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jazz
& **blues** report

2014
SUMMER
FESTIVALS
PART 2

Jazz & blues report

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Founded in Buffalo New York in March of 1974; began in Cleveland edition in April of 1978. Now this global e-zine edition is posted online monthly at www.jazz-blues.com

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!



Single-Day Arena Tickets On Sale Thursday, June 26 for the 57th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival, September 19-21

Single-Day Arena Tickets Start at \$71,
Single-Day Grounds Tickets Start at \$45

Headliners Include Herbie Hancock, The Roots, Gary Clark Jr., Michael Feinstein, Christian McBride, Cecile McLorin Salvant, Charles Lloyd, Jason Moran, Robert Glasper Experiment, Lisa Fischer, Marcus Miller, Booker T. Jones, Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band, Davina & The Vagabonds, Billy Childs, and Many More

Monterey, Calif, June 25, 2014; Single-Day Arena and Single-Day Grounds Tickets for the 57th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival, September 19–21 went on sale on June 26. Tickets can be purchased online at monterey-jazzfestival.org or by calling 888.248.6499.

The Festival features 500 artists, and more than 100 performances from iconic and emerging jazz artists on eight stages, spanning two days and three nights, accompanied by exhibits, presentations, educational events, and an array of international cuisine and shopping on the oak-studded 20 acres of the Monterey County Fair & Event Center.

Single-Day Arena Tickets include one reserved seat in the Arena for the day purchased and access to the other seven Grounds general admission stages. Single-Day Arena Tickets are \$71 for Friday and \$142 for Saturday or Sunday.

Single-Day Grounds Tickets include one Grounds ticket for the day purchased. This ticket includes access to seven general admission stages.

Single Day Grounds Tickets are \$45 for Friday and \$55 for Saturday or Sunday. Youth and Military discounts are available.

Also on sale are Single-Day Premier Club Tickets starting at \$65 for Friday, and \$100 for Saturday or Sunday. The Premier Club has become the hospitality center for the Annual Monterey Jazz Festival. Guests enjoy a central Festival location to comfortably relax featuring complimentary catering by AQUA TERRA Culinary and non-alcoholic beverages, a no-host "top-shelf" bar, closed-circuit Arena simulcasts, and private restrooms. Arena or Grounds Ticket purchase is required. Full Weekend Premier Club hospitality passes are priced at \$265.

Lineup for the 57th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival, September 19-21, 2014

Artist-In-Residence: Eric Harland
Showcase Artist: Charles Lloyd
Commission Artist: Aaron Diehl

ARENA ARTISTS – Friday, September 19

Herbie Hancock, Robert Glasper Experiment with special guest Jason Moran, Cecile McLorin Salvant

GROUND'S ARTISTS – Friday, September 19

Dizzy's Den: Sangam with Charles Lloyd, Zakir Husain and Eric Harland; Red Baraat

Night Club: Cecile McLorin Salvant, Christian McBride Trio; Claudia Villela & Harvey Wainapel

Garden Stage Presented by Alaska Airlines: Sarah McKenzie Quartet, Melissa Aldana Crash Trio, SambaDa

Coffee House: Harold Mabern Trio (3 sets)

ARENA ARTISTS – Saturday, September 20

The Roots, Billy Childs with special guests Shawn Colvin, Lisa Fischer and Becca Stevens; Aaron Diehl Quartet; Gary Clark Jr., Booker T. Jones; Davina & The Vagabonds

GROUND'S ARTISTS – Saturday, September 20

Dizzy's Den: Billy Childs Quartet; Charles Lloyd-Gerald Clayton Duo; The Philadelphia Experiment with Christian McBride, Questlove, Uri Caine and special guest Booker T. Jones; Blue Note Records 75th Anniversary Band with Ambrose Akinmusire, Kendrick Scott, Robert Glasper, Derrick Hodge & Lionel Loueke; Becca Stevens, John Hanrahan Quartet, DownBeat Blindfold Test with Lionel Loueke

Night Club: Aaron Diehl Quartet, Eric Harland Voyager, Habaneros, USAF Commanders Jazz Ensemble, CSU Long Beach "Pacific Standard Time"; SFJAZZ High School All-Stars Orchestra

Garden Stage Presented by Alaska Airlines: Pete Escovedo Orchestra with Peter Michael & Juan Escovedo; Jason Moran, Ana Popovic, Davina & The Vagabonds, Red Baraat

Coffee House: Donald Brown Trio (3 sets); Sarah McKenzie Quartet; Panel Discussion: Blue Note Records at 75: The Most Enduring Jazz Brand of All Time with Robert Glasper, Jason Moran, Bobby Hutcherson, and



Charles Lloyd (photo: Cole Thompson)

Don Was, hosted by Ashley Kahn; Panel Discussion: Remembering Two Piano Masters: Mulgrew Miller & James Williams with Donald Brown, Geoffrey Keezer and Harold Mabern, hosted by Ashley Kahn

West Lawn: Sourmash Hug Band (2 sets)

ARENA ARTISTS – Sunday, September 21

Michael Feinstein with special guests Russell Malone & Harry Allen and the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra; Charles Lloyd Quartet with Jason Moran, Rueben Rogers, & Eric Harland; Marcus Miller; Jon Batiste & Stay Human; Next Generation Jazz Orchestra

GROUND'S ARTISTS – Sunday, September 21

Dizzy's Den: Eric Harland Voyager, Tony Monaco, Pamela Rose & Wayne De La Cruz; Daniel Rosenboom Quintet; Discussion: Celebrating the Great American Songbook with Michael Feinstein, moderated by Ashley Kahn

Night Club: Delfeayo & Ellis Marsalis; Ambrose Akinmusire Quintet; Folsom High School Combo; Folsom High School Jazz Choir I; Valencia High School Vikings "Two N' Four"; Westlake High School Jazz Ensemble I; Buchanan High School Big Band; Monterey County High School All-Star Band; Monterey County High School Honor Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Garden Stage Presented by Alaska Airlines: Harold Lopez-Nussa, Ben Flocks & Battle Mountain; Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band; Youn Sun Nah & Ulf Wakenius; University of Miami Frost Concert Jazz Band; Northgate High School Big Band

Coffee House: Geoffrey Keezer Trio (2 sets); Bari Koral; Tucson Jazz Institute "Concord" Combo; USC Thornton School of Music Honors Combo

West Lawn: Minor Thirds Trio (2 sets)

ALL WEEKEND

Jazz on Film: Legends of the Tenor Saxophone: Charles Lloyd: Arrows Into Infinity; Jeremy Siskind & Friends on the Yamaha AvantGrand on the Courtyard Stage; Arena Simulcasts in The Jazz Theater; Coffee House Gallery Exhibits: Blue Note Records: 75 Years of Excellence; Earl Newman: 50 Years of Monterey Jazz Festival Posters



The 36th Annual Chicago Jazz Festival announces full lineup

Featuring artists Kurt Rosenwinkel New Quartet, Miguel Zenón Quartet, “Tootie” Heath Trio, Myra Melford’s Snowy Egret & many others including previously announced headliners - August 28-31 at the Chicago Cultural Center and Millennium Park

CHICAGO - A favorite Labor Day Weekend tradition celebrating both the mainstream of the national jazz scene as well as Chicago’s unique contributions to the art form, the 36th Annual Chicago Jazz Festival will be presented Aug. 28-Aug. 31, 2014 in Millennium Park and the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington).

This year’s headliners include trumpeter and noted film music composer Terence Blanchard, vibraphonist and jazz education pioneer Gary Burton, Miles Davis alumnus bassist Dave Holland and his all star fusion band Prism featuring three of modern jazz’s leading lights – Craig Taborn, guitarist Kevin Eubanks (formerly of The Tonight Show Band) and drummer Eric Harland, jazz’s most celebrated new straight-ahead singer in years (and rightly so), Cecile McLorin Salvant, Chicago-affiliated bassist Rufus Reid, trumpeter and now elder statesman and noted mentor Tom Harrell leads a new band, Colors of a Dream featuring jazz’s biggest breakout crossover star of the last decade, Esperanza Spalding. Finally, the Sun Ra Arkestra celebrates the centennial of Ra’s “arrival” on planet Earth from Saturn.

Produced by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events and programmed by the Jazz Institute of Chicago, the free admission Chicago Jazz Festival will officially open with a Tribute to Nelson Mandela by Chicago composer Ernest Dawkins. The Millennium Park performance of Dawkins’ Afro Jazz Opera will also be the final concert in this year’s Made in Chicago: World Class Jazz series. The Sun Ra Arkestra, celebrating what would have been the 100th birthday of its founder, a Chicago legend, will close out the Chicago Jazz Festival. This is the prized free-admission event’s second year in the glorious setting of the Jay Pritzker Pavilion. The festivities will mark the 45th anniversary of the Jazz Institute.

Full Festival Schedule

The festival will get underway at noon on Thursday, Aug. 28, at the Chicago Cultural Center (78 E. Washington St.), where there will be a full slate of performances in Preston Bradley Hall, the Claudia Cassidy Theater and Randolph Square.

The Chris Foreman Trio, led by a terrific organist in the tradition of Hammond B-3 master Jimmy Smith, will kick off things in Randolph Square, followed by the duo of revered blues and boogie-woogie pianist Erwin Helfer and saxophonist John Brumbach.

At 12:15pm in the Claudia Cassidy Theater, Keefe Jackson’s Likely So, a beguiling ensemble of seven reed players, will perform Jackson’s alluring compositions. They will be followed by a special 10-member edition of gusty tenor saxophonist David Boykin’s Expanse, performing a suite written for Sun Ra.

In Preston Bradley Hall, singer-guitarist Paulinho Garcia, the city’s reigning Brazilian music king, will lead a quintet at 12:30pm. Next up is the Judy Roberts/Greg Fishman Duo, a homecoming for the Arizona-based singer-pianist and saxophonist.

As part of the festival’s centennial Sun Ra celebration, a panel of Arkestra experts will discuss the cosmic hero’s legacy from 4-6pm at Roosevelt University’s Ganz Hall (430 S. Michigan Ave.).

“Homage to Nelson Mandela: Ernest Dawkins’ Memory in the Center, an Afro Jazz Opera,” will be performed at 6:30pm in Millennium Park. Saxophonist Dawkins, longtime leader of the New Horizons Ensemble, will be joined by distinguished players from Chicago, South Africa and London in recognition of the role musicians played in energizing the anti-apartheid movement. At the heart of the work, the phenomenal Chicago singer Dee Alexander will embody the activist spirits of Winnie Mandela, the South African President’s first wife, Winnie Mandela, and Graça Machel, his widow – both remarkable women.

On Friday, Aug. 29 at noon at the Von Freeman Pavilion

in Millennium Park (South Promenade), the promising local sextet, drummer Xavier Breaker’s Coalition, will kick off the action. They’ll be followed by the talent-laden Joshua Abrams Quartet, including Jason Adasiewicz, David Boykin and Frank Rosaly; bassist Clark Sommers’ enveloping (Ba)SH trio, featuring Geof Bradfield and Dana Hall, and the Russ Johnson Quartet, led by a gifted trumpeter whose addition to the local

scene has added immeasurably to it.

Music at the Jazz and Heritage Pavilion (North Promenade) begins at 12:30pm with the the Howard Alden/Andy Brown Quartet, which teams the renowned Sweet and Lowdown guitarist and one of Chicago's finest fret players. They'll be followed by the Paul Mariano Quintet, led by the stylish young crooner; and the Grammy-nominated Wayne Wallace Latin Jazz Quintet, led by the fine trombonist.

Friday evening's offerings at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion begin with a 5pm set by the George Freeman/Mike Allemana Quartet, featuring the late and lamented Von Freeman's brother, an idiosyncratic player idolized by the younger set for his soul-jazz adventures, and Von's longtime guitarist and music director, a fluid but risk-taking improviser himself.

Next up is Rufus Reid, the much loved bassist-bandleader-composer, who began his career in Chicago after graduating from Northwestern University. He'll lead his star-studded Out Front sextet, including saxophonists Bobby Watson and JD Allen and drummer Winard Harper.

Another Chicago product, piano virtuoso Myra Melford, will perform pieces from a new work, *Language of Dreams*, with her five-piece band Snowy Egret, including internationally renowned cornetist Ron Miles.

And then trumpeter Terence Blanchard, who is equally admired for his jazz compositions and film scores, will lead a thrilling group including saxophonist Ravi Coltrane and Beninese guitarist Lionel Loueke. They'll perform pieces from Blanchard's experimental gem, *Magnetic*, while also continuing the 2014 celebration of Blue Note Records 75th Anniversary.

Saturday, Aug. 29, performances begin at noon at the Von Freeman Pavilion with the Clif Wallace Quintet, a light-grooving unit including young AACM standout Justin Dillard. Also on tap, the John Campbell Trio, a reunion of one of the city's all-time favorite piano trios, including California-based Campbell, Kelly Sill and Joel Spencer; the John Wojciechowski Quartet, led by a terrific tenor saxophonist from Detroit; and the Corey Wilkes Quartet, featuring the outgoing trumpeter and including Robert Irving III.

Beginning at 12:30pm at the Jazz and Heritage Pavilion, the music will be performed by Laurenzi/Ernst/Green, a new wave trio including saxophonist Dustin Laurenzi, bassist and singer Katie Ernst and drummer Andrew Green; the Chicago Underground Duo, the ever-expansive, electronically expressive twosome of cornetist Rob Mazurek and percussionist Chad Taylor; and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel, the most influential guitarist of his generation, heading up a topflight quartet including Aaron Parks, Eric Revis and Colin Stranahan.

At the Jay Pritzker Pavilion, the great AACM tenor saxophonist Ari Brown will play in support of his excellent recent release, *Groove Awakening*, beginning at 5pm. He'll lead his longstanding quartet, including his brother Kirk on piano.

Next up is arguably the greatest vibraphonist of not just this era, but several before it, Gary Burton. The four-mallet innovator, who has played with a glittering roster of greats, will lead a new quartet including guitar virtuoso Julian Lage and pianist Vadim Neselovskyi.

Trumpeter and flugelhornist Tom Harrell will follow Burton, also with a relatively new band, *Colors of a Dream*, featuring Grammy-winning bassist and vocalist Esperanza Spalding.

And if the first three bands don't provide enough excitement for one evening, the great double bassist Dave Holland's new fusion-style band, Prism, will push things over the top. The sonic attack unit features guitarist Kevin Eubanks, former music director of the *Tonight Show*, keyboardist Craig Taborn and drummer Eric Harland.

Sunday, Aug. 31 performances at the Von Freeman Pavilion begin at noon with guitarist Neal Alger's Blue Note Quartet, interpreting classics by artists including Wayne Shorter, Horace Silver and Sonny Clark. Next up is on-the-verge-of stardom Chicago singer Tammy McCann, backed by a quartet including pianist-arranger Laurence Hobgood; the Dennis Luxion-Michael Raynor Quartet, whose skilled leaders will "report" on their 2012 State Department tour of Africa, and trombonist Joel Adams' groove-minded Chicago Yestet, featuring 13 of the Windy City's finest players – seven on horn!

The Tomeka Reid Quartet, led by the brilliant Chicago cellist and featuring New York guitarist Mary Halvorson, will perform at 12:30pm at the Jazz and Heritage Pavilion, followed by Sun Rooms, a miraculous vibraphone trio including Jason Adasiewicz, Nate McBride and Mike Reed, and the Tootie Heath Trio, led by the legendary drummer of Heath Brothers fame, reborn in the copacetic company of pianist Ethan Iverson of the Bad Plus and bassist Ben Street.

What is guaranteed to be a memorable final night of music in this year's Chicago Jazz Festival will get off to a stylish start in Millennium Park with the Bobby Broom Trio. A New York native (and Sonny Rollins protégé) Broom has risen into the top ranks of guitarists during his time in Chicago. He's joined by bassist Dennis Carroll and drummer Makaya McCraven.

MacArthur Foundation Fellow Miguel Zenón, who is both one of jazz's great alto saxophonists and perhaps its best practicing musicologist, will next lead his cutting quartet. Their set will dip into various historical musical styles of his native Puerto Rico.

Zenon will be followed by the "new voice of Jazz," Grammy®-nominated, Cécile McLorin Salvant, who performs unique interpretations of little-known and seldomly-recorded jazz and blues compositions. Salvant, who, like last year's CJF sensation, Gregory Porter, has brought a crowd-pleasing magnetism back to jazz. Singing in English, French and Spanish, her repertoire ranges from 19th century folk ballads to jazz standards.

And then come's this year's climactic finale, the

Sun Ra Arkestra, which with its chants, glittery outfits, Egyptian dancers and other cosmic trappings is as great a show band as it is a musical unit. But for all its frolics, Sun Ra wrote music for the ages: as beautiful and swinging as it is probing and mysterious. Led by saxophonist Marshall Allen, this special edition of the band will celebrate its return to Chicago with current and past members in what is sure to be a riotous centennial salute.

The free admission Chicago Jazz Festival offers top-notch talent, with a broad diversity of styles and an unmatched cultural experience for Chicago residents and tourists alike. The festival stands out from others largely based on a history of putting its own regional stamp on the artistic proceedings. This is particularly true given the city's deep roots in the history of jazz from Louis Armstrong to Muhal Richard Abrams to the late Von Freeman and Fred Anderson to today's stars Ken Vandermark, Dana Hall, Mike Reed, Dave Rempis and many more. The Chicago Jazz Festival takes an annual stock of what makes Chicago such an amazing international destination for jazz year-round.

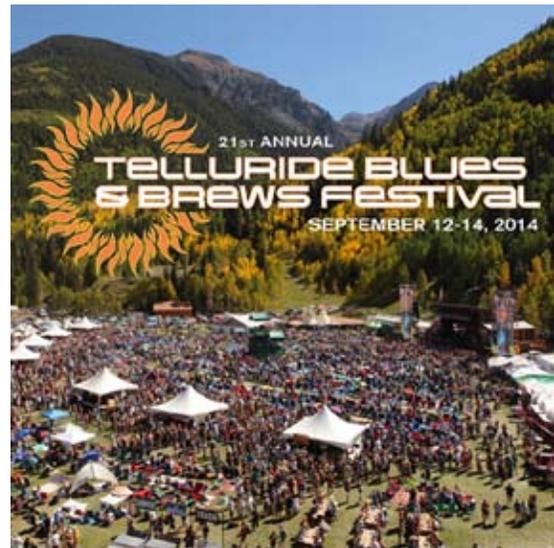
The Chicago Jazz Festival is presented by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events and the Chicago Jazz Partnership and programmed by the Jazz Institute of Chicago. The festival is sponsored in part by American Airlines, Aquafina, Chicago Jazz Magazine, Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Tribune, Chicagotribune.com, CLTV-ChicagoLand's Television, Communications Direct, DownBeat Magazine, E&J Gallo Family Vineyards, LaGrou Distribution System, Metra, Pepsi and WGN-Television.

For the latest information on the Chicago Jazz Festival, visit chicagojazzfestival.us, like us on Facebook at Chicago Jazz Festival and follow us on Twitter (@ChicagoDCASE, #ChiJazzFest).

Telluride Blues & Brews Festival, Sept. 12-14, 2014

Telluride, CO - Single Day and Late Night Tickets for the 21st Annual Telluride Blues & Brews Festival went on sale in June. (MDT). Tickets can be purchased online at TellurideBlues.com, by phone at 866.515.6166, or locally at Telluride Music and at Wizard Entertainment.

Telluride Blues & Brews Festival is proud to announce the Violent Femmes, George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic, and Peter Dinklage to headline the event this summer. Additional artists include The Meter Men, Buddy Guy, Dumpstaphunk, Lee Fields & the Expressions, Charles Bradley and His Extraordinaires, The Slide Brothers, Zach Deputy, Roosevelt Collier & The Bayou Gypsies, Bombino, Amy Helm and the Handsome Strangers, MoHead, Patrick Sweany, Shakey Graves, Roosevelt Collier "Artist at Large", The Record Company, Markus James, Chris Dracup, and Kipori Woods. Returning festival favorites Anders Osborne, the Robert Cray Band, The Lee Boys, Black Joe Lewis, and Ryan



McGarvey will also join us for the 21st annual festival.

For the first time ever, 2014's Blues & Brews lineup will feature comedian sets on the newly added "Blues Stage", a state of the art second stage located in the Hanley Pavilion. Expect appearances from the endlessly funny Troy Walker, Elliot Woolsey, and Ben Roy. Colorado-based artist 'Scramble' Campbell will also return to Town Park with his beautiful performance painting.

"We are excited to announce a bigger lineup than in previous years, with the addition of comedians during the festival weekend," said Steve Gumble, Festival Director. "This year's festival has many new features including a second stage, campground sessions, and a diverse mix of music and entertainment."

This year's festival weekend kicks with our opening night show at the Sheridan Opera House with Amy Helm and the Handsome Strangers for our Bal de Maison on Thursday September, 11th at 9:00 p.m. Limited Tickets are \$20 for the show. When the lights go down after each festival evening, the party continues at our four late night Juke Joint venues. Bombino and Dumpstaphunk claim our newly added second stage. A revamped Fly Me To The Moon Saloon sees Patrick Sweany and Zach Deputy. The intimate Elks Lodge houses The Record Company and The Slide Brothers. The historic Sheridan Opera House hosts The Lee Boys and Black Joe Lewis with opening act Kipori Woods, Anders Osborne and Friends will end the weekend with the Fais do-do closing celebration. Limited tickets for the Fais do-do are \$25 per person.

Three-day passes are available for \$185 each, Friday and Sunday Single Day passes are \$65 each, and Saturday passes \$70 each. Juke Joint passes are \$25 per night, and feature late night shows at various intimate venues throughout the town of Telluride. Festival 4-day camping passes are \$40 per person, with camping located adjacent to the Festival grounds starting Thursday, September 11th.

For a full schedule of events or to purchase tickets, visit us online at TellurideBlues.com. To purchase tickets by phone, call toll-free at (866) 515-6166.

Pennsylvania Blues Festival

Pocono Mountains - The 4th Pennsylvania Blues Festival celebrates 23 years of blues in the Pocono Mountains, July 25-27 at Blue Mountain Ski Area & Resort's Valley - at the base of Blue Mountain with 1 wide spectrum of real blues acts two covered stages. Headlining this year's festival are Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters; The James Cotton Blues Band and C.J. Chenier & the Red Hot Louisiana Band.

The Festival starts on Friday night with PA Blues Fest Showcase with The BC COMBO featuring Bev Conklin, Slam Allen, Mikey Junior, Joe Mac & Lonnie Shields. Bev Conklin and her band anchored last year's showcase and it will be a treat to hear this year's group that features the Mississippi born Lonnie Shields bringing his distinctive touch along with harmonica wizard Mikey Jr., and Slam Allen who was part of James Cotton's Band for many years.

Saturday, July 26, the Festival will open with Tad Robinson performing on the Main Tent Stage while Rip Lee Pryor (son of the legendary Snooky Pryor) will open the Adventure Center for the first of two stages. Also appearing at the Adventure Center Stage will be Ursula Ricks for two sets. After Tad Robinson, there will be sets on the Main Tent Stage by Shawn Holt and the Teardrops (Shawn is son of Morris 'Magic Slim' Holt); the great soul-blues vocalist Barbara Carr; the magical guitar of Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters; and the legendary James Cotton Blues Band will close that night. After the main performances there will be Saturday Night Jam in the Adventure Center featuring Dave Weld & The Imperial Flames.

Sunday, July 27 will open with VIP Sunday Brunch with The Murali Coryell Band with Special Guest - Dave Keyes. The Main Stage opens with the marvelous gospel harmonies of The Como Mamas; Following the Como Mamas will be The Jarekus Singleton Band featuring the young Mississippi bluesman who recently signed with Alligator and will soon have his debut album for the label. Little Bit of Blues, a Washington DC trio that features the amazing guitar and vocals of Warner Williams will be at the Adventure Center for the first of two sets and followed there by Super Chickan, also playing two sets there. Other main stage acts include the Chris Cain Band, featuring the wonderful, if highly underrated West Coast singer and guitarist; the Heritage Blues Quintet; with C.J. Chenier & the Red Hot Louisiana Band closing the main stage with some les bon temps roulet zydeco. The Jarekus Singleton Band will close out the Adventure Center stage.

Once again Michael Cloeren has put together a lineup that captures a wide range of blues styles and includes some artists making rare East Coast appearances. Blue Mountain Ski Area is in Palmerton PA.

For more information on the Festival, including information on tickets, and other matters visit <http://www.skibluemt.com/seasonal-activities/pa-blues-festival>.

Ron Weinstock

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By combining high-end cruising heralded and talented jazz performers, ECP provides its Guests with the ultimate jazz cruise experience. Having entertained in excess of 50,000 people throughout the years and boasting a 60 percent rebooking rate, ECP has developed fans all over the country - and the world.

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The Signature Jazz Cruise (Sept. 30 to Oct. 10, 2014)

By combining a Seabourn cruise, the most amazing Mediterranean itinerary, and the most heralded jazz vocalist in the world, Diana Krall, *The Signature Jazz Cruise* is the most luxurious and the most exclusive jazz cruise vacation ever offered. As we like to say, it is "Beyond Perfect." (For each suite reservation completed under this program, we will make a \$1,000 contribution to Monterey Jazz Festival jazz education programs.)

The Jazz Cruise (Jan. 25 - Feb. 1, 2015)

The Jazz Cruise is the first and only full-ship charter in the world featuring "straight ahead" jazz. With more than 90 internationally renowned musicians and vocalists, TJC presents the music festival-style, with as many as five performances at the same time. This cruise is a jazz lover's paradise. (For each cabin reservation completed under this program, we will make a \$300 contribution to Monterey Jazz Festival jazz education programs.)

The Smooth Jazz Cruise (March 1-8, 2015)

Known as *The Greatest Party at Sea*, this cruise presents smooth jazz, R&B, funk instrumental and vocal music in settings geared to having fun and creating a shared experience for all Guests. There is an earlier sailing of this cruise (Jan. 11-18, 2015), but that has already sold out. (For each cabin reservation completed under this program, we will make a \$250 contribution to Monterey Jazz Festival jazz education programs.)

The professionals at Entertainment Cruise Productions are ready to assist you with your reservations and with any additional arrangements that you may need to

complete your vacation experience. You can reach us at 888.852.9987.

Mention Monterey Jazz Festival when you call or include promo code **MONTEREY** when you book online to ensure a contribution is made to Monterey Jazz Festival jazz education programs.

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release Blues... Ahh, the sweet sound of the blues to warm up your summer. Here's what's on tap in the new release bin: **Kelley Hunt**- *The Beautiful Bones*; **Jeremy Spencer**- *Coventry Blue*; **Eli Cook**- *Primitive Son*; **Various Artists**- *Blues From the Checker Vaults*; **Eric Johnson**- *Europe Live*; **Alastair Greene Band**- *Trouble At Your Door*; **Glen David Andrews**- *Redemption*; **Kelly Richey Band**- *Love at the Blue Wisp*; **Lil Ronnie & The Bluebeats** feat. **Claudia Carawan**- *Unfinished Business*; **John Mayall**- *A Special Life*; **Catfish Hodge**- *Different Strokes*; **Rick Estrin & the Nightcats**- *Live!*; **Andy T- Nick Nixon Band**- *Livin' It Up*; **Walter Trout**- *The Blues Came Callin'*; **Seth Walker**- *Sky Still*

Blue; **Oz Noy**- *Twisted Blues Vol. 2*; **Jarekus Singleton**- *Refuse to Lose*; **Ian Siegal**- *Man & Guitar*; **Lucky Peterson**- *The Son of a Bluesman*; **Pee Wee Crayton**- *Texas Blues Jumpin' in Los Angeles*; **Roy Buchanan**- *Live at My Father's Place*; **The Nighthawks**- *444*; **Rod Piazza & the Mighty Flyers**- *Emergency Situation*; **Freddie King**- *Live & Loud 1968*; **Keb' Mo'**- *Bluesamericana*; **Royal Southern Brotherhood**- *heartsoulblood*; **Selwyn Birchwood**- *Don't Call No Ambulance*; **Too Slim & the Taildraggers**- *Anthology*; **Eden Brent**- *Jigsaw Heart*; **John Primer**- *You Can Make It If You Try*; **Al Basile**- *Woke Up in Memphis*; **Deanna Bogart**- *Just a Wish Away*; **Mannish Boys**- *Wrapped Up and Ready*; **The Forrest McDonald Band**- *Turnaround Blues*; **Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters**- *Good News*; **Kenny Blues Boss Wayne**- *Rollin' With the Blues Boss*; **Johnny Drummer**- *Bad Attitude*; **Dave Alvin and Phil Alvin**- *Common Ground: The Songs of Big Bill Broonzy*; **Big Jack Johnson**- *Big Jack's Way*; **Dave Specter**- *Message in Blues*; **Steve Freund & Gloria Hardiman**- *Set Me Free*; **Giles Corey's Stoned Soul**- *Stoned Soul*; **Pork Chop Willie**- *Love Is the Devil*; **Sleepy John Estes**- *Live in Japan with Hammie Nixon*; **Ben Prestage**- *Live at Will's Pub*; **Ray Bonneville**- *Easy Gone*; **Paul Butterfield**- *Live at the Winterland Ballroom* and **Chris Smither**- *Still on the Levee*

That should tide you over until next month. See ya!



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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 rified

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

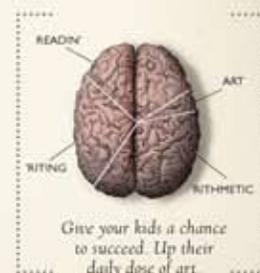


A piano player. A composer. An orchestra leader.
 Duke Ellington reigned over a land called Jazz.

"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.



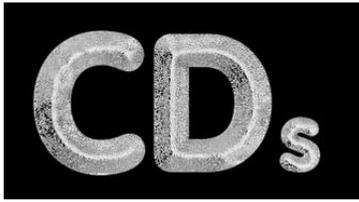
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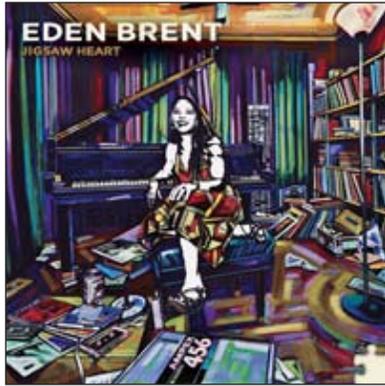


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EDEN BRENT
Jigsaw Heart
YELLOW DOG RECORDS

In 2008, I called Eden Brent's album "Mississippi Number One" "a stunning recording of blues, jazz and soul... ." I also observed that "[a]s a singer she sings with the authority of the late Esther Phillips, if a bit less nasal, while displaying the sassiness of a Denise LaSalle and a bit of Bobby Gentry's country soul." I was similarly impressed by next album "Ain't Got No Troubles," noting it "mixes a marvelous pianist and vocalist with strong material, sympathetic backing and varied, imaginative programming resulting in a terrific recording that should appeal to blues and roots music fans." Eden Brent's latest album, "Jigsaw Heart" (Yellow Dog Records) is another recording that perhaps displays her country side as a performer.

Like "Ain't Got No Troubles," this was produced by Colin Linden who also contributes guitar (and mandolin on one track). Some of the others playing behind Edén on this include John Dymond on bass, Gary Craig on drums, Dan Dugmore on pedal steel, Kenzie Wetz on fiddle. Brent's originals are mixed with interpretations of songs from Joan Armatrading, Billy Taylor & Dick Dallas, and Jimmy Phillips amongst others.

The very first two numbers illustrate the range of music on "Jigsaw Heart" as well as the extent of Ms. Brent's talent and artistry. "Better This Way" has her singing about leaving today, but the relationship ended sometime before, so let's raise a glass to toast the past. This is a classic country waltz that has a bit of a swamp pop feel as well. In contrast, "Everybody Already Knows" is a romp about the whole town knowing Edén and her lover are messing round, with some wonderfully rollicking piano that evokes Jerry Lee Lewis (although perhaps

not quite as wild). Both are superbly sung and played and display her considerable gift as a songwriter. The title track has another wonderful lyric as she asks her cowboy angel whether he has what it takes to un-break her heart.

In addition to these wonderful originals she provides her own take on Joann Armatrading's "Opportunity," with a vocal that suggests Bobby Gentry. Another noted cover is the Billy Taylor-Dick Dallas penned "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free," which was inspired by Nina Simone's classic rendition of this. It's a good performance with backing singers, although I would love to hear Edén perform this just with her piano.

"Jigsaw Heart" is a superb recording. Edén Brent has a range as a pianist, singer and songwriter comparable to the late Charlie Rich. Like Rich, she brings complete authority to renditions of blues, country and soul. I look forward to hearing more from Edén Brent and her continual musical growth. *Ron Weinstock*



DAVID WEISS
When Words Fail
MOTEMA MUSIC

Regarding "When Words Fail," the new Motema Music CD by David Weiss and his Sextet, this arose in Weiss' own words: "[T]he last year or so has been a time of profound loss for me and a lot of my close friends and acquaintances. Some of these losses have been very public and horrific. These were the themes that were swimming through my head as I put the final touches on the music for this CD and began to rehearse it. But, ideally, it's also about lifting one out of that world, so it should also be about rebirth, hope and finding your way back. The music on "When Words Fail" is about acknowledging your pain but also about finding a way out, or at the very least, providing a temporary escape. I don't want to say that this is what I strive for or set out to do when composing, but I do hope that this is what the end result of my endeavors will encompass."

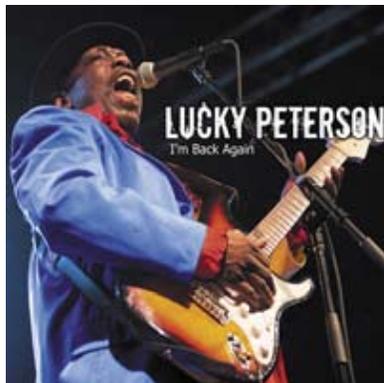
For this album, Weiss reassembled his "original band," The David Weiss Sextet, featuring his original band-mates (once fledgling artists themselves and now proven jazz stalwarts), Saxophonists Marcus Strickland (tenor sax) and Myron Walden (alto sax), pianist Xavier Davis, bassist Dwayne Burno, and drummer

E.J. Strickland (plus guitarist Ben Eunsen making his recording debut on two tracks). Tragically these were Burno's final recordings, as he passed away at the early age of 43, a week after these recordings were made. This album is dedicated to him.

The music here will not sound unfamiliar for those who have enjoyed his work with The Cookers or his other efforts. It suggests to these ears some of the classic Shorter and Hancock sessions for Blue Note. The compositions are fresh and interesting and the performances are terrific, starting with the sparkling "The Intrepid Hub," that was written for Freddie Hubbard. Burno was impressed by the title track when they first rehearsed it and the rendition here, Weiss states, is for him with a slower tempo. Weiss takes notable solos on both. "MJ" evokes the classic second Miles Davis Quintet renditions of Wayne Shorter's compositions. Marcus Strickland standing out on tenor while the leader's tone is a bit more extroverted than Davis and guitarist Eunsen is heard adding some fiery playing.

"Wayward," part of an extended suite, is a feature for Waldron's fervent alto sax with E.J. Strickland driving things along with his energetic playing, and Davis also takes a solo. Karl Jenkins' "Lullaby For a Lonely Child" is another sober composition that showcases Waldron. The closing number, "Passage Into Eternity," is dedicated to Jimmy, Nelba and Isaiah Greene whose daughter (and sister) was one of the victims of the Newtown massacre. Marcus Strickland and Weiss both stand out here, with more kudos for the terrific rhythm section. Burno was an anchor, Davis' comping was precise and Strickland is one of today's most compelling drummers. It concludes a terrific recording that is full of heart as well as exquisite playing.

Ron Weinstock



LUCKY PETERSON

I'm Back Again
BLUES BOULEVARD

Blues Boulevard's new Lucky Peterson album "I'm Back" is a release of the music from the excellent DVD/CD set on BlackbirdMusic/ Soulfood by The Lucky Peterson Band Featuring Tamara Peterson "Live At The 55 Arts Club." The eleven performances on this release are available on the DVDs and the CDs of the earlier set, but are limited to those that featured Lucky, and

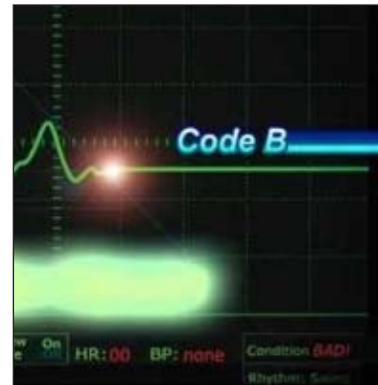
not the others which featured Tamara. Lucky's backing band included Shawn Kellerman on guitar, Tim Waites on bass and Raul Valdes on drums. It is a hard-rocking, tight band that did a fine job supporting Lucky (heard on organ as well as guitar).

I wrote, reviewing the DVD/CD set, "The material ranges from Lucky's reworking of blues classics such as "You Shook Me," "I'm Ready," and "Who's Been Talking," along with Johnny 'Guitar' Watson's "Ta' Ta' You." He takes out the slide for "Dust My Broom," while getting really greasy on the B-3 on "I'm Back Again," as well as Rico McFarland's "Giving Me The Blues."

Listening to these performances again, my views haven't changed.

Those having "Live At The 55 Arts Club" will have no reason to buy this fine reissue, but others may want to get this strong sampling of Lucky Peterson (and his excellent band) today.

Ron Weinstock



DOC STEWART BIG BAND RESUSCITATION

Code Blue
CANNONBALL JAZZ

Chris 'Doc' Stewart is a world-class alto saxophonist who developed his talent before entering into his day job as an ER physician at the famed Mayo Clinic.

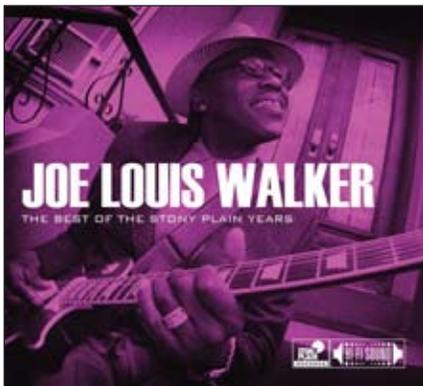
This is the second CD of his big band, Resuscitation, comprised of musicians that he associated with in his pre-medicine days that include a number top studio and jazz musicians in the LA scene. Some of the more prominent names here include pianist Matt Catingub, bassist Kevin Axt, drummer Steve Moretti, trombonists Bill Reichenbach Andy Martin and Scott Kyle, Trumpeters Wayne Bergeron, Jeff Bunnell and Ron Stout, and saxophonist Bill Liston. Arrangements are by pianist Catingub and Tom Kubis, who co-wrote the centerpiece of this album, "Code Blue Suite," with Doc Stewart.

Stewart advises that the four-part "Code Blue Suite" "tells the story of life and death I see everyday in the ER." The bluesy roots of Stewart's music here is evident on the opening "Code Pink - Born to See Blues" that celebrates birth and the uncertainty life brings, followed by "Ironman Blues - Dig Me Man!." This part has a definite fifties-sixties Basie feel about it with strong

playing from Reichenbach and Bergeron in addition to the leader's own playing. "The Last Breath Blues - All Alone Now" opens with some unaccompanied playing from Stewart before to starting a bluesy riff with the rhythm and its leader getting very heated before a segment incorporating some emergency room effects a spoken part before a sharp ending. The concluding part of the suite, "Code Jesus - New Life," is quite lively and celebratory with nice playing from Stewart and Stout, but kudos also to Axt for his electric bass playing.

The remainder of the album includes performances associated with Cannonball Adderley, including the driving "The Sticks"; a spirited Bobby Timmons' "Dis Here"; Adderley's "Introduction to a Samba" and Oscar Pettiford's "Bohemia After Dark." Stewart's previous big band album was a tribute to Adderley and his music publishing company is Cannonball Jazz. The big band arrangements are nicely done and with the solid soloing providing nice framing for what were originally small group performances. The leader certainly plays with a fluid, robust bluesy attack. Kubis contributed a lovely ballad, "Tribute to Bud Shank," while Catingub contributes a bright, brassy arrangement for "Poor Butterfly" as well as the lightly swinging treatment for "The Way You Look Tonight," with Andy Martin's trombone solo of note.

"Code Blues" is a recording that should have wide appeal with first rate soloing and swinging ensemble playing by this excellent big band. *Ron Weinstock*



JOE LOUIS WALKER
The Best of the Stony Plain Years
STONY PLAIN

Stony Plain Records has just issued a retrospective of Joe Louis Walker's three albums for that label, "The Best of the Stony Plain Years." It brings together performances from the two studio CDs of Walker that Duke Robillard produced, and from the live album recorded on the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise. The music represented lack the hard rock trappings of some of his most recent recordings on Alligator.

Certainly its nice to hear once more the bluesy adaptation of Travis Phillips rocker "Eyes Like a Cat" along with the nice acoustic duet with harmonica player

Sugar Ray Norcia, "Send Me Back." In addition to the hot guitar feature with Robillard, "Highview," Walker picks up harmonica for "Sugar Mama" that some will know from Howlin' Wolf. It's a wonderful performance with Bruce Katz standing out on piano while Todd Sharpeville is on guitar.

Three performances come from the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise including a rocking, "Slow Down GTO," with fine Mike Finnigan organ as well as Walker's guitar. Johnny Winter's slide guitar embellishes Walker's singing on "Ain't That Cold," and Winter added a strong solo. Finnigan and Curtis Salgado share vocals with Walker on an enjoyable (if slightly messy and frenzied), "You're Gonna Make Me Cry."

Those who have been turned on the Walker by his Alligator recordings may want to check out this retrospective of some of his recent music. Others, who may have missed the Stony Plain releases when they came out, will get a taste of what they had missed. Recommended.

Ron Weinstock



JASON ROEBKE OCTET
High Red Center
DELMARK RECORDS

Chicago bassist and composer Jason Roebke leads an impressive octet on a new Delmark release "High Red Center." Roebke is joined by Greg Ward – alto saxophone, Keefe Jackson – tenor saxophone, Jason Stein – bass clarinet, Josh Berman – cornet, Jeb Bishop – trombone, Jason Adasiewicz – vibraphone, and Mike Reed – drums in this octet that contains many of the most impressive contemporary jazz instrumentalists in the Windy City to handle Roebke's compositions that mix free with a strong swinging undercurrent.

Listening to several of these compositions, including the title track, one is impressed by the Dolphyesque angularity and use of dissonance along with Roebke's shifts in tempo and arrangements of the horns, including segments of controlled frenzied group improvisation to create distinctive performances. The title track opens with a surging tenor sax solo over Jason Adasiewicz's vibes before a segment focusing on tonal development before concluding with riveting collective improvisation by the horns. Berman and Bishop's growling brass set a moody beginning to "Slow," while

Reed's adept percussion adds accents here.

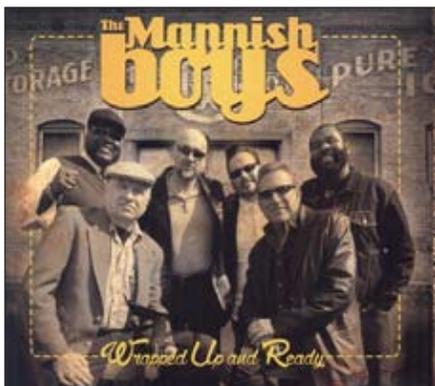
"Blues" opens honking and squawking from Jackson over a droning backdrop which slowly transforms into the ensemble playing a repeated motif played with increasing intensity until Berman cuts loose as Adasiewicz provides support as Roebke and Reed get into a kicking groove. "Candy Time" opens with a Monk-esque theme with Bishop taking the forefront. "Dirt Cheap" is constructed around a hummable bluesy vamp with a memorable guttural saxophone solo and some intriguing playing by the others (especially Bishop).

Stein is also featured on "Double Check" that opens as a duet with the leader before the other horns join in for the head he first stated. A ballad, "Ten Nights," is a feature for Bishop's deep sound enhanced by Roebke's charts for the other horns and Adasiewicz's comping. "Ballin'" is another performance with hints of Eric Dolphy in its angular construction along with Adasiewicz's vibes and Jackson's blues-inflected sax.

Greg Ward's alto is highlighted on the moody "Shadow," which is followed by the closing "Birthday" that opens with the leader's bass solo before the rhythm and then Berman join in.

In the liner notes Art Lange makes the observation that the players here all "share a common language of 'inside' and 'outside ... " that is evident on these performances that are thoughtful and passionate. Roebke's compositions engage the listener and the Octet brings them to life with free, yet disciplined, playing making "High Red Center" a recording of great merit.

Ron Weinstock



THE MANNISH BOYS
Wrapped Up and Ready
DELTA GROOVE

The Mannish Boys' new Delta Groove release, "Wrapped Up and Ready" continues this group's mix of lesser known vintage blues numbers and idiomatic originals, many contributed by Delta Groove's main impresario, and the group's musical director, Randy Chortkoff. The band is one of the best around today with the nuanced, powerful singing of Sugar Ray Rayford, the guitars of Kirk Fletcher and Franck 'Paris Slim' Goldwasser, bassist Willie J. Campbell and drummer Jimi

Bott. Add a variety of special guests such as Candye Kane and her guitarist, Laura Chavez, Steve Freund, Kim Wilson, Kid Ramos, Fred Kaplan and Monster Mike Welch, and one has a terrific blues revue in the vein of the group's prior recordings.

Dedicated to original Mannish Boy Finis Tasby, whose career has ended due to a major stroke, they certainly do him proud with the excellent performances throughout kicking off with Mike Welch's "I Ain't Sayin'" and followed by a lesser known Roy Brown jump blues "Everything's Alright" with Kid Ramos and Nico Dupertal contributing some T-Bone Walker inspired guitar. Both sport terrific vocals from Sugar Ray, who is perhaps a bit more uptown a singer than the grainy vocals that Finis Tasby and Jonny Dyer had provided, but is one able to certainly get down in the alley. He handles 10 vocals on the 16 tracks with Goldwasser singing on two (including "Struggle in My Hometown" that sounds like it was inspired by Percy Mayfield); Candye Kane (with the terrific Laura Chavez on guitar) on a strong rendition of Ike Turner's "I Idolize You; Steve Freund on his original "The Blues Has Made Me Whole," and Randy Chortkoff and Kendra Fox dueling on Chortkoff's "Can't Make a Living."

The title track is a nice rocker penned by Sugar Ray with Kim Wilson on harp followed by "It Was Fun," a terrific late night West Coast styled slow blues with some nice lead fretwork from Freud. The mix of Chortkoff's

A black and white promotional image for Selwyn Birchwood's album "Don't Call No Ambulance". It features a close-up of Birchwood playing a Gibson electric guitar. The text "A genius revelation and a pleasure... roaring guitar and down-home lap steel" is overlaid on the right side, attributed to "Blues Matters". At the bottom, it says "THE NEW RELEASE ON ALLIGATOR RECORDS AVAILABLE NOW AT ALLIGATOR.COM AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS GENUINE HOUSEROCKIN' MUSIC SINCE 1971".

SELWYN BIRCHWOOD
don't call no ambulance

"A genius revelation and a pleasure...
roaring guitar and
down-home lap steel"
—Blues Matters

THE NEW RELEASE ON ALLIGATOR RECORDS AVAILABLE
NOW AT ALLIGATOR.COM AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS
GENUINE HOUSEROCKIN' MUSIC SINCE 1971

harp and Chavez's judicious use of tremolo add nice touches to Kane's vocal on "I Idolize You" with its solid Latin groove. It is followed by "You Better Watch Yourself" with its mix of a James Brown funk bass groove and a traditional blues lyric. The succeeding rendition of Robert Ward's "Something For Nothing" evokes some of the Maxwell Davis and Johnny Heartsman productions for singers like Ray Agee and Al King, while Sugar Ray sings his heart out. Sugar Ray's "Troubles" has a more down home setting with some strong playing from Kim Wilson with Welch adding nice tasty fills. A really fine cover of Magic Sam's "She Belongs To Me" is taken at a slower tempo than the original with Kid Ramos contributing a sharp solo.

The closing track is Fletcher's "Blues For Michael Bloomfield," on which he, Goldwasser and Welch all dig deep on this slow blues instrumental that is also the CD's longest track. It concludes another excellent disc (with 75 minutes of strong blues) by the Mannish Boys, which should be of little surprise to those who have heard their previous recordings and/or have seen them performing.

Ron Weinstock



KAREN MANTLER
Business Is Bad
 ECM

Naiveté and savvy coexist and commingle in the both highly idiosyncratic and distinctly straightforward lyrical universe of Ms. Mantler.

Paired with sparse, smart melodies and draped in highly atmospheric minimalist accompaniment, the NYC-based vocalist/pianist/harmonica player's lyrics address situations both light-hearted and those not so in an environment curiously and consistently attractive.

A light-stepping vocal approach, ideally suited to the character of her lyrics, and sly harmonica solos that are exquisite examples of economy serve as signatures for a most engaging artist.

Standouts include "Catch As Catch Can", "Surviving You" and the title track.

Duane Verh



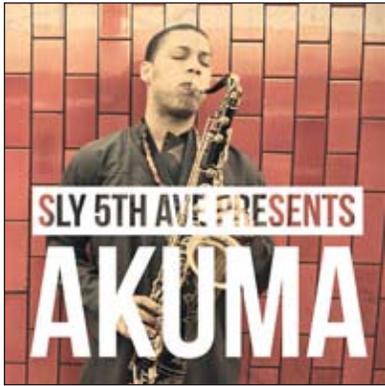
SHEBA
Butter on My Rolls
 SELF PRODUCED

Mississippi born Sheba Beck has traveled many miles (literally and figuratively) since leaving the life in a Mississippi sharecropper's family as a youngster. Growing up in Florida, music became her calling as she played in various types of groups ranging from rhythm and blues and jazz to the blues she sings today. She has endured hardships, and abusive relationships, but her experiences provide a foundation for the music heard on her recent self-produced recording "Butter on My Rolls." Sheba is backed by George 'Chocolate' Perry on synthesized strings, bass, drums and synthesized horns; Michael 'The Dog' Gauthier on keyboards, synthesized strings and synthesized horns, Walter 'Roach' Thompson on guitar; and Chuck Juntzman on slide guitar. While this writer isn't a fan of synthesized horns and strings, they are functional and provide musical color. The backing fortunately is from real musicians as opposed to drum machines.

While some songs may sound generic, and the backing sometimes gets frantic (the boogie woogie shuffle "Oh So Good" taken at too fast a tempo), Sheba is a wonderful, soulful singer who caresses her lyrics while belting out a line or two for emphasis. She never sounds strident, and is compelling on slow blues ("Real Good Woman" who wonders about all those no good men) or soulful ballads ("Can't Help Lovin' My Man" and "Don't Say Goodbye"). She gets down and bawdy celebrating her "Big Man," telling other women to find their own good big man. She shows her presence on the rocking funky "Pourin' Rain," but the real gem is the talking blues "Blues of My Soul," with slide guitar backing where she recalls growing up in Mississippi and her mother taking her to Florida. She is a marvelous storyteller. She follows it with the title track, a song suggestive on some of the vaudeville blues of the twenties but with a lyric of today.

There may not be anything fancy about Sheba or "Butter on My Rolls," but her vocals and songs ring true and full of heart. If the backing is mostly functional, there is nothing wrong with that when one is supporting a singer with the character Sheba manifests throughout.

Ron Weinstock



SLY5THAVE

Akuma

TRUTH REVOLUTION RECORDS

“Akuma” (Truth Revolution Records) is the debut recording of Sly5thAve (aka Sylvester Uzoma Onyejiaka II). The release of “Akuma” comes as the Nigerian born, New York- based saxophonist came off a national tour with Prince. Based in New York, “Akuma” represents an effort the synthesize his Nigerian roots with jazz, soul and global music for an impressive debut displaying considerable maturity in his compositions, arrangements and his playing.

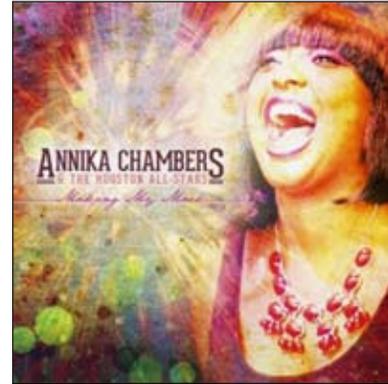
The core band includes Sly5thAve (Sax); Ross Pederson (Drums); Daniel Foose (Bass); Hajime Yoshida (Electric Guitar); Keita Ogawa (Percussion) and Jay Jennings (Trumpet). Those appearing on various selections include Brad Williams (Acoustic Guitar and producer of the recording); Cory Henry (of Snarky Puppy on Piano and Wurlitzer) Phil Lassiter (Trumpet 7); John Leadbetter (Flute), Zach Brock (Violin), Denitia Odigie (voice).

The performances of Sly5thAve’s compositions bring together memorable melodic lines, charged rhythm sections, intriguing horn voicing, thoughtful, often energetic solos and a marvelous display of dynamics throughout. The opening three-part “Suite For Ogbuefi” includes a wonderful solo from guitarist Yoshida that builds in intensity before the leader takes over with some forceful playing that takes the performance up a notch. With Henry’s marvelous playing on the Wurlitzer, and Foose as a solid anchor one can appreciate the imaginative coloring that Pederson adds here.

The title track displays some of the leader’s African roots in its theme and the rhythmic core. Leadbetter’s flute is added for musical coloring while Jennings takes the initial solo with some bright, interesting playing that suggests a definite familiarity with the likes of Woody Shaw and Freddie Hubbard. “Bach” opens with the leader playing unaccompanied before the ensemble enters playing very lightly under Brock’s hot, soaring violin that segues into some nice trumpet. “Security” has a lively, danceable groove and a strong piano solo. “Deme” features lovely voice and showcases Yoshida’s fleet playing.

“Road to Abuja” is a percussive introduction to “Abuja” with its mix of propulsive percussive rhythms and unison horn passages to frame the solos by Yoshida’s single note playing and conversational, and explosive interplay between Sly5thAve and Jennings. It is an understatement to say “Akuma” is an auspicious debut given the strong and memorable playing that will leave a strong impression on listeners. It is a marvelous and very contemporary recording.

Ron Weinstock



ANNIKA CHAMBERS & THE HOUSTON ALL STARS

Making My Mark

MONTROSE RECORDS

A bright new voice on the Houston Blues scene, Annika Chambers & The Houston All-Stars have an impressive debut album on Montrose Records, “Making My Mark.” The CD is co-produced by Montrose Records owner

/engineer Richard Cagle and bassist Larry Fulcher. Fulcher is best known as bassist for the Phantom Blues Band and Tony Braunagel is amongst those playing drums on this recording. Some of the musicians playing on various selections are trumpeter/arranger Darrell Leonard, drummer Samantha Banks, guitarists Brad Absher, Corey Stoot and David Carter, organist Barry Seelen, pianist Randy Walls, saxophonist/arranger Anthony Terry and backing singers Nicoya Polar and Sheree Howard.

Chambers as well as Dominique Fulcher (Larry’s Daughter) contributed five originals among the 12 tracks on this recording. There are interpretations of songs from such writers as Bobby Charles, Joe Sample, Steve Cropper & Eddie Floyd, Rose Marie McCoy & Charles Singleton and B.B. King. The presence she has as a singer is apparent on the opening number, “Move” (written by her, Dominique and Larry Fulcher) where she sings about her dreams with almost a rap-like phrasing at times, as she will sing a burst of words before holding some over a couple measures, as she also directs us to take steps to the front and shake our rumps. It’s a funky good performance.

I believe “Barnyard Blues” may have been a Phantom Blues Band number as Fulcher, Mike Finnigan and Johnny Lee Schell have credits along with Paul Lawrence Dunbar. It’s a fine shuffle with a solid organ solo and brash brass

behind Chambers full-throated singing. She turns the heat down with a more nuanced and relaxed delivery to begin Bobby Charles' "The Jealous Kind," which displays how she is able to build her intensity. There is also a choice saxophone solo on this track. Dominique Fulcher's "Down South" is a lovely ballad where Chambers sings a prayer about being "lost here down south," a stranger to herself and no one to tell. Dominique Fulcher adds a rap to Chambers vocal on Dominique's funky "That Feel Good" as she sings "give me another hit of that feel good, I know the feeling ain't gonna last but I never thought he would."

"Put It Where You Want It" is a solid rendition of a mid-tempo Crusaders number. Chambers also takes us to Memphis on a soulful duet with Barry Absher of the Cropper-Floyd classic "Love's Sweet Sensation. "It Hurts Me To My Heart" is a terrific performance of the McCoy-Singleton song that evokes some of the classic Atlantic recordings of Ruth Brown and Lavern Baker (Faye Adams had the original in 1954).

Her fervent rendition of King's "Let's Get Down To Business" concludes this excellent debut recording. Anika Chambers may possess a powerful voice, but she also is a marvelous singer whose timing, phrasing and sense of dynamics is quite impressive, and I am one of those who await more funky blues and soul from her in the future.

Ron Weinstock



PAUL MARINARO

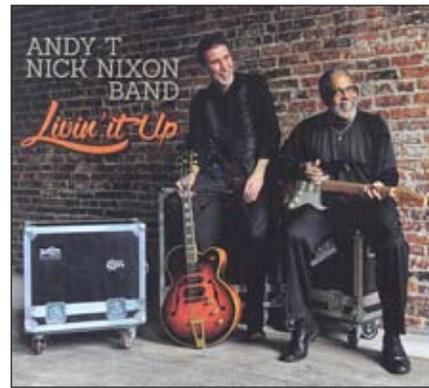
Without A Song
MYRTLE RECORDS

Possessed of the prerequisite pipes and chops of a classic jazz vocalist, Paul Marinaro here works them in a most tasteful and measured manner, cutting a very veteran figure for his debut release. The Chicago-based baritone never lets his undeniable technique overtake the song, permitting the lyrics- here a well-chosen assemblage of standards- to do their work.

Adding considerably to this set's success is Marinaro's accompaniment, which is consistently collaborative in character. His various trio and quartet lineups, in particular, display solid chemistry.

Standouts in a strong set list include "Devil May Care", "Everything Must Change" and the Cole Porter gem "I Get a Kick Out Of You".

Duane Verh



ANDY T - NICK NIXON BAND

Livin' It Up
DELTA GROOVE

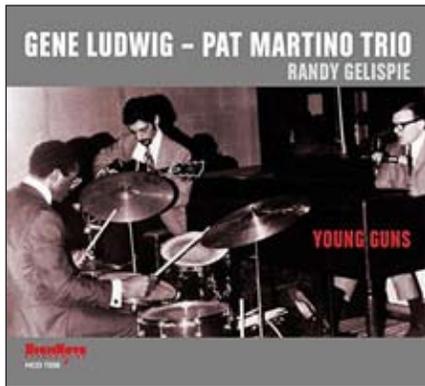
Nashville's Andy T - Nick Nixon Band impressed with their debut album "Drink Drank Drunk." The band led by guitarist Andy "T" Talamantez and James "Nick" Nixon impressed as I wrote "Andy T impresses with his fluidity, tone and taste while Nixon brings plenty of heart and soul to his nuanced vocals. Not simply an impressive debut, "Drink Drank Drunk" will have listeners wanting another dose of music from The Andy T - Nick Nixon Band."

Delta Groove has just issued a follow-up release, "Livin' It Up," which, like its predecessor, was produced by veteran guitarist Anson Funderburgh. Backing the pair on most of this are Sam Persons on bass, Larry Van Loon on keyboards and Jim Klinger on drums. Ron Jones adds saxophone to 8 selections while Dana Robbins is present on sax for 5. Christian Dozzler guests on harmonica on one selection while adding piano to four and Anson adds rhythm guitar to one track.

This is another first-rate blues recording with some choice, idiomatic originals and some select covers with the same crispness in Andy T's playing and the ensemble backing, while Nixon is at home whether handling the opening shuffle "Baby Right Now" with a crackling solo from Andy T; the lazy Jimmy Reed groove of "Best in Town" with Christian Dozzler adding some nice atmospheric harp; the title track (from Delbert McClinton and Gary Nicholson) with its Crescent City second line groove with another taut guitar solo; and Nixon's soulful ballad "Love at First Sight," where his vocal might suggest Percy Sledge to some, and Dana Jones takes a terrific sax solo.

Other delights include the reworking of a lesser-known T-Bone Walker number, "My Baby Is Now On My Mind" with Andy T suggesting T-Bone's sound without trying to sound like a clone; the instrumental "One Note Shuffle" by Van Loon on the Hammond B-3 with Andy T and Jones both adding short, hot solos; and "Back Down South" with Nixon singing nothing wrong about living up North but Down South is home, and if the blues took him away, its bringing him back where he belongs. While Nixon is consistently strong throughout, this may be his best vocal here.

“Livin’ It Up” will satisfy those who have been waiting for more by Andy T & Nick Nixon. Blues lovers not familiar with them are in for a treat with this excellent recording.
Ron Weinstock



GENE LUDWIG-PAT MARTINO TRIO

Young Guns
HIGHNOTE

This late sixties live recording featuring guitarist Pat Martino, organist Gene Ludwig and drummer Randy Gelispie has just found its way to the public arena, and it is quite a gem indeed.

Organ trios were quite the thing back then. Those of us who used to go out to experience them in clubs are certainly showing our age, but for any younger listeners who might question just what an organ trio is – they generally had just either a sax (usually tenor) OR guitar, with an organist and a drummer. The organ was the Hammond B-3, and its player “kicked bass” with the foot pedals, thus eliminating the need for a bass player. As with many other things these days, it is becoming a lost art.

Although this particular trio was rather short-lived, many played on for many years. Pat Martino worked with many organists back in the sixties and seventies, and recorded many memorable sides with Jack McDuff and Don Patterson, mostly on Prestige. He also recorded with numerous big names of the era, and released several albums under his own name on the Prestige and Muse labels. Martino was one of many guitarists who were influenced by the greats such as Wes Montgomery and Grant Green, but he took it to a different level. He had a unique tone, and was an incredibly fast and clean player, often blasting off long melodic machine gun blasts, even during a mid tempo, or even a rather slow song.

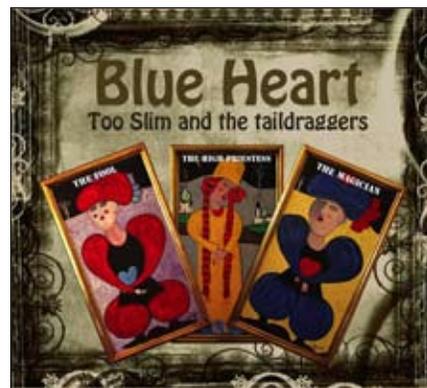
In 1980, Martino had a brain aneurysm, causing him to be unaware of much of his past, including playing the guitar. He actually had to re-learn how to play the instrument from listening to his own records. He had a long but good recovery and came back on the scene after about seven years sounding like he did before the tragedy happened.

This album showcases Martino in his early years and is a must-have for all his fans, as well as all who

are interested in straight-ahead jazz guitar. While the songs may have various tempos, Martino burns throughout, whether it be on fare such as “Watch What Happens,” the standards “Close Your Eyes” and “Who Can I Turn To?,” or Milt Jackson’s “Sam Sack,” Montgomery’s “Road Song” or Coltrane’s “Mr. PC.” And, after you get through these you can *really* burn some more along with the trio on Martino’s 12-minute original “Colossus.”

While Martino is the real star here, I must mention that Ludwig and Gelispie definitely shine throughout as well, helping to make this night in a Kentucky nightclub such a treat for so many of us over 25 years later, and for the first time at that. Hats off to HighNote’s Joe Fields for helping to bring us this recording, as well as so many others over the past four decades.

Bill Wahl



TOO SLIM & THE TAILDRAGGERS

Blue Heart
UNDERWORLD RECORDS

Veteran blues-rocker Tim “Too Slim” Langford, who relocated to Nashville in Fall 2012, has his first recording since moving to Music City, “Blue Heart” (Underworld Records). It was recorded in Nashville, Tennessee and produced by Tom Hambridge (Buddy Guy, George Thorogood, Joe Louis Walker) with current and former rhythm section members of Delbert McClinton’s band, who include Reese Wynans, Jimmy Hal Tom Hambridge, Rob McNelley, and Tommy MacDonald.

Too Slim’s music is centered around his whiskey-parched, graveling vocals and stinging blues-rock guitar backed by the driving rhythm sections. His vocals are similar to Omar Dykes although a bit more hoarse and less limber to these ears, but within a limited range he does display subtlety in his phrasing and the level volume within and between songs. This can be heard in the contrast between the opening “Wash My Hands” and the following “Minutes Seem Like Hours.” Certainly his insistent and scorching blues-rock guitar will appeal to many, but he displays more than simply power and Rob McNelley’s second guitar adds nice textures and accents (like at the end of “Minutes Seem Like Hours”).

Jimmy Hall adds some nice harmonica to the title

track, which is a very appealing blues with a tough groove and nice tremolo-laced guitar (from McNeley?), and a nice, cleanly played guitar solo. Halls takes a vocal on “Good To See You Smile Again,” with some organ from Wynans and strong guitar. One thing that stands out throughout is that Too Slim has a pretty good way of constructing a lyric and the material he has provided maintains interest with its variety and the emphatic, direct manner in which he performs.

This mix and the blues-roots that can be heard even when he rocks out the hardest explains his well-deserved appeal.

Ron Weinstock

This CD was released in 2013, but the review was misfiled, so we re running it at last. ~Ed



CHARLIE DENNARD

From Brazil to New Orleans
SELF-RELEASED

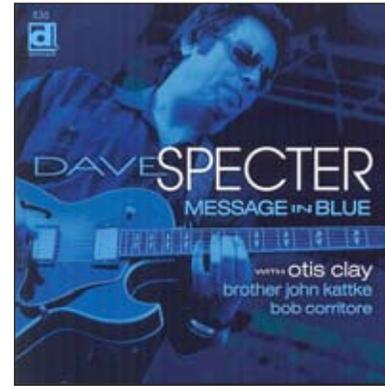
It’s possible the listener will hear destinations even beyond the two heralded in this album’s title. Keyboardist Dennard’s interpretations of works from several Brazilian composers- none necessarily a household name in the States- flavored with some New Orleans-styled arrangements, display within this fusion a wide spectrum of sounds and feelings.

Lineups vary on each track but the “Big Easy” slant favors settings with goodly sized horn sections. The tracks “Capoeira Mata Um” and “Quanto o Galo Cantar”, both bedecked with robust brass and solid second-line drumming, are the most literal expressions of this mix. Deeper emotional shades show elsewhere with the use of cello, flute and acoustic guitar and Dennard’s multiple keyboard work is key in the impressive variation found in this set.

That said, piano still sounds like his main axe, particularly when in ballad mode. *From Brazil to New Orleans’* is a tasteful and tasty set that grows more appealing with the next listen.

Duane Verh

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DAVE SPECTER

Message in Blue

DELMARK RECORDS

Lloyd Sachs’ notes for the new Delmark album by guitarist Dave Spector, “Message in Blue,” observes its tenth album as a leader with a mix of blues, soul and funk. Spector is supported by his band of Brother John Kattke on keyboards, Harlan Terson on bass and Marty Binder on drums, with appearances by Otis Clay on three vocals, and Bob Corritore adding harmonica on two selections. Horns are present on several selections as well. Kattke also sings on three selections to add variety to the performances here.

The opening “New West Side Stroll” is a tough instrumental shuffle that updates a composition he first waxed almost two decades ago. It is followed by two of the three Clay vocals including a riveting “Got To Find A Way,” and then a solid cover of “This Time I’m Gone For Good,” which Bobby Bland recorded for his “California Album.” I do prefer the late Johnny Adams’ vocal on this to that by Clay (not that it is poor by any means). In any event, Spector’s channeling of Otis Rush in his solo here is quite striking. The title track is a bluesy tone poem followed by “Chicago Style,” a lively shuffle with Kattke (no slouch as a singer) celebrating the Chicago blues scene with Spector playing quite forcefully and imaginatively. Clay handles the Wilson Pickett vocal on the Falcons’ classic “I Found a Love,” with Spector emulating Robert Ward’s distinctive guitar sound of the original.

“Funkified Outta Space” is a crisp instrumental with a rhythmic underpinning that reflects the influence of The Meters, while Kattke and Spector combine for a memorable cover of A Freddie King recording, “The Same Old Blues.” “The Stinger” is a Latin-tinged blues-rocker suggestive of Santana. More Latin-flavor can be heard on “The Specifyin’ Samba” with a nice tenor solo from John Brumbach. Corritore’s harmonica is right at home on “Jefferson Stomp” with a bit more of a down home flavor (and a tinge of Eddie Taylor in Spector’s playing here before Spector adds slide guitar. Spector says his tremolo guitar on the closing “Opus De Swamp” - another track that Corritore contributes his harp to.

Spector almost recorded a vocal but as he says “I sing with my guitar.” And his guitar certainly sings throughout, embellishing and enhancing the vocals heard here and taking us down on a West Side blues troll.

Ron Weinstock



CHRIS BIESTERFELDT

Urban Mandolin
SELF-PRODUCED

Mandolin is not a common instrument in jazz ensembles, and outside of the world of bluegrass or a Brazilian Choro Ensemble it is not a common lead instrument. Chris Biesterfeldt is known as a guitarist, but on his self-produced new recording, “Urban Mandolin,” he handles a variety of jazz and pop tunes leading a trio of mandolin, bass and drums.

On this recording he is accompanied by Adam Armstrong on upright bass and Eric Halvorson on drums on a fairly broad range of material including jazz classics from Eddie Harris (“Freedom Jazz Dance”), Jaco Pastorius (“Teen Town”), Chick Corea’s (“Armando’s Rhumba”), Thelonious Monk (“Bye-ya”), Wayne Shorter (“Witch Hunt”) and Jimmy Smith (“Back at the Chicken Shack”); pop classics like “I Can’t Make You Love Me,” and “God Only Knows”; Pixinguinha’s choro classic “Segura Ele”; and Frank Zappa’s “Rollo Interior” that closes this recording

A torrid take on Dizzy Gillespie’s “Bebop” opens this recording and immediately establishes how deft and commanding a player Biesterfeldt is with a fast, clean picking complemented by Armstrong and Halvorson’s lightly played drums.

The metallic (tinny) staccato sound of the mandolin lends these performances with a unique tone. There follows a relaxed rendition of Charlie Parker’s “Quasimodo” that displays exemplary interplay between the leader and Armstrong while Halvoson employs a light touch here.

The mandolin’s brittle, metallic tone may put off some listeners and the trio format perhaps does not work with every single number (“Freedom Jazz Dance” sounds a bit clunky), but his playing on “Bye-Ya” is exhilarating. Other high points include the exhilarating “Segura Ele,” a marvelous rendering of “God Only Knows” and the invention he brings in his improvisation to Shorter’s “Witch Hunt.” Biesterfeldt’s adventurous playing throughout “Urban Mandolin” merits careful and attentive listening. *Ron Weinstock*

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RONNIE EARL

Good News
STONY PLAIN

Ronnie Earl’s latest album, “Good News” (Stony Plain), certainly will be good news to the guitarist’s many fans. Earl is joined once again by The Broadcasters (Lorne Entress – drums, Dave Limina – keyboards and Jim Mouradian – bass), his band of over 25 years, to create a mostly instrumental CD. Also appearing is vocalist Diane Blue and guitarists Nicholas Tabarias and Zach Zunis.

As great a guitarist as Earl is, the presence of Blue’s vocals on several tracks certainly adds to the pleasures heard here. The Disc opens with the Memphis music inspired “I Met Her on That Train,” with some rockabilly

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tinged playing (a bit of Scotty Moore mixed with Floyd Murphy). Ms. Blue is on hand to sing Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come," with Earls' thoughtful playing and attention to tone very evident. His facility on the fretboard is matched by the clarity and restraint of his playing. Few can convey such deep feeling, as even evident on the jazzy "Time To Remember," with Limina's organ playing standing out.

Junior Wells is the source for "In the Wee Wee Hours" with another fine Diane Blue vocal and some playing from Earl that might suggest Buddy Guy (but with greater restraint than Guy would display today). Zach Zunis takes the first guitar solo here. It is followed by the infectious gospel-laced title track.

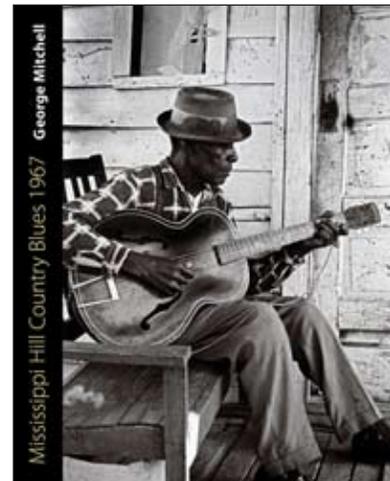
"Blues For Henry" is a low-down instrumental tribute to the late Hubert Sumlin with Limina getting greasy on the organ.

The closing track, "Running in Peace," has lyrics written by Ilana Katz, who was near the finish line of the Boston Marathon when the first bomb exploded on April 15, 2013, which Diane Blue movingly delivers with Earl and the Broadcasters providing a sober background as Earl really gets down and pulls out all the stops on the solo here. It is a moving end to another excellent recording by one of the leading guitarists in the blues today.

Ron Weinstock

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books



GEORGE MITCHELL

**Mississippi Hill Country Blues 1967
UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI**

In the Summer of 1967, George Mitchell made a trip to Mississippi looking for unrecorded blues singers. The trip was an historic one that indicated that there were a number of down home blues artists of considerable talent still performing older styles of blues at a very high level.

These were not the first recordings Mitchell had made, but in providing the initial recordings of R.L. Burnside as well as rediscovering Joe Calicott, who had recorded over 45 years earlier, Mitchell's recordings were revelatory. Arhoolie issued two albums from these recordings under the title of "Mississippi Delta Blues," although the recordings of R.L. Burnside and others might be better known as Mississippi Hill Country Blues, the rubric the music of Burnside, Junior Kimbrough, Jesse Mae Hemphill and others are known today. The trip also was the source for Mitchell's book "Blow My Blues Away."

In addition to documenting the music, through his camera Mitchell photographed these performers at home and with members of their family and community. The University Press of Mississippi has just published a terrific new book by Mitchell, "Mississippi Hill Country Blues 1967," which reproduces many wonderful photographs that Mitchell took along with his recollections from that trip and interviews with a number of the performers he met, including Mississippi Fred McDowell, Rosa Lee Hill and Otha Turner.

The pictures and words help us enter a world of house parties and picnics as we can imagine Johnny Woods on harmonica joining with Mississippi Fred McDowell, and, as Mitchell recalls, one is amazed by the fact they had not seen each other in 8 years at that time.

Then there is his story of recording Calicott, who

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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

had made a few 78s with Garfield Acres, and one under his own name and a trip to one of the Hill Country picnics in a chapter titled "Ain't No Picnic If You Ain't Got No Drums." We see R.L. Burnside playing guitar with a son or sons standing behind him. There are images of Joe Calicott playing his guitar on a porch and Fred McDowell reaching over Otha Turner to play the guitar several pictures of Rosa Lee Hill show the joy she had despite her poverty.

An interview with Otha Turner provides a backdrop on the Fife and Drum band traditions, but Turner himself turns out to be a fair guitarist. Turner is not the only one representative of this tradition as several images are of Napoleon Strickland who was fairly renown as a fife player.

There are interviews with Jesse Mae Hemphill (Brooks), Rosa Lee Hill and Ada Mae Anderson, all of who are related to the great Sid Hemphill, who Alan Lomax recorded for the Library of Congress in the early 1940s. In addition to providing insight to their lives and the conditions they lived under, they also provided information on this great Hill Country musician.

Jesse Mae Hemphill is the best known of the three with her marvelous recordings, but like Mitchell himself, one is particularly taken with Rosa Lee Hill who, as Mitchell says, could stand as an inspiration for all. Being as poor as anyone could be and being in the middle of nowhere... "That someone that poor could be

that spirited and that full of life. ..." Mitchell describes her as one of his favorite people and "Mississippi Hill Country Blues 1967" is dedicated to her.

There are brief biographies presented after the main body of this book, which includes brief descriptions of what happened to the subjects after 1967 and a brief consideration of the legacy of these artists. Even if viewed solely as a coffee table book of blues photography, this book would certainly be easy to recommend.

Inclusion of Mitchell's recollections and interviews which help us understand the world of these performers, make this one of those books that is essential for blues lovers.

Ron Weinstock

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