



**jazz
& blues** report

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SUMMER FESTIVALS CONTINUE.....

McCoy Tyner
Detroit Jazz Festival

Jazz & Blues Report

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Jazz & Blues Report

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"Buffalicious"

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

The Festivals Continue.....

We are in the middle of the Festival season and there are any number of festivals of interest for Blues and Jazz lovers upcoming. As this issue gets circulated the annual Portland Waterfront Blues Festival and Mississippi Valley Blues Festival will have likely wrapped up, as will the major Jazz Festivals in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal in Canada. This is a very selective list of festivals that include two I will be attending. First, three blues festivals, and then three jazz festivals.



John Primer

The 3rd Pennsylvania Blues Festival takes place at the Blue Mountain Ski Resort in Palmerton Pennsylvania, from Friday evening July 26 through Sunday July 28. Friday evening will feature the Lehigh Valley Blues Showcase with performers including Bev Conklin and Georgie Fame. There is a buffet available in addition to the music. Saturday, July 27's line-up has performances by John Primer, Bonerama, Sista Monica, Guy Davis; Robert Randolph presents the Slide Brothers featuring Calvin Cooke; Chuck Campbell, Darick Campbell and Aubrey Ghent, and Robert Randolph and the Family Band. On Sunday July 28 the lineup includes Alexis P Suter with both a gospel and a blues show; Eddie Shaw and the Wolf Gang; Johnny Rawls; Electro-Fi Canadian Blues Showcase with Harrison Kennedy, Diana Braithwaite and Chris Whitley; Ivan Neville and Dumpstaphunk, Ruthie Foster, and Bobby Rush (performing acoustic and full show sets). For more information (including directions and tickets)

check out Blue Mountain's website, <http://www.skibluemt.com/seasonal-activities/pa-blues-festival/>. I will be there.

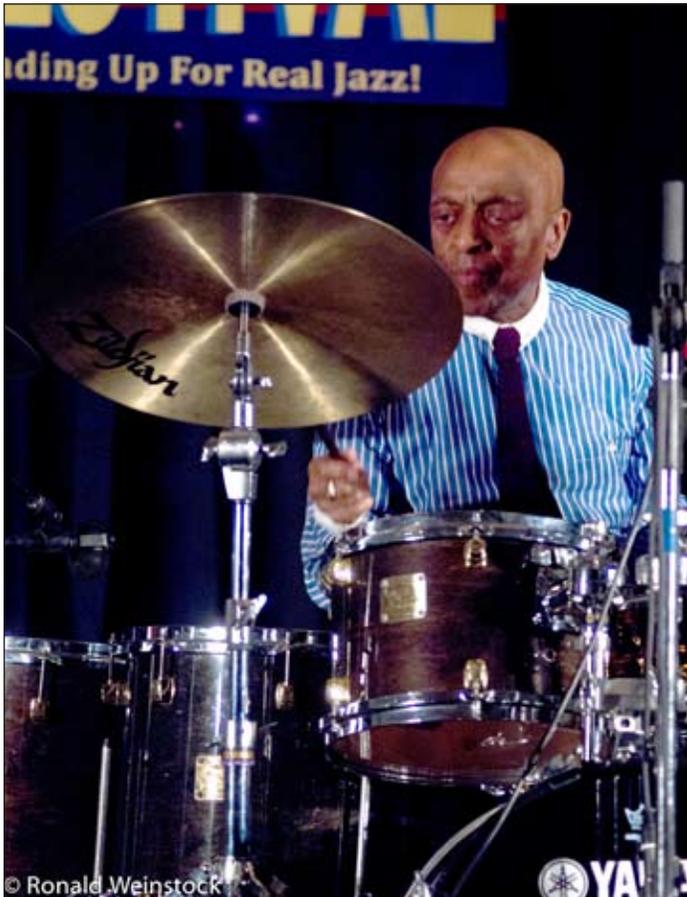


James Cotton

The Riverfront Blues Festival takes place at Tubman-Garrett Riverfront Park, Wilmington Delaware August 2 to August 4. The lineup on August 2 includes John Primer, Moreland and Arbuckle, Lil Ronnie & the Grand Dukes and The James Cotton Band. On Saturday, August 3 the performers include Eden Brent, Jimmy D. Lane, Eric Lindell and the Sunliners featuring Anson Funderburgh; and Rod Piazza and the Mighty Flyers Reunion Band. The lineup for Sunday, August 4 includes The Lee Boys, Mac Arnold and Plate Full O' Blues, and Elvin Bishop. For information on tickets and other matters visit <http://riverfrontbluesfestde.com>.

The Heritage Music Blues Festival takes place in Wheeling WV on August 9 to August 11. Blues highlights of Friday, August 9 include Lionel Young and the Golden State-Lone Star Blues Revue featuring Anson Funderburgh; Little Charlie Baty, & Mark Hummel. Performers on Saturday, August 10 include Little G Weevil (IBC solo winner), Joe Louis Walker and Dr John. Sunday highlights include IBC band winner Selwyn Birchwood, Harrison Kennedy and Ruthie Foster.

Like most 'blues' festivals they also have non-blues acts such as Glen David Andrews, Southern Hospitality and JJ Grey & Mofro on Sunday. This is not unique to this festival as even the Pennsylvania Festival has several such acts (Bonorama and Ivan Neville). This isn't to say anything about the quality of the music or inclusion of a couple of non-blues acts. For example, having seen a DVD of JJ Grey & Mofro, he is an electrifying performer whose music has qualities similar to great blues, soul and country. However, actual blues is getting squeezed out at some so-called 'blues' festivals. Heritage does have a fair amount of real blues. For more information, check out <http://heritagemusicfest.com>.



Roy Haynes

The legendary **Newport Jazz Festival** returns to the Rhode Island community Friday August 2 through Sunday August 4. Highlight of this year's festival maybe the Wayne Shorter 80th Birthday Celebration and Chick Corea will be leading an All Star new band. It opens Friday night, August 2 with Natalie Cole and the Bill Charlap Trio with Special Guest Freddie Cole.

The line-up on Saturday, August 3 includes Wayne Shorter's 80th Birthday Celebration: Wayne Shorter Quartet featuring Danilo Pérez, John Patitucci & Brian Blade plus special guest Herbie Hancock; Esperanza Spalding's Radio Music Society; Michel Camilo Sextet; Terence Blanchard Quintet; Robert Glasper Experiment; Gregory Porter, Bill Charlap Trio with special guests Bob Wilber & Anat Cohen; Edmar Castañeda with special guest Andrea Tierra; Lew Tabackin Quartet with Randy Brecker, Peter Washington &

Lewis Nash, plus Ray Anderson Pocket Brass Band and more.

The line-up on Sunday, August 4 includes Chick Corea & The Vigil with Christian McBride, Tim Garland, Marcus Gilmore & Charles Altura; Eddie Palmieri Salsa Orchestra; Dizzy Gillespie™ Big Band under the direction of Paquito D'Rivera; Joshua Redman Quartet; Roy Haynes Fountain of Youth Band; Steve Coleman Projects: Five Elements, Talea Ensemble and Duo with David Bryant; Jim Hall with Scott Colley, Lewis Nash and special guest Julian Lage; Dirty Dozen Brass Band; Jon Batiste & Stay Human and more.

For more information on the Newport Jazz Festival (including travel packages through radio station WBGO), visit <http://www.newportjazzfest.org>.

Chicago and Detroit both host major Jazz Festivals over Labor Day Weekend. I will be attending the **Chicago Jazz Festival** that starts Thursday August 29 and runs through Sunday September 1. The Detroit Jazz Festival starts Friday August 30 and runs through Labor Day, September 2

There is quite of range of music at the **Chicago Jazz Festival** from the trad jazz of Fat babies to the cutting edge sounds of Hamid Drake (who is the Festival's Artist In Residence), Fast Citizens and Jack DeJohnette who will lead all star special band that with Muhal Richard Abrams, Roscoe Mitchell and Henry Threadgill.

While the bulk of the **Chicago Jazz Festival** takes place at Millennium Park, on Thursday, August 29 performances take place at several locations including the Chicago Cultural Center at, 78 E. Washington with performers including Fat Babies, and the Harrison Bankhead Sextet. At Roosevelt University's Ganz Hall at 430 S. Michigan Ave. there will be a 5:00PM performance of Hamid Drake's Chicago Trio with Ernest Dawkins and Harrison Bankhead. That evening at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park (201 E. Randolph St.) is Made in Chicago: World Class Jazz - Jack DeJohnette: Special Legends Edition Chicago featuring, Muhal Richard Abrams, Larry Gray, Roscoe Mitchell and Henry Threadgill.

Starting Friday, August 30 performances are at Millennium Park. In the afternoon one can see bassist Christopher McBride's Quartet; the Ben Paterson Organ Quartet; the Mike Smith Quartet, and Hamid Drake with Michael Zerang, Eigen Aoki and Tsukasa drummers directed by Tatsu Aoki. Highlights of the evening performances are Wadada Leo Smith's Ten Freedom Summers, performed by WLS's Golden Quartet and Pacifica Red Coral with video artist Jesse Gilbert; and Charles Lloyd and Friends featuring Bill Frisell.

On Saturday, August 31 afternoon performers include Hamid Drake Quartet with Kidd Jordan, William Parker and Cooper-Moore; Ernie Krivda Quartet; Nick Mazzarella Trio and the Erin McDougald Quartet. Evening performances feature Stafford James String and Percussion Ensemble featuring M'BOOM; Gregory Porter; Rudresh Mahanthappa's GAMAK and Jason Moran: Fats Waller Dance Party.

Sunday, September 1 afternoon performers include

Fast Citizens; Evan Christopher; and Fareed Haque and Tony Monaco; The evening performers include the legendary Jimmy Heath Quartet with Jeb Patton; Hamid Drake & Bindu: Reggaeology; Robert Glasper Trio and Donald Harrison and The Congo Square Nation with special guest Willie Pickens.

For more information visit http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/chicago_jazz_festival.html.



Jimmy Heath

Danilo Perez is the Artist-in-Residence at this year's **Detroit Jazz Festival**. This is also a free festival. The Detroit Jazz Festival occupies two million square feet of downtown Detroit – from Hart Plaza on the riverfront, three blocks north to beautiful Campus Martius Park. There are two stages on the North end and three stages at Hart Plaza, plus a Jazz Talk Tent. While a free festival, the Festival offers VIP passes for donations.

The Festival line-up includes performances by Danilo Perez including his Panama Suite and other works for a large orchestra; David Murray Big Band with Macy Gray; Ahmad Jamal; Joshua Redman with Strings; Shelia Jordan with Strings featuring the Alan Broadbent Trio; Charles Lloyd Quartet with Bill Frisell; McCoy Tyner Trio with special guest Savion Glover; Saxophone Summit – Joe Lovano, David Liebman, Ravi Coltrane; Gregory Porter; Bill Frisell – Lennon

Project; Eddie Daniels and Roger Kellaway, with Celo-Duke at the Roadside; Geri Allen and the Detroit Homecoming Band; Danilo Perez and Geri Allen Acoustic Piano Duo; Jon Faddis, Jesse Davis & the Bill Charlap Trio; Tribute to Detroit's Pepper Adams – Gary Smulyan, Howard Johnson, Frank Basile; Lee Konitz Quartet; Freddie Cole; The Cookers featuring Billy Harper, Eddie Henderson, George Cables, Cecil McBee, Billy Hart, David Weiss; and more.

For more information on the Detroit jazz Festival, visit <http://www.detroitjazzfest.com/schedule.html>.

September brings the annual Monterey Jazz Festival, which Bill Wahl highlighted last issue and might repeat for this one. Early October brings the annual King Biscuit Blues Festival which I hope to highlight in the next issue. Enjoy your summer. All pictures, including the cover, by Ron Weinstock
Ron Weinstock



Monterey, CA - Monterey Jazz Festival has announced the star-studded line up for its 56th annual Monterey Jazz Festival to be held September 20–22 at the Monterey Fairgrounds. Arena and Grounds Package Tickets went on sale on to the general public on May 21. Single Day tickets are on sale now.

2013's GRAMMY Award-winning lineup includes Arena headliners Diana Krall; Wayne Shorter Quartet; Bobby McFerrin; Bob James & David Sanborn featuring Steve Gadd & James Genus; Dave Holland's PRISM featuring Kevin Eubanks, Craig Taborn & Eric Harland; Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Quintet: Sound Prints; George Benson; The Relatives; Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club; Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra; and Gregory Porter.

The GRAMMY-winning saxophonist, Joe Lovano, will serve as the Festival's 2013 Artist-In-Residence, and will perform with Us Five; with Dave Douglas in Sound Prints, playing music inspired and commissioned from Wayne Shorter; and as a soloist with the Festival's all-star student band, the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra.

Award-winning trumpeter Dave Douglas returns to the Festival as the 2013 Showcase Artist, and will perform three times throughout the weekend: on the Grounds with his own Quintet; and with Sound Prints in the Arena and on the Grounds. Sound Prints acts as one of the dual 2013 Commission Artists along with the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra, which will debut newly commissioned music in tribute to the late Dave Brubeck in the Arena.

The Festival features 500 artists, 90 performances on 8 stages and more, for 30 hours of live music over two days and three nights, accompanied by an array of international cuisine, shopping, art exhibits, educational events, seminars and conversations with iconic and

emerging jazz artists on the oak-studded 20-acres of the Monterey County Fairgrounds.

Monterey Jazz Festival Highlights and Artist Listing

- Return of jazz legends Diana Krall, Wayne Shorter, George Benson, Bobby McFerrin, Dave Holland
- 2013 Artist-In-Residence, Joe Lovano, makes four appearances over the weekend in the Arena and Grounds
 - World Premiere of 2013 Commissions: Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra's tribute to Dave Brubeck; Sound Prints performs music inspired by and commissioned from Wayne Shorter
 - 2013 Showcase Artist Dave Douglas appears three times over the weekend in the Arena and on the Grounds
 - Festival debuts of Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club, The Relatives; and more
 - NEA Jazz Masters include Wayne Shorter, George Benson, Cedar Walton, Lou Donaldson
 - 2013 Monterey Jazz Festival Artists have won 43 GRAMMY Awards
 - Coffee House Gallery Exhibit: Brubeck at Monterey: Six decades of Excellence
 - Film screenings of Round Midnight and Sonny Rollins: Between the Notes
 - Return of Sunday's Family Day with fun and music for all ages

Artist-In-Residence: Joe Lovano

Showcase Artist: Dave Douglas

Commission Artist: Wayne Shorter, Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra

ARENA ARTISTS - Friday, September 20

Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club featuring Omara Portuondo & Eliades Ochoa; Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra; Gregory Porter

ARENA ARTISTS - Saturday, September 21

Bobby McFerrin; Dave Holland's PRISM featuring Kevin Eubanks, Craig Taborn & Eric Harland; Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Quintet: Sound Prints; George Benson; The Relatives

ARENA ARTISTS - Sunday, September 22

Diana Krall; Wayne Shorter Quartet; Bob James & David Sanborn Featuring Steve Gadd & James Genus; Next Generation Jazz Orchestra with Joe Lovano; Winning High School Big Band from the Next Generation Jazz Festival

GROUND ARTISTS - Friday, September 20

Dizzy's Den: Gregory Porter; Snarky Puppy
Night Club: Joe Lovano Us Five; Carmen Lundy; Dave Douglas Quintet

Garden Stage: 7 Come 11; Berklee Global Jazz Ambassadors with Joe Lovano; Roberto Fonseca

Coffee House: Uri Caine Trio (3 sets)

GROUND ARTISTS - Saturday, September 21

Dizzy's Den: Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Quintet: Sound Prints; Charlie Hunter & Scott Amendola; Ravi

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Coltrane Quartet; DownBeat Blindfold Test hosted by Dan Ouellette; Panel discussion on Dave Brubeck

Night Club: Brubeck Brothers Quartet; Mary Stallings; Craig Taborn; Claire Daly; Brubeck Institute Jazz Quintet; more TBA

Garden Stage: The Relatives; Big Sam's Funky Nation; California Honeydrops; Marc Cary Focus Trio, Kentyah presents: M1, Brian Jackson & The New Midnight Band

Coffee House Gallery: Orrin Evans Trio (3 sets); Berklee Global Jazz Ambassadors; Prez Kids

West Lawn: North Pacific String Band (2 sets)

GROUND ARTISTS - Sunday, September 22

Dizzy's Den: Dr. Lonnie Smith Trio; Anthony Wilson Trio with Larry Goldings & Jim Keltner; Conversation with Jim Keltner; NEA Jazz Master Panel; Conversation with Jim Keltner & Steve Gadd

Night Club: Cedar Walton Trio; Lou Donaldson Quartet; Winning bands from the Next Generation Jazz Festival (TBA)

Garden Stage: Paul Contos Quartet; Davina & the Vagabonds; Tammy Hall Quartet; Along Came Betty; Winning band from the Next Generation Jazz Festival (TBA)

Coffee House Gallery: Phronesis (2 sets); Winning band from the Next Generation Jazz Festival (TBA); Family Day with Peter Alsop (2 sets)

West Lawn: John Brothers Piano Company Quintet

ALL WEEKEND

Jazz on Film: Round Midnight (Saturday) and Sonny Rollins: Between the Notes (Sunday); Judy Roberts on the Yamaha AvantGrand with Greg Fishman on saxophone; Arena Simulcasts in the Jazz Theater Presented by Alaska Airlines; Coffee House Gallery Exhibit: Brubeck at Monterey: Six Decades of Excellence

Artists and schedule subject to change.

2013 TICKET INFORMATION AND MORE

New sales for Full Weekend Arena and Grounds Packages began May 21. Arena Packages start at \$225 and offer a reserved seat to each of the concerts on the Jimmy Lyons Stage in the Arena (renewable annually); access to seven Grounds Stages and all Festival activities. Full Weekend Grounds Packages start at \$125, and offer access to seven Grounds stages and activities, plus simulcasts of all Arena concerts in the Jazz Theater Presented by Alaska Airlines.

Single Day Arena Tickets include a reserved seat (non-renewable) for the Arena shows on the day selected, and are \$66 for Friday and \$132 for Saturday or Sunday. Daily Grounds Tickets start as low as \$40, and include access to seven Grounds stages and activities, plus simulcasts of all Arena concerts in the Jazz Theater presented by Alaska Airlines. Single Day Arena and Grounds Tickets just went on sale July 8.

For more information on the events, and to purchase tickets, visit <http://www.montereyjazzfestival.org/2013/>

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& blues**

SMITTY GOES TO NEW ORLEANS

BEWARE THE SMIRK!

THE 2013 NEW ORLEANS JAZZ & HERITAGE FESTIVAL

I looked at my feet and legs with a sense of disbelief. They were coated with a thick black muck that oozed from every opening in my sandals every time I lifted my feet. I would lift one foot only to see the other one sink ankle deep below the surface as I attempted to move forward. My feet seemed to weigh several pounds apiece with the muck filling both the inside of my sandals and sticking to the soles. Not only was the muck coating my feet and legs, it was throwing up a horrible stench best left for pig farms or road kill on a hot afternoon: Putrid, noxious, gut-wrenching, gag-inducing bad. Walking was difficult because the muck not only tried to suck the shoes off your feet with each step, it was slippery to boot.

Even the slightest dip in the ground presented an opportunity for an unplanned horizontal adventure and a fate worse than just dirty legs and feet: which is exactly what someone just ahead of me had just accomplished. He looked like one of those ads for mud-runs or warrior dashes, only worse because he was fully clothed. Not wanting the same fate, instead of using my hand to plug my nose against the stench, I found myself with arms held out like a high wire artist or drunk trying to keep my balance. The mud stretched on as far as I could see in all directions. As I trudged onward I found myself longing for a pair of pink paisley cowboy boots. Warm. Dry. Mud-proof. Stylin'. If I only had a pair of those beauties, life would take a turn for the better. Did I say that out loud? Am I hallucinating? What will my buddies think? So what does all of this have to do with Jazz Fest? Read on my friends.

The first weekend of May marked my 10th appearance at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. The scheduled line-up at both the festival and on the club scene was solid and I was travelling with a group of music loving buddies so it was shaping up to be a great weekend. Jazz Fest takes place at the Louisiana State Fairgrounds, mostly in the infield of the horse race track. There are two main stages, the Acura and the Gentilly which are located at each end of the track and host the big headline bands. Interspersed in-between are the Congo Square, Fais Do- Do, Jazz & Heritage and Lagniappe stages as well as the WWOZ Jazz tent, the Economy Hall Tent, the Gospel Tent and the Blues Tent. The stages and tents run simultaneously from 11:00 am to 7:00 pm. While start times are staggered a bit, it is impossible to see everyone that you want to see in the course of the day. We gave it our best, taking in at least part of the performance by 31 bands over the course of our 3 days and four nights at the fest and the clubs. We literally did nothing but listen to music, eat and sleep. Warren Zevon's infamous

box set title "I'll Sleep When I'm Dead" became our mantra for the weekend. Here's how it all went down.

Wednesday- The Warm-Up Round

Due to a lousy set of flight connections the trip to New Orleans consumed most of the day so that I didn't hit the city until well after 7:00 p.m. Not to worry though, as a stop at the Acme Oyster House awaited us. Big juicy raw oysters on the half shell, a fried oyster Po' boy and a cold Abita beer had been front and center on my mind ever since landing at the airport. While waiting in a mid-sized line to get in I had my first surprise of the weekend as I spied another guest in line sporting the distinctive t-shirt of my son's employer in Chicago. It turned out that it was my son's employer! We had a laugh over the coincidence and I hope I didn't screw up my son's job!

The dinner was every bit as good as I had envisioned. Properly fortified with food and drink, and knowing that Bourbon Street is a cover band dead end, we headed to Frenchman Street to hear some music and get the adventure off to a good start. We were excited with the prospect of seeing San Francisco based jazz funk outfit, the Monophonics, who were scheduled to play at d.b.a. at 10:00. When we arrived at the club we noted a small sign saying "doors at 11:00, show at midnight." Since we were already running a little late on the body clocks given the hour time change, we were a little concerned about waiting that long but the bouncer told us we could catch the end of Ivan Neville's set and still stay for the Monophonics. Drawn by Neville's funky groove, we threw our money down and walked in only to hear Neville say "thank you and good night" two songs later.

We then found out that the Monophonics were not only going on later than expected but had an opening act- the Nigel Hall Band. Who? Well, it turns out they are a great, up and coming, New Orleans band. They locked into a tight groove and blew us away with their instrumental prowess. Musicians rotated in and out of the line-up with a horn section leading the charge one moment and Hall's keys scorching the earth the next. Before we knew it, the clock struck 1:30 (2:30 for us!). By then we were all too tired to await what was surely going to be a very late set by the Monophonics. We pulled the plug and headed back to the hotel, only to be way laid by the siren call of fresh beignets and café au lait at the infamous Café Du Monde. Lights out at 2:30.

Thursday- It's Jazz Fest Y'All!

7:30 am. Thursday broke with some disappointing news. The weather forecast, which had been trending towards rain, was now showing a 60% chance. No rain though as we left the hotel and hopped the shuttle to Jazz Fest. A quick trip to the festival grounds and full day of Jazz Fest was before us. First up was Kirk Joseph's Backyard Groove, a funky New Orleans outfit fronted by tuba player, Kirk Joseph. "Hey, wasn't he one of the guys on stage with Nigel Hall a couple of hours ago?" A close look revealed him to be one and the same. Wow, if he's tired, he's sure not showing it. He fired up a great brass-driven set with a couple of guest vocalists that added a nice counterpoint to the blast of brass. Just before the set ended, the threatened rain started and we

took an unplanned detour to the Blues tent where we were treated to the end of the J. Monque D. Blues Band's set. By then, the rain had increased in strength to the point that we soon had lots of company as people sought protection from the elements. As is always the case at Jazz Fest, the changed plans had a bonus- 80 year old North Carolina based bluesman Drink Small soon took the stage and regaled us with all manner of stories and tunes and even worked in a bit of "yaba dabba do" from the Flintstones, to the amusement of the crowd. About mid-way through the set, we noticed the rain had slowed to a mist and we beat an exit to the food court where we agonized over the abundant choices including boiled crawfish, oyster beignets, duck Po' boy sandwiches, crawfish bread, fried alligator, fried green tomatoes and all manner of other southern delicacies.

Now that we were fueled, we headed over to the Fais do-do stage to catch the smokin' hot Zydeco of Rosie Ledet and the Zydeco Playboys who drew a huge crowd wanting to get the party started. The normal band line-up was augmented by a male dancer decked out in skin-tight paisley stretch pants, a halter top, a straw fedora, sunglasses and a belly dancer's belt with beads and medallions hanging around his waist. The outfit was so wild that without the hairy chest and beard he could have been Aerosmith's Steven Tyler. With moves that would make a Bourbon Street stripper blush, he added some wild spice to the hot Zydeco laid down by Rosie and crew and the party definitely got started. After over an hour, we headed over to the Gentilly Stage to catch the final few songs of the traditional jazz of Meschiya Lake and the Little Big Horns.

While she sported the tattoos of a heavy metal chick, the sounds coming out of her mouth were pure old school bliss. While catching her set we spied a middle-aged woman shaking a maraca in one hand with the other holding a "free hugs" sign. She worked her way through the crowd hugging anyone willing to throw their arms open. One of my buddies was a recipient and turned the hug into a quick little dance that almost set the maraca flying. Unfazed, the hug lady moved on dispensing smiles and hugs to everyone in her path adding a bit of warmth and humor to the misty afternoon. After that little adventure, we then stayed put for the home grown blues of blind pianist Henry Butler and the rootsy pop of Theresa Andersson who not only has a crack backing band but assembles tape loops on the fly so that she can harmonize with herself.

While she was great, we decided mid-set to catch the end of jazz trumpeter Shamarr Allen's set at the Congo Square Stage. We grabbed some prime real estate near the stage and were treated to a terrific performance including his amazing ability to hold a note for well over a minute by utilizing circular breathing. Unfortunately, all that breathing must have awakened the rain gods again as the mist turned into a downright pelting hard rain. Cold and now wet, we reluctantly abandoned our plans to see rock goddess Patti Smith who was scheduled to follow Theresa Andersson.

A planned dinner at the fabulous Jacques Imos had to be scuttled because the two hour wait would cut into a show we had learned about only that morning involving the Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Trombone Shorty and his band,

Orleans Avenue. We were excited about this show because we would not only get to see the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, thus opening up the opportunity to skip them at the Fest in favor of something else, but we would have the chance to see Trombone Shorty, who is one of the hottest names on the New Orleans scene. So hot, in fact, that he has been named the Sunday night festival closer taking over the slot held down for years by the Neville Brothers. Heading to the show we grabbed dinner at Dragos, a must if you enjoy grilled oysters. A great meal behind us, we then hit the show, which exceeded our wildest expectations with a large rocking crowd and over the top performances by the bands.

The show was a benefit for the Trombone Shorty Foundation, which is funding music classes for high schoolers. Since it was the inaugural event for his own foundation, Trombone Shorty made sure it was a gig that will long be remembered. Mission accomplished, particularly with his cover of his Grandfather Jessie Hill's classic "Ooh Papa Do", which had the place on fire. We stayed until the last note. An awesome first day of Jazz Fest. Lights out, 2:00.

Friday- Oh, oh....

Friday dawned bright as the sun peaked through the window at the all too early hour of 7:00 a.m. (See lights out above!). Unfortunately, that soon changed as a large rain cell moved into the area drowning the sunlight in water. A check of the radar revealed the cell would be through the area by 11:00 with partly sunny skies promised for the afternoon, which was a good thing as the rain had also

JESSE DEE

ON MY MIND / IN MY HEART

*"Tough-but-tender soul
and rollicking,
rootsy R&B...
infectious revival-
meeting furor"*
—*Boston Globe*




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Receive tour info and special online offers by subscribing to the Alligator mailing list at www.alligator.com



brought a chill to the air. Since there was no hurry to get to the festival and stand around in the rain, we took a trip to the venerable Mothers, a renowned New Orleans restaurant that proclaims itself the home of the world's best baked ham. We treated ourselves to biscuits with debris (loose roast beef) and cups of almost undrinkable strong chicory coffee in the funky warehouse setting.

As we left Mothers we discovered the rain had stopped as predicted so we headed straight to the jazz fest shuttle and grabbed a spot in line. Hmmm, Pink Paisley rubber cowboy boots. I've seen plenty of fashion statements in New Orleans but this was a first. They seemed an odd pairing with the shorts and brief top worn by the young lady walking ahead of us to the line. Why in the world would anyone choose foot suffocating rubber boots in early May, particularly matched with summer apparel? You might as well wear fur Uggs in a Fourth of July parade in 90 degree heat. My buddies and I exchanged smirks at this fashion faux pas knowing we were shod far more appropriately in sandals and running shoes suitable for a long day of walking the festival grounds and standing for hours watching the many bands gracing the various stages. Beware the smirk. It can boomerang without warning. Within hours every one of us would have paid money to wear those boots, pink paisley and all.

You see, the rainfall from the day before didn't have a chance to soak in before today's morning deluge. As a result, the normally dusty festival grounds had been converted into a shoe sucking quagmire of fetid muck. When we arrived at the festival grounds we were surprised to discover that the gates had not yet been opened despite the fact bands were already supposed to be playing. Once they did open we discovered the groundskeepers had spread loads of sand in an effort to deal with the saturated grounds. As we approached the Gentilly stage where we planned to spend most of the day we discovered the groundskeeper's efforts had been met with only limited success.

The "stand only" zone immediately in front of the stage was largely a mucky mess and many areas of the chair zone had big, deep mud bogs that stretched several yards long and wide. This led to a patchwork of islands of chairs as people set up in the driest spots they could find. We were lucky to snag some higher ground to share with other early arrivals. Having claimed a relatively dry spot, we then headed to the other end of the fairgrounds to catch former child prodigy Amanda Shaw and her Cute Guys. Now an "ancient" 22 years old, Shaw was playing her 10th Jazz Fest.

One hearing her terrific Cajun fiddle work and earnest, earthy vocals would never figure such terrific music could come from someone so young. After her set, we each grabbed a soft-shell crab Po' Boy and headed back to the Gentilly stage to catch the Iguanas, the Mavericks and Marcia Ball who were scheduled to appear consecutively. Having been gone for only a little over an hour and a half we were shocked at the transformation that had taken place- the field was now packed with people who had set up for the day to see Willie Nelson, who was to end the day after Marcia Ball. The low, muddy bogs that had been left unoccupied by the early arrivals were now filled with chairs,

people and frequent plumes of reefer smoke. Willie's fans will not be denied! People that looked perfectly sane were sitting in chairs in the middle of mud puddles. Those without chairs were simply standing in it seemingly oblivious to the fact the water and mud was well over the top of their feet. Our own "high ground" seats didn't fare much better as the longer we stood in order to see the bands, the more our feet sunk into the mud.

The mud was the subject of much joking amongst our fellow high ground occupants as we watched people try to pick their way through the mess. There are basically two kinds of people when it comes to mud: those who try to skirt around the edges of it so as to not soil their shoes and clothing and those who embrace it with the passion of a six year old, taking it straight on and not caring a bit about a little dirt and grime. The conditions in our area converted us and thousands of others to embracers of the muck as it was simply unavoidable if you wanted to watch the bands. Man, those pink paisley rubber boots would be great for this stuff!

After the terrific three way punch of the Iguanas, The Mavericks and Marcia Ball, we decided to stretch our legs a bit and catch the end of dobro legend Jerry Douglas' set at the Fais Do Do stage and the beginning of Jimmy Cliff's set at Congo Square before closing out the day with Willie. Wow, by mid-afternoon areas that had been passable earlier were now in horrible shape.

The effort of pulling your foot from the muck would result in a lurch forward when the muck released its grip and the high chance of a face plant when trying to plant in the greasy mess in order to take the next step. Despite that, the journey was worth it as we were treated to not only Douglas' masterful playing but Cliff's infectious, upbeat reggae, which seemed the perfect antidote for the ugly mess around our feet. Making our way back to the Gentilly, we found that the crowd had increased in size even more as Willie's fans had converged from throughout the fairgrounds. Since we didn't have rubber boots, pink paisley or otherwise, and our area was even more of a mucky mess than when we left, we caught about a half hour of Willie and decided to pack it in before the immense crowd made the shuttle line an hour long ordeal. Even then, the line was long and we were cold, wet and covered with muck. Grumpiness was setting in. A stop by a liquor store and a pint of Jamison shared as we walked back to the hotel made it all better. Only in New Orleans!

After a half hour of rinsing the mud from our sandals and bodies we headed out for a quick dinner before tonight's show- the Slide Brothers and Robert Randolph and the Family Band at the House of Blues. The gospel steel and rock groove soon had us warmed up as we were treated to some amazing interplay amongst the musicians. Unfortunately, after two nights of a short ration of sleep my eye-lids were getting as droopy as Rush Limbaugh's jowls. While I kept repeating "I'll sleep when I'm dead" it was becoming a struggle not to be one of the zombies in the Night of the Living Dead. Had we not been packed in so tight I might have toppled over. When the show ended at midnight it turned out I was not alone in running short on gas. We called

it quits and headed back to the room. Lights out 12:30.

Saturday- Sunshine Baby!

After a decent night of sleep we were ready to take on our final day of fest. And what a glorious was promised: nothing but clear blue skies and moderate temperatures. We knew that given the change in weather the crowd would be much bigger than the last two days. We also knew that with Fleetwood Mac headlining the Acura stage we had better claim some real estate early or we would be setting up in the mud bogs like the poor souls we had seen yesterday. Entering the grounds we immediately hot-footed it there and found that even at the opening bell, space was at a premium with the band's hard core fans having apparently lined up to gain access to the grounds before the downtown shuttles delivered the first fan. As with yesterday, we set up on the highest ground available which put us well back from the stage. Unfortunately, a number of the people around us didn't get the fact that space was at a premium and laid out large tarps to mark their area. The problem was, with few dry ground options, people were soon cutting across their space to reach the rest of the area leaving a muddy path and honked off people in their wake. It was going to be a long day for some of them as they devised ways to stem the traffic across their precious space.

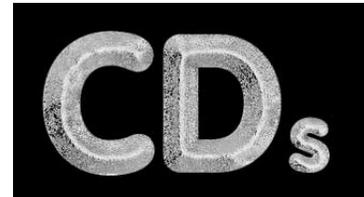
We soon left the grumpy neighbors behind and headed to Fais Do Do to see the traditional Cajun music of the Red Stick Ramblers who never fail to get the crowd waltzing and two-stepping. We then headed back to grumpy land to catch New Orleans' mainstays Cowboy Mouth who were having fun tweaking the people who were there just to see Fleetwood Mac by demanding that they either participate in the fun or the band would simply leave dead air for an hour or so. They finally lit a spark and the masses were soon rocking and shouting "The name of the band is Cowboy Mouth." Then it was back to the Fais Do Do stage to catch the Grammy Award winning Zydeco giant Chubby Carrier and the Bayou Swamp band lay down a masterful mix of traditional and rocking Zydeco.

We then took a detour to see jazz funk crew Galactic at Gentilly and started the journey back to Acura for Fleetwood Mac. Can you say crowded? What would normally be a 10 minute walk took us well over a half hour. When we reached our seats we found that every chunk of ground around us was occupied regardless of how wet or mucky it was. Areas that had been avoided like the plague at the beginning of the day were now home to thousands who had no other choice if they wanted to see the show. Fortunately, it was worth it as Fleetwood Mac brought a diverse set list to the stage which they played with enthusiasm. As good as they were, we decided we just had to end the day with the jazz funk of Stanley Clarke and George Duke over at the Jazz tent. As we walked in, Clarke was giving a lesson in the sonic possibilities of the stand-up bass. Wow!

Ah, but it was now time to head to the final round of the weekend: Kermit Ruffins, Royal Southern Brotherhood and Bonerama at the world famous Mid-City Lanes Rock and Bowl. To say the show was good would be a massive understatement. We only caught the end of Kermit's set but

were treated to first rate blues and rock from the other two bands. The Brotherhood's version of the Grateful Dead classic, "Fire on the Mountain" was worth the price of admission all by itself with Devon Allman and Mike Zito trading riffs worthy of Allman's lineage as the son of Greg Allman. The crowd was in an absolute frenzy with the energy increasing by the minute. We knew things were getting crazy when the 50 something venue owner took over mid-set and sang the national anthem before stripping off his shirt and dancing through the next couple of songs. Creepy, but somehow just right. Hey wait. Isn't he wearing pink paisley rubber cowboy boots?

Another Jazz Fest in the books. Time for some sleep!
Mark Smith



We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!



CANDYE KANE Coming Out Swingini VIZZTONE

Candye Kane has a new album "Coming Out Swingini" on VizzTone that stands out in an already substantial catalog of music she has produced. Some have may have regarded her as a novelty when she made her first recordings years ago, but she has long established herself with her personality voice and heart. This latest album features her soul mate Laura Chavez on guitar and co-writer on most of the songs along with a terrific band that includes the rhythm section of Fred Rautmann on drums and Kennan Shaw on bass, along with Leo Dombecki on organ, Sue Palmer on piano, Johnny Viau on saxophone, April West on trombone and Billy Watson on harmonica. Laura Chavez and her former husband Thomas Yearsley produced this and Yearsley adds some acoustic bass on some songs.

With drummer Rautmann doing a credible evoking of Gene Krupa's drumming on "Sing, Sing, Sing," Ms. Kane launches into the title cut, an exhilarating jump

blues with terrific horn playing and slashing guitar from Ms. Chavez who is exceptional throughout this recording. The repertoire is varied allowing Ms. Kane to show herself equally able at handling a ballad (Rick Estrinís “What Love Can Do”) as belting out the title track. Chavez adds a rockabilly tinge to the rocking reworking of Benny Carterís iRock Me To Sleep,î while Kane and Chavez demonstrate their ability to write witty songs “ím The Reason You Drink” along with one of the most remarkable lyrics I have heard in a long time, “Invisible Woman”. This latter song contrasts wealthy and celebrity women that might grace a cover of a tabloid or be on a television reality show to those who are not thin or young or rich enough to be worshipped. These are invisible woman that everybody looks through. The stark simplicity and directness of the lyrics contributes to the potency of this remarkable performance.

I have had the pleasure to see Candye Kane perform several times and always been impressed by her warmth as a person as well as the powerfulness of her music, which has grown with her experience as a performer. This is heard in “Coming Out Swingini,” which is an extraordinary recording by a remarkable singer and performer.

Ron Weinstock



DJANGO FESTIVAL ALLSTARS 2012

Live at Birdland & More
THREE'S A CROWD RECORDS

The Django Festival Allstars, purveyors of Gypsy jazz in the vein of the legendary Django Reinhardt, have become frequent visitors to the States, including regular runs in New York City. Led by guitarist Dorado Schmitt and accordionist (Ludovic Beier) with Franck Mehrstein on rhythm guitar (with Dorado's sons Samson and Bronson also becoming regulars at their performances at venues such as Birdland and the Kennedy Center were full. This writer was fortunate to see them a couple of years ago at the Kennedy Center for an exhilarating evening full of virtuosity, passion and heart, and will be there when they return in this fall.

While not part of the Allstars when I saw them, they also include violinist Pierre Blanchard.

The latest recording is “Live at Birdland & More”

(Three's A Crowd Records) reflecting that it includes some live performances from NYC's Birdland club as well as some Paris studio recordings which include guest appearances by saxophonist Anat Cohen and cellist Jisoo Ok. This CD is the first time that members of the Schmitt family dynasty have been recorded performing together for North American release.

There are plenty of pleasures to be heard here starting with the traditional “Gitan Swing” which provides Dorado a chance to dazzle with astonishing technique along with Beier's similarly dazzling playing on this hot jazz performance. Dorado switches to violin for a lovely original “For Pierre,” that is dedicated to Blanchard and displays Dorado's warm style. Blanchard is featured on his own original “Balkan Dance,” with evocation of Indian solo violin and Balkan folk dances that morphs to a driving gypsy swing performance with Beier's accordion complementing Blanchard's fiery playing. Anat Cohen guests on soprano saxophone on what is perhaps Django Reinhardt's most famous composition “Nuages,” with some lovely and very warm playing in her own style.

Another Blanchard original, “Valse En Exil,” is a lovely piece of romanticism with Samson Schmitt exhibiting a precise technique in his guitar solo while Dorado's “El Dorado” has a Brazilian flavoring with delightful interplay between Beier and Dorado. On Reinhardt's “Manor De Mes Reves,” Beier is heard on the accordina (a mouth accordion) then lends a wistful quality. The marvelous “Out of Nowhere” displays the lovely gliding violin of Blanchard and Dorado's cleanly, articulated playing set against a simple rhythm on this standard.

There are moments of faux-Middle East sounds (think of Juan Tizol's “Caravan”) on Beier's vibrant “Camping Car,” with fiery solos from Blanchard and Beier. Dorado is again featured on violin on his own “Song For Ettore,” exhibiting a strong romanticism in his playing while his son, Amati, is featured on lead guitar. Son Bronson contributed “Bronson's Song” with fleet and imaginative playing suggesting some influence from Grant Green. “Them There Eyes,” perhaps familiar from Billie Holiday is a tour de force for Samson, Beier and Blanchard, who also shine on Dorado's “Melissa.”

“Bossa Dorado” closes this lively and enchanting recording with Dorado taking the lead against the rhythm guitars of Samson and Mehrstein with Jisoo Ok providing a different musical tone with her charming cello playing.

This is a spirited close to a recording of virtuosity and passion that is full of charm as well as exhilaration. It is produced by Pat Philips and Ettore Stratta, who are founders and producers of the regular Django Reinhardt New York Festival, which is in the midst of its 14th year in celebrating the legacy of Django Reinhardt and the Gypsy jazz tradition.

Ron Weinstock



DUKE ROBILLARD
Independently Blue
 STONY PLAIN

Stony Plain has just issued the new Duke Robillard album, "Independently Blue," with twelve blues by the Duke backed by his band of Bruce Bears on keyboards, Brad Hellen on bass and Mark Texeira on drums with Monster Mike Welch added to all the selections. In addition Doug Woolverton guests on trumpet for a couple of tracks and Billy Novick adds clarinet to one selection. Robillard penned half of the songs, Al Basile added two and collaborated with Duke on one and Mike Welch contributed two instrumentals. One selection is a twenties Porter Grainger selection.

Musically there is little to complain about as the songs are well crafted, and Robillard and Welch both provide plenty of hot licks backed by Robillard's tight band. The music swings and rocks with plenty of variety ranging from the driving blues "I Wouldn't-a Done That," the country blues riff that serves as the foundation for "Below Zero," with the tight rock backing, Welch's Albert Collins' styled instrumental "Stapled To The Chickens' Back," the traditional jazz flavor of Grainger's "Patrol Wagon Blues," with the horns adding some nice coloring and Duke adding some banjo here and Bears takes a jaunty piano solo, and the raucous rock and roll of "Laurene." It's fascinating to listen to the contrasting styles of Robillard and Welch as they trade choruses and licks throughout making for some exciting listening.

My only reservation on this recording is Duke's vocals, which sound a bit too deliberate and contrived. Its not that his vocals are poor or unlistenable, but rather they are not up to the level of the music. And no fault can be found in the instrumentals including the afore-mentioned "Stapled To The Chickens' Back," as well as "Strollin With Lowell And BB," a salute to Lowell Fulson and B.B. King with Bears evoking Lloyd Glenn's piano, and the late night mood of "This Man, This Monster."

With the reservations about Duke's vocals aside (and some of you will not share my reaction), there is plenty to enjoy about the music on "Independently Blue." There is seriously strong music here and something for his many fans to enjoy while he is touring behind Bob Dylan.

Ron Weinstock

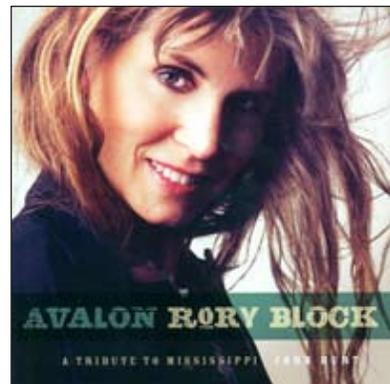


FRANK WESS
Magic 101
 JPO RECORDINGS

The title of tenor saxophonist/flautist Wess' new offering couldn't be more appropriate. The fundamental magic of jazz is at play here in the work of Wess, heard exclusively on tenor, and his principal partner, pianist Kenny Barron. The two veteran craftsmen ply their trade both in duet format and with bassist Kenny Davis and drummer Winard Harper.

Unsurprisingly, these mature masters are partial to ballads, Mr. Wess' rich, slightly smoky tone proves a most suitable match for old-school gems including "The Very Thought Of You" and "Come Rain Or Come Shine". As satisfying as the leader's work is, Mr. Barron is a frequent scene-stealer, his always-elegant approach becoming bluesy at just the right moment. A low-keyed winner of a set.

Duane Verh



RORY BLOCK

Avalon: A Tribute To Mississippi John Hurt
 STONY PLAIN

Stony Plain has just issued "Avalon," the fourth Rory Block recording that pays tribute to some of the blues legends that inspired her and from whom she learned in developing her own music. To me this is a far better recording than her Reverend Gary Davis tribute, where some of her vocals, or should I say shrieking, made several of the selections unlistenable.

Her vocals may sometimes sound mannered, but Block avoids going over the top. Importantly, Block evokes Hurt's rolling guitar style and genial vocals without attempting to sound like him. She adds spo-

ken and verbal asides in retelling the stories Hurt sang (“Avalon” is a particularly effective adaptation) and employing overdubbing to build up her guitar accompaniments for renditions of familiar songs associated with Hurt such as “Louis Collins Blues,” “Candy Man” and “Pay Day.” “Got the Blues Can’t Be Satisfied” is an especially apt example of how Block places her own stamp on Hurt’s music.

In addition to her interpretations, Block contributed an original, “Everybody Loves John,” that recalls a little of Hurt’s life as well as how everybody loved Hurt and his music. It is the opening track on what is a marvelous and moving salute by Block to one of the most beloved artists located during the sixties blues revival.

Ron Weinstock



PROJECT TRIO

When Will Then Be Now
SELF-PRODUCED

Project Trio might simply be described as a Chamber Jazz and Music hybrid on its self-released “When Will Then Be Now.” The trio is comprised of Peter Seymour on bass, Greg Pattillo on flute and Eric Stephenson on cello, and they perform a mix of classical numbers from Beethoven, Bach and Rossini with a bebop cover and five originals that display invigorating, rhythmically charged performances that display the trio’s interplay and bridge of musical worlds.

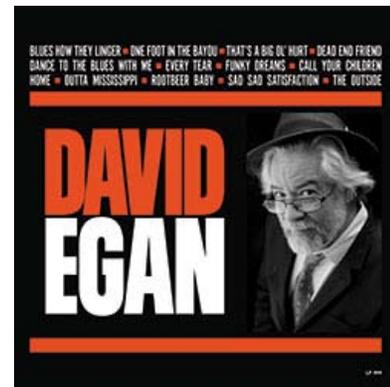
The short opening take of the opening of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, “Beethoven 5,” opens with a brief statement of the theme before their interplay. Pattillo’s use of his flute almost as a rhythm instrument is introduced here and followed by the original “Classique,” an evocative crossover in the classical tradition. “Raga Raja” is a lively Indian styled composition with Pattillo’s driving playing lending an exotic flavor here. In contrast are the three Bach “Sinfonias” with a distinct chamber music flavor.

“TV Theme Show” is a fun original that should have wide appeal while “The Stacks” moves from a chamber trio to a driving feature for flute and cello. The Charlie Parker and Miles Davis bebop classic “Donna Lee” starts as a stately bass-cello duet statement of the theme before Pattillo turns up the tempo a few notches with Stephenson shadowing him and then taking his own brisk cello solo before Pattillo

leads the performance to its coda.

“6th Road Middle” opens with the tone of a chorale number by the trio with some really pretty flute at the beginning before becoming a hot jam between the three. Rossini’s “William tell Overture” is the lengthiest performance on the disc. There is a playfulness leading up to what folks of my age will refer to as “The Theme to The Lone Ranger,” followed by three minutes of silence before a minute long spacey segment closes this recording. There is a mix of serious music and playfulness on “When Will Then Be Now” matched by their lively performances that also likely accounts for the following among diverse audiences Project Trio has garnered.

Ron Weinstock



DAVID EGAN

Rhonda Sue Records

It’s been quite a few years since Louisiana songwriter, pianist and vocalist David Egan has had a new recording under his own name. Now he has an eponymously titled release on Rhonda Sue Records. Some may know Egan as the keyboard player with Lil Band O’ Gold (and he wrote that group’s iconic song, “Spoonbread”), but he has been crafting songs for decades. “Even Now,” co-written with Buddy Flett, was on the late Johnny Adams’ final album while his “Half Past the Blues” served as the title song of an underrated album by soul-blues legend Vernon Garrett. Egan has an affinity for blues and country-flavored soul in the vein of such folks as Dan Penn. He is a more than a capable pianist and as a singer he suggests Mose Allison, although with a bit of swamp pop and blues flavor.

Of the backing musicians, I am most familiar with saxophonist Dickie Landry, Little Buck Senegal who plays guitar on several selections and Buddy Flett who also guests on guitar. The opening “That’s a Big Old Hurt” is a nice slow blues about his woman treating him like dirt with solid backing although the recording of Landry’s baritone gives it a pretty sour tone. Little Buck is featured on guitar on “Call Your Children Home,” which might be about him with a lyric where Egan sings about the power of the guitar in the song’s protagonist’s hands. Egan provides some rolling piano on “Outta Mississippi” where he sings that its a big old world out there waiting to be found

so get your butt outta Mississippi, with nice guitar from Joe McMahan.

Other songs include “Blues How They Linger,” which has a sophisticated lyric noting how birds fly for the winter, and a storm is only passin’ by, but the blues how they linger, and linger on and on which is set against an appealing jazzy backing. Lil Buck returns on lead guitar on the toe-tapping “Dance to the Blues With Me,” which is followed by a strutting performance about a lady who has gone to New York City and has one foot in the city and “One Foot in the Bayou.”

“The Outside” is among several moody slow blues about being a troubled man being on the outside and somehow his heart won’t mend. “Sad Sad Satisfaction” is another blues for 3AM in the morning as Egan has the sad sad satisfaction that his worst suspicions is coming true and his lady is setting him free. The feel is enhanced by the understated backing with nice guitar from McMahan as well as a splendid piano solo.

The last track on this release is a swamp pop ballad, “Every Tear.” It is a gem of a recording that hopefully will bring David Egan a bit more attention. He has a way of crafting songs as well as delivering a lyric in performance. Recommended. *Ron Weinstock*



JOE LOCKE
Lay Down My Heart
Blues & Ballads Vol. 1
MOTÉMA MUSIC

Vibraphonist Joe Locke teams up with pianist Ryan Cohan, bassist David Finck, and drummer Jaimeo Brown for this superb nine-tune studio set, his third release since he signed with Motéma Music in 2012.

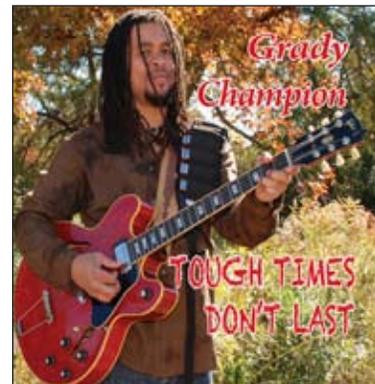
Locke has a long-standing collaboration with Finck since they were students in Rochester, New York. With 100 recordings, Finck’s discography is diverse, including platinum and gold-sellers with Rod Stewart, Natalie Cole and Elton John. Cohan and Brown are both label mates at Motéma. Cohan has worked with numerous top-name jazz artists. Brown, who began working with vibist Bobby Hutcherson at age 19, has a Motéma project to be released later this year.

These musicians work tightly together as they

launch the set with a sexy version of “Ain’t No Sunshine,” and follow that with their unique takes on gems by Frank Foster (“Simone”), Walter Donaldson/Gus Kahn (“Makin’ Whoopee”), Sam Jones (“Bittersweet”) and other tunes, including two Locke originals, “Broken Toy” and “This New October.” Among my favorite renderings are their interpretations of the Michael Reid/Allen Shamlin ballad “I Can’t Make You Love Me” and their slinky, sultry remake of “Makin’ Whoopee.” There’s really not a dull tune in the bunch.

Locke (b. 1959 in Palo Alto, CA) has accrued more than 30 CDs as soloist and is an experienced pro who has worked and recorded with a wide array of musicians in mainstream jazz as well as more edgy settings. His talents as composer-arranger, performer and bandleader rank him among the major voices on his instrument.

A departure from his previous two Motéma albums (**Signing**, which features the Joe Locke-Geoffrey Keezer Group, and a big-scale album, **Wish Upon A Star** featuring Locke with a symphony orchestra), this session is an intimate, lyrical, soulful mix destined to please Locke’s fans and all vibraphone devotees (like me). I love this session and can’t wait for more of the same on Vol. 2!
Nancy Ann Lee



GRADY CHAMPION
Tough Times Don't Last
GRADY SHADY MUSIC

“Tough Times Don’t Last” is Grady Champion’s newest recording on his own Grady Shady Music label. The 2010 International Blues Challenge winner is back with some new songs and supporting musicians that include Caleb Armstrong (guitar, production, string arrangements), Marquis Champion (bass), Lil Cal Jackson (drums), Nathan Keck (guitar), Chris Gill (guitar), Granard McClendon (guitar) and Larry Addison (piano).

This opens with a shuffle titled “My Time Baby,” with some nice harp from Grady. While the backing is solid and his harmonica is strong, it lacks the presence of his vocals, perhaps because the harmonica was overdubbed. “Missing You” is a blues ballad sung very soulfully with a touch of Sly and the Family Stone in the groove. “Trust Yourself” has a message of not giving up your soul to someone else, rather to be free

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.



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

His music spread across the world with songs like "Sophisticated Lady," "In a



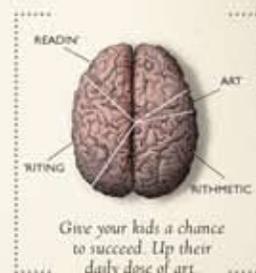
*A piano player. A composer. An orchestra leader.
 Duke Ellington reigned over a land called Jazz.*

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.



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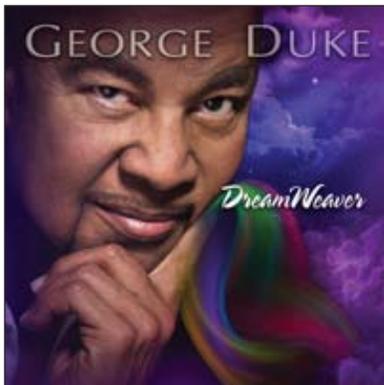
NAMM
 Foundation

one needs to trust oneself.” It would have been a stronger track with real horns instead of synthesized ones.

On “Broke Cadillac” Grady sings about how his relationship with his lady is like driving a broken down Cadillac. He plays the guitar lead displaying a fuzzy tone, but his playing would have benefited from more clarity. His guitar is stronger on the solid blues “Things Ain’t What They Used To Be,” co-written with Eddie Cotton. The title track carries an optimistic message that tough times don’t last, but tough people do. “Cookie Jar” is an amusing back door man song in the tradition of Little Johnny Taylor’s “Open House At My House.” Chris Gill adds 12-string acoustic guitar for “Glory Train,” a gospel blues on which Grady entreats people to give up their bad habits while the closing song, “What Would Christmas Be Without You,” expresses his wishes for the holidays.

The material is one of the strengths of this recording. Grady is in good voice and his harmonica playing is quite strong, but the recording sounds like heavy overdubbing was used and the performances don’t come across as crisp as they might otherwise be. “Tough Times Don’t Last” would have benefited from less overdubbing as well as real horns instead of synthesized horns on a couple of tracks. It is enjoyable, but I suspect as Grady performs some of these songs, they will come across more potently.

Ron Weinstock



GEORGE DUKE

Dreamweaver

HEADS UP INTERNATIONAL

There is likely no more “natural” a crossover musician than George Duke. The venerable, eclectic keyboardist transits genre lines with an ease and authenticity that strongly suggests he’s digging the results and not merely trying to “go commercial”. And he’s found typically in the best of company, evidenced on his new set by the presence of storied r&b vocalists Jeffrey Osborne and the late Teena Marie, bassists Stanley Clarke and Christian McBride, and guitarist Paul Jackson, Jr.

Standout vocal fare includes Ms. Marie’s “Ball And Chain” and Duke’s own “Round The Way Girl”. On the jazz and fusion fronts, “Stones Of Orion” features an extended, nicely orchestrated “head” as well as nice acoustic work from both Duke and Clarke, and “Burnt Sausage Jam” morphs from frenetic fusion to one of the longest, lazy funk/blues vamps one can recall.

Duane Verh



THE FAT BABIES

Chicago Hot

DELMARK

It’s surprising to hear a jazz band whose members are in their twenties and thirties and devote their talents to the hot jazz that would be heard in Chicago in the twenties and thirties. That is The Fat Babies, who have a debut Delmark CD, “Chicago Hot,” with their interpretations of songs associated with Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke and King Oliver.

The band is comprised of the leader Beau Sample on bass; Andy Schumm on cornet; Dave Bock on trombone; Jake Sanders on banjo; Alex Hall on drums; Paul Asaro on piano and John Otto on clarinet and saxophones. Mike Walbridge guests on tuba for the last of the 16 tracks.

There are plenty of youthful bands that approach materials from this era in a campy fashion. One thing that this observer appreciates about The Fat Babies is that they play this music straight, but that doesn’t mean that their performances are sterile recreations. There is plenty of life here from the opening “Snake Rag” from King Oliver; “San,” a number associated with Bix Beiderbecke; the pop standard “I Surrender Dear,” that was so memorably performed by Louis Armstrong; “Weary Blues” that has become a staple of the New Orleans traditional scene; and “Tight Light This,” that was a celebrated recording by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five.”

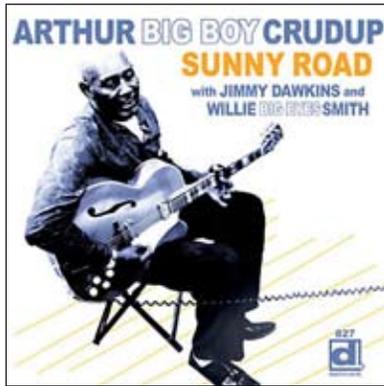
Schumm’s cornet playing, with its base in Bix Beiderbecke’s lyrical style, stands out here, although he is more than capable of generating fireworks as on “Tight Light That,” where Armstrong’s influence is a bit more prominent as the rest of the band provide support. On “Snake Rag” and Jelly Roll Morton’s “Froggie Moore,” (another song associated with King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band), one is impressed by the marvelous ensemble work and the contrapuntal playing between the horns here.

Pianist Asaro is featured on the Gershwin classic, “Liza (All the Clouds’ll Roll Away),” as he moves from the wistful opening before he picks up the tempo turning this into a piano stomp as he incorporates ragtime and stride while supported by the understated rhythm section and trading fours with Hall. Asaro also has a nice chorus on “Tight Like That” as does clarinetist

Otto, prior to Schumm's solo.

Kim Cusack, a veteran of the traditional Chicago jazz scene, observes that not only has this band appealed to listeners old enough to be grandparents of the band members but also have a substantial youthful following. Listening to the performances on "Chicago Hot," one can understand their appeal listening to The Fat Babies crisp and spirited playing, which has transcended existing traditional jazz audiences.

Ron Weinstock



ARTHUR 'BIG BOY' CRUDUP

Sunny Road
DELMARK

The emergence of previously unissued recordings by the late Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup (pronounced Crude-up) on Delmark, "Sunny Road," caught the attention of long-time blues collectors and others. Crudup is best known because Elvis Presley recorded his songs "That's All Right" and "My Baby Left Me" for Sun records at the beginning of his legendary career. Crudup was himself one of the most prominent bluesmen to make commercial recordings after World War II and if a rudimentary guitarist, his high-pitched vocals were quite expressive and certainly accounted for part of his appeal among Black record buyers in the end of the 78 era.

Delmark has just issued a November 11, 1969 session of Crudup backed by Willie 'Big Eyes' Smith on drums, Jimmy Dawkins on guitar for 3 tracks, Mike Thompson guitar for 1 track, and Mark Thompson on bass on 5 tracks). Crudup sounds like his rudimentary guitar playing is running through an organ speaker on this. The songs are typical slow blues with lyrics incorporating phrases that Crudup used in other of his recordings along with themes from other blues. Example include the opening title track where there is a reference to his "That's All Right," while on "Trying to Take Me For a Ride" he talks about being a "Bad Luck Child." In "I Have Called Up China" his lyrics reference "Eyesight To The Blind" as well as the Elmore James - Robert Johnson classic "Dust My Broom."

There is some brief studio chatter with Bob Koester included with the nine performances and Koester's liner notes provide mostly an overview of his life and career. The trouble with the performances here is that

they sound like the same number all at a slow tempo, except with different lyrics and occasionally accompaniment. Certainly Dawkins' guitar enlivens "She Gives Me a Thrill" and "I Have Called Up China" but it does not change the fact that this album is best sampled a couple of tracks at a time, in which his vocals will have the most impact on the listener. This addition to Crudup's discography is one primarily for fans of his music and less for casual blues fans. I would suggest Delmark's prior Crudup release "Look On Yonder's Wall" first over this.

Ron Weinstock

EMILIO TEUBAL

Musica Para Un Dragon Dormido
BROOKLYN JAZZ UNDERGROUND RECORDS

Argentinean pianist and composer, Emilio Teubal, has become a vibrant part of the very cosmopolitan scene in New York City. Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records has just issued Teubal's third album as a leader, "Musica Para Un Dragon Dormido." On this recording, Teubal is joined by some of his longtime collaborators, Moto Fukushima (six string electric bass), Sam Sadigursky (clarinets, saxophones and flute) and John Hadfield (percussion), plus special guests Erik Friedlander (cello) and Satoshi Takeishi (percussion and cajon).

The album title (translated is music for a sleeping

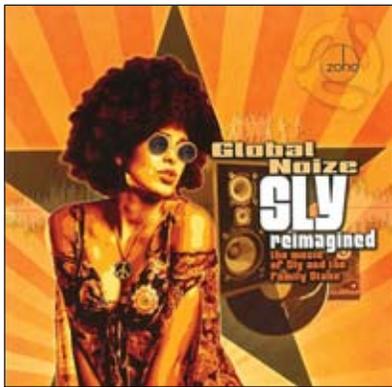
The advertisement features a black background with a large white guitar graphic. At the top, the text 'LET'S GO' is written in large, bold, white letters. Below it, a blue teardrop shape contains the words 'Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise' in a white script font. The guitar graphic is positioned as if it's playing a note, with a white starburst effect. At the bottom, the word 'BLUESIN!' is written in large, bold, white letters. Below that, the text 'The World's Only Fully Chartered Blues Cruise!' is written in yellow, followed by 'BluesCruise.com • 888-BLUESIN' in white.

dragon) Teubel said “is a reference to the Chinese horoscope as we contemplate 2012, the year of the Dragon. During 2012 I became the father of a little ‘dragon’, and being an older dragon myself, this event made me think about the strong connection with this new creature, and the huge footprint that year left on my being.” While his earlier recordings he considered Argentinean jazz, he does not hold that as true for this recording in which the Argentinean elements are just some of the elements heard on this. “The music still sounds Argentinean but it has a strong cosmopolitan New York sound in it, with strong hints from other world music.”

This is a fascinating recording starting with the opening “Un Simple Objeto,” that has “a strong Chacarera flavor (Chacarera is a folkloric Rhythm from the north of Argentina)” and the group brings a very multi-faceted approach with lively rhythms and intriguing reed playing from Sadigursky. “El Temade Ludmila” is a lively performance that is evocative (not imitative) of some of Keith Jarrett’s European Quartet recordings. Teubel and Sadigursky (on soprano sax) both stand out on this track. “La Espera” is a reflective performance with Teubel making use of a Korg while Friedlander’s bowed cello contributes to the lugubrious spirit at the beginning. Noteworthy on this is Sadigursky’s flute and Fukushima’s bass as well as the empathy the musicians have and the deftness of Teubal’s arrangements.

“Musica Para Un Dragon Dormido” brings together playfulness, romanticism and reflection over a lively and varied program of music, and is wonderfully played. This writer is not familiar with Emilio Teubal’s earlier recordings, but listening to this first-rate recording, I understand the enthusiastic critical reception they received.

Ron Weinstock



GLOBAL NOIZE

Sly Reimagined

The Music of Sly and the Family Stone

ZOHO MUSIC

The music of Sly and the Family Stone was innovative and has influenced so many artists. Sly Stone’s music’s impact can still be heard today. Reflecting this influence is an extraordinary release by Global Noize titled “Sly Reimagined” on the Zoho Roots label that

shows how Sly and the Family Stone remain contemporary.

Jason Miles is the instigator (along with DJ Logic) behind Global Noize. Jason came to notice with his groundbreaking synth programming for Miles Davis’ ‘80s recordings “Tutu,” “Music from Siesta” and “Amanda,” and later contributed to a genre-crossing array of artists as well as a variety of legacy-based dedications to Marvin Gaye, Ivan Lins, Luther Vandross, and Grover Washington. Miles, a visionary conceptualist, producer, arranger, composer and keyboard wizard, has organized this tribute to the legendary Sly and the Family Stone with a remarkable group of contemporary singers and musicians including, but not limited to, DJ Logic; vocalists Nona Hendryx, Roberta Flack, Fatu, Maya Azucena and Mike Mattison; guitarist Will Bernard; trumpeters Ingrid Jensen and Barry Danielian; saxophonists Jay Rodriguez and Ron Holloway; bassist Amanda Ruzza and drummer Greg Errico (Sly’s original drummer).

Miles first saw Sly and the Family Stone opening for Jimi Hendrix in 1968 and has been listening and playing their music over the past 40 + years. As he writes in the liner notes “Making an album of Sly’s music has been on my mind for over a decade. I saw the opportunity to reintroduce this great music and re-imagine Sly’s music for 21st century sensibilities.” Sly’s original music itself transcended categories while contributing to the development of funk and fusion. His original recordings still have a freshness to them. What Miles has done here is to provide a broad musical palette in rendering some of the classic songs that Sly left us; fusing, funk, jazz and hip hop for the stirring musical results.

What one hears is Sly’s music that captures the spirit of Sly’s originals without imitating them. Perhaps it is the presence of Errico on the opening “Time” who sets forth the groove as Nona Hendryx handles the vocal. Ingrid Jensen channels Miles Davis with her trumpet behind the vocals of Roberta Flack (mostly repeating the title) and James D Train Williams on “It’s a Family Affair,” while Jay Rodriguez takes a couple of tenor sax breaks. This performance is one of two presented here in two separate mixes, and in both cases illustrate the skill Jason Miles has in mixing the various musical elements together. I was not familiar with Maya Azucena, but her vocal on “Fun” set against a tough funk groove really got my attention, and her vocals on “You Can Make It If You Try,” (shared with James D Train Williams) and “Stand” are equally outstanding. Rodriguez does some serious bar walking on his sax during “You Can Make It If You Try,” on which Jensen is heard playing without a mute.

I don’t want to slight the leader’s keyboards either. Not only did he organize this and create the arrangements of the songs, but his playing also is an integral part of these terrific performances. “Sly Reimagined” shows how contemporary Sly and the Family Stone’s music remains today. Just like Sly’s original recordings, this is serious musical fun for listening and partying.

Ron Weinstock

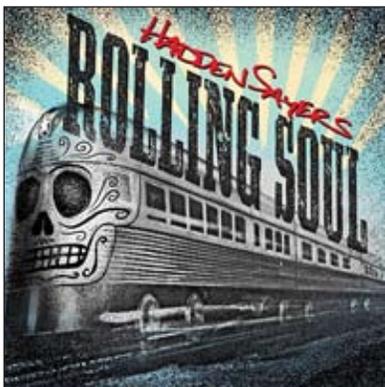


PJ RASMUSSEN
Adventures In Flight
THIRD FREEDOM MUSIC

Could this be “summer” jazz for the thinking person? Young guitarist Rasmussen and his equally youthful partners consistently couple appealing, distinctive grooves and decidedly mature-sounding jazz instincts on this quite refreshing, all-original set. Much credit goes to the leader’s compositional savvy; his smartly crafted “heads” speak to the best of 60’s post-bop sensibilities, giving most every tune an attractive retro feel. These tendencies are particularly evident in the sly funk of “Baden Hill”, the breezy, waltz-timed “Waxing and Wayne-ing” and the uptempo Latin hybrid, “Stolen Miracles”.

Rasmussen reliably plays to the same values, while adding just a dab of age-appropriate distortion at times. The star soloist of this six-piece, however, is pianist Chris Pattishell, who stands out inventively at every opportunity. Respectable work further comes by way of tenor saxophonist Nate Giroux and trumpeter/flugelhornist Danny Reyes. Nice work.

Duane Verh



HADDEN SAYERS
Rolling Soul
BLUE CORN MUSIC

“Rolling Soul” is Hadden Sayers’ newest release on Blue Corn Music and follows up “Hard Dollar” which I called ‘terrific.’ Sayers has seen times go from a hard touring musician to personal circumstances that led him to give up music for a period.

But he is back and writing new tunes, is part of the amazing Ruthie Foster’s band and has this new

release full of Texas Roadhouse blues and rock with country, swamp pop and Tex-Mex seasoning. He is backed by David DeWitt on keyboards and accordion; Mark Frye on bass and Tony McClung on drums and percussion, with Phil Clark on harmonica and Baritone sax, Jim Ed Cobbs on clavinet and Ruthie Foster sings on one track.

“Don’t Take Your Love (out on me)” opens with Sayers’ nuanced sandpaper vocals and blues-rock guitar with his effective use of various effects set against his band’s crisp backing.

“Something Wrong In the World” was written after learning a mentor of his had passed and is a restrained soulful blues about wanting his baby, but knowing someone else is holding her tight,” with a nice guitar solo as DeWitt’s organ provides additional musical colors. Sayers and his band strut on “Want What You Have,” based nicely on “You Don’t Love Me,” with some effective use of his wah wah pedal. Noteworthy is Sayers’ use of sustain and echo with his spare playing on “Alone With the Blues” adding to the mood of his lyrics on a nice performance benefiting from the light backing.

Ruthie Foster joins in for “Lay Down Your Worries,” with Clark adding harp in support of the vocals. Hadden calls “The Man I’m Supposed to Be” a love letter to his one and only and it is a lovely performance, again marked by restraint in his playing and displays his sense of space and knowing it’s *what* one plays, not how fast and how many notes that matters.

In contrast, “Crazy Enough” is a rocking shuffle with DeWitt rocking away on the piano as he sings about a woman in love who is crazy. “Unlucky” has a rocking country flavor with some nice whining guitar while DeWitt is in a honky tonk piano mood. “Insomniac Blues” is a nice 12 bar blues with a late night feel in the backing and a terrific vocal, before closing out with “Can’t Get You Off Of My Mind,” a very fine piece of blues-rock.

Hadden Sayers has a knack with words, his vocals ring true and his fine band complements his wonderful guitar playing. The result is that “Rolling Soul” is another excellent addition to his body of recordings.

Ron Weinstock

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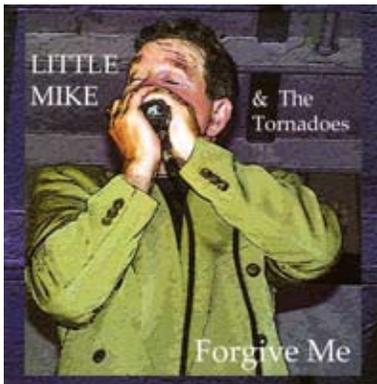


PLANET D NONET
Swingin' The D
DETROIT MUSIC FACTORY

Finding the compositional likes of Ellington and Sun Ra and a jump/blues take on Elvis Presley in the same set might get one's attention, but to pick up on the verve and style with which this Motor City nine-some struts their way through this varied fare is to score some very positive listening time. Skillful solos and chart craft, as well as undeniable exuberance, are to be found all over this tasty "little big band" effort.

In addition to the Ellington's "Addi" and the Ellington/Billy Strayhorn "Mr. Gentle, Mr. Cool", and Sun Ra's "A Call For All Demons", the nonet takes on Count Basie's "Shorty George" and Hank Crawford's "Weird Beard". Detroit vocalist Thornetta Davis' potent take on the ballad "Candy" is an ear-grabbing bonus on this very "up" feeling release.

Duane Verh



LITTLE MIKE & THE TORNADOES
Forgive Me
ELROB RECORDS

Its been quite a few years since I last saw Michael "Little Mike" Markowitz playing at Twist & Shout outside of Washington DC. I don't remember whether the first time I saw him he was backing Pinetop Perkins or Hubert Sumlin (both of whom he recorded with for Blind Pig) but every time I saw him it was always solid, straight blues, whether he was interpreting a blues classic or singing one of his originals. His harp playing was full-bodied and played with a fluid swing. At some point he relocated to Florida, and now years

later he has a relatively new release, "Forgive Me" on Elrob Records. While it shows a 2011 copyright, it was likely recorded sometime earlier since Bob Greenlee, who passed away in 2004, is listed as Executive Producer.

Little Mike referred to his band as a "working class band" as he and the members came from working class families and neighborhoods and they played blues with a rock'n'roll edge. The music on "Forgive Me" is straight blues and rocks along relentlessly, but without the rock trappings that often passes for blues these days. It certainly helps that he has a fine band that includes Troy Nahumko on guitar, Cam Robb on drums, Chris Brzezicki on bass, Jim McKaba on keyboards, and Sonny Rhodes on lap steel guitar. Warren King is on guitar for one track while Ace Moreland adds backing vocals on another. Several tracks have uncredited horns

There is nothing fancy here, just idiomatic originals opening with Troy Nahumko's original "Opelousas Rain" that is also a feature for Sonny Rhodes' lap steel guitar. Markowitz's originals such as "Wait a Minute Baby" or "Walked All The Way," display his natural sounding, unforced vocals, along with strong playing by all involved. Nahumko is an imaginative, driving guitarist while McKaba is more than capable laying down some solid piano breaks. The rhythm duo of Robb and Brzezicki is outstanding whether handling a shuffle groove or a slow drag tempo. "My Little Therese," an 11-minute performance, is simply a stunning slow blues with Little Mike channeling the second Sonny Boy on harmonica with Nahumko's guitar fills echoing the legendary Luther Tucker. "The Hit" is an excellent instrumental set against a swamp blues groove with strong harmonica and guitar. Other standout selections include a slow, urbane blues, "You Don't Love Me" and the rocker "Forgive Me Baby" that opens with some of Mike's best harp playing.

In addition to the wonderful music heard, the best thing about "Forgive Me" is that Little Mike is again actively playing and touring. This is welcome news for those of us who remember the wonderful shows he put on.

Ron Weinstock

SCOTT RAMMINGER
Advice From A Father to a Son
ARBOR LANE

Scott Ramminger is a singer and a saxophone player. This disc, recorded in New Orleans and D.C features musical royalty from each location plus a travelling band of vocalists from Nashville. The New Orleans sessions include Shane Theriot (Neville Bros, Boz Scaggs) on guitar, David Torkanowsky on piano, George Porter, Jr. (Meters) on bass and Johnny Vidacovich (Professor Longhair, James Booker, Tab Benoit) on drums.

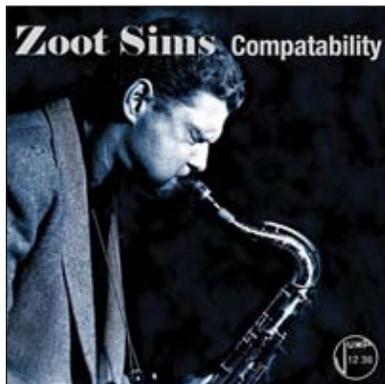
Nashville favored all the sessions with the McCrary Sisters and Etta Britt on vocals while D. C contributed Barry Hart on drums, Dave Chappell on guitar, Jay

Turner on bass and Tommy Lepson on organ plus a host of keys, horns and background vocals. So, given the pedigree of the back-up players it's a fair question to ask whether Ramminger, a relative unknown outside of the DC area where he's racked up multiple nominations for the DC area music awards (the WAMMIES) and a win for Best Debut Recording, is up to the task of fronting them. It doesn't take long to answer "yes!"

With 10 original tunes, a wailing saxophone and a big, expressive voice, Ramminger has crafted a fine release that takes advantage of the collected talent. Things get off to a great start with the piano and sax driven *I Really Love Your Smile*. The band then dips into some righteous funk on the aptly titled *Funkier Than Him* and on *Magic In the Music*, the later of which features some righteous riffing by Teriot on guitar and a Dr. John style voodoo vibe. *This Town's Seen the Last of Me* starts with a simple drum cadence and then morphs into a chugging rocker reminiscent of the Huey Lewis classic, *Working for a Living*. The title cut has a great New Orleans horn groove and lots of advice, some funny, some pointed. The band gets closer to the blues on *I've Got a Funny Feeling* which finds Ramminger using music to push his sadness to the side.

The final three tracks, all featuring the D.C. crew, dip into soul/R&B and even jazz fueled reggae with Lepson's icy cool B-3 grooves adding a completely different feel than the rollicking piano work of Torkanowsky on the other cuts. Solid from beginning to end, this disc should take Ramminger to the next level of his career.

Mark Smith



ZOOT SIMS
Compatability
 JUMP/DELMARK

Delmark recently acquired the Jump Records label and the first result of this acquisition is a Jump CD release under the name of Zoot Sims, "Compatability." This is a reissue of what was a four-song, 10 inch LP from 1955 that was originally issued under the name of trumpeter Hall Daniels who composed two of the songs and arranged two standards.

In 1977, Zim Records issued a ten track LP that added six alternate takes under the rubric of the Zoot

Sims/ Dick Nash Octet. The present Jump Records reissue adds an additional two alternate takes and a brief bit of studio chatter.

In addition to leader Daniels, the participants on these recordings included tenor saxophonist Sims, trombonist Dick Nash, baritone saxophonist Bob Gordon (who died in an automobile crash shortly after the 1955 recording sessions), guitarist Tony Rizzo, pianist Paul Atkerson, bassist Rolly Bundock and drummer Jack Sperling. The liner booklet reproduces producer Clive Acker's 1977 liner notes with brief biographical information.

Daniels certainly provided attractive, clean arrangements for these swinging, 'cool' sounding octet recordings. At the time of the 1977 reissue, Sims had become a fairly prominent tenor saxophonist so its not surprising he shared billing with Nash then.

His opening solo on the "The Way You Look Tonight" displays the fluidity of his own distillation of Lester Young's sound. Daniels' arrangements provide nice settings for his lead work. Trombonist Nash is well featured on "Nash-Ville," which also has notable solos by Rizzo and Gordon.

The ballad, "You Don't Know What Love Is," features some exquisite playing from Nash along with Sims, while Gordon's baritone plays a prominent backing role. The title track is a lively bop-flavored number with pianist Atkerson taking a nice solo before the leader employs a mute and then Gordon digs in with authority.

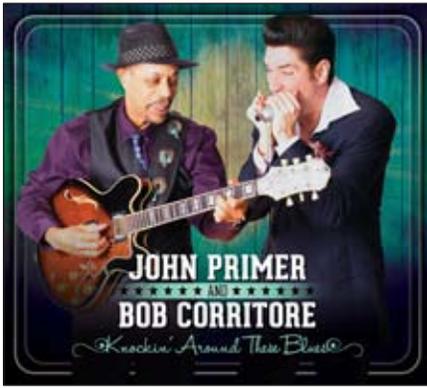
There is certainly much to enjoy on these performances and the alternate takes provide interesting contrasts to the originally issued tracks. Gordon, for example, is more prominent on the first alternate of "The Way You Look Tonight." "Compatability" is an engaging recording and the performances hold up over fifty years after being waxed.

A final note - comptability is spelled wrong in the title and throughout the review, as that is how it is spelled on the CD cover and at Amazon.

Ron Weinstock

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JOHN PRIMER AND BOB CORRITORE

Knockin' Around These Blues
DELTA GROOVE

The fact that John Primer and Bob Corritore share the billing on a new Delta Groove release, "Knockin' Around These Blues," is certain to be welcome to fans of real deal blues. Primer, a member of Muddy Waters last band and a long time member of Magic Slim's Band, has deservedly acquired a reputation as among the finest living 'old school' Chicago blues artists still with us. The fact that Bob Corritore (who produced this) has teamed up with Primer for this new release is doubly welcome.

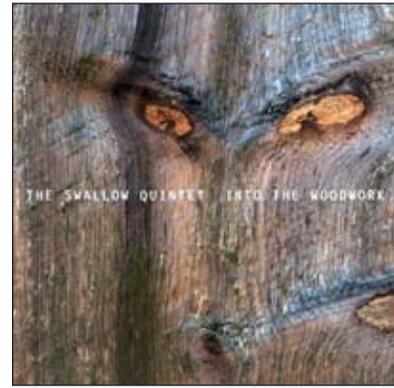
The album was recorded in two sessions. One session was done in Phoenix with Chris James on guitar, Patrick Rynn on bass and Brian Fahey on drums. The other session was in Chicago with Billy Flynn on guitar, Bob Stroger on bass and Kenny 'Beedy Eyes' Smith on drums. Pianist Barrelhouse Chuck is on both sessions.

The personnel listing should give a sense of what to expect, and indeed this is a recording that fans of the Chicago blues will savor. While most of the album are covers, the songs covered, such as the opening rollicking rendition of Jimmy Reed's "The Clock," will be fresh, and even the most familiar songs, Little Walter's "Blue and Lonesome" (with some real nice slide guitar) and Robert Lockwood Jr.'s "Little Boy Blue" (sounding as if Muddy Waters had recorded), are freshly reworked so they will sound new. Primer sings and plays strong while Corritore wails as Barrelhouse Chuck pounds the 88s.

The originals are Primer's "When I Get Lonely," which has the feeling of some of Eddie Taylor's fifties recordings and Corritore's "Harmonica Joyride," a rollicking feature for him. Other highlights include Primer's take on Artie White's "Leanin' Tree," taking that soulful blues to Pepper's Lounge, Lil Son Jackson's "Cairo Blues, transformed into a Chicago blues shuffle and hearing Lightnin' Hopkins' "Going Back Home" as Muddy Waters might have done it back in the sixties.

Bob Corritore has to be thanked for his efforts to bring deserving blues performers into the spotlight. John Primer should have been a household name amongst blues lovers for several years, and if there is any justice, the stellar "Knockin' Around These Blues" should elevate him to this status. He is among the finest blues performers of today.

Ron Weinstock



STEVE SWALLOW QUINTET

Into The Woodwork
ECM

The dreamlike character of the opening track here, "Sad Old Candle", doesn't let on to the abundance of swing and drive found elsewhere on Mr. Swallow's new offering. The electric bassist and his group-organist Carla Bley, tenor saxophonist Chris Cheek, guitarist Steve Cardenas and drummer Jorge Rossy- prove capable of numerous and decidedly melodic mood swings, and no small measure of invention as well.

"Candle"'s gauzy nature gives way to breezy waltz-time on the title track, and provide the first openings for Cheek and Cardenas. Cheek emerges as the standout soloist overall, both as balladeer and swinger, taking good advantage of the imaginative frameworks the leader's compositions provide. Speaking well to that latter point is "Back In Action", which begins as a feature for Rossy then morphs into a mirthful minor-keyed romp, with Cheek leading the charge.

Ms. Bley's presence is never to be underestimated, providing subtle but clear direction to the proceedings and indulging a bit of melodic whimsy of her own on "Never Know".

Swallow the player may seem to defer to Swallow the composer in terms of profile but the intelligent push he provides throughout surfaces nicely on the intro to the set's lilting closer, "Exit Stage Left". A rich and entertaining work.

Duane Verh

JAKE LEAR

Diamonds and Stones
SELF-RELEASED

Born in Vermont and raised on blues and country, singer-guitarist Jake Lear has spent the last three years honing his blues and roots sound in Memphis.

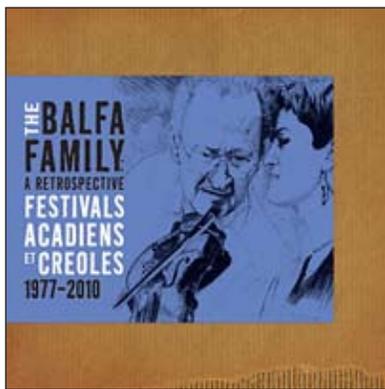
He has a new self-released CD "Diamonds and Stones," that brings together plenty of grit, stinging guitar and driving rhythm section on a program of mostly original songs. On this release he is backed by drummer Roy Cunningham and bassist Carlos Arias. Cunningham was a member of the Bar-Kays, a STAX studio drummer and drummed for Albert King, Little Milton and Little Jimmy King.

Lear performs in a pretty direct fashion with some

nice stinging guitar, which to these ears suggests the late Magic Slim. Vocally, he has a gravelly voice with hints of Bob Dylan and his songs are pretty simple, straight-ahead numbers with a touch of the North Mississippi Hills in the grooves here, particularly the slow burning title song and “Going Back Home (North Mississippi Bound).” Cunningham lays down a driving, funk groove for “Down By The River,” while on Lear’s arrangement of the traditional “Jack O’ Diamonds,” might suggest early John Lee Hooker with Lear’s effective guitar work. “Work, Work, Work,” with a driving boogie guitar and groove, is a lively reworking (as opposed to a rehashed copy) of the Ricky Allen recording “Cut You Loose.” This ten-song recording concludes with a driving instrumental “Boogie Time.”

There is nothing fancy or complicated about the music on “Diamonds and Stones.” Jake Lear is a good singer and the simplicity of his approach has definite appeal as evidenced by this recording.

Ron Weinstock



THE BALFA FAMILY

**The Balfa Family: A Retrospective Festivals
Acadiens et Créoles 1977-2010**
VALCOUR RECORDS

One of the most influential families in Cajun music of the post World War II era, The Balfa Family is celebrated with the second release in the Rubber Bootleg Series of Valcour Records, “The Balfa Family: A Retrospective.” It is compiled from the Archives of Cajun and Creole Folklore at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and includes selected performances from the Festivals Acadiens et Créoles by various configurations and members of The Balfa Family spanning 1977 to 2010.

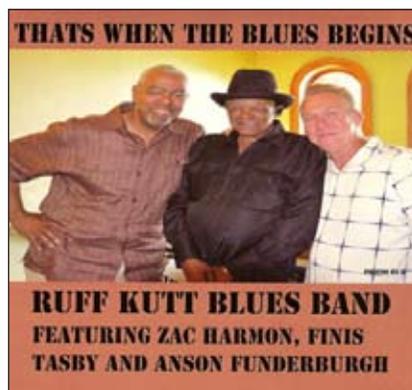
Dewey Balfa and his brothers were central figures in the emergence of Cajun music onto the national stage, performing at the Newport Folk Festival and other events in the sixties that today is reflected by festivals that feature Louisiana Cajun and Creole musical traditions throughout the US and the world. When I started listening to Cajun music as an undergraduate in the late sixties, among the wonderful recordings I listened to were Balfa Brothers recordings on Swallow, which fortunately continue to be available on compact disc now.

With the passing of Dewey Balfa and his brothers, it is wonderful to listen to this marvelous album which starts with recordings by the brothers and ends with the children and grandchildren performing, deeply rooted in the more traditional style of Cajun music fostered by the Balfas. I have no problem recommending this compilation of performances that are wonderfully played. It’s a delight to hear the introductions by Dewey, and in some of the later performances, his daughter Christine who would form Balfa Toujours after Dewey’s passing in 1992.

I did not know that Courtney Granger, the wonderful fiddler with The Pine Leaf Boys, was a cousin. She remarked on the fact that while there were many young accordion players, they needed more young fiddlers. Courtney wrote “Two step des Festivals Acadiens,” which is the last of the twenty tracks here that opens with Nathan Abshire’s “Pinegrove Blues.” There are a couple of renditions of Iry LeJeune’s “Viens me Chercher,” one from 1981 and the other by Balfa Toujours from 2009, along with LeJeune’s “Lacassine Special,” Dewey Balfa’s “Parlez-Nous a Boire,” Will Balfa’s “Valse de Balfa,” Canray Fontenot’s “Les Barres de la Prison,” and the traditional “J’ai été au Bal.”

Over the 33 years covered by this compilation one hears wonderfully played waltzes and rousing two-steps, with the latter performances showing how strongly the Balfa legacy is being kept alive and vital today. A wonderful collection that certainly is essential to anybody with a love for Cajun music.

Ron Weinstock



RUFF KUTT BLUES BAND

That’s When The Blues Begins
VIZZTONE

Formed by Bassist James Goode with Anson Funderburgh on guitar for a previous self-issued recording that benefited the Blues Foundation’s HART Fund, the Ruff Kutt Blues Band returns with a second album “That’s When The Blues Begins” on VizzTone.

On this collection of new recordings the band is fronted by vocalist Finis Tasby (on what may be his final recordings given the severe stroke he recently suffered) and Zac Harman who also plays guitar. Others on this session include Wes Starr on drums, Ron Jones on saxophone, and keyboardist/engineer Gentleman

John Street on keyboards.

From the opening song, "Deep Elam Blues" where Finis sings "I live on Elm Street, I got the deep Elam blues, I play my guitar on Elm Street, I got the deep Elam blues ... I see women come and go, I wish I could make one of them mine ..." to the closing "When a Bluesman Goes to Heaven," where Harman sings about Pinetop jamming with Sammy Myers, Little Milton and others, this a full dose of nothing but the blues. Goode writes some solid no frills blues, Anson is riveting on guitar and Tasby and Harman sound great delivering the lyrics.

"Don't It Make You Cry" is a nice blues about Tasby's woman leaving him that evokes the Big Jay McNeely-Little Sonny Warner classic, "There Is Something on Your Mind," with Ron Jones standing out on sax here. Harman is showcased on the easy rocking shuffle "Oh Woman," as well as "Blues Ain't a Color," ("The blues ain't a color, its the way you feel"). Harman's soulful singing will be no surprise to those familiar with his recordings and live performances. Jones has another strong sax solo on "Oh Woman."

It also helps that the band gives first-rate backing through the varied moods and grooves from the slow drag of "Deep Elam Blues," and the funky underpinning of "Blues in My Blood" (another song displaying Goode's way with words), as well as on "Oh Woman." They never rush things and their crisp, yet understated playing enhances the singing. It is welcome to hear first-rate blues played as on "That's When The Blues Begins" at this place in time as so many records marketed as 'blues' sound like album-rock

Ron Weinstock



FAST CITIZENS

Gather
DELMARK

Fast Citizens is a Chicago based cutting edge jazz sextet originally under the nominal leadership of Keefe Jackson that has a rotating leadership. For its third album "Gather" (Delmark), it is under the nominal leadership of Fred Lonberg-Holm who plays cello, tenor guitar and cornet and contributed 5 of the 7 compositions.

Other members of Fast Citizens include Jackson on tenor saxophone, bass clarinet and reed trumpet; Aram Shelton on alto saxophone, clarinet and cornet; Josh

Berman on cornet; Anton Hatwich on bass and trumpet; and Frank Rosaly on drums and pocket trumpet.

The opening "Infra-Pass" is a bouncy original with an Ornette Coleman flavored riff and some fine bass clarinet from Jackson, fiery alto saxophone from Shelton, the leader's gut-bucket fiddling on the cello and an interlude of dialogue between the alto and bass clarinet before the ensemble picks up the tempo riding this performance out. It's a fascinating mix of shifting musical flavors and some tempo shifts.

The mood shifts with some alley saw cello against cornet opening Shelton's "It's a Tough Grid," before the leader's firm bass solo followed by Jackson's tenor supported by the rhythm as the other horns repeat a riff that segues to Shelton's acerbic alto. The leader's guitar opens up "Later News," with a simple rock groove that underpins Jackson's hard-edged tenor sax solo and Shelton's somewhat coarse and almost frenetic alto.

"Lazy Day" with its moody chords and mix of musical colors from the cello, cornet and clarinet followed by Shelton's strong clarinet is an evocative performance followed by the emphatic, rock-like rhythms of "Faster Citizens! Kill! Kill!" This latter number (whose title is a take off a Russ Meyer film title) has includes a segment where Berman's cornet engaging Shelton's clarinet in a fiery unaccompanied dialogue.

On "Simpler Days," there are excellent solos from Jackson on bass clarinet, Berman on cornet and Shelton on alto sax, with the leader's prickly guitar

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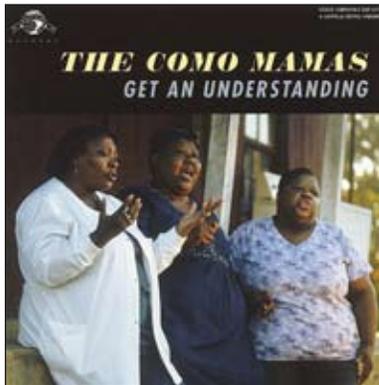


This photo of Gary Bartz captured by Ron Weinstock at the 2008 Duke Ellington Jazz Festival is just one of hundreds of Ron's photos you can view online at www.flickr.com/photos/novaron

providing an interesting backdrop.

I have not heard the earlier recordings by Fast Citizens, but the mix of composition, improvised playing and empathetic ensemble playing on “Gather” rewards careful listening. It left a very favorable impression on this writer.

Ron Weinstock



THE COMO MAMAS
Get An Understanding
DAPTONE RECORDS

An unexpected delight is Daptone Records release of a CD from an a cappella trio of gospel singers, The Como Mamas, “Get An Understanding.” Como, Mississippi is best known as the home of Mississippi Fred McDowell and while best known as a giant of Mississippi blues, McDowell also recorded religious songs with members of his church.

Michael Reilly first met the three ladies when traveling down south for a documentary about local musicians. He met Angela Taylor along with Ester Mae Smith and Angela’s sister Della Daniels and found out they had been singing gospel together since they were kids. The three sang “Peace of Mind” at the time that Reilly recalled sent chills to Reilly and his associates.

He came back and recorded the three at Mt. Mariah Church, a small structure surrounded by a cemetery where several relatives were buried, including Ester’s grandfather, Miles Pratcher, who was a guitarist, songwriter and entertainer and often played music with fiddlers and guitarists on the porch (including with Fred McDowell).

In 1959 Alan Lomax in fact recorded some of these porch sessions, which Ester recalled. Now five decades later, Esther and her two close friends came together for the a cappella gospel on this recording.

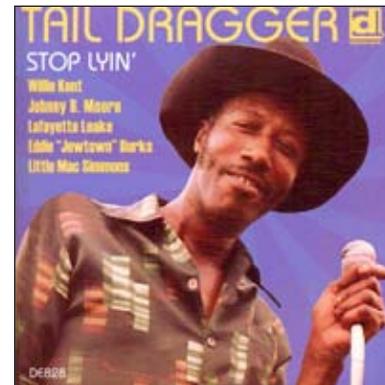
Ester takes the lead on most selections with her powerful voice with the others providing the fervent responses to her calls on the moving performances here starting with “Old Landmark” with their call to the old ways and staying in the service of the Lord. “God Is Able” to carry one through and all one has to do is trust in Jesus with their vocals preaching their deep beliefs in the gospel.

The old style gospel continues on such songs as “God Is Good To Me,” “Peace of Mind,” “Meet Me At The River Jordan,” “One More River To Cross” and “Ninety

Nine And A Half Won’t Do.” The latter song, originally from Dorothy Love Coates, was transformed by Wilson Pickett into a secular deep soul classic. “

The passion here is present until the closing moments of “Nobody’s Fault But Mine.” “Get An Understanding” will be must listening for fans of traditional gospel and anyone who loves great, heartfelt singing.

Ron Weinstock



TAIL DRAGGER
Stop Lyin’ – The Lost Session
DELMARK

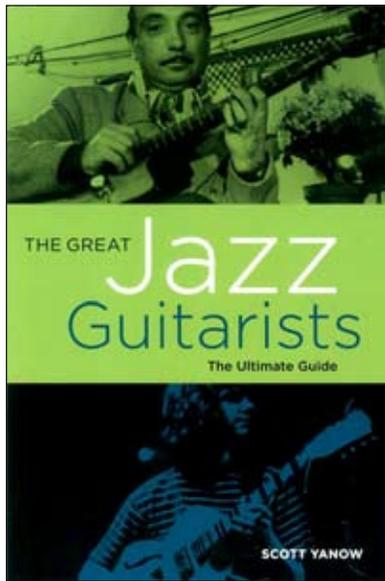
This surprising new release on Delmark makes available the first recordings by James Yancy Jones, better known as Tail Dragger, “Stop Lyin’.” It was recorded at the time Tail Dragger had been performing with various bands, but had yet to make to make music his career. He had been working as a truck mechanic and a long distance hauler (including traveling down south to haul back catfish from Mississippi for the Delta Fish Market) On “Stop Lyin’,” he was backed by a band that included Johnny B Moore and Jesse Lee Williams on guitar, Eddie ‘Jewtown’ Burks or Little Mac Simmons on harmonica, Willie Kent on bass and Larry Taylor on drums with Lafayette Leake adding piano on two selections.

Tail Dragger’s music is very much in the vein of Howlin’ Wolf that Justin O’Brien, in the liner notes, observes was an “over-the-top take on Wolf’s delivery.” Two of the nine songs here “So Ezee” and “My head Is Bald” were issued on Jimmy Dawkins’ Leric label and the others appear on a recording for the first time.

Tail Dragger’s songs here are all originals, although some are modeled on Wolf’s recordings so the groove of “Where Did You Go” might evoke “Smokestack Lightnin’” or “Commit a Crime,” whereas the use of the “Dust My Broom” riff on “Alabama Bound” similarly suggests Wolf’s “Highway 61.” There is some nice slide guitar on the latter number. Tail Dragger is a very engaging singer, although his vocals lack the crisper articulation of the Wolf.

In addition to the blues performances, this CD is filled out by the lengthy spoken “Tail’s Tale,” a fascinating and frank bit of oral history that provides some sense of the time and place of this recording. The songs are nicely played and performed and this will appeal to fans of old school Chicago blues.

Ron Weinstock



THE GREAT JAZZ GUITARISTS - THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

Scott Yanow
BACKBEAT BOOKS

Scott Yanow, who has possibly reviewed more recordings than any other individual, has a new guide to a segment of jazz that by its nature should appeal to more than simple jazz aficionados.

Backbeat Books has just released "The Great Jazz Guitarists - The Ultimate Guide," which focuses on 342 great guitarists, many of whom are still living, along with brief chapters on 1) 44 Historic Guitarists 2) 175 Other guitarists On the Scene and 3) They Also Played Jazz Guitar (discussing 36 other individuals who are known primarily for playing other instruments). There is also a selected list of Jazz Guitarists on DVD (and some tapes not yet released on DVD) and a brief list of other books on jazz guitarists.

The book also contains a brief history of the guitar in jazz as an introduction.

The coverage is pretty broad touching on many I had never heard before in a variety of styles and places of origin. Still, there are several omissions I observed on quick perusal.

Mickey Baker, whose pioneering instructional books on jazz guitar are still used today and made countless recordings as a session man and a leader (he is best known for being the Mickey of Mickey and Sylvia), isn't even mentioned in "They Also Played Jazz Guitar." In a communication with me, Mr. Yanow did mention he omitted Baker because he primarily was a blues player, although there are clips of him with Coleman Hawkins on the Internet that show off his jazz credentials.

Other omissions include Mel Brown, who recorded

several albums on Impulse before becoming Bobby Bland's guitarist, the versatile Calvin Keys and the brilliant Ronnie Earl (he is mentioned in an entry on Duke Robillard).

They do not even have a short entry in the "Other Guitarists" section such as accorded Bill Jennings and Calvin Newborn. Undoubtedly other readers will find other players they believe should have been included or given more prominence. Such omissions, of course, are inevitable in a publication of this nature.

I noticed one factual error while reading the entry on Everett Barksdale that repeats the erroneous allmusic.com assertion that Barksdale played guitar on Mickey and Sylvia's "Love Is Strange." Yanow's repeating this shows how erroneous information gets repeated and accepted as true. It also shows the difficulty authors like Yanow face in putting together books like this in this age of Wikipedia and the Internet. In any event, it is a small "erroneous" background fact in the Barksdale entry.

These criticisms should not minimize the substantial merits of this guide. The entries contain biographical overviews that include influences, major musical associations and achievements. What is helpful is that a number of the individuals discussed answered a questionnaire relating to personal information, and the quotes from these are quite valuable.

Yanow is quite lucid, whether writing about well known names like Wes Montgomery, Django Reinhardt, Jim Hall, Pat Metheny, Joe Pass, Bucky Pizzarelli, Charlie Christian, Bill Frissell and Grant Green along with lesser known names such as Duck Baker, Bill Harris (of The Clovers who recorded perhaps the first jazz solo guitar album), Jamie Rosenn and Izzi Rozen. Traditionalists like Chris Flory find their place along with avant-garde stylists like Elliot Sharp.

Along with the overview, there are recommended recordings, and in some cases (out-of-print) recordings, to seek out. Yanow also provides websites for artists where applicable. If an updated edition comes out in the future, this is one area the guide could be improved in. For a number of artists he lists a number of recordings and it would really be helpful if he separated out one or two specific recordings to highlight for that particular guitarist.

This is a very useful addition to the jazz literature with particular interest to guitarists and fans of guitar music. I have used Yanow's recommendations to purchase a couple of recordings. *Ron Weinstock*



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