandra Patsavas (Owner, The Chop Shop Music Supervision - credits include The OC, Grey's Anatomy, Without A Trace, Carnivale, Rescue Me); Barbara Sedun (VP Creative, EMI Music Publishing Canada); Bruce Iglauer (Founder/President, Alligator Records); Cory Robbins (Founder/President, Robbins Entertainment); Betty Pino (DJ, WAMR Miami, pioneer of Latin radio); Angel Carrasco (President, 605 Discos and Sr. VP A, Sony BMG Latin America); Thomas Brooman (Co-Founder/Artistic Director, WOMAD); Dan Storper (President, Putumayo World Music); Danny Epstein (Music Supervisor, Sesame Street/Sesame Workshop); Tara Griggs-Magee (Executive VP Gospel/Urban Music, Sony Records); Emily Wittmann (VP, Nick Records); Leib Ostrow (CEO, Music For Little People); Larry Willoughby (VP A, Capitol Records Nashville) and Manolo Gonzalez (Sr VP Regional Mexican A and National Promotion, Univision Records)

Entrants may submit their songs into any of the 18 categories: Pop/Top 40, AAA (Adult Album Alternative), Rock, Country, Americana, R/Hip-Hop, Blues, Folk/Singer-Songwriter, Jazz, Gospel/Christian, Latin Music, Instrumental, Dance/Electronica, World Music, Children's Music, Lyrics Only, Teen (18 and younger), and Performance.

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For an entry form or to enter, go to [www.songwritingcompetition.com](http://www.songwritingcompetition.com) or call 615.251.4441 for more information.

# BLUES WATCH

By Mark Smith

**New Release blues....** The fall is yielding a bumper crop of new blues releases. Get out your checkbook for a few of these: **Tony Joe White-** *Uncovered*; **The Robert Cray Band-** *Live From Across the Pond*; **Rory Block-** *The Lady and Mr. Johnson*; **Chris Smither-** *Leave the Light On*; **Tab Benoit-** *Best of the Bayou Blues*; **Ray Charles-** *Ray Sings, Basie Swings*; **Jeremy Spencer-** *Precious Little*; **Fiona Boyes-** *Lucky 13*; **Anthony Gomes-** *Music is the Medicine*; **Mark Hummel-** *Ain't Easy No More*; **Indigenous-** *Chasing the Sun*; **Various Artists-** *American Music: Hightone Records Story*; **Johnny Nicholas-** *Texas All-Star: Big Band Bash*; **The Kelly Richey Band-** *Speechless*; **Joe Louis Walker-** *Playin Dirty*; **Barrelhouse Chuck and the all Star Blues Band Featuring Kim Wilson-** *Got My Eyes on You*; **Canned Heat-** *Instrumentals 1967-1996*; **Julien Kaspar Band-** *The New Imperial*; **Evie Sands-** *Estate of Mind*; **Marvin Sease-** *Candy Licker: The Sex & Soul of Marvin Sease*; **Various Artists-** *Blind Pig Records 30th Anniversary Collection*; **Calvin Owens-** *I Ain't Gonna Be Yo Dog No Mo, Vol.2*; **Downchild Blues Band-** *Blood Run Hot*; **John Mayall-** *Picking the Blues: Boogie Woogie Pioneers*; **Cleveland Fats-** *The Way Things Go*; **Bernard Allison, Larry McCray, Carl Weathersby & Lucky Peterson-** *Triple Fret*; **Mitch Kashmar-** *Wake Up & Worry*; **Dirty Dozen Brass Band-** *What's Going On?*; **Mitch Woods-** *Big Easy Boogie*; **Hans Theessink Band-** *Bridges*; **Jonny Lang-** *Turn Around*; **Deanna Bogart-** *Real Time*; **Dr. Duke Tomatoe-** *You've Got the Problem...* That's it for this month. See ya!

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# Jazz & Blues Report 2006 Gift Guide • Part 2

For most of the past 30 years, we have featured our annual Holiday Gift Guide on the November-December issue. This year we are changing that. The 2006 Gift Guide begins with this issue and will carry over the next issues through the end of the year. That would include the November-December print issue as well as the October and December web issues available for download at [jazz-blues.com](http://jazz-blues.com). We'll probably wait until November to call it the Holiday Gift Guide. After all...it is still going to be warm, sunny and nice outside (or, so we hope) for quite some time...so no need to rush things. We will also be featuring a stand alone Gift Guide on our site which will combine the items covered in these columns along with boxed sets, DVDs and other goodies from previous issues, and even earlier years, which we feel would make great gifts. You'll also note that we go beyond jazz and blues to feature items that would make great gift ideas for your friends or family who might not be jazz or blues fans at all. Keep in mind, these in our regular issues are all newly-reviewed titles, so although they appear in the gift guide, you'll probably want to pick up some of these for yourself. You'll see more next month, but it all starts now!



## NINA SIMONE Live At Montreux 1976 EAGLE EYE DVD

Nina Simone, known as the "High Priestess of Soul," was one of the great singers in the history of American music and was also an accomplished pianist. Nina, born Eunice Waymon in 1933, first began singing gospel in church and later dreamed of one day being America's first black classical pianist. Though she studied at Julliard for a time, she was unable to continue for

financial reasons and began performing in nightclubs where she turned to jazz and blues. She changed her name to Nina (Spanish for little girl) Simone (after French actress Simone Signoret) and the rest is American music history.

As the years went on, Nina also mixed R&B, soul, classical, show tunes, world, pop music and more into her repertoire as she shied away from classifications. She was a majestic woman with a commanding presence and a deep, breathy voice. When she was on stage...she *owned* it.

This just-released DVD captures her in concert mostly at her 1976 Montreux Jazz Festival appearance, just after she had been living in Africa. Elegantly dressed in black, she enters to thunderous applause, then stands tall and stares at the audience until the room is quiet before she sits at the piano and begins to play. No matter what the song, this concert was magnificent throughout. Her version of "Little Girl Blue" is simply outstanding, and she can even make the pop song of the time "Feelings" sound good.

The video aspect of this DVD is extremely well done. I am told by a friend who knows some stuff about the subject that "it was probably filmed on U-matic video, the standard of the time & a real dog of a media, and it is breathlessly transferred to 2006 digital media." It is all Greek to me, but Greek is good because the camera work is clear, focused and often offers closeups of her face and hands at the piano. What else do we need?

After the seven songs (two are a medley) from 1976, there are six more bonus tracks – two from her Montreux performance in 1987 and four from her final appearance at the Swiss Festival in 1990. No question, they are very good as well, but it is the 1976 concert that makes this DVD a must-have for Nina's fans. Nina Simone retired in France after performing into the 90s. She passed away in 2003 at the age of 70.

*Bill Wahl*



## October

FRI 6 .....	MIKE LENZ BAND
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FRI 13 ....	ARMSTRONG BEARCAT BAND
SAT 14 ....	THE TONY KOUSSA JR. BAND
FRI 20 ....	THE CHOSEN FEW
SAT 21 ....	THE TRAVIS HADDIX BAND
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	12 BRENT HOPPER & BRITTANY REILLY ACOUSTIC ROOTS MUSIC	10 BRENT HOPPER & BRITTANY REILLY ACOUSTIC ROOTS MUSIC
	26 ERNIE KRIVDA & THE FAT TUESDAY BIG BAND	17 KING BAUMGARDT'S BLUES BAND FEATURING APRIL KING FROM GERMANY
		31 ERNIE KRIVDA & THE FAT TUESDAY BIG BAND
WEDNESDAYS	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
	6 J. P. & THE CHATFIELD BOYS	4 J.P. & THE CHATFIELD BOYS
	13 KENTUCKY THUNDER	11 KENTUCKY THUNDER
	20 NORTH OF TEXAS	18 LAWLESS
	27 ROGER "HURRICANE" WILSON	25 NORTH OF TEXAS
THURSDAYS	THE SAVANNAH JAM WITH BAD BOYS OF BLUES	

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## FATS WALLER

### If You Have to Ask, You Ain't Got It BLUEBIRD/LEGACY 3-CD SET

Thomas "Fats" Waller was one of the iconic figures of the first quarter century of Jazz and has been heavily re-issued over the years. As a result of the Sony/BMG merger, Bluebird/Legacy is releasing a three CD retrospective eponymously titled after the famed singer-pianist-composer. Each disc has twenty-two selections and is thematically organized.

A good many of the performances are by Fats Waller and Rhythm, a celebrated sextet whose personnel included (over the years) guitarist Al Casey, clarinetist Gene Sedric, Bill Coleman and more celebrated Herman Autrey on trumpet, Cedrick Wallace on bass and Yank Porter, Slick Jones and Arthur Trappier on drums. Many of the selections on these discs are in this format with Waller featured singing and on piano and the various horn players getting short solo space; and while a bit formula-based, Waller's ebullient vocals and dazzling piano playing sustain the listener's interest. There are a number of selections from the forties that have Waller in a big and setting and some solo instrumentals as well.

The first of the three discs is devoted to songs that Waller composed, often in the company of Andy Razaf or others. When going through the titles one is struck by the fact that he not only gave us such well known songs associated with him such as *Honeysuckle Rose* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, but also such classics as *Our Love Was Meant to Be*, *Squeeze Me* (with Clarence Williams), *The Joint is Jumpin'* (with J.C. Johnson), *Bessie Bessie Bessie*, *Cash for Your Trash* and *Up Jumped You With Love*. Waller brings wit, humor and tenderness to these with his vocals while the numbers swing with considerable Élan.

The Second Disc is all instrumental, opening with a solo pipe organ instrumental rendition of *St. Louis Blues* along with a couple other numbers on the pipe organ. The next ten performances are features that display his considerable mastery of the stride piano including such dazzling Waller originals as *Numb Fingers*, *Smashing Thirds*, and *African Ripples*, along with renditions of Hoagy Carmichael's *Star Dust* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, concluding with a stunning rendition of James P. Johnson's classic stride composition, *Carolina Shout*. After several group instrumentals, Waller then is heard on electric organ on a couple of originals, including *Jitterbug Waltz*, which show his reflective side as a composer. The instrumental disc concludes with an all star group swinging on *Honeysuckle Rose*.

The final disc is devoted to Waller's performances of songs from Tin Pan Alley. Waller was celebrated for his ability to take some of the most dreadful songs and make musical magic, all the while mocking the material, but not everything he recorded from Tin Pan Alley would be dross in the hands of others. So while some of these tunes may be remembered solely because of Waller, such as *Hold Tight (Want Some Seafood, Mama)*, many of the tunes here are pretty well known including (*I'll Be Glad When You're Dead*) *You Rascal You* (an All Star performance with Waller on piano behind Jack Teagarden), *I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter*, *Dinah*, *Christo-*

*pher Columbus*, *Darktown Strutters Ball*, *Your Feet's Too Big*, and *T'aint Nobody's Biz-Ness If I Do*. Waller attacks these with his usual mix of ebullient vocals, buoyant stride piano with the strong swing backing of his Rhythm and the other supporting musicians.

Although I worked off an advance copy of the discs to get this done in time, the actual release (set for 9/26/06) will also include a 100-page booklet with extensive liner notes penned by Dan Morganstern and scanned reproductions of photographs from the collection of Waller's last manager, Ed Kirkeby. The three discs in this set provide a solid overview of a legendary jazz performer and will serve as a basic Waller release for a well-rounded jazz collection.

Ron Weinstock

## GARY BURTON AND MAKOTO OZONE

### Live at Montreux 2002

#### EAGLE EYE DVD

In one of a series of DVDs documenting Montreux Jazz Festival performances, vibraphonist Gary Burton and pianist Makoto Ozone deliver a scintillating and visually engaging 71-minute, 11-tune set in 2002.

Throughout, Burton announces tunes, initially explaining that the vibraphone was invented as recently as 1930 and, two years before this performance, all the important players were still living. Citing his four favorite vibists, Burton launches a lively, entertaining "history of jazz" segment, featuring gems by Cal Tjader ("Afro Blue"), Milt Jackson ("Bags' Groove"), Red Norvo ("Hole In the Wall") and Lionel Hampton ("Opus Half").

Superb filming by six cameras captures Burton's flowing four-mallet style, as well as Ozone's two-handed keyboard attack as he improvises in ragtime, stride, boogie-woogie and other piano styles. Both of these artists are talented leaders who have performed and recorded on their own as well as collaborating occasionally since first meeting in 1983 at Berklee College of Music. They are well-attuned to each other; their interactions are comfortable, seamless and reactive, making this a benchmark duo session and a more exciting performance than Burton's 1997 Montreux performance with Chick Corea.

The next segment of the Burton-Ozone performance features tunes from their 2002 recording project, *Virtuosi*, featuring their improvisations on suitable Classical tunes by Maurice Ravel, Domenico Scarlatti, Samuel Barber and others. Both instrumentalists are equally up to the task and these pieces, as well as a tango, a Gershwin concerto spotlighting Ozone, and the encore, round out their extremely satisfying stage performance.

This is a marvelous concert in Montreux history, one to be long-treasured and the informative liner notes add nicely to the package.

Nancy Ann Lee

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## BRUCE HORNSBY

### Intersections

#### RCA/LEGACY CD/DVD BOXED SET

Those who enjoy the music of pianist/singer/songwriter Bruce Hornsby through the many songs heard on radio or his CDs over the years will be thrilled with this new boxed set on RCA/Legacy. Inside the longbox you'll find four CDs and one DVD covering Hornsby's career from 1985 through late 2005. This is by no means a "greatest hits" set reissuing familiar versions of his many recordings. In fact, although his best-known songs are here, pretty much all of them are different versions, mostly live, making this set much more enjoyable for his fans old and new; as well as those remotely familiar with him.

Hornsby is one of those songwriter/performers who refuses to stick with one genre, much like Van Morrison and Big Al Anderson. That aspect keeps things very interesting as the music flows from song to song, disc to disc. In fact, When I first popped Disc 1 in, I followed it with 2, 3 and 4. After a short break, I watched Disc 5, the DVD, while eating dinner. I was sorry to see it all come to an end. Hornsby gets away with mixing rock, jazz, pop, bluegrass, country and whatever else he feels like in such a way that they all seem to belong together. He even mixes in some classical flavored songs on solo piano backed by an orchestra.

Of the 52 tracks on the CDs, 26 have never been released on CD; and most of the ones that were previously released are not his better-known songs. The 5 discs in set are loaded with treats, whether he be playing solo, with his band, with the Grateful Dead, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band or the members of the New York Philharmonic...or collaborating with Ornette Coleman, Branford Marsalis, Bonnie Raitt, Pat Metheny, Chaka Kahn, Ricky Skaggs, Roger Waters, Robbie Robertson and on...

While oftentimes a DVD included with a CD set is something you might watch once, or twice at most...that is not the case here. Though it starts out with his early videos, which admittedly do seem hokey by today's standards, they start to improve greatly by track 6, the first of three Spike Lee directed videos. Mixed among the Lee contributions are videos featuring Robbie Robertson, Chaka Kahn and Branford Marsalis. Then things begin to become even more interesting. Some of the highlights you'll get between tracks 13 and 23 are a studio performance of "Valley Road" with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and a host of live performances, including Bob Dylan's "The Mighty Quinn" with B.B. King and Lou Reed; a 1991 live performance with the Grateful Dead; another 1991 live show at the Legends of Guitar Festival in Spain with Hornsby joining Pink Floyd's Roger Waters for a version of PF's "Comfortably Numb;" a beautiful version of John Lennon's "Imagine" in Constitution Hall, Washington D.C. in '93; a live trio performance of Hornsby's "The Tide Will Rise" with Bonnie Raitt and Pat Metheny and a real treat for Clevelanders – a duo performance of "Star-Spangled Banner" with Branford Marsalis at the opening of the fifth game of the World Series in 1997 at Cleveland's Jacobs Field.

The enclosed 60-page booklet is loaded with information, mini posters and photos, plus some notes from Hornsby on the songs, most of them anyway, on all 5 discs. This would make an excellent gift for a rather wide range (no pun intended) of people. If you happen to read this in time, our Cleveland readers can get this boxed set for free by attending Hornsby's solo concert at the Allen Theatre, Playhouse Square on October 11. Visit [brucehornsby.com](http://brucehornsby.com) for other cities with the free boxed set deal for concertgoers.

Another excellent boxed set from the Legacy Records division of Sony-BMG.

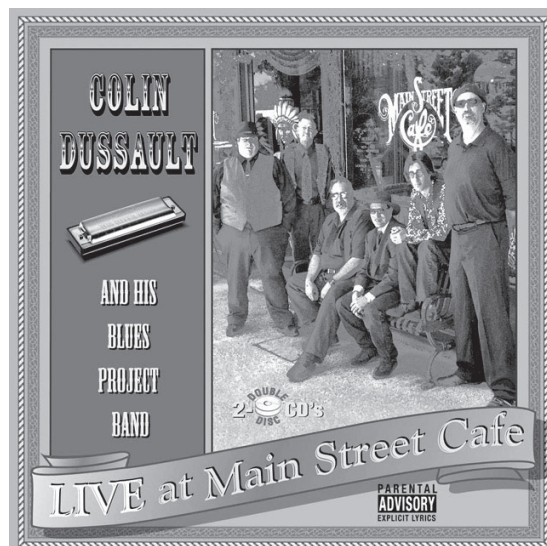
**Bill Wahl**

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## **DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND What's Going On SHOUT FACTORY**

Like others from their home city of New Orleans, the members of The Dirty Dozen Brass Band have been greatly affected by the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. They recorded this new album with some friends which reinterprets the classic Marvin Gaye album on a recording that is very relevant in light of the catastrophic events of last year in which the band members, like so many, lost their homes, and so much more.

More than their homes, they were distressed about the loss of their communities and personal treasures; photo albums and mementos of their travels were all destroyed. "I'm not talking about clothes and shoes and material things, but family albums," says Roger Lewis. "I have a 7-year-old daughter. I had pictures of myself as a child, but I can't share them with her because they were destroyed. All she's really going to know is her dad as a 64-year-old man."

The album opens with Chuck D rapping on the title track with a justified bitterness as the Dozen provides a sobering backing with Revert Andrews contributing a strong trombone solo. This is followed by a Betty Lavette take on *What's Happening Brother* as she sings "Are things really getting better like the newspaper says ... I just don't understand what's going on in this land ... will the Tigers win the pennant, do they stand a chance ..." with the tenor sax reaching to the higher registers behind her. *Flyin' High (In The Friendly Sky)*, is taken at a medium tempo with a rather nice rendering of it before the tempo picks up as the members chant "Help Me Somebody," with some nice spir-

ited playing as the tune rides out. Some nice trumpet leads *Save the Children* which also includes some nice sax work including Roger Lewis' baritone, and original member Kirk Douglas provides a foundation on the sousaphone and Jamie Mclean's guitar brings African flavoring and rhythm. Ivan Neville guests on *God Is Love*, as Joseph and Lewis add the deep bottom behind his vocal as the brass punctuate the lyrics. G. Love raps the lyrics *Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)* with the Dozen providing a sharp funk groove before they get a another groove going on *Right On*, as Revert Andrews takes the lead on trombone prior to Kevin Harris' tenor sax. The last instrumental, *Wholy Holy*, is rendered almost as a funeral dirge before they conclude with Guru rapping on *Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)*, concluding a very thoughtful and moving recording.

A portion of the proceeds from this CD will be donated to the **Tiptina's Foundation**, benefiting the musical community of New Orleans.

**Ron Weinstock**

## **MARK HUMMEL Ain't Easy No More ELECTRO-FI RECORDS**

West Coast harmonica wizard Mark Hummel has been increasing his visibility with his annual blues harmonica

packages, which have brought together a number of harmonica legends and led to several outstanding CDs documenting the tours. The shows are anchored around Hummel and his fine band of guitarist Charlie Wheal, bassist Steve Wolf and drummer Marty Dodson. Electro-Fi has just issued Hummel's Third album for the label, which will certainly delight his fans and blues harp fans as well.

With a mixture of Hummel's originals and some choice rearrangements of previously recorded blues, Hummel impresses most as a harp player and his band (augmented by horns on several tracks) is terrific supporting him. Hummel also writes some strong originals, including the topical *Big Easy (Ain't Easy No More)*, based on his reaction to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Hummel is a pleasant vocalist but his delivery does not match the outrage of the lyrics here nor does he

have the forcefulness to be completely convincing on Muddy Waters' *She's Got It*.

But on other tracks his delivery works better and there is really little to fault whether listening to his reworking of a Ray Charles jump blues *Get on the Right Track*, or a couple of fine Eddie Boyd songs, *You Got to Reap* and *Blues is Here to Stay*. Harp features include his originals *Harpoventilating*, and *Bird Brain*, and Little Sonny's *The Creeper Returns*, all of which showcase his driving, full-bodied playing.

Overall quite a fine album and my quibbles about his vocals on a couple tracks should not be taken too far as his vocals are easy to take. Recommended highly.

**Ron Weinstock**

## **MONTY ALEXANDER Concrete Jungle: The Music of Bob Marley TELARC**

Seven years after making his Telarc debut with the release of *Stir It Up*, Jamaican-born jazz pianist Monty Alexander, revisits his roots again with this 12-tune tribute to the reggae icon Bob Marley.

Recorded at Marley's own Tuff Gong Studios in late summer 2005, tunes penned by Marley, Alexander and others are reinterpreted by Alexander's piano-oriented arrangements. Beats retain the feel of Marley's music, yet they're more melodiousness and colorful, and allow for the individual musicianship of guitarist Wendel Farraro, bassist Hasson Shakur, drummer Herlin Riley and guests: vocalist Luciano, trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis, reggae drummer Rolando Wilson, bassist Glenroy Browne, and other musicians (including some who played with Marley).

Highlights abound. Alexander's "Nothing But Trouble" spotlights Marsalis playing the melody head in the New Orleans style before the catchy reggae-blues beat is laid down. Marsalis shines again on "Crazy Baldheads," a Marley tune with an appealing electric bass-reinforced melody. Marley's "Simmer Down" again gives Marsalis space for some fine improvising and interactions with Alexander, with acoustic rhythm support from the band.

Alexander is at his best, leading



from the keys. The tunes are a pleasing reggae mixture of everything from pretty ballads to nippy beats. Considering the choice and diversity of the material, the engaging arrangements, and the all-around musicianship, there's plenty to like about this album. *Nancy Ann Lee*

## RONNIE BAKER BROOKS

### The Torch WATCHDOG

Purists will have a problem with this disc, but, while this son of Chicago guitar legend Lonnie Brooks takes on multiple genres, his super-charged blues sense always shows up at solo time. Embracing soul music both of vintage and more contemporary strains and funk and urban-rock flavors more akin to Parliament/Funkadelic and Prince than to sounds from the South Side, In addition to his high-octane axe work, Brooks showcases his vocal prowess and versatility with the pen on a set that is nothing if not ambitious.

A power shuffle, "Born In Chicago" (NOT the Nick Gravenites-penned tune of Paul Butterfield fame), starts things off and is the "purest" blues track here. But blues pervades lyrics of cuts such as "Half" and "Other Side Of Love" and the hip-hop/blues hybrid "If It Don't Make Dollars Then It Don't Make Sense". Brooks' core band is strong and production and arrangements are top-notch. For those who don't have a problem with the broader definition bestowed upon blues these days, *The Torch* is one of this year's biggest treats. *Duane Verh*

## PAULA LAMMERS BARBARA MORRISON JOEL PENNER SEXTET MARY LOU WILLIAMS TRIBUTE JANE BUNNETT

Minnesota vocalist **Paula Lammers** is backed by a talented musician team on her first professional recording project, **A Blanket of Blue (Nightingale Jazz)**. Her sweet, pleasant tone and warm, sincere delivery enhance 11 American songbook standards such as "I Thought About You," "Isn't It Romantic?," "In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning," "More," and other gems. Lammers is definitely a talent to track.

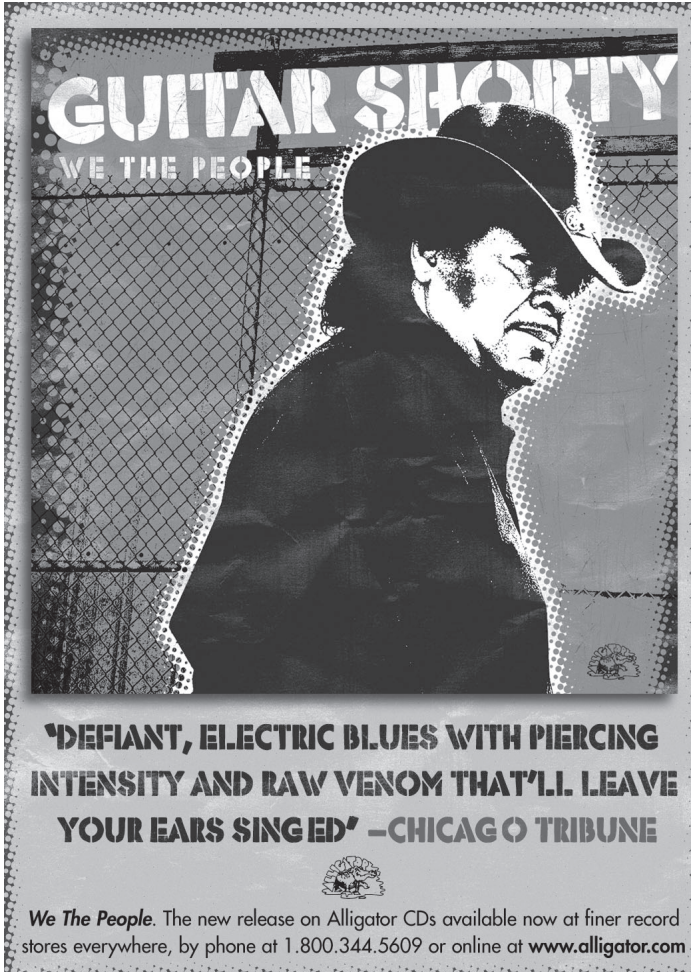
Backed by Junior Mance (piano), Earl May (Bass), Jackie Williams (drums) and Houston Person (tenor sax), veteran vocalist **Barbara Morrison** shows a penchant for boisterous, bluesy swing and light, jazzy verve on her live-recorded album, **Live at the Dakota (Dakota Live!)** as she refreshes 12 warhorse standards such as "Thing Ain't What They Used to Be," "Please Send Me Someone To Love," "Take the 'A' Strain," "Don't Go to Strangers," "All of Me," and others. Williams' inventiveness, mature voice and expert phrasing make this CD a listening treasure.

The **Joel Penner Sextet** delivers a variety of standards by Cole Porter, Freddie Hubbard, David Raskin, Keith Jarrett, Richard Rodgers, on **The Church of the Little Black Dog (Sea Breeze Jazz)**, a California studio session. Playing trumpet & flugelhorn, Penner is backed by a solid crew on alluring arrangements of "You'd Be

So Nice to Come Home To," "Straight Life," "Laura," "My Funny Valentine, and four more tunes. Penner excels with warm, plump tonalities. Drummer Steve Pemberton keeps tidy tempos. Other standout soloists are saxophonist Michael Rose and guitarist Doug MacDonald. Nice session.

The idea to visit the music of the late pianist-composer Mary Lou Williams with **The Lady Who Swings the Band (Challenge Records)** pays off for **The Dutch Jazz Orchestra**. Playing 13 never-before-recorded Williams tunes, the band injects her sophisticated compositions with passion, bluesy style and artistry, making for a totally engaging listen. This band was selected by Rev. Peter F. O'Brien, Executive Director of the Mary Lou Williams Foundation. A 20-page liner booklet includes notes about Williams and each composition.

With her core Spirits of Havana band, Canadian saxophonist **Jane Bunnett** explores Cuban Blues music on **Radio Guantanamo: Guantanamo Blues Project Vol. 1 (Blue Note)**. Recorded in Toronto and Guantanamo, Cuba, this is a puzzling mixture of 11 tunes merging New Orleans music, straight-ahead jazz, authentic Cuban themes and rhythms and more. With its pretty melody, the title tune stands out. Although the busy music might be a stretch of the ears for some listeners, individual musicianship shines through—in part due to participation of special guests Johnny Sansone (accordion, harmonica, vocals), Howard Johnson (tuba), Dewey Redman (sax) and others. *Nancy Ann Lee*



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## JEREMY SPENCER


### Precious Little BLIND PIG

As a member of Fleetwood Mac in its blues band days when he was part of a three guitar attack alongside Peter Green and Danny Kirwan, Jeremy Spencer laid down the slide guitar lines that burned such classics as "Black Magic Woman," "Oh Well" and "Rattlesnake Shake" into your memory bank.

Having departed the band in the early 70's, Spencer didn't join his former band mates in their evolution into a rock and pop outfit. As a consequence, this effort sounds like a telegram from the band's storied past. Spencer alternates between acoustic and electric slide throughout this disc with nods to influences such as Elmore James, "It Hurts Me Too" and "Bleeding Heart." Spencer's slide skills shine brightly throughout particularly on "Trouble and Woe" and "Psychic Waste" as he weaves around the accompanying guitar of Norwegian Espen Liland.

Spencer steps outside of the straight blues form on the folksy title cut and on the rootsy, vaguely latin, groove of "Maria De Santiago." He also throws in an Elvis drenched vocal on Fabian's "Please Don't Stop" and takes a stab at early rockabilly on Slim Rhodes's "Take and Give." With a focus on subtlety and craftsmanship this is a great display of slide guitar without the over-amped pyrotechnics that are so often the result when someone sticks their finger into a slide and calls it the blues.

Mark Smith



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## RANDY JOHNSTON

### Live at the Smithsonian Jazz Café MEL BAY (DVD)

Guitarist Randy Johnston has made numerous CD recordings but this is his first DVD. He performs a diverse 12-tune set of pop and jazz standards as well as four originals at the Smithsonian Jazz Café with bassist Tom Pietrycha and drummer Tommy Leone.

Detroit-born Johnston is a skillful player with lots of imagination and plenty of technique. His original compositions prove his ability to write pleasing tunes and his performances show off his dexterity and tunefulness at any tempo. Notable is his delivery of his speedball original, "Green Curry." His catchy "Fringe Benefits" pulsates with vibrancy. One of his best performances is his gorgeous solo rendering of the ballad standard "Here's That Rainy Day." Another beauty is his warmhearted interpretation of Don Militello's ballad, "Seems Like Times Are Changin'." Included among the tunes are John Coltrane's "Impressions," Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce," and popular favorites such as "Secret Love," "If Ever I Would Leave You," and "Body and Soul."

Johnston's trio performs admirably but due to unimaginative camera work, this 110-minute set seems to be more sedate than his live performances I've attended. While lighting is ample, the three camera operators just don't add much drama to the performance. They seem not to be familiar with or to "feel" the jazz. For example, they fail to move in for tight shots during creative solo improvisations (especially on the bassist) and move in at inappropriate times on Johnston. There are no liner notes and no special features such as illuminating interviews on the DVD. However, if you're a Johnston fan, you should be satisfied with the high levels of his music, guitar mastery and ingenuity.

Nancy Ann Lee

## BIG GEORGE BROCK

### Round Two CAT HEAD

Bluesman Big George Brock won acclaim for his debut disc, **Club Caravan. Round Two** (Cat Head Delta Blues & Folk Art, Inc.) is his follow-up and brings the gruff voiced bluesman with his band augmented by special guest guitarist Hubert Sumlin on two tracks.

Brock was born in

Grenada, Mississippi (Magic Sam's birthplace I believe) and spent many years in St. Louis before returning South. Nothing fancy about Brock's singing or harp here as he delivers straight ahead performances that echo legends like Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters. After a short spoken intro, Brock opens with the lengthy *So Long*, where he tells his woman she is going to miss him when he's gone, as he blows some simple but hard-edged harp as Sumlin throws in his unpredictable twisting licks in support, while *No, No Baby*, is a simple medium tempo rocker followed by another song associated with Wolf, *Poor Boy*, although with hints of Fred McDowell and RL Burnside in the backing.

*Rockin' Chair* sports a spare backing along with Brock's tough downhome harp, while *Mattson, MS* is a short instrumental with a groove not far removed from a

jazz  
blues



fife and drum band, whereas the feel of *Mr. Wal Mart* is pretty lowdown with its bump and grind groove as he pleads for Mr. Wal Mart to send his baby home. Sumlin returns for Brock's reprise of Wolf's *Shake For Me*, an amiable it not riveting performance. *Arkansas to Memphis* has Brock backed by acoustic guitar, which is followed by the title track, then a rendition of *Sugar Mama*, followed by *Burden Down*, the traditional gospel number in a rendition likely owing a bit to the legendary Fred McDowell. Brock ends the proceedings with a short solo track, *Call Me Lover*, with a spoken intro before he launches into a buoyant performance.

This is an enjoyable collection of downhome Chicago-inspired blues with a heavy Howlin' Wolf accent that may not be the second coming of the Wolf, but makes for some nice listening. It has national distribution but is readily available on cdbaby.com or the Cat Head website, [www.cathead.biz/index.html](http://www.cathead.biz/index.html).

Ron Weinstock

**TERRY BLAINE/  
MARK SHANE/  
ALLAN VACHÉ**

**Swingin' The Benny Goodman  
Songbook  
JUKEBOX JAZZ**

Frequent collaborators, this threesome of vocalist Terry Blaine, pianist Mark Shane and clarinetist Allan Vaché deliver a light, airy 17-tune set of old-fashioned Benny Goodman favorites that swing fans should enjoy.

Staying true to melody and lyrics, Blaine sings gems such as "After You've Gone," "I Don't Know Why," "Body and Soul," "More Than You Know," and "On the Sunny Side of the Street," as well as lesser-known tunes such as "Junk

Man," "You Turned the Tables On Me," and others. Blaine's sweet, lilting mid-range voice is complemented by Vaché and Shane who tidily accompany the singer and serve up some fine solos, especially notable on their bouncy duo version of "Sweet Leilani."

From start to finish, this is a satisfying, nostalgic album you'll want to hum or sing along to. *Nancy Ann Lee*

**CHRIS SMITHER**

**Leave the Light On  
SIGNATURE RECORDS**

Listen closely to a Chris Smithers disc and you'll likely be left with that same nagging feeling you carried with you as you walked out of Philosophy 101: "Why didn't I think of things that way before?" On this, his 12<sup>th</sup> disc, Smithers asks the questions that make you ponder about such things as why the best ideas come when you stop thinking so hard, "Open

Up" or why we spend all our time running from this goal to that when we'll ultimately all end up at the same destination, "Leave the Light On." In "Origin of the Species," he takes on intelligent design with some pointed questions about Noah's Ark and comes to his own conclusions about how DNA got mixed and matched.

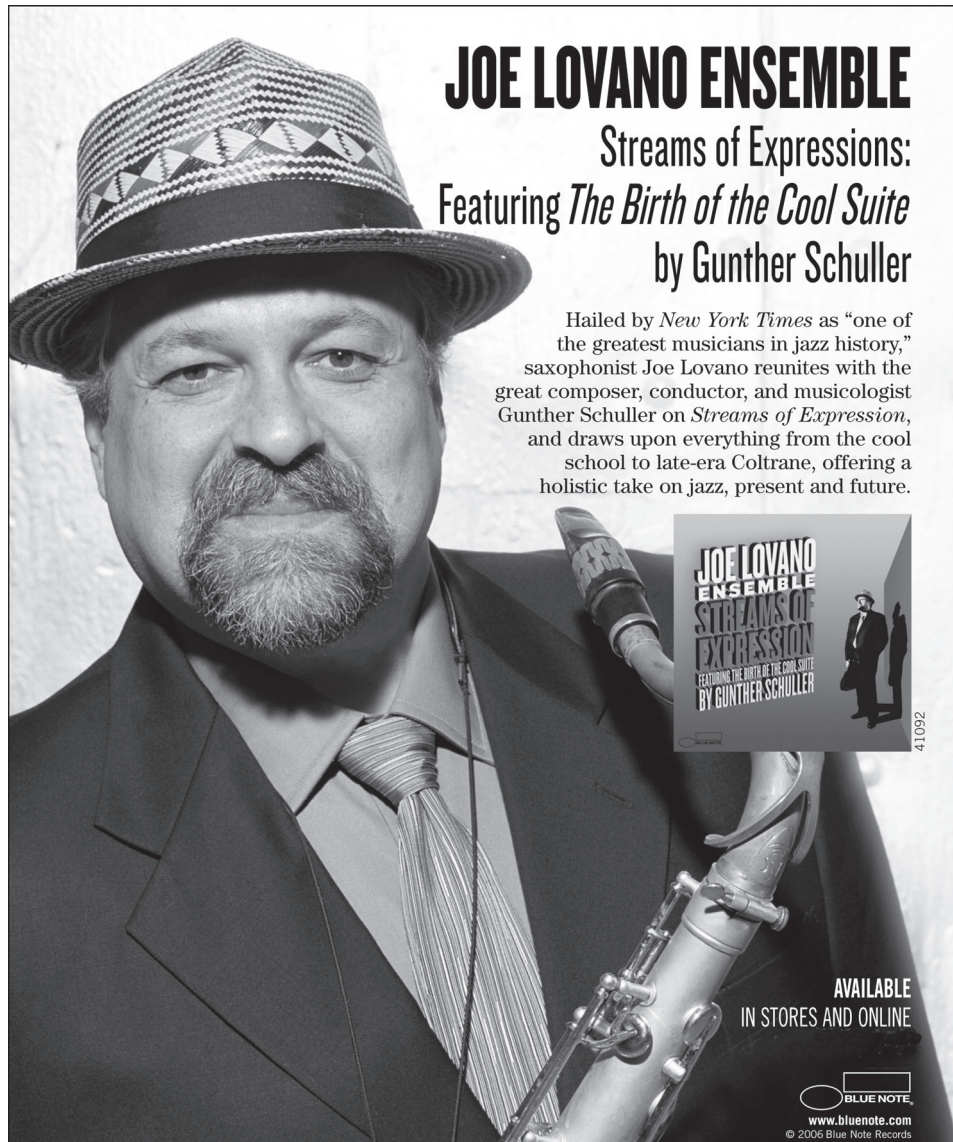
He uses "Diplomacy" to sling a few disdainful barbs at those who define themselves by those who hate them and who invite those who don't agree to love it or leave it. Smithers's skill isn't limited to the lyric sheet. His prowess on acoustic guitar keeps his musings interesting and often surprising.

Some of the darkest tunes have an upbeat buoyancy to them that hooks you before you realize how deep you're going. He also isn't afraid to rework such revered cuts as Dylan's "Visions of Johanna" which makes an appearance in Waltz time. Overall, this sits nicely along Smithers's earlier work. *Mark Smith*

**JOE LOVANO ENSEMBLE**

**Streams of Expressions:  
Featuring *The Birth of the Cool Suite*  
by Gunther Schuller**

Hailed by *New York Times* as "one of the greatest musicians in jazz history," saxophonist Joe Lovano reunites with the great composer, conductor, and musicologist Gunther Schuller on *Streams of Expression*, and draws upon everything from the cool school to late-era Coltrane, offering a holistic take on jazz, present and future.



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