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Jazz in Bonaire

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On the Cover

Shot at the Jazz Brunch, Empatia's Carlos "Nene" Quintero's left hand is at a dead stop, the right is still in motion. Photo by Pitopolo. Visit www.pitopolo.com

See more of Pitopolo's photos in the Bonaire review, *right*. Uncredited photos are by Bill Wahl



"Buffalonus"

Our original mascot from the very early Buffalo Jazz Report days – mid '70s. He is older now, but global & still very cool!

Jazz in Bonaire

2008 Bonaire Heineken Jazz Festival Reviewed



Scott Katzev joined in on sax and flute with some of the bands

By Bill Wahl

In recent years, we have been moving into another specialty niche, so to speak. For just about 35 years now reviews of albums, and now CDs, has been our main focus. Then came the DVDs of live concerts and documentaries. But this more recent focus has been including music festivals, many of which are in tropical locations such as the Caribbean. In addition to the great jazz and blues festivals Ron Weinstock has covered stateside, I have been able to attend jazz festivals in St. Croix (U.S. Virgin Islands) and Riviera Maya (Mexico). Both of those were in the fall of 2007, so when spring 2008 rolled around I was itchy to be on the move again. One that looked good was the St. Lucia Jazz Festival. Then I heard about the 4th Annual Bonaire Heineken Jazz Festival, which was to be about two weeks after St. Lucia. To be honest, I had never heard of Bonaire. No one I mentioned it to had either, except for one person, a diver, who told me it is a paradise for divers and snorkelers. After some Googling, I also found out that much if it is a protected wildlife and nature reserve, and that there were not many people actually living on the island compared to others in the area. And what is the area?

Well, Bonaire is in the Dutch Caribbean and is part of a group of three islands that are very close to Venezuela. They are known as the "ABC Islands" – Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire. Interesting. When I looked at the lineup for the festival, I had never heard of any of the performers, except for Latin jazz drummer Willie Martinez – although I had never heard any of his albums. Well, the intriguing information I had gathered on Bonaire, mixed with the idea of hearing music from bands coming from places like Curaçao and Venezuela got me going. And since there was no way I could go to both St. Lucia and Bonaire, I chose Bonaire and sent my daughter to cover St. Lucia. Let me tell you, she had no trouble accepting the assignment.

So off she was, and then off I was.

It is actually quite easy to get to Bonaire from most any part of the United States. In this particular case, in order to hope to get to Bonaire in time for opening night, Thursday, May 22 at Fort Oranje at the harbor area, I had to take three flights, first to New York City, then to Aruba and then on to Bonaire. If I were to do it again, I would fly to San Juan and over, which is how I came back. All went well until the flight from Aruba was delayed for quite a while, so I arrived too late for the show anyway. Instead, I went directly to my hotel, Plaza Resort Bonaire, checked in and wandered to the beach bar, which was "manned" by two young Dutch female bartenders. They turned me on to a beer



Izaline Calister in motion (photo by Pitopolo)

I had never heard of...Amstel Bright. I'd heard of Amstel Light, but this is apparently aimed at the Corona crowd and is quite refreshing. Amstel is a Dutch beer, which is owned by Heineken. I was on a Dutch island, so it all began to make sense...no matter how tired I was. Anyway, this is not a beer review, so let's get on with it.

Friday I spent the day driving all over the island with one person who knew nothing about Bonaire, like myself, and another who knew everything about it. He lived there and was a veritable wealth of information. We'll get into that trip and the other island experiences in a while. Now, off to the show.

As mentioned earlier, I missed the first night at the fort, which featured an art exhibition with live jazz followed by vocalist Izaline Calister with her trio, a poetry reading and more. From what I was told, it was an enjoyable evening. And although I very much wanted to hear Izaline, no worry – she was the headliner for the Friday night concert. Now moving to a stage at the Plaza Resort Bonaire, it was certainly convenient for me since I was staying there. The stage was right at the beach with several hundred chairs set up. Apparently more people showed up than anticipated, and chairs continued to be brought in and set up as the night went on.

The first band on stage was the Bonaire Student Band. The large band changes pretty much every year and is led by guitarist and music teacher Robert Swinkels. The band mostly features students who attend the Scholen Gemeenschap Bonaire, the local high school. These were some talented kids who played Latinized R&B/jazz including a Latin take on "There Will Never Be Another You" and, if my memory serves me right (I write a lot of notes and then can't read some of them!), a version of Wayne Shorter's "Footprints." They were joined by a very fine tenor saxophonist Scott Katzev, who lives in Philadelphia but his parents live on Bonaire. Katzev would be seen and heard quite a bit throughout the festival, as he was a kind of Artist



Martina Gerling with Tin Foil (photo by Pitopolo)

In Residence. Also assisting was Moogie, a local who sings, plays percussion and acted as an MC.

Following the Student Band was Footsteps Ahead, a quartet consisting of sax/flute up front with piano, bass and drums, which opened with "Girl From Ipanema." This versatile band was equally adept at playing in a modal style as well as straight ahead, up-tempo swingers. While perhaps unknown in the states, they are well known in the islands as two of the members are from Aruba and one is from Cuba. Bassist Frankie Yanga, who I believe is the leader, is from New York. They finished their set with some interesting covers, such as "Yellow Moon."

The headliner for the evening was Izaline Calister, the singer I had missed the night before. This night she was with her full band and was an absolute pleasure to hear and watch. She has a great voice and stage presence, immediately capturing the audience and holding them tight throughout her performance. With a top-notch band, including a back-up singer, Izaline delivered a set of all originals sung in her native language, Papiamentu (she is from Curaçao). The music is a mix of jazz and Afro-Antilles music that is very percussive and an absolute crowd pleaser that is very hard to sit still to. It didn't matter a bit that she sung in a language I do not understand. I'd like to hear more from her. So did the crowd, who emphatically demanded an encore. For more info on Izaline and her music, visit



Carlos "Nene" Quintero with Empatia (photo by Pitopolo)



Pablo Gil with Empatía (photo by Pitopolo)

www.izalinecalister.com.

Saturday night's show opened with a local Bonaire band known as Tin Foil. Led by Jon Hilgers, this quartet plays original compositions with a rock base mixed with some tinges of R&B and Latin and jazz. One of their best songs was a blues/gospel ballad with alternate verses sung by Hilgers and guitarist/vocalist Martina Gerling, whose voice added a nice dimension to the band's sound. Another was a rock ballad sung by Martina, which constantly built in intensity. My guess is that Martina will be singing more and more as time goes on and her guitar work was quite good as well. And to think that she is only 16! Some of their material was more like folk/rock, and some more along the lines of classic rock. Scott Katzev joined in with them as well. The band's website is www.tinfoiltheband.com.

The next band up, Empatía, was from Venezuela and delivered a strong set of music that was exactly what I had hoped for. Knowing that Bonaire was so close to South America, the thought of hearing some bands that I would otherwise not encounter was one of my reasons for going to the festival. While Americans may be expecting Empatía to play Latin jazz, they instead delivered some very fine modal jazz along the lines of people like Wayne Shorter or Joe Henderson with some dynamic percussion courtesy of



J. Walter Hawkes with La Familia Sextet (photo by Pitopolo)

drummer Carlos "Nene" Quintero, who played hand drums and a battery of percussion instruments most of the time rather than the traditional drum set which he ignored for most of the performance. While they are all first class musicians, the special treat for these ears came from Quintero and Pablo Gil, who played tenor and soprano saxes and flute and was a standout on all three. His tone on both tenor and soprano was outstanding and he had an endless flow of ideas. An exceptional performance from Empatía. Pablo Gil's website is supposed to be www.gilpablo.com, but I can't get it to work. Perhaps this is a temporary situation.

So while the band from Venezuela played straight modal jazz, the band from New York City closed the night with Latin jazz. La Familia Sextet is led by drummer Willie Martinez, and its set of infectious, percussive Latin grooves got the crowd back on their feet again as they were for Empatía, but the between sets announcements had settled them back down. Martinez also sings and writes many of the band's compositions. One of the things that made this band so interesting is the somewhat *different* front line, which consisted of Max Schweiger on baritone sax and flute and J. Walter Hawkes on trombone. I was also especially impressed with upright bassist Jennifer Vincent, who is another of a number of excellent female bassists I have heard recently. Willie Martinez and the La Familia Sextet sounded every bit as good as one might expect given their impressive individual resumes. Pablo Gil, from Venezuela's Empatía, came back up at the end of their set and joined in with them. One of the songs they played was "After Winter, Spring," which is also the title of their new album, just re-



Cristian Rivera with La Familia Sextet (photo by Pitopolo)



Nene Quintero and Willie Martinez getting into it with a drum duet at the Jazz Brunch. J. Walter Hawkes is taking it in.

leased on June 17. You can sample the songs at <http://cdbaby.com/cd/wmlfs2>. For more information on the band, visit www.williemartinez.com.

The Sunday Jazz Brunch at Divi Flamingo turned out to be a real treat, in more ways than one. Just down the road from Plaza Resort and a bit closer to town, Divi Flamingo is a beach resort and casino, which, as I quickly found out, also offers some excellent food. The Jazz Brunch is the official closing event of the annual Heineken Bonaire Jazz Festival and is a jam session featuring many of the performers from the festival. Held outside practically right on the beach, the band and the diners were covered from the heat of the sun by a tarp, but it certainly didn't keep the music from being hot. The buffet style meal combined with the small club feel and a good sound system provided the best ending to a festival I have ever experienced. It was a good opportunity to meet and speak with many of the musicians and exchange info. I chatted with Willie Martinez for

a while, and got to hear him really well as he played drums for most of the long set and I somehow managed to get a front table. I also got to hear plenty from Empatia's percussionist, Nene Quintero, who played congas for most of the set about six feet in front of my seat. And it provided more time to hear bassist Jennifer Vincent and trombonist J. Walter Hawkes. Scott Katzev was there as well with plenty of playing time, and I must say he is quite a versatile player thinking back on the different bands he sat in with over the three days. The drummer from the Student Band, Christopher Maldonado, also sat in, sounding very good as he gave Martinez a break. And then there were some surprises. Several unannounced musicians, locals, sat in and sounded fantastic. One was a piano player; another played harmonica and another guitar. I talked to the guitar player, who looked familiar, after the set and it turned out to be Robbie Swinkels – the director of the Bonaire Student Band and, with the Bonaire Jazz Foundation, organized the festival. The only jazz harmonica player I have heard live that had a big impact on me was Toots Thielemans, that is until the "unknown" harmonica player at the brunch began to play. After some Googling, he turns out to be Henk Roozendaal, a Dutch painter who moved to Bonaire in 1999 and is very much "known" on the island. You can check out his art at www.bonairenet.com/roozendaal. I never did find out who the piano player was, but I'll keep working on it. There were some musicians I had hoped would be playing at the brunch that did not, such as Pablo Gil, but there were plenty of fine players on hand and the time went by way too quickly. Some of the songs I remember being played that day are Coltrane's "Equinox," Wayne Shorter's "Footprints," Monk's "Straight, No Chaser" and Kenny Dorham's "Blue Bossa." Those are four of my favorite tunes! If you are ever able to attend a future Heineken Bonaire Jazz Festival, by all means, do not miss out on the Jazz Brunch.

If you want information on the 2009 festival, visit www.bonairenet.com/jazz/. No information is up yet on next year's events, but I'm sure it will be as time draws closer.

OK, so we covered the festival. Now exactly what can someone expect when visiting Bonaire?

As I mentioned earlier, Bonaire is one of the three Dutch Caribbean (or Antilles, depending on who you ask) islands



Robbie Swinkels and Henk Roozendaal at the brunch



A street scene in Kralendijk, the capital city of Bonaire



A view from my balcony at the Plaza Resort Bonaire



Don't step on a little lizard!

that lie just off the coast of Venezuela. Bonaire is only 50 miles from Venezuela, and Aruba is even closer. Of the three islands, Aruba is the smallest and has 90,000 people. Curaçao is the largest and has 150,000 people. Bonaire is in the middle size-wise, but has only 14,000 residents. While Aruba is the most well known and is a tourist hot spot, Bonaire is a well-kept secret from most of the world, but not to divers by any means.

Bonaire has been voted for the sixth straight year-in-a-row as the #1 Top Dive Destination Overall (Caribbean/Atlantic) in the Scuba Diving Magazine's Readers Choice Awards 2008. It is consistently rated as one of the top 5 diving locations in the world. You can also enjoy snorkeling, kiteboarding windsurfing, kayaking and more water-related activities. I do not dive, but in talking with some divers I found that you can see turtles, squid, octopus, dolphins and countless other sea creatures. I did try a bit of snorkeling and saw seemingly hundreds of species of different fish in many different shapes and vibrant colors, not to mention the colorful and oddly shaped plants on the ocean floor. Bonaire has the most thriving fish population in the Caribbean and is well known for its pristine coral formations.

There are also a number of on-land activities or attractions one can try out, such as mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, land sailing, cave tours, butterfly farms, na-

ture tours, bird watching and countless other things to keep you busy, whether you are the physically active or more laid back type of individual.

I stayed at the Plaza Resort Bonaire, which is about a 10-minute, easy walk to the main city on the island, Kralendijk. It is also very close to the airport, which can be handy as well. It turned out to be a great choice, not only because the main events for the jazz festival were held there, but it was a very comfortable and friendly place to relax. It has a private marina with a river that has many villas and buildings with suites on both sides. There are many other buildings, some with suites that have a view of the Caribbean. Mine had a view of the marina. The room was quite large and more of a European style, with the toilet in a room by itself rather than in the same room with the sink, shower and bathtub. This is certainly not unusual, given that it is a Dutch island. The staff was made up of Bonaire natives and people from Holland, who don't need a visa to work on the Dutch islands. All were very friendly, like the two bartenders mentioned earlier. There were several fine restaurants (the breakfast buffet is always a treat) and beach bars, and the beach itself, is quite the sight with its white sand. The resort has the largest variety of tropical plants, and trees, than I can remember seeing in one place, so walking the grounds was certainly never a bore. Many of the activi-



The beach at the Plaza Resort



A Bonaire church



Entering Washington Slagbaai National Park



Goats roam in rural areas, along with little pigs and donkeys

ties mentioned earlier are available right there, and it is well known for its Toucan Diving. I did my snorkeling bit right there as well. Of course, you can also set up tours to explore other part of the island. I can easily recommend the Plaza Resort for a super relaxing and very convenient place to stay. Just watch where you walk, as I noticed many cute little lizards, or perhaps baby iguanas strolling on the sidewalks. For more information on the Plaza Resort, and the many activities you can undertake there, visit www.plazaresortbonaire.com.

Just down the road apiece, the main town of Kralendijk offers a harbor with restaurants and small shops and a myriad of very brightly colored buildings. I ate at the City Café, right at the harbor, and had a tough time settling on a single choice from the large and quite varied menu. But in the end, I went with the local fish, Dorado, and could easily recommend it to everyone who enjoys a good, mild fish. It was the only restaurant I was able to try in town, and luckily it was a fine experience. I heard that Donna & Giorgio's down the street was good as well and has live music on the weekends. Karel's Beach Bar, also in the harbor area, is the big nightclub in town and has live music on weekends and sometimes during the week as well. There were quite a few shops in town, though not at all like places such as St. Maarten, St. Thomas and many of the other islands in

the Caribbean. Most of the people in town were native, but there were many Dutch nationals as well. All of them were extremely friendly, and as I recall, everyone spoke English. I was told that the kids on the island learn Dutch in school by age 5 or 6, then Spanish and English by age 12. By high school they can read and write all three. Boy, that is a far cry ahead of the U.S.

My island tour on the first day was a real eye opener, and quite an education. The town to the north, Rincon, is very small and is very close to Washington Slagbaai National Park. Rincon was originally the main town on the island because mountains, which protected it from pirates, surround it.

The man who took me on the tour, Rolando, seems to be the best-known guy on Bonaire, and is certainly a wealth of information. While we were driving he told me that the island is all coral, not volcanic. You can see the stages where the water level was. The main town, Kralendijk, means "A dike of coral." The island was divided into five properties in the days of the slaves, and you could see some of the fences and walls as we drove. One thing I noticed that I'd never seen before was the many cactus fences. In the northern area, north of Rincon, you can see little pigs, goats and donkeys roaming wild. This is where we entered Washington Slagbaai National Park.

The park occupies the entire northwestern section of the island and has never been developed. The last owners of the plantations sold the land to the government with the stipulation that it remains a natural sanctuary. We drove down winding roads for miles and miles seeing nothing but cacti, plants, trees, birds, reptiles, and, at last, the famous Bonaire pink flamingos. At first we spotted a single flamingo, then later several together. I got as close as I could to get a picture, but a sign warns you to stay back so as to not scare them off. I was told the flamingos are born white, then turn grey growing up and then pink. The healthier they are, the pinker they get. And both the males and females are the same color.

Preserving nature is a prime concern on the island, and the entire coast is a national wildlife preserve, with some areas even closed off to divers – although there are plenty of dive spots all around the coastal area.



One of the famous Bonaire pink flamingos

After leaving the national park, we continued to drive through some wilderness areas along the coast. There were many magnificent coral formations, some very large. I noticed some large oil tanks, which are filled by small oil tankers from Venezuela since the water off the coast of that oil-producing country is too shallow for the large tankers to dock. So the smaller ships deliver it to Bonaire, and the large tankers take it from Bonaire to closeby countries such as the U.S. as well as very far off destinations such as China. In fact, oil storage is the number two-income source for the island, after tourism. The third is salt production, which takes place on the southern part of the island.

After hours of driving we stopped to eat at a place called Maiky's Snack. This is a restaurant that was highly recommended for a traditional Bonaire meal, but I would never have been able to walk there (although I had thought about trying it.) It was in a kind of remote area just before the more populated areas of Kralendijk, and was surrounded by a cactus fence. We sat outside and drank a bottle of Polar Beer, a very nice, light brew from Venezuela. The menu here was traditional Bonairean cuisine, with things like goat stew. After seeing so many cute goats roaming around during our drive, I opted for the conch stew, and it was a delight. The Polar Beer complemented it well. Maiky's Snack should be a must on a Bonaire visit, but you'd better rent a car.

One of the people I met on this trip was a photographer from Curaçao named Pitopolo. He and I were at the same table for the Jazz Brunch and he loaded me up with a good deal more information on the region. He also offered some of his pictures for this piece if some of mine did not come

out. Most of mine did, but the ones from the nights at the Plaza Resort stage were pretty foul, so I thank him for sending me the performance pictures which accompany this story, as well as the cover photo. His photos are credited, and mine are not. You can find out more about Pitopolo by visiting his website at www.pitopolo.com

In closing, Not only did I enjoy the music...I also had the most relaxing, as well as most interesting experience I've had on any of the Caribbean islands I've visited over the years. Bonaire may be unknown to most, but that is one of the reasons it is a real find for the rest of us. And, if you dive, snorkel or are into the other activities I've mentioned, that just adds even more sparkle to this Caribbean jewel.



Natural beauty in Washington Slagbaai National Park

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Photo © Robyn Churchill



Seattle's Earshot Jazz Festival set for Oct. 17 to Nov. 8

SEATTLE WA – Seattle's 20th annual Earshot Jazz Festival presents more than 50 one-of-a-kind events in concert halls, clubs, and community centers all around the city beginning October 17 and continuing through November 8.

Known for "adventurous, spot-on programming" (Jazz Times) and praised as "one of the best festivals in America" (Seattle Times) the Earshot Jazz Festival brings important artists from around the world into creative collaboration with area audiences and Seattle's finest jazz musicians. It celebrates Seattle's place in the world of jazz – from its award-winning high-school jazz programs to its renowned resident jazz masters – in a world-class festival setting that features many of today's most important artists.

Some of the highlights planned for this 20th Earshot Festival include:

- NEA Jazz Master James Moody with the Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra in a 4-day residency that includes oral history interviews, educational programs, and two concerts
- Pioneering avant-garde pianist and NEA Jazz Master Cecil Taylor in a solo concert at Seattle's Town Hall
- Saxophonist Ravi Coltrane and his quartet at the Triple Door
- Pianist Marilyn Crispell in concert at the Chapel Performance Space
- Vocalist Simonne, daughter of Nina Simone, in concert in Bothell
- A collaboration with the Langston Hughes Cultural center that includes concerts by violinist Billy Bang, Seattle jazz legend Julian Priester, a tribute to Seattle organist Dave Lewis by his grandson, drummer D'Vonne Lewis, and panel discussions about trends and issues in jazz.
- A pre-election concert at Town Hall by Bassist Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra featuring pianist/arranger Carla Bley.
- A 20-year retrospective of internationally-known Seattle resident Wayne Horvitz featuring his groups, The President, New York Composer's Orchestra West, Pigpen, and Zony Mash with Horns
- Seattle's award winning Garfield and Roosevelt High School jazz bands in main stage concerts with guests such as Wycliffe Gordon.
- A dance party with Funk saxophonist Maceo Parker and his band.
- Japanese pianist Satoko Fujii with Rova's Larry Ochs ...and many, many more

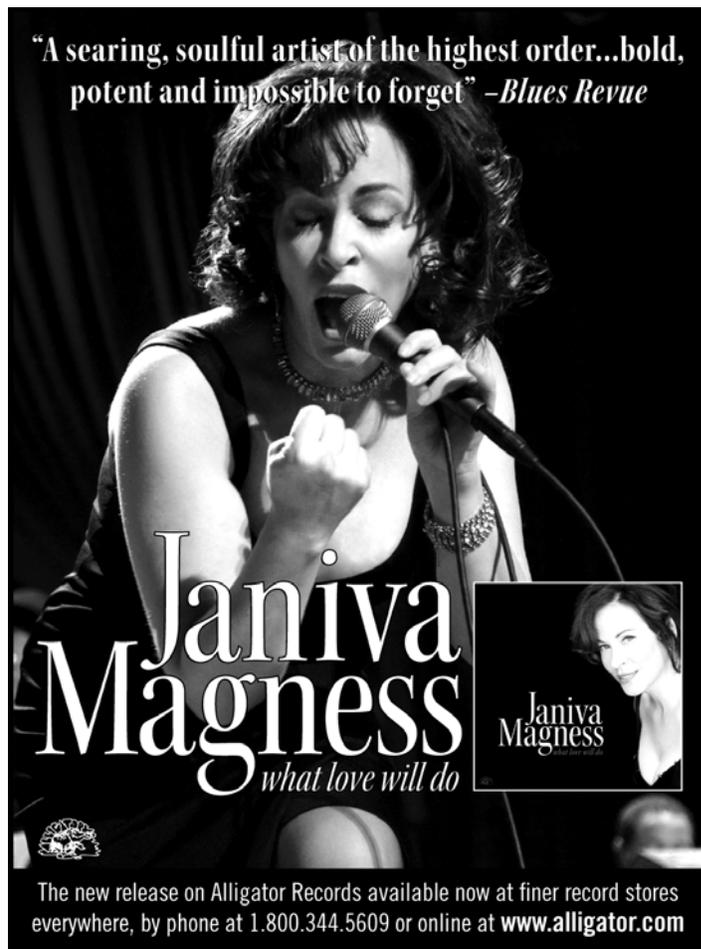
Tickets for the Earshot Jazz festival will be on sale in late August through Earshot Jazz and at various Seattle jazz spots. Complete concert information will be available as it develops at www.earshot.org and (206) 547-9787.

Earshot Jazz is a non-profit, jazz-support and presentation organization. In addition to concert presentation, which includes Seattle's premiere annual jazz festival, Earshot provides jazz education programs and publishes the monthly Earshot Jazz magazine. More information is available at www.earshot.org or by calling (206) 546-6763.

Johnnie Taylor Tribute Concert Kicks Off Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest One Day Early

RENO, NV — Celebrating a lifetime of musical contributions, the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest highlights Floyd Taylor in a tribute in honor of his late father, the legendary Johnnie Taylor, Aug. 15 at Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nev. Floyd Taylor, performing some of his father's most beloved songs including "Disco Lady" and "Last Two Dollars," is consistently compared to his father thanks to his uncanny similarity in voice, singing style, appearance and on-stage presence. The musical tribute, commemorates a lifetime of musical talent, and kicks off the 2-day festival which runs Aug. 16 – 17 at Reno's Rancho San Rafael Park featuring 10 other blues, R&B and soul legends.

Johnnie Taylor is considered by some to be one of the great gospel, soul and R&B artists of the 20th century. Starting off on the streets of Kansas City with the gospel quartet the Melody Makers at just 10 years old, Taylor knew already that music was in his blood. Whether leading the Soul Stirrers, a group he inherited from friend and renowned vocalist Sam Cooke, or singing doo-wop with Chicago's The 5 Echoes, Taylor's talent couldn't be contained. In 1961 Taylor left gospel singing behind him and eventually signed with Stax Records where he recorded musicians including Isaac Hayes and Booker T. Jones. Taylor's list of hits includes "Who's



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Making Love," "Last Two Dollars" and "Disco Lady" which topped the Billboard pop charts in 1976 and was the first single ever to become officially certified platinum for sales of two million copies.

Floyd Taylor follows in the footsteps of his legendary father performing on stage for more than 30 years. From his earliest days singing in church with his mother, as his father had before him or with a band during his high school days in Chicago, Taylor's musical talents were innate. Joining his father onstage for tours on festivals from the early 70s until the senior Taylor's death in May 2000, Floyd found a labor of love in playing alongside him. In addition to his years of performing in the shadow of Johnnie Taylor, Floyd Taylor also performed with many other stars including Natalie Cole, The O'Jays, Patti LaBelle, Aretha Franklin, Bobby Rush, Buddy Guy and Bobby Bland.

The 2008 Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest line-up for Aug. 16 – 17 features headliners Gladys Knight, The Whispers and Jonny Lang along with performances by Delta-bluesman Bobby Rush, soul and gospel legend Mavis Staples and others including Mel Waiters, Latimore, E.C. Scott, Betty Wright, Ernie Johnson and M.C. Larry La La. Daily tickets include access to all performances and VIP packages are available to attend both days.

Johnnie Taylor Tribute Concert tickets are \$10 and available for purchase at the door. Call the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest at 775-857-3378 to reserve tickets ahead of time. Tickets for the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest are on sale now, with one-day tickets starting at just \$58 and two-day value tickets from \$106. VIP passes, valid for both days of the Festival, are just \$210 and offer premium seating for the entire event. Group pricing and Platinum and Blues Cabana ticket packages are also available.

For more information, visit the Reno-Tahoe Blues Fest online at www.RenoTahoeBluesFest.com or call 775-857-3378. Tickets are on sale now through Ticketmaster, online at www.Ticketmaster.com, or by phone at 775-787-8497.

Monterey Jazz Festival Records to Release Six Archival Recordings Aug. 5

MONTEREY CA – Monterey Jazz Festival Records, in collaboration with the Concord Music Group, will issue the second wave of six never-before-released, archival live recordings taped on the Arena stage of the world-famous Monterey Jazz Festival. The releases are slated for August 5, 2008, seven weeks prior to MJF's celebration of its 51st annual presentation of world-class jazz, September 19-21, 2008.

Four of the historic releases will be year-specific recordings, including Art Blakey and the Giants of Jazz/1972; Shirley Horn/1994; Tito Puente & His Orchestra/1977; and Jimmy Witherspoon featuring Robben Ford/1972. Two "best of" recordings include Dave Brubeck - *50 Years of Dave Brubeck: Live at the Monterey Jazz Festival, 1958-2007* and Cal Tjader: *The Best of Cal Tjader, Live at the Monterey Jazz Festival, 1958-1980*, and are compilations of the legendary artists' multiple performances at MJF.

Showcasing legendary artists caught at the peak of their powers, the releases are the second round of recordings to be brought to the public by the MJFR label, which was founded in celebration of the 50th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival in 2007. Initial historic releases included Louis Armstrong and His All-Stars/1958; Miles Davis Quintet/1963, Thelonious Monk Quartet/1964; Dizzy Gillespie/1965; Sarah Vaughan/1971; and a 50th-year compilation disc that included selections from the aforementioned albums as well as live material from Diana Krall, Joe Henderson, Dave Brubeck, and Pat Metheny.

The recordings represent the wide variety of classic performers in the mainstream jazz, Latin and blues genres that are featured at Monterey, ranging from piano trios and small combos to big bands. Adding to the legacy of the featured artists, the recordings also feature a cornucopia of legendary leaders-as-sidemen, including saxophonists Paul Desmond, Gerry Mulligan and Sonny Stitt; trumpeters Roy Eldridge, Dizzy Gillespie and Clark Terry; pianists John Lewis and Thelonious Monk; and percussionists Poncho Sanchez and Mongo Santamaria.

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release blues.... Ah, the dog days of summer. Perfect time for some new blues....**The Iguanas-** *If you Should Ever Fall on Hard Times*; **Willie Nelson & Wynton Marsalis-** *Two Men with the Blues...***Buddy Guy-** *Skin Deep*; **Walter Trout-** *The Outsider*; **Mick Hucknall-** *Tribute to Bobby*; **Henry Butler-** *Pianola Live*; **Curtis Salgado-** *Clean Getaway*; **Hollywood Fats with the Paladins-** *Live 1985*; **Scrapomatic-** *Sidewalk Caesars*; **Harry Manx-** *Live at the Glenn Gould Studio*; **Walter "Wolfman" Washington-** *Doin' the Funky Thing*; **Big Walter Horton, Guitar Johnny, Sugar Ray & the Bluetones-** *Bocce Boogie: Live 1978*; **Rita Chiarelli-** *Uptown Goes Downtown Tonight*; **Geoff Muldaur-** *Is Have a Wonderful Time*; **Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes-** *From Southside to Tyneside*; **Various Artists-** *Blues Caravan: Guitars & Feathers*; **Byther Smith-** *Blues on the Moon- Live at Natural Rhythm Social Club*; **Little Axe-** *Champagne and Grits*; **Fiona Boyes-** *Live from Bluesville*; **Cephas & Wiggins-** *Richmond Blues....* That's it for this month. Too nice to be inside!! See ya...

LIVE BLUES ON THE HIGH SEAS



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Justin Time Records Celebrates 25 Years of Jazz, Blues & More with 2-CD Set

The Montreal-based record label Justin Time Records first recording was inspired by a particularly swinging evening at local jazz club. It was there that founder Jim West first heard the Oliver Jones Trio, immediately sensing they should be recorded. It was, shortly thereafter, and Justin Time Records was born. Named for West's then infant son, the label's first release was *Live at Biddle's Jazz & Ribs* by Oliver Jones Trio (with bassist Charlie Biddle and drummer Bernard Primeau). It was also pianist Oliver Jones' first foray into recorded jazz as a leader.

A beautifully produced 2-CD 25th Anniversary Collection, documenting some of the label's finest moments to date will hit stores on August 26 in the USA. It features music spanning its entire history, from its first signings - Oliver Jones, Raneé Lee and the Montreal Jubilation Choir - to Diana Krall's (Gold certified) debut, Dave Young's duets with Oscar Peterson and other piano legends; the label's increased visibility worldwide; and its signing of American jazzmen David Murray, Billy Bang, World Saxophone Quartet and Hank Jones.

The label's musical diversity is also in evidence, as it moved beyond its initial emphasis on jazz and gospel to its signing of blues powerhouse Bryan Lee, world music sensations Quartango and Intakto, the hip hop hybrid of the inimitable Russell Gunn, and the unique songwriting and production esthetic of Coral Egan.

On Saturday, July 5th, the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal presented "A Night To Remember," Justin Time's celebration of a quarter century of great music, featuring an impressive line-up at the prestigious Place-Des-Arts, featuring Billy Bang, Raneé Lee, the Montreal Jubilation Choir, Coral Egan, Yannick Rieu, Chet Doxas, Lorraine Klaasen, Dawn Tyler Watson & Paul Deslauriers, Bryan Lee & The Blues Power Band and, of course, Oliver Jones.

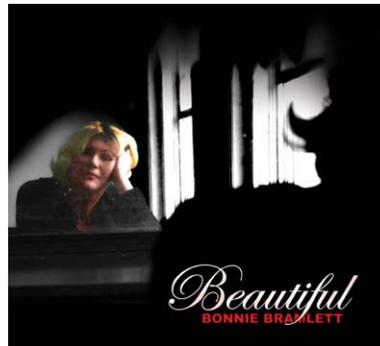
In the past quarter century, the label has released more than 300 recordings. Although Justin Time is recognized mainly as a jazz label, its catalogue of recordings also features albums in the musical genres of blues, gospel, world, tango, folk, comedy, film soundtracks, pop and rock. In addition, its artists have garnered numerous awards and nominations including Juno, Félix, Grammy, Jazz Report, National Jazz Awards and Choc Awards (from the French magazine *Jazzman*). The label has received accolades from such international publications as *Billboard*, *Downbeat*, *Jazz Times*, *Musician*, *The Wire*, *Jazz Magazine*, *Jazz Podium*, *Swing Journal*, and *Coda*.

In 1990, the label launched Just a Memory Records, a label devoted to unique re-issues and previously unreleased gems. Some of the series featured on that label are the Collectors' Classics, showcasing live recordings made in various Montreal venues in the 1960's and 1970's. In 1997, Justin Time launched another imprint, Just a Minute Records, whose musical direction has a decidedly rock angle.

Justin Time Records 25th Anniversary Collection (JUSTSAM 2525-2) will be released on Aug 26th in the USA.



We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!



BONNIE BRAMLETT

Beautiful

ROCKIN' CAMEL MUSIC

Way back in 1969 a husband and wife team put out an album titled "The Original Delaney & Bonnie: Accept No Substitute." I remember having it on an 8-track tape and just letting it play over and over again. The album had some impressive guests, such as Leon Russell and, I believe, Rita Coolidge. It was a mix of soul, R&B, rock and gospel that was instantly infectious. But the main ingredient was the blond lead singer named Bonnie Bramlett. Her voice was smoky and gravelly, and she had an incredibly powerful delivery whenever she needed it, but could also be soft and beautiful when ballads were the fare. You would think she grew up singing gospel, and she was for many years a favorite backup singer for many big names in blues, soul, R&B and more.

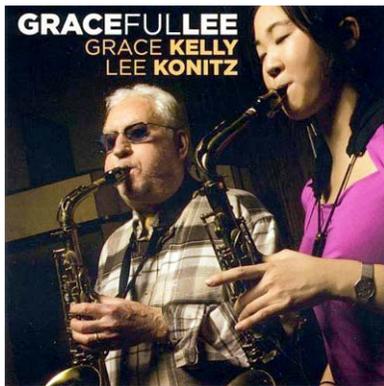
Her track record of solo albums after she and Delaney broke up has also been mostly impressive. I do remember some being a letdown as I was still comparing them to the "Accept No Substitute" album. Her previous disc, 2006's "Roots, Blues & Jazz" was very good. But she has without a doubt eclipsed that with this new effort. The title, "Beautiful" certainly applies to most of the music here as the program is mostly laid back including some very sweet ballads, although there are some more energetic moments such as "Strongest Weakness" (which definitely recalls the above-mentioned 1969 D&B album) and Randall Bramlett's rocking "Shake Something Lose."

The choice of material here is one reason for the success of the project. All of the songs are very well chosen and put in an order that allows the set to flow perfectly. Check out Steve Conn's title track for some chills on that spine of yours. Even Stephen Stills' "For What It's Worth" is given a nice update. Add to the mix the very talented groups of musicians, including drummer Bill Stewart and bassist David Hood. Now add Johnny Sandlin's production and top it all off with that fantastic voice of hers and Bonnie Bramlett has a definite winner. In fact, it is on my list for one of the best of 2008.

You can visit www.bonniebramlett.com for more on Bonnie, but I don't believe you can sample any songs there. For that, try www.cdbaby.com/cd/bonniebramlett

Bill Wahl

PAGE ELEVEN



GRACE KELLY, LEE KONITZ

GracefulLee
PAZZ PRODUCTIONS

Only 16-years-old and with three albums behind her, alto saxophonist, songwriter, composer-arranger and singer Grace Kelly releases her new 10-tune CD with her “dream band,” alto saxophonist Lee Konitz (her mentor), guitarist Russell Malone, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Matt Wilson.

The full team comes together on Konitz’s “Subconscious Lee,” and on four other tunes, including the churning 1:50-minute finale “NY at Noon.” Melodious, swinging Konitz originals “Subconscious Lee” and “Thingin’,” feature the full group. Kelly performs in duo settings with each musician: with Malone on a ballad version of “Just Friends,” with Reid playing arco bass on “There Is No Greater Love,” with Konitz on freely improvised “Alone Together” and “Buzzing Around,” and with Matt Wilson on her eerie original, “Call of the Spirits.”

Kelly’s won numerous awards and has been accepted with full scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music. A Brookline, Massachusetts resident, Kelly was the youngest student ever to complete a four-year Jazz Studies certificate program at New England Conservatory Prep School. She also plays piano, soprano and tenor saxophone, flute and some drums.

The multi-talented Kelly has learned well from Konitz and others. She’s a spontaneous player who improvises imaginatively and seems to have an ingrained sense of jazz history.

Nancy Ann Lee

TONY JOE WHITE

Deep Cuts
SWAMP RECORDS

With a career that extends back to the 60’s and his hit *Polk Salad Annie*, Tony Joe White, has long been the master of the slow, swampy groove. While recent projects matched White’s rich baritone with the cream of the female roots rock world (Shelby Lynne, Lucinda Williams, Emmylou Harris, Jessi Coulter and others on 2004’s *The Heroines*) and with fellow guitar slingers (Eric Clapton, J.J. Cale, Mark Knopfler and others on 2006’s *Uncovered*) this set returns White to his roots with ten tracks from throughout his career given the re-mix treatment by his son, Jody White. With electronic loops and effects

adding a sonic back drop to the live instrumentation, the songs simmer and crackle with funky energy. In keeping with White’s style, the cuts develop over time and get their punch from their deep bottom end and trance inducing groove. While this approach will certainly appeal to those who dig the raw, electric Hill Country work of the likes of Junior Kimbrough or RL Burnside, which is laid out to best effect on *Soul Francisco* and *Swamp Water*, it can grow wearisome over the course of the disc or, in some cases, in the course of an individual cut. The instrumentals *Run with the Bulls* and *Homemade Ice Cream* break this mold with their light, almost cheerful, feel. *Aspen, Colorado* is also a change up by virtue of the strings and acoustic piano that help paint White’s word picture of a place and time.

Mark Smith

AARON PARKS

Invisible Cinema
BLUE NOTE

Performing with guitarist Mike Moreno, bassist Matt Moreno and drummer Eric Harland, 24-year-old pianist Aaron Parks delivers a diverse 10-tune studio session that draws from rock, Middle Eastern, classical, gospel and other musics. Parks is a melodic player showing not many surprises in his technique. Yet, he excels in composing-arranging (all tunes are his originals) and he builds surprise into each tune with intriguing melodies and time signatures.

“Peaceful Warrior,” the lengthiest work at 9:39-minutes, has an almost New-Age feel while it gives the players plenty of creative time for solos and shifting tempos. “Nemesis” features Parks playing the mellotron, glockenspiel and piano over Harland’s steady rock beats. One of the catchiest and most enjoyable tunes (no doubt destined for radio play) is “Riddle Me This,” so brief at 2:43 minutes that it leaves you wanting more. “Roadside Distraction” conveys a churchy feel coming from Parks’ left-hand chording supported by Harland’s splashy beats.

At age 14, Seattle-born Parks enrolled in an early college entrance program. The next year at the University of Washington, he intended to follow a triple major of math, computer science and music. However, his plans changed and two years later he moved to New York City where he enrolled in Manhattan School of Music. He studied there with Kenny Barron (hear those influences in his playing). Barron later recommended Parks for Blanchard’s band, where Parks remained for five years until 2007 when he left to pursue a solo career.

Musicianship is top-notch. Compositions are fresh and suspenseful. There’s plenty on Parks’ debut disc to keep the listener engaged.

Nancy Ann Lee



Why Some People Think *Duke Ellington* Is a Member of the Royal Family.

KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH ART THESE DAYS. So you can see why some of them might accidentally confuse a jazz legend named Duke with royalty named duke. But it's finally time to set the record straight.

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington didn't rule over a small English estate. Instead he reigned supreme over jazz institutions like The Cotton Club. He riffed

powerfully on the piano, but it was the full orchestra that he considered his most compelling instrument. He introduced improvisation to his compositions — a process unheard of using a 15-piece orchestra. The result was a different approach to jazz that sparked a revolution and an evolution. His music spread across the world with songs like "Sophisticated Lady," "In a



Royal dukes are squaresville. They have no rhythm. And they wear crowns.

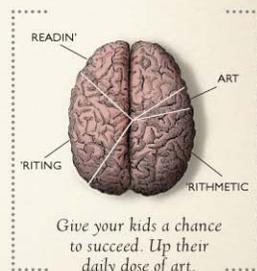


A piano player. A composer. An orchestra leader. Duke Ellington reigned over a land called Jazz.

Sentimental Mood," and "Take the 'A' Train." His historical concert in 1953 at the Newport Jazz Festival has entered the lexicon of legendary live performances. There is no doubt about it, Ellington's brand of jazz has contributed significantly to the American songbook and to the lives of anyone who has ever tapped their foot to a beat.

Jazz is art, you dig? Art can

really transform lives. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And the more likely they'll become well-rounded, cool members of society. For *Ten Simple Ways* to get more art in kids' lives, visit AmericansForTheArts.org.



Art. Ask for More.

AMERICANSFORTHEARTS.ORG



NAMM Foundation



JACKIE PAYNE-STEVE EDMONSON BAND

Overnight Sensation DELTA GROOVE

The title track of the new Delta Groove CD by the Jackie Payne-Steve Edmonson Band, *Overnight Sensation*, quickly dispels that myth as Payne sings of growing up to Lightning Hopkins and T-Bone Walker, playing with Johnny Copeland and touring with Johnny Otis – “They call me an overnight sensation, but it sure has been a mighty long time.” Often such songs can come off flat, but this gem penned by vocalist Payne and guitarist Edmonson sets the tone for this soulful, funky set of modern urban blues.

This is the third collaboration between the two veterans of the blues scene. Payne had been featured with Johnny Otis for about 15 years, and then had several fine recordings in the company of guitarist Kenny ‘Blue’ Ray (including an album under Payne’s name for JSP) while Edmonson had made his mark with various musicians before the two teamed up and put together a terrific band that includes bassist Bill Singletary; drummer Nicky Otis (one of Johnny’s sons); saxophonist Carl Green and trumpeter Lech Wierzynski.

Payne and Edmonson are responsible for most of the material here, but there are some choice interpretations of vintage material such as Gene Barge’s “Mother-in-Law Blues,” with Payne’s gripping vocal, and Edmonson’s sizzling guitar work certainly compares favorably with Buddy Guy’s Chess original. Of the originals, “Take a Chance on Me,” has a Latin tinge with a strong Memphis soul-styled vocal by Payne and a nice trumpet break from Green.

Mitch Kashmar adds harp (and the horns sit out) for the Windy City salute “I Got a Mind to Go to Chicago,” while the mood shifts on the jazzy “Uptown Woman Downtown Man,” with a vocal that would have done the late Lou Rawls proud.

The rest of this album is equally good. There is a terrific remake of “Your Good Thing (Is About to Come to an End),” the strutting funk of “Bag Full of Doorknobs,” with a great line “My woman has a bag full of doorknobs, she changes the lock every time I leave home,” and some tasty guitar commentary from Edmonson. It is followed by the driving deep-soul medley “She’s Looking Good/ I’ve Never Found a Girl.” After the instrumental “Bringin’ Me Right Home,” the disc ends with Charlie Rich’s “Feel Like Going Home,” with a country-soul flavoring in Payne’s vocal that closes this marvelous set on another high musical note.

There are some singers who affect me deeper than

Payne does, but none of them sing as soulfully and consistently strongly as Payne does here, and with the superior playing by guitarist Edmonson and the band, this certainly will be on my list of best blues recordings of 2008.

Ron Weinstock

COLEMAN HAWKINS

The Hawk Flies High

SONNY ROLLINS

Freedom Suite

NAT ADDERLEY

Work Song

WES MONTGOMERY

The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery

MCCOY TYNER

Fly With The Wind

KEEPNEWS COLLECTION

CONCORD RECORDS

The fifth installment in the series of historic classic jazz albums produced by Orrin Keepnews includes titles by Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Rollins, Nat Adderley, Wes Montgomery and McCoy Tyner. Each disc contains a 16-page liner booklet featuring original and “revisited” session notes by Keepnews, with historic photos, and original cover art.

Recorded in 1957, “The Hawk Flies High” finds tenor saxophonist Coleman Hawkins (b. 1904; d. 1969) leading a septet featuring trombonist J. J. Johnson, trumpeter Idrees Sulieman, pianist Hank Jones, guitarist Barry Galbraith, bassist Oscar Pettiford and drummer Jo Jones. Tunes include Jones’ “Chant,” as well as a lush version of David Raskin’s “Laura,” a swinging version of Gigi Gryce’s “Blue Lights,” and a smoothly rendered, nicely arranged version of “Think Deep” (by William Smith) that contains a characteristic Hawkins’ solo and blended horns. Longest tunes are Sulieman’s “Juicy Fruit,” an 11:16 minute blues featuring fine solo work, and the nine-plus minute take on Hawkins’ “Sancticity,” a bouncy number that draws from “Give Me That Old Time Religion.” Combining modern bop-oriented players with veterans of the Swing Era, Hawkins (then age 51) achieved a benchmark five-star session for that era.

Another five-star treat, Sonny Rollins’ “Freedom Suite” (recorded in 1958 as his last Riverside album) features the tenor saxophonist in a pianoless trio with bassist Oscar Pettiford and drummer Max Roach. Included on this reissue are the five tunes from the original recording and three alternate takes. Rollins’ title tune is his only original on this album and, at 19:37 minutes, took up the entire Side 1 of the original LP. It was his first venture into extended composition. Rollins (b. 1930) blows brilliantly as his novel trio works through a waltz version of Noel Coward’s “Someday I’ll Find You,” a brief take on Matt Dennis’ “Will You Still Be Mine?,” a jazz reinvention of the showtune “Till There Was You (take 4),” and an airy take on the Warren-Dubin tune, “Shadow Waltz.” A pinnacle of artistry that has endured for decades, this album is still credited as one of Rollins’ best achievements.

“Work Song,” recorded by cornetist Nat Adderley in

New York City on three dates in January 1960, features the leader playing nine tunes in settings from trio to septet with guitarist Wes Montgomery, pianist Bobby Timmons, cellist/bassist Sam Jones, bassist Percy Heath or Keter Betts, and drummer Louis Hayes. Jones (on cello) and Montgomery share the front line with Adderley on "Pretty Memory" (by Timmons), on Adderley's "Fallout," and on the title track. One of the best tunes is the trio version of the ballad, "I've Got A Crush On You," containing a lovely, lyrical Adderley solo, with backing from Montgomery and Jones on bass. Other tunes include "Mean to Me," "My Heart Stood Still," and an introduction of brother Cannonball's bluesy, riffing "Sack of Woe," which has become a well-known standard. Performed in a quintet setting, Jones' upbeat original, "Scrambled Eggs," features fine front-line solos and closes the set. Whether bopping hard or lightly swinging, Adderley and his teammates deliver a polished set without a dull moment.

The original Riverside recording, "The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery," was his second for the label and help him to gain international exposure. Montgomery (b. 1925; d. 1968) was largely influenced by Charlie Christian and until late 1959 had spent all but two years of his playing with Lionel Hampton and regionally to his native Indianapolis. Performed with a quartet featuring Tommy Flanagan on piano, Percy Heath on bass and Albert "Tootie" Heath on drums, the eight tracks on this reissue were recorded on two dates in January 1960 and include four Montgomery originals ("D-Natural Blues," "Four on Six," "West Coast Blues," and "Mr. Walker"). Appealing versions of Sonny Rollins' "Airegin," the Burk-Van Heusen gem "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," Dave Brubeck's "In Your Own Sweet Way," and "Gone With the Wind" round out the tidy set. This disc, or "Full House" (an earlier reissue in the Keepnews Collection), represent good first-purchase choices to introduce new fans to Montgomery's music.

Recorded in January 1976, pianist McCoy Tyner's "Fly With the Wind" album contained four Tyner originals plus the standard "You Stepped Out of A Dream," and is augmented on the reissue with two alternate takes. An ensemble featuring Hubert Laws (alto flute, flute), Paul Renzi (piccolo, flute), Raymond Duste (oboe), Ron Carter (acoustic bass), Linda Wood (harp), Billy Cobham (drums) and six violins, two violas and two cellos join Tyner. An adventurous album for the time, it gave Tyner a rare opportunity to write and arrange for strings. This is a challenging listen that some fans may find perhaps too densely orchestrated and a tad "busy."

After partnering with Bill Grauer to found Riverside Records in 1953, Keepnews freelanced before launching Milestone records in 1996 with pianist Dick Katz. He relocated in late 1972 to San Francisco as director of A&R at Fantasy Records, which had just acquired the Riverside masters. The same year, Fantasy purchased Milestone and Keepnews remained at his job until 1980.

He founded Landmark Records in 1985, which passed to Muse Records in 1993. Keepnews has continued to be involved with extensive reissue compilations. For this series, Keepnews handpicked the classic albums. You can't go wrong with any one of the albums in the series.

Nancy Ann Lee

August 2008 • Issue 307

JOHN DEE HOLEMAN

You Got to Lose, You Can't win All the Time

MUSIC MAKERS FOUNDATION

One can certainly appreciate the work of Tim Duffy and the Music Maker Foundation. The Foundation's efforts to assist and promote mostly southern rural musicians certainly have benefited a number of musicians. They have also made available recordings by a number of artists, although these vary considerably in quality. North Carolina bluesman John Dee Holeman is one of the artists that has fallen under the Music Makers Recordings umbrella with his latest CD, "You Got to Lose, You Can't win All the Time."

Holeman, a veteran Piedmont bluesman who learned from Blind Boy Fuller, has been honored by the National Endowment of the Arts with a Heritage Fellowship. This album was produced by Zeke Hutchins, who plays with country artist Tift Merritt, and essentially has him mostly reworking a variety of down home blues standards from the pens of Muddy Waters, Lightnin' Hopkins, Sleepy John Estes, Memphis Minnie and Lowell Fulson. While credited to Holeman, the title track is a slowed down version of an Ike Turner song that was recorded for Cobra with Tommy Hodge handling the vocal. In additions to Hutchins, others heard in the backing band include Duffy and Cool John Ferguson on guitars, and Slewfoot on harp. Several tracks have backing vocals.

This is at times entertaining but oftentimes somewhat anonymous, downhome flavored performances of the songs. This type of small group down home blues deriving from the recordings of the likes of Muddy Waters and Lightning Hopkins has been done more compellingly by the likes of Lightnin' Slim on Excello or Louisiana Red for a variety of labels over the years. Proceeds of this do support the Foundation's worthy efforts, but otherwise it only gets a reserved recommendation. For more on the Music Maker Foundation and its various programs and recordings, check www.musicmaker.org. *Ron Weinstock*

HOT CLUB OF DETROIT

Night Town

MACK AVENUE

Guitarist Evan Perri (b. 1979, Detroit) and crew follow up their widely acclaimed 2006 eponymously titled debut CD with this delightful 15-tune romp.

Modeled after the Paris-based gypsy jazz (drumless) quintet led by the three-fingered guitarist Django Reinhardt with violinist Stephane Grappelli, the award-winning Hot Club of Detroit features Perri, accordionist Julien Labro, soprano/tenor saxophonist Carl Cafagna (replacing clarinetist Dave Bennett), rhythm guitarist Paul Brady and bassist Shannon Wade.

The musicians take on four Reinhardt tunes ("Valse A Rosenthal," "Speevy," "Melodie Au Crepuscule," "Django's Monkey") as well as tunes by Gene Ammons, Jelly Roll Morton and others. Included are two Perri originals "Swing" and the title tune. Perri's playing is crisp, expressive and sonorous. Highlights include Cafagna's spectacular solos and trades with Labro on the chugging Ammons classic, "Blues Up and Down." Tunes range from under three to almost six minutes each.

The accomplished Perri is the son of a professional jazz

guitarist. He began studying piano at a young age and took up the bass in high school. At age 17, he received a Fender strat from his father. Although he'd been exposed to his father's straight-ahead jazz guitar playing, it wasn't until he studied with the now-deceased Mike Elliott at the McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul, Minnesota that he first heard Django Reinhardt. In 2003, Perri formed the Hot Club while attending Wayne State University.

Night Town is a buoyant album you'll want to hear over and over again. The Hot Club of Detroit has matured and modernized their sound with the addition of Cafagna. The team deserves an A-plus for choice of material and first-rate musicianship. Their joy of playing comes through.

Nancy Ann Lee



TEENY TUCKER

Two Big M's
TEBO RECORDS

Daughter of the late Tiny Tucker (of "High Heel Sneakers" fame), Columbus, Ohio's Teeny Tucker is a vocalist that more than lives up to her family pedigree. Diminutive in stature, she possesses a powerful voice, that is displayed to good effect this latest release by the one-time International Blues Challenge finalist.

The Big M's in the title are the great post-war woman blues divas, Big Mama Thornton and Big Maybelle Smith, who are celebrated by Tucker's renditions of songs associated with the two, five from Thornton's repertoire and four from Maybelle's, along with the original title track which is a tribute to them, with lyrics celebrating their musical greatness and noting they neither received their due then or now.

Backed by a solid small combo, the playing here is a bit more evocative of those on Big Mama's rather than the horn driven bands found on many of Maybelle's classics. There is some solid guitar by Robert Hughes, who also produced this with Teeny and she certainly can belt out "Hound Dog," "Unlucky Girl," and "Sassy Mama" in a manner that would do Big Mama proud.

She also gives nice readings of Big Maybelle's "Rockhouse," "Ramblin' Blues" (a "Key to the Highway" variant), and "Whole Lotta Shakin'" (Maybelle's recording predated Jerry Lee Lewis' monster classic). A backing vocal chorus is present on several tracks and I do believe they are a bit overused. After the nice title track tribute, the disc closes with a "Heavy Load," on which Hughes' slide guitar backs Tucker on a track with a bit

more downhome flavor.

Tucker is a very strong and expressive singer and this disc should both send folks back to the original recordings as well as justifiably bring Teeny Tucker some well-deserved attention and recognition. Her website is www.teenytucker.com.

Ron Weinstock

MEL MARTIN/BENNY CARTER QUINTET

Just Friends

JAZZED MEDIA

As a member of the band Bebop and Beyond, saxophonist Mel Martin met the great Benny Carter at a Festival in 1987, which began a relationship that continued until Carter passed away in 2003. Martin championed Carter's music when Carter was alive and continues to work to preserve his legacy. The two appeared with a quintet that included pianist Roger Kellaway at Yoshi's in Oakland, CA in 1987 from which an album appeared on Enja.

This new release on Jazzed Media presents six more performances by the Mel Martin/Benny Carter Quintet and is absolutely marvelous. The opening *Perdido*, starts this joyous recording off and if Martin's musical grounding was initially bebop, Carter's swinging style sounds as contemporary today as he was the thirties. A swinging *Secret Love*, a staple of Carter's repertoire,

opens with Carter stating the theme and Martin responding before Carter launches his solo followed by an equally marvelous one from Martin and some nice playing from Kellaway. Carter's *Elegy in Blue* perhaps is the highpoint here with a very contemporary take on the blues from both horn players, and the pair close on the title track.

The music throughout the sixty odd minutes is consistently of a high level and the pleasures of this recording linger after repeated listening over several weeks. This release is highly recommended.

Ron Weinstock

JOHNNY HALLYDAY

Live At Montreux 1988

EAGLE

While "the French Elvis" is a virtual unknown in the US, singer/guitarist/film star Hallyday is an icon in his homeland, selling over 100 million albums since his 1959 debut. And though the Swiss city of Montreux is usually associated with sophisticated jazz audiences, the recurring feminine screams and overall high-energy atmosphere greeting Hallyday's set depict much more a party scene. One doesn't have to understand the lyrics of "Je Te Promets (I Promise You)" to figure out this cat's fan base. He drops out of the second verse, turns over singing chores to the crowd- and they don't muffle a word.

The fare here tends more toward arena-rock and power ballads than roots-rock and the mood is more Springsteen than Elvis but Hallyday is a high-voltage vocalist whose charisma cuts through- even if all the French one knows are fries.

This concert is also available on the Eagle Eye Media label as a DVD.

Duane Verh



RETURN TO FOREVER

The Anthology

CONCORD

Return To Forever is currently in the midst of its reunion tour after 25 years of being apart. This 2-CD set was released by Concord Records in conjunction with the tour, and offers RTF fans most of the best songs from the band's lengthy electric period. I say that because their first two albums were more in the jazz vein with a Latin influence.

RTF had *kind of* been born out of the Stan Getz unit that released the album "Captain Marvel" in early 1972. Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke and Airto Moriera were in that band, and that same year those three were joined by Airto's wife, Flora Purim and saxophone and flute master Joe Farrell. Airto was now playing both percussion and drums and together the new band released an album on ECM titled "Return To Forever." RTF was now making waves and the following year the same personnel released an album on Polydor titled "Light As A Feather." By 1973 Farrell, Airto and Purim had left the band; drummer Lenny White and guitarist Bill Connors then joined, and RTF, now a quartet, was off in a different direction forging new paths in the world of jazz-rock. It is here that this new CD set begins.

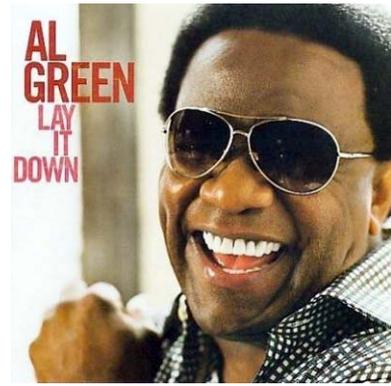
The first disc contains the entire 1973 album "Hymn Of The Seventh Galaxy," which has partially been reissued on several RTF collections, especially songs like "Theme To The Mothership" and "Captain Senor Mouse." The following year the band released "Where Have I Known You Before," with guitarist Connors being replaced by Al DiMeola, who would remain with the band and is with them now on the reunion tour. Only four of the original eight songs are here, including "Vulcan Worlds" and "Beyond The Seventh Galaxy."

Disc two opens with four of the nine songs on 1975's "No Mystery," including the title track and "Dayride." The rest of the CD contains the entire 1976 album "Romantic Warrior," with songs such as "Medieval Overture," "Sorceress," "The Magician" and the title track. Being that this final album was on Columbia, you probably won't find tracks on the many RTF reissues (Universal has put out).

So, in short, this collection with nicely improved sound will definitely please the many fans of Return To Forever's jazz-rock period. The enclosed booklet includes a lengthy essay from Bob Belden and some words from Corea, Clarke, DiMeola and White along with some vintage photos. You can check out more info and goodies on RTF and see what is left of the band's tour at www.return2forever.com.

Bill Wahl

August 2008 • Issue 307



AL GREEN

Lay It Down

BLUE NOTE

What can one say about the legendary Al Green? "Soul and gospel vocalist" only scratches the surface of one of the iconic performers of the past forty or so years.

His new album, a return to secular music, "Lay It Down," is produced by the drummer of The Roots, Ahmir 'Questlove' Thompson and the keyboards of James Poyser. Using a tight young backing band instead of the classic Memphis Hi rhythm section, the producers capture the magic of Green's pioneering Hi records classics. In addition to the Memphis styled grooves, they effectively use strings as well as horns from The Dap-Kings Horns.

Young contemporary vocalists Anthony Hamilton, Corinne Bailey Rae, and John Legend each do a duet with Green on this set of songs that focus on love and relationships; whether the wonderful title song, or the bluesy celebration of 'You've Got the Love I Need' with Hamilton. Corinne Bailey Rae is featured on the lovely ballad "Take Your Time," with its theme of falling in love again with each other. Legend joins Green for "Stay With Me (By the Sea)," and while the star power may hook younger listeners to this disc, the continuing quality of Green's vocals, and the songs here, certainly will add them to Green's already existing legion of fans.

Highly recommended.

Ron Weinstock

NICOLAS BEARDE

Live at Yoshi's: A Salute to Lou

RIGHT GROOVE RECORDS

I was not familiar with vocalist Nicolas Bearde prior to receiving a copy of his new CD, "Live at Yoshi's: A Salute to Lou." Bearde is a multi-talented gentleman who as a vocalist is a member of Bobby McFerrin's world renowned and innovative a cappella vocal ensemble, "Voicestra," since the 1980s as well as his own solo career. He also is an actor who has appeared on radio plays with Danny Glover, on such TV series as "Monk" and "Nash Bridges," and movies like "Pacific Heights," and "True Crimes."

He started his Right Groove label, and this is his third CD, based on the "Tribute to Lou Rawls," he has been presenting around the country, showcasing a variety of songs associated with the late great soul/jazz vocalist along with a bit of Bill Withers and Max Roach/Abbey

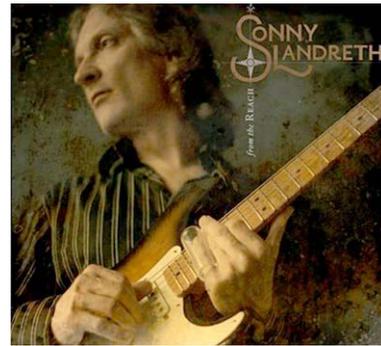
Lincoln (I am paraphrasing his website on this point).

This live recording at Yoshi's, the fabled Oakland jazz club, has him backed by a terrific, swinging quartet of saxophonist Charles McNeal; pianist Glenn Pearson; bassist Nelson Braxton; and drummer Jason Lewis. The mood is set with the opening Roach/Lincoln song, 'Living Room.' He is a marvelous singer; reminiscent perhaps more of a Joe Williams than the deeper voiced Rawls, although like both, the blues is part of his performing foundation. He nicely handles "Girl from Ipanema," as well as 'Lady Love,' one of Rawls hits during the disco era, turned into a samba-tinged number.

As good as the band is, this listener found saxophonist McNeal especially marvelous behind the vocals and his solos. And, like Rawls and Williams, Bearde shines on ballads like 'The Shadow of Your Smile.' The center of this disc is Oscar Brown's 'World of Trouble' and 'Lou's Medley,' where Bearde revives Rawls' classics including 'This Song Will Last Forever,' 'Love is a Hurtin' Thing,' 'I Want to Be Happy,' 'Tobacco Road,' and 'You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine.' A vigorous rendition of the Eddie Miller penned blues, 'I'd Rather Drink Muddy Water,' concludes this excellent set.

Bearde brings warmth, soul and personality to these performances, which certainly provide a memorable tribute to one of the great vocalists of the past few decades. This is available on iTunes and from cdbaby.com among other sources. His website is www.nicolasbearde.com.

Ron Weinstock



SONNY LANDRETH From The Reach LANDFALL RECORDS

Slide guitarist Sonny Landreth has been very well known for years...among musicians that is – especially guitar players. I recently had the pleasure of seeing him live for two nights with his trio, Dave Ranson/bass and Michael Burch/drums, and they delivered four sets of electrifying performances. Since it is a trio, Sonny just keeps going, and going, and going. This new CD had just recently come out and the local stores had already sold out of it.

Some of the songs Landreth played that night were from his previous album, "Grant Street," which was a live trio recording. But he also played many songs from this new album in a 'stripped down' fashion. I say that because the three on stage that night had been joined in the studio on some tracks by Steve Conn on keyboards with Sam Broussard on acoustic guitar and two percussionists. But that is not all...by any means. In fact, the big story here is the impressive and diverse list of guests adding vocals, guitars and piano. On hand were Dr. John, Mark Knopfler, Robben Ford, Eric Clapton Vince Gill, Jimmy Buffett, Eric Johnson and Nadirah Shakoor.

Landreth crafted some fine originals suiting his guests very well and the result is a well-balanced set where each song sounds different from another and all flow together for a quite enjoyable set. But don't worry; the guests in no way create a shortage of Landreth's slide solos. In fact, I'd say they spur him on. And, of course, you get even more guitar from the guests.

So, although Sonny has been well known to his fellow musicians for years, that should be expanding greatly among the axe-free listening public with the airplay he's been receiving with "From The Reach."

It is so accessible in fact that it is actually well within the reach of a large chunk of the general public, without making any compromises. Yes, this is very nice stuff.

Be sure to check Sonny out live if you get the chance. Visit www.sonnylandreth.com.

Bill Wahl

LIKE JAZZ & BLUES PHOTOS?



This photo of Deitra Farr captured by Ron Weinstock at the 2007 Pocono Blues Festival is just one of hundreds of Ron's photos you can view online at www.flickr.com/photos/novaron

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KAHIL EL 'ZABAR'S RITUAL TRIO

Ooh Live!

KATALYST ENTERTAINMENT

Recorded live at Chicago's Hot House in 2000, this four-tune CD by drummer Kahil El' Zabar features bassist Malachi Favors Moghostut and pianist/tenor saxophonist Ari Brown, with a guest appearance by tenor saxophonist Pharoah Sanders.

The band opens with a stimulating 18:36-minute workout of "Autumn Leaves." Featuring Brown on piano, El' Zabar kicking (and shouting) from underneath, and Favors plucking steadily, the swinging tour-de-force begins with the usual melody statement before breaking out into free improvisations. "In the Land of Ooh!" is a 25:10 churning foray into the avant-garde with Sanders blowing raw, free and abrasive before Brown takes his creative solo on the ivories. A 15-minute take on "This Little Light of Mine" and a swinging seven-minute "Ka's Blues," featuring Brown's bluesy tenor sax statements, round out the impressive set.

This exciting live-recorded performance adds nicely to El' Zabar's existing discography. El' Zabar yields plenty of space to his teammates and, as driving force of the band, displays fiery traps pyrotechnics under the soloists. Malachi Favors died January 30, 2004 and hearing his masterful plucked and bowed solos and support on this disc reminds us of how sorely he is missed on the jazz scene.

Nancy Ann Lee

LIL' DAVE THOMPSON

Got to Get Over You

ELECTRO-FI RECORDS

Playing with Booba Barnes as a teenager, and later recording for Fat Possum while touring with R.I. Burnside, Jr. Kimbrough and others, Mississippi blues man Lil' Dave Thompson may not be 40, but he has developed into a terrific modern bluesman.

Thompson had an impressive debut album on Fat Possum followed by an excellent recording on the British JSP label. Despite his hill country roots, his stinging guitar and forceful vocals owes much to the legendary Albert King, joining such other notable blues artists as the late Son Seals and Larry Davis as well as the muscular blues of Michael Burks.

Thompson's new album on Electro-Fi certainly shows he has developed his own blues style. He is a fiery guitarist whose tone evokes King, although, like others, he has a busier style.

Tied to this is his soulful, expressive singing and a program of strong blues originals, including the title track and rocking shuffles like "Out in the Cold" and "Hard Headed Woman." "Need For Speed," the lone instrumental, is a showcase for his searing fretwork.

Recorded in Toronto, Electro-Fi backed Thompson with a tight band with organist John Lee and saxophonist Pat Carey impressively adding their voices, but the spotlight remains clearly on Thompson and with this recording and his striking, intense performances (this writer just saw him at the Pocono Blues Festival), his stature in the blues world should be growing.

Ron Weinstock

DVDs



STUFF

Live At Montreux 1976

EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

Alongside Booker T & The MG's and The Meters, the '70s sextet Stuff rates as royalty among r&b instrumental groups. Just as those two afore-mentioned lineups, in their day, ruled the studio roosts of Memphis and New Orleans respectively, the NYC-based members of Stuff were on every self-respecting producer's A-list. And also, just like those other celebrated "sections," the funky guitar tandem of Cornell Dupree and Eric Gale, the gospel-steeped keyboardist Richard Tee, anchor-man bassist Gordon Edwards, and the drumming duo of Steve Gadd and Chris Parker made fresh, funky, and extremely entertaining music, when starring as themselves.

Minus Parker, Stuff hit the Montreux stage with their collective game face firmly in place and proceeded to dish out a non-stop set of foot-stomping, tuneful originals & covers. Their strictly-business attitude was most personified by Edwards, who appeared to be their on-stage leader. He deviated from his screwed-in-the-ground bass foundation only when providing the change-up lick for the following number. And the numbers followed as if on a conveyor belt, to the obvious delight of the audience who, when finally offered a break in the action, exploded in vocal and hand-clapped approval.

As they have on their studio tracks, Dupree and Gale nonchalantly tossed the lead line between them, fashioning seamless statements of funky mind-meld. While Mr. Tee's solos and segues start strictly "in church," it's his work which speaks most directly to jazz, as evident on their cover of Earth, Wind and Fire's "That's The Way Of The World." Gadd, hardly over-burdened by handling the drumming chores solo, was an ideal blend of technique, taste and soul. These fellas were so into their mission, they barely acknowledged folk icon Odetta when she made it to the stage for some shouting on "Oh Happy Day."

The camera work and shot selection tastefully enhances a performance that was virtually devoid of a "show." The players interacted with the audience exclusively through their craft (no one seemed to complain) and the cameras provide just enough variation to keep one's eyes pleasantly occupied during this ear and soul feast. Fans of the band and all others partial to smokin' r&b should not hesitate.

This performance is also available as a CD with the same songs as the DVD version

Duane Verh



27th Annual Adams Avenue Street Fair Sept. 27 & 28 in San Diego

SAN DIEGO, CA – The Adams Avenue Street Fair, Southern California's largest free music festival, will celebrate its 27th anniversary on Saturday, September 27, from 10 am to 90 pm, and Sunday, September 28, from 10 am to 6 pm, on Adams Avenue, located in the Normal Heights community of San Diego. The Street Fair offers fun and excitement for all-ages.

Keeping true to Adams Avenue Street Fair traditions, this year's festival will include more than 70 musical acts performing on six stages spread out over eight-blocks of Adams Avenue. Street Fair-goers will enjoy a variety of music, including blues, rock, world, alt, roots-rock, jazz and acoustic. This year's all-star Street Fair line-up will be announced in mid-August.

In addition to the exciting and diverse music, there will be three beer gardens, giant carnival rides, children's activities and more than 300 food, arts and craft vendors selling their specialties along Adams Avenue.

During the past 26 years, the Adams Avenue Street Fair has generated critical acclaim for its focus on rising local, regional, national and international talent, as well as established artists who have altered and influenced generations of musicians.

Among the past Adams Avenue Street Fair performers, which include Grammy Award winners and Rock &

Roll Hall of Fame inductees, are: No Doubt, Lila Downs, Pops Staples, Andy Summers, Wanda Jackson, Nortec Collective, Koko Taylor, Dave Alvin, John Doe, Johnny Johnson, Rosie Flores, Mike Watt, The Beat Farmers, Cindy Lee Berryhill, Charles McPherson, GOP, Eve Selis, The Rugburns and Mojo Nixon.

For further information, please call (619) 282-7329, or visit us on the web at: www.AdamsAveOnline.com The Adams Avenue Street Fair is presented by the Adams Avenue Business Association, a non-profit organization whose mission is "To promote and increase commercial activity within the Adams Avenue Business District".

More than 600 Adams Avenue businesses, proud hosts of the Street Fair, Taste of Adams Avenue and Adams Avenue Roots & Folk Festival, offer an eclectic array of unique boutique shops, restaurants and pubs that make it worth returning to Adams Avenue year-round.

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ELLIS ISLAND. WHERE THE WORLD CAME TOGETHER AND AMERICAN STYLE BEGAN

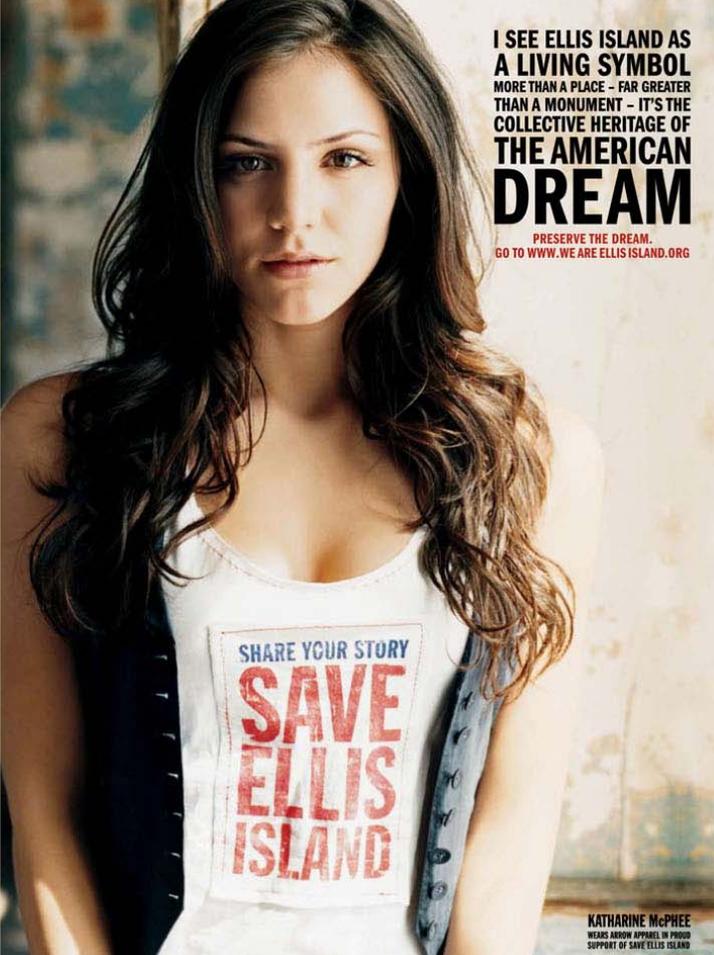


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