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Pennsylvania Blues Festival

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"Buffalonious"

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

Pennsylvania Blues Festival Celebrates 25 Years Of Pocono Blues

By Ron Weinstock

September 16, 17 & 18, 2016, blues returns to the Split Rock Resort in Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania for the Pennsylvania Blues Festival. Among the acts on the two stages at this year's Festival will be Buckwheat Zydeco, Zac Harmon, Ronnie Earl, Toronzo Cannon, The Delmark Chicago Blues Revue and Gaye Adegbalola & the Wild Rutz.

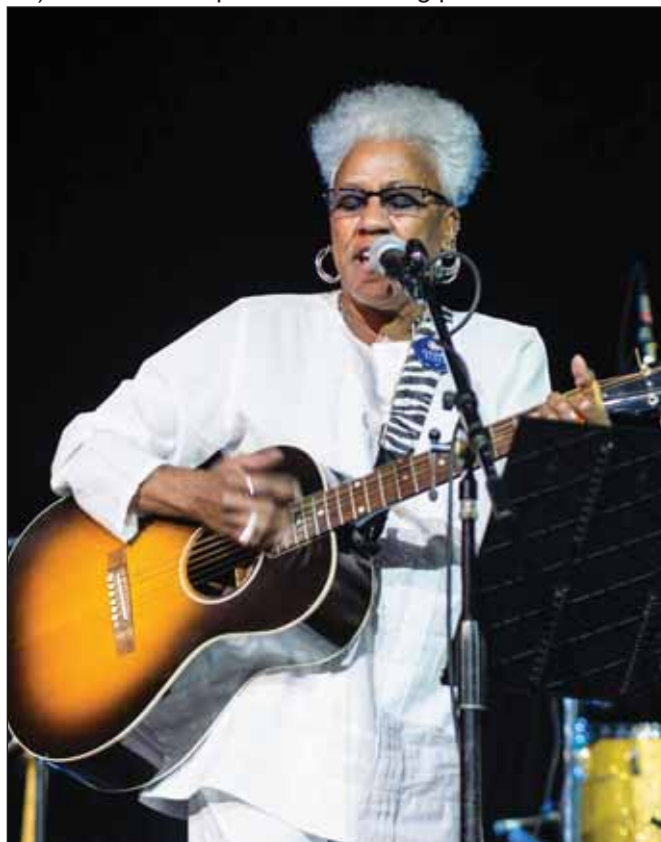
It was August 1 and 2 of 1992 when the Big Boulder Ski Resort hosted the very first Pocono Blues Festival with a lineup that consisted of Son Seals, Lonnie Brooks, Kenny Neal, Big Jack Johnson & the Oilers, Willie Kent & the Gents with Bonnie Lee, Johnny "Clyde" Copeland, Bobby Radcliffe, The Bob Margolin Blues Band, George "Mojo" Buford, The Clarence Spady Band, Queen Bee and the Blue Hornets, and the The Dukes of Destiny. I first attended the Pocono Blues Festival in 1994 for the third festival whose lineup included Johnny Clyde Copeland, Denise LaSalle, Carol Fran & Clarence Holliman, Larry McCray, Sugar Blue, Billy Boy Arnold with Bob Margolin, Long John Hunter, Honeyboy Edwards, Fruteland Jackson, Fenton Robinson and others.

For 19 years Big Boulder hosted what became known as the Blues Lover's Blues Festival. Most every significant blues act (many no longer with us) with the exception of B.B. King performed at the Festival including Buddy



Guy, Luther Allison, Guitar Shorty, Lowell Fulson, Little Milton, Otis Rush, Koko Taylor, Saffire-The Uppity Blues Women, Shemekia Copeland, Ruth Brown, Smokey Wilson, Mavis Staples, Jerry McCain, Eddie Clearwater, Trudy Lynn, Robert Lockwood Jr, Phillip Walker, Bobby Bland, Artie 'Blues Boy' White, Texas Johnnie Brown, Long John Hunter, Otis Clay, Irma Thomas, Marva Wright and many more.

After 19 Festivals, the owners of Big Boulder decided to make a change in the off-season activities and the Festival, rechristened the



Gaye Adegbalola



Kenny Neal

Pennsylvania Blues Festival, moved to Blue Mountain Ski Area for 4 years and presented such performers as Otis Clay, Shemekia Copeland, Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials, Magic Slim & The Teardrops, Kenny Neal, Bettye LaVette, Brooks Family Dynasty, Billy Branch & The Sons of Blues with Lurrie Bell, Demetria Taylor & Carlos Johnson, Joe Louis Walker, Teeny Tucker, Otis Taylor, Eugene Hideaway Bridges, Corey Harris, Bobby Rush, Ruthie Foster, Sista Monica, John Primer, Alexis P Suter, Guy Davis, Eddie & Vaan Shaw, James Cotton, Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters, Barbara Carr, Jarekus Singleton and many more. Then in 2015 the Festival moved to Split Rock with a line-up that included Shemekia Copeland, Lil' Ed & The Blues Imperials, Walter "Wolfman" Washington & the Roadmasters, John Nemeth, Victor Wainwright & the Wild Roots, Sugar Ray & the Bluetones, Selwyn Birchwood, Vaneese Thomas, and Dwayne Dopsie & the Zydeco Hellraisers.

This is an impressive history of performers that will be celebrated by this year's event. Friday night's line-up in the Split Rock Galleria Governor's Ballroom features the Mikey Junior Revue starring the marvelous harmonica player and his band and a number of blues performers from the Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey and Northern Delaware region. It should be quite an enjoyable early evening event for blues enthusiasts.

On Saturday the Festival gets into full swing. At 11:00 AM in the Galleria Governor's Ballroom, Ronnie Earl will offer a guitar master class (separate charge will apply). At 1:00PM, Slam Allen opens the Main Stage with his



Buckwheat Zydeco

highly entertaining set. The guitarist and vocalist fronted James Cotton's band for a number of years and on his own he puts on a terrific live show. Reviewing his album "Feel These Blues" I wrote "There is nothing fancy about Slam Allen with his rocking, B.B. King influenced guitar and his strong vocals. His vocals strike me as his greatest strength although he is no slouch as a guitarist." Up next on the main stage is Zac Harmon. Harmon, a former winner of the International Blues Challenge, certainly has established himself on the blues circuit, becoming a favorite attraction, especially on the Festival circuit, with his hot guitar, varied repertoire and gospel-soul rooted vocals.

Pianist Anthony Geraci may be best known for being with Sugar Ray & the Blue Tones, but last year he put together a wonderful album with the Boston Blues All Stars and they follow Zac Harmon on the main stage. Reviewing his Delta Groove release "50 Shades of Blue" I wrote "Anthony Geraci is a first-rate blues songwriter and a terrific keyboard player." I expect his live revue will certainly be as entertaining as that terrific recording. Geraci is followed by Kenny Neal who will bring us his own very personal style, rooted in the swamp blues of his father Rafal and the likes of Slim Harpo. A threat on guitar, lap steel and vocals, Kenny Neal always delivers strong deep blues.

Closing the Main Stage on Saturday will be the rollicking zydeco of Buckwheat Zydeco, who has been entertaining zydeco and blues audiences for nearly 50 years since he was on keyboards with Clifton Chenier.



Anthony Geraci

Arguably the greatest living performer of the creole musical idiom, he will certainly have the Split Rock audience up and dancing.

In the Tent Stage will be performances by the marvelous singer-guitarist Guy Davis along with Canada's Blackburn Brothers who will be joined for one set by Harrison Kennedy. Slam Allen will also perform a set in the Tent Stage. After the main festival acts conclude, there will be performances by Beareather Reddy and Zac Harmon in a special showcase at the Resort.

Sunday, September 18 opens with a blues brunch that features music from Gaye Adegbalola & the Wild Rutz. Gaye, a founding member of Saffire-The Uppity Blues Women, founded this vocal quartet (with occasional guitar and percussion accompaniment) that is focused on their marvelous vocals and harmonies. Their debut VizzTone album "Is It Still Good to Ya?" only hints at how wonderful this group is.

After the brunch folks can head to the Main Stage for the spectacular sacred steel of The Campbell Brothers who present the opening Sunday afternoon gospel blues set. They are followed by the Andy T-Nick Nixon Band bringing the solid guitar playing of Andy T and the strong vocals of Nick Nixon. About this Nashville based band, and their debut recording on Delta Groove, "Drink Drank Drunk," I wrote "Andy T impresses with his fluidity, tone and taste while Nixon brings plenty of heart and soul to his nuanced vocals." I am looking forward to finally hearing this band.



Slam Allen

Chicago takes over the main stage next with Toronzo Cannon, whose Alligator album "The Chicago Way" is getting much well-deserved praise. Cannon, who is a bus driver in Chicago, brings together his life experiences and what he observes to his powerful songs. After two terrific albums on Delmark, he signed with Alligator and about "The Chicago Way" I wrote, "As a songwriter, as well as a singer-guitarist, Toronzo Cannon brings grit and passion. His playing is varied ranging from blues-rock to jazzy flavored while his singing is robust resulting in the mostly compelling performances here. "The Chicago Way" is one of most striking recent new blues releases."

Following Cannon will be the Delmark Chicago Revue featuring The Mike Wheeler Band with Jimmy Burns & Peaches Staten. Wheeler is a wonderful singer-guitarist who brings in a deep dish of soul and funk to his blues. A veteran of Big James Montgomery and the Chicago Playboys, his 2013 Delmark debut "Self Made Man" was quite impressive and indicated a very distinctive talent. Appearing with Wheeler is the marvelous singer-guitarist Jimmy Burns who also mixes rhythm and blues with his Chicago (and delta) blues roots. Peaches Staten is a tough vocalist with influences from Koko Taylor, Mavis Staples and Etta James amongst others. She had a wonderful album on the short-lived Swississippi Records label that Mike Wheeler played on.

The Main Stage closes with Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters. Earl's career included stints in Sugar



Zac Harman

Ray & the Blue Notes, then replacing Duke Robillard in Roomful of Blues before his own solo career leading the Broadcasters. Among the most accomplished guitarists, Earl is not simply known as a virtuoso, but a player of impeccable taste, tone, nuance and imagination. Recently listening to some of the legendary Earl Hooker's club recordings, Earl was one of the few contemporary guitarists who evokes Hooker's style without copying or imitating. His most recent recording was a tribute to Otis Rush and Magic Sam, and his sterling playing on it similarly calls to mine their originals while coming out as all Ronnie Earl.

The Tent stage opens with Harrison Kennedy for the first of his two sets. Kennedy a former member of The chairman of the Board is a compelling singer and astute songwriter. Also performing will be singer saxophonist Vanessa Collier, who this writer has heard great things about, along with additional sets from The Campbell Brothers and the Andy T-Nick Nixon Band.

Michael Cloeren, who puts together the Festival, has certainly does it again with this sterling line-up. For more information on the Pennsylvania Blues Festival including

videos of the performers, ticket and lodging information, visit <http://www.pennsylvaniafestival.com>.

It should be noted that six weeks after the Pennsylvania Blues Festival, Split Rock will host the first Pennsylvania Music Festival. Also produced by Michael Cloeren, this festival brings a variety of performers from assorted musical genres including blues, roots rock, bluegrass and the like. Notable performers of interest to blues fans includes the zydeco of CJ Chenier & The Red Hot Louisiana Band, the riveting singing of Alexis Suter, and the blues-rock of Devon Allman and the Royal Southern Brotherhood. Other performers include the country roots rock of Girls, Guns and Glory, and roots-rock songwriter Paul Thorn. For more information on the Festival visit www.pamusicfestival.com

All photos © Ron Weinstock



Guy Davis

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Monterey Jazz Festival



Wayne Shorter ©Robert Ascroft

Headliners Include a Tribute to Quincy Jones, Wayne Shorter Quartet, Pat Metheny, Branford Marsalis Quartet with Kurt Elling, Gregory Porter, The Bad Plus with Joshua Redman, Terri Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project, Kamasi Washington, Maceo Parker, Cory Henry, Richard Bona, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Davina and the Vagabonds, and Many Others

Monterey, Calif - Single Day Arena and Grounds Tickets for the 59th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival, September 16-18 went on sale May 23. Tickets can be purchased online at montereyjazzfestival.org or by calling 888.248.6499.

The Festival features 110 performances from iconic and emerging jazz artists, educational events, conversations, and exhibits on eight stages, for 30 hours of live music spanning two days and three nights, accompanied by an array of 75 vendors selling international cuisine and merchandise on the oak-studded 20 acres of the Monterey County Fair & Event Center.

Terri Lyne Carrington will act as the 2016 Artist-In-Residence. Joshua Redman will be the 2016 Showcase Artist, appearing three times over the weekend with Still Dreamin', The Bad Plus, and with his Quartet. Wayne Shorter will act as the 2016 Commission Artist, and will debut his new piece The Unfolding in the Arena.

Single Day Arena Tickets are \$78 for Friday, September 16, and \$154 for Saturday or Sunday, September 17 or 18. Single Day Arena Tickets include a reserved seat to each of the 15 concerts on the Jimmy Lyons Stage in the Arena,



Cécile McLorin-Salvant ©Ron Weinstock

plus access to all activities on seven additional Grounds Stages.

2016's GRAMMY Award-winning Arena lineup on Friday, September 16 includes a Tribute to Quincy Jones: "The A&M Years" with Quincy Jones as an honored guest, with musical director Christian McBride, and conductor John Clayton, with James Carter, Dave Grusin, Paul Jackson, Jr., Sean Jones, Hubert Laws, Gregoire Maret, Valerie Simpson, and the Monterey Jazz Festival Orchestra, in addition to Richard Bona Mandekan Cubano, and Cécile McLorin Salvant.

The Saturday afternoon Arena lineup on September 17 includes Maceo Parker featuring the Ray Charles Orchestra and The Raelettes; Cory Henry and The Funk Apostles, and Davina and the Vagabonds.

The Saturday night Arena lineup features the Branford Marsalis Quartet featuring special guest Kurt Elling; Terri



John Clayton ©Ron Weinstock

Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project featuring Valerie Simpson and Lizz Wright; and The Bad Plus Joshua Redman.

The Sunday afternoon Arena lineup on September 18 includes Gregory Porter, Kamasi Washington; and the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra with Terri Lyne Carrington.

The Sunday night Arena lineup includes Pat Metheny with Antonio Sanchez, Linda Oh & Gwilym Simcock; Jacob Collier, and the Wayne Shorter Quartet premiering *The Unfolding*, featuring Danilo Perez, John Patitucci, and Brian Blade, with the Monterey Jazz Festival Wind Ensemble conducted by Nicole Paiment.

Single Day Grounds Tickets are \$47 (Friday) and \$57 (Saturday or Sunday) and offer access to seven Grounds stages and all activities. Student and military discounts are available.

Grounds activities include 95 events, conversations, films, and musical performances, with weekend highlights from Donny McCaslin Quartet, Christian McBride Trio, Bill Frisell; Banda Magda; Joey Alexander Trio; Toshiko Akiyoshi; Lew Tabackin featuring Randy Brecker; Troker; Billy Hart Quartet; Ibrahim Maalouf; Bria Skonberg; Dr. Lonnie Smith; KING; Stanley Cowell Trio; Kris Davis Trio; John Patitucci's Electric Guitar Quartet; Elena Pinderhughes; top bands from the 2016 Next Generation Jazz Festival, and many others. Moderated conversations include talks with Terri Lyne Carrington and Toshiko Akiyoshi; Donny McCaslin, and Quincy Jones with Clint Eastwood.

Also on sale are Single Day Premier Club hospitality



Official 2016 Poster ©Monterey Jazz Festival

passes, priced at \$75 (Friday) or \$125 (Saturday or Sunday). Benefits include a furnished setting offering closed-circuit Arena simulcasts, a hosted bar, complimentary food service and music, artist interviews, door-to-door service for the Hyatt, a merchandise store, and private restrooms. Arena or Grounds Ticket purchase is required.

The 10th Annual Jazz Legends Gala, held at the Inn at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, will honor Quincy Jones on Thursday, September 15, 2016. Hosted by Clint Eastwood, special performances at this beautiful location will feature the Joey Alexander Trio and the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra. Cost is \$290 per person. Proceeds from this event benefit Monterey Jazz Festival's jazz education programs. Contact 831.233.3715 for more information.

Information about the Arena and Grounds artists for the 59th Monterey Jazz Festival can be found on www.montereyjazzfestival.org.

Lineup for the 59th Monterey Jazz Festival, September 16-18, 2016

Friday, September 16

ARENA:

Jimmy Lyons Stage: Cécile McLorin Salvant; Richard Bona Mandekan Cubano, Tribute to Quincy Jones: "The A&M Years" with Quincy Jones as honored guest (Christian McBride, Musical Director, John Clayton, Conductor), with special guests James Carter, Dave Grusin, Paul Jackson, Jr., Sean Jones, Hubert Laws, Gregoire Maret, Valerie

GROUNDINGS:

Garden Stage: Mixcla +1 from Berklee College of Music; Alfredo Rodriguez Quartet; Bria Skonberg
Dizzy's Den: Still Dreamin': Joshua Redman, Ron Miles, Scott Colley, Brian Blade; Cécile McLorin Salvant
Night Club: Jamison Ross; Toshiko Akiyoshi Trio; Troker
Coffee House Gallery: Sullivan Fortner Trio (Three sets)
Courtyard Stage: James Francies on the Yamaha AvantGrand (Two sets)
Jazz Theater: Simulcasts from the Arena

Saturday, September 17

ARENA:

Jimmy Lyons Stage: Davina & The Vagabonds; Cory Henry & the Funk Apostles; Maceo Parker: Tribute to Ray Charles featuring the Ray Charles Orchestra & The Raellettes; The Bad Plus Joshua Redman; Terri Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project featuring Lizz Wright and Valerie Simpson; Branford Marsalis Quartet featuring Kurt Elling

GROUNDINGS:

Garden Stage: The Guitarsonists: Chris Cain, Daniel Castro & "Mighty" Mike Schermer; Davina & The Vagabonds; Cory Henry & the Funk Apostles; Joey Alexander Trio; Tony Lindsay
Dizzy's Den: Conversation with Quincy Jones; Larry Vuckovich's Vince Guaraldi Project; Ibrahim Maalouf; Somi; Christian McBride Trio
Night Club: Wellington Secondary Combo; American Music Program Pacific Crest Jazz Orchestra; 32nd Street Brass Band; Bop of the Bay; John Patitucci's Electric Guitar Quartet; Lew Tabackin Quartet featuring Randy Brecker; Billy Hart Quartet
Coffee House Gallery: Mixcla +1, from Berklee College of Music; Conversation with Toshiko Akiyoshi & Terri Lyne Carrington; James Francies Trio: JF3; Stanley Cowell Trio (Three sets)
Education Pavilion: Student Performances (All afternoon)
Courtyard Stage: James Francies on the Yamaha AvantGrand (Three sets)
Jazz Theater: Simulcasts from the Arena; Film: *Brownie Speaks: The Life, Music & Legacy of Clifford Brown*

Sunday, September 18

ARENA:

Jimmy Lyons Stage: Next Generation Jazz Orchestra with Terri Lyne Carrington; Kamasi Washington; Gregory Porter; Wayne Shorter Quartet; Jacob Collier; Pat Metheny with Antonio Sanchez, Linda Oh & Gwilym Simcock

GROUNDINGS:

Dizzy's Den: Claudia Villela with Vitor Gonçalves; DownBeat Blindfold Test with Christian McBride; Banda Magda; Donny McCaslin Quartet; Bill Frisell's Guitar in the Space Age; Joshua Redman Quartet
Garden Stage: California State University, Sacramento "C-Sus Voices"; University of Miami Frost School of Music Concert Jazz Band; Montclair Women's Big Band; Tommy Igoe's Groove Conspiracy Featuring Randy Brecker and Drew Zingg; Elena Pinderhughes; KING
Night Club: MJF High School Honor Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Valencia High School "Two N' Four"; LA County



Lizz Wright ©Jesse Kitt

High School for the Arts Vocal Jazz Ensemble; Las Vegas Academy Big Band; Folsom High School Big Band; Northgate High school Big Band; MJF High School All-Star Big Band; Ronnie Foster Trio; Dave Stryker Quartet featuring Eric Alexander and Jared Gold on organ; Dr. Lonnie Smith
Coffee House Gallery: SFJAZZ High School All-Stars Combo; University of Miami Frost School of Music Dafnis Prieto Artist Ensemble; Kris Davis Trio (Two sets)
Jazz Education Pavilion: Student Bands (All afternoon)
Courtyard Stage: James Francies on the Yamaha AvantGrand (Four sets)
Jazz Theater: Simulcasts from the Arena; Film: *Thomas Chapin, Night Bird Song: The Incandescent Life of a Jazz Great*

For more information visit www.montereyjazzfestival.org

MJF59 Partners include: AT&T, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; DownBeat, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Inns of Monterey, The Jazz Cruise, Jazziz, JazzTimes, Mission Linen, National Endowment for the Arts, North Coast Brewing Company, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Scheid Family Wines, SmoothJazz.com Global, Yamaha Drums, and Yamaha Pianos.

Monterey Jazz Festival Education programs are sponsored by: Arts Council for Monterey County, the Carmel, Pacific Grove and Monterey Rotary Clubs; Community Foundation for Monterey County, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, Harden Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Monterey County Gives, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Pebble Beach Company Foundation, Quest Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, William H. Donner Foundation, Bill Graham Supporting Foundation, Nancy Buck Ransom Foundation, Monterey Peninsula Volunteer Services, Yellow Brick Road Foundation, and the Upjohn California Fund.





AimLoan.com San Diego Blues Festival Presents Blues in a scenic waterfront park

By Ron Weinstock

Four-time Grammy-winning Los Lobos, Blues Hall of Famer Bobby Rush and the scintillating Nikki Hill are the featured artists at this year's AimLoan.com San Diego Blues Festival on Saturday, Sept. 10. The Festival Takes Place in Embarcadero Marina Park North in the downtown San Diego Waterfront. Also performing are the funky Watermelon Slim, guitar wizard Chris Cain, the double-barrel soul attack of the Bey Paule Band with Wee Willie Walker, the rambunctious Billy & Junior Watson and the hill country sounds of The Holla Pointe.

When the San Diego Blues Festival was founded in



Nikki Hill ©Ron Weinstock

2011, it had a simple mission to provide great blues music at an affordable price, and raise money to support the battle against hunger in our community. In the festival's first four years, our sponsors and our festival goers have helped contribute 20 tons of food and more than \$435,000 to help the Food Bank fight hunger in San Diego County. All proceeds benefit the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank.

This year's festival has an outstanding line-up headlined by the fabulous Los Lobos, arguably the best rock and roll band in existence with four Grammy's among other accolades. Bobby Rush, the Blues Hall of Famer will bring his folk funk and revue that has been entertaining audiences for five decades while Nikki Hill is one of the most electrifying roots and blues singers one will see.

The entire line-up brings together so many exciting performers. The Bey-Paule Band is a terrific soul-blues band led by guitarist Anthony Paule and vocalist Frank Bey who will be joined by another sensational soulful singer Wee Willie Walker. Then there is Watermelon Slim, who is a sensational roots and blues singer and songwriter, as well as the Billy Watson & Junior Watson that brings together the harmonica player with the legendary West Coast blues guitarist. Chris Cain has been singing and playing tough modern blues for several decades while Big Jon Atkinson is only in his twenties but just released a spectacular debut album with Bob Corritore on Delta Groove that sounds like it was recorded for Chess and Sun records in the 50s. Finally The Holla Pointe is built upon the foundation of the Mississippi Hills Country to which other elements are added.

For more information, including purchasing tickets on the San Diego Blues Festival, visit <http://www.sdbluesfest.com>



Bobby Rush ©Ron Weinstock

Second Annual Coltrane Day Music Festival Sat., July 23

Celebrating Community & Music with Live Performances, Music Workshops, Community Jams, Art, Food & More



Event at Heckscher Park, Huntington Village Will Feature Drumming Legend Roy Haynes, Randy Brecker (Brecker Bros.), Charles Neville (Neville Bros.), Michelle Coltrane, Melissa Aldana, and Others TBA

Huntington, NY – On Saturday, July 23rd 12 noon – 10:30 PM (Sunday, July 24 rain date), The Coltrane Home in Dix Hills in conjunction with the Town of Huntington Summer Arts Festival and the Huntington Arts Council will be staging an all-day, affordable, family-friendly festival of live music and music workshops in beautiful Heckscher Park, Huntington Village. “Building Community through Music” is this year’s theme as the event celebrates the legacies of music giants John and Alice Coltrane, who lived in Dix Hills. The Festival will host workshops, master-classes, community jams and live performances for all ages and levels. World class Live music performances, including jazz, funk, blues, hip-hop, gospel, electronic music and jamband will be featured, with top local music talent on display. Local arts and food are included this year along with many opportunities for young musicians to play with professionals. With the recent announcement that Tri-State Cadillac has stepped up as Title Sponsor for the event, other corporate sponsors and vendor booths will be available to the public as well.

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People may know about Coltrane’s transformative impact on the world of jazz, where he has achieved nearly god-like status. What most people don’t realize is the incredible and acknowledged influence John Coltrane has had on the non-jazz world. From rock, to pop and R&B, world music, rap and hip-hop, Coltrane’s influence has been tremendous. Here are just a few bands and musicians who have credited him with having been extremely influential: the Doors, Grateful Dead, Jefferson Starship, Carlos Santana, John McLaughlin, Eric Clapton, Bono and U2, Allman Brothers, Mos Def, Rakim, Gil Scott Heron, Common, Flying Lotus, Audioslave, the Byrds... the list is nearly endless. “When you think of the long solo for extended periods of personal expression, think Coltrane,” says Ron Stein, President of the Coltrane Home in Dix Hills.



Building on the success of the inaugural event in 2015, the second annual Coltrane Day Music Festival will raise funds for the restoration and transformation of the home into a cultural center and park and support ongoing and expanded education and outreach programming focused on empowering young people and fostering creativity. This is consistent with the late Alice Coltrane’s stated goal for the Home, to “Inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in the making of music and the creative process.”

The significance of the Home as the residence of not one but two great African American artists and furthering the Coltrane Legacy cannot be overstated – music which impacted music lovers worldwide and inspired musicians across music genres and cultures, including rock, hip-hop, classical, and Indian and African artists.

The “Friends of the Coltrane Home” -- aka “The Coltrane Home in Dix Hills” -- hopes that this event can be a boon to the region’s awareness of the Coltranes’ legacy and furthering the organization’s goals. Last year’s event celebrated the 50th anniversary of the release of “A Love Supreme” – John Coltrane’s iconic masterpiece composed at the home. According to Stein, “This year’s theme -- “Building Community Through Music” – reminds us that nothing brings people together and connects us like music. Creating an event where people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy listening, participating, and developing an appreciation

for the incredible gifts the Coltranes have left us is a special opportunity anyone who loves music shouldn't miss."

The Day's Events:

The Coltrane Day Music Festival offers something for everyone, including jazz, funk, blues, electronic, hip-hop, gospel and more with a tremendous lineup of headline talent. Featured artists include jazz and funk trumpet giant Randy Brecker (of Brecker Brothers fame), Charles Neville (Neville Brothers) who will bring his New Orleans sound into town, Firey String Sistas! featuring Nioka Workman and Mala Waldron- both daughters of jazz giants (bassist Reggie Workman and pianist Mal Waldron) who performed and recorded with John Coltrane, award-winning Downbeat baritone sax winner Gary Smulyan, sax phenom Melissa Aldana and jazz vocalist Michelle Coltrane (daughter of John and Alice Coltrane). The day culminates with jazz drumming legend Roy Haynes – who played and recorded with John Coltrane – and his Fountain of Youth Band (as part of the Summer Arts Festival).

While headline performers continue to be announced, highlighted local bands will also be on display including jam band The Electrix, with music to include gospel and more.

The workshops and community jams, huge successes at last year's event, are sure to be highpoints once again as musicians, young and old get to sit in with peers and professionals in a supportive environment. Workshops for a wide range of ages and skills will be available, including funk, blues, hip-hop, electronic music, songwriting, with the Coltrane Home's Legacy Education Project workshops in percussion and music improvisation in full swing as well. Community Jams – enormously popular last year – are coming back this year in jazz, funk, and blues. Coaches will also be available offering one-on-one assistance to aspiring musicians. Additional information will be announced soon and pre-registration for workshops is strongly encouraged.

Full List of Workshops Offered:

- Percussion I, II
- Music Improv I, II, III
- Hip-hop/Rap
- Electronic Music
- Songwriting
- Improvisation Master Class
- Girls - Only Music Improv (w/ Nioka Workman & Mala Waldron)
- Funk
- Blues
- Vocal w/Michelle Coltrane

Community Jams:

- Funk
- Blues
- Jazz

Said Stein, "Kids were telling me last year that this was one of the best days of their lives. Other older folks were telling me this was better than Woodstock. The smiles last year were unbelievable!"

Building on last year, local performers and members of high school and college bands will also take the stage, as a special stage is being set up to highlight local music

talent. The organization is hoping that this is an element that will be greatly expanded. "There is so much incredible local music talent here just crying for an opportunity to be heard. We need to help that along," says Stein.

In celebration of Alice Coltrane's impact as an accomplished and highly influential female jazz and Eastern spiritual music artist, a commitment to encouraging and supporting women instrumentalists, composers and improvisers is an integral part of both Coltrane Day 2016 and the mission of the Coltrane Home. Accordingly, the day will feature women artists in multiple settings including a women's musical collective performance and a workshop geared towards female music students of all ages. A women-only headline ensemble is soon-to-be announced.

This year's event also offers other family-friendly amenities. Food vendors will be offering a variety of food and beverage items, an artist booth (working with the Long Island Arts Alliance), highlighting the creative work of local arts will provide a new and exciting area of interest. Artists of different levels will also be drawing and painting during the day. Adding to the attractions will be sponsor booths, and hangout areas where musicians can jam and work with coaches in the beautiful Heckscher Park setting.

Again... Be sure to join in the celebration as the Second Annual Coltrane Day Music Festival kicks off Saturday, July 23rd 12 noon – 10:30 PM (Sunday, July 24th rain date) at Heckscher Park, 100 Main Street, Huntington, NY 11743! Admission: Under 18, free; adults - \$10 (requested donation). VIP packages available.

www.thecoltranehome.org

www.facebook.com/coltranehome

About The Coltrane Home:

Fifty years ago, Coltrane's opus work, "A Love Supreme", considered by many music enthusiasts and jazz critics to be among the most influential pieces of music of the 20th century, was composed at their Dix Hills home. The Coltranes moved into the Home in 1964. (After John's passing in 1967, Alice sold the Home in 1973 and moved to Los Angeles.) The Home was slated for demolition until jazz enthusiast and Dix Hills resident Steven Fulgoni helped publicize the significance of the property. In 2004 an outpouring of support from around the world, including letters from Michael Brecker, Herbie Hancock, and many others persuaded the Town of Huntington to purchase the property and convert the site into a park. The Home was placed in the hands of "The Friends of the Coltrane Home in Dix Hills" – aka "The Coltrane Home in Dix Hills".

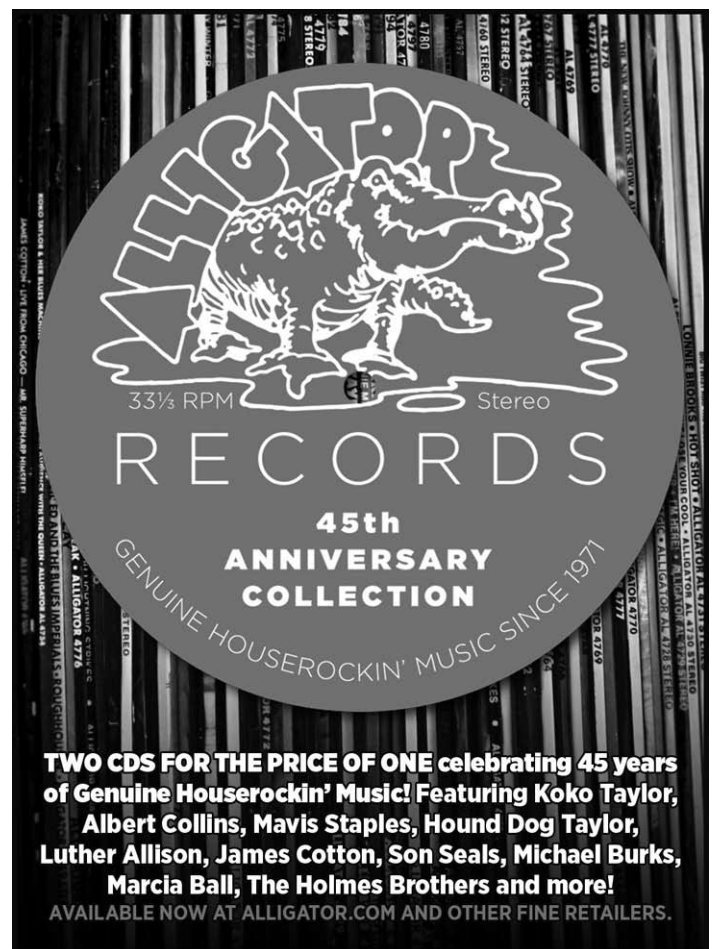
According to Stein, saving and restoring the Home is the right thing to do. "John Coltrane is revered as a music god across all music genres, generations and around the globe. It's as if Beethoven had composed his Ninth Symphony right here on Long Island. People around the world will recognize Dix Hills, Huntington and Long Island as the Home of John Coltrane. This place is a Long Island gem." Continues Stein, "His legacy is more than his music. His desire to use music as a force for good, his embracing of diversity, his kindness, and his work ethic and commitment to excellence set an inspirational model for all of us."

The Home is also a national gem. In 2011, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Home as one of the “Eleven-most Endangered Properties” in the United States, a designation only given to properties deemed to have critical cultural importance. Since that time, the “Friends” have made many improvements to stabilize and repair the Home, but much more needs to be done. The Coltrane Day Event will provide an opportunity for the Home to announce a major capital campaign to create a Cultural Center on the beautiful site.

The dual mission. The Coltrane Home has a dual mission: a) restore the Dix Hills Home and create a state-of-the art museum and inspirational learning and cultural center at the site, along with a beautiful park environment, and b) develop its Legacy Education Project to help encourage young people to engage in the creative music making process, and improve communication and life skills. The theme of the program is “Music for Life”.

2016 also marks the 51th anniversary of the Town of Huntington and the Huntington Arts Council’s Summer Arts Festival, and is testament to the importance of Huntington’s commitment to arts and music. The Huntington Arts Council is assisting The Coltrane Home in Dix Hills to present the Music Festival. The day’s program is also partially funded by a Suffolk County Community Arts grant from the Department of Economic Development and Planning.

The Coltrane Home in Dix Hills hopes to attract all members of the Long Island community and beyond to this event. As Alice Coltrane has intimated in the past, this is about bringing everyone together to make, and enjoy music.



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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 riffed



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

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.

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RICARDO BACELAR

Concerto Para Moviola **BACELAR PRODUÇÕES**

This new album by the Brazilian pianist, composer, and arranger Ricardo Bacelar, puts jazz fusion of the 1970s and 1980s in the spotlight as it documents a performance specially produced for the traditional Guaramiranga Jazz and Blues Festival, held annually in Guaramiranga, Brazil, during the renowned Carnival celebration. Recorded at the Via Sul Theatre, “Concerto para Moviola” showcases Bacelar’s deep fascination with fusion from that era, as he is heard on a blend of analog synthesizers, Brazilian music, and acoustic piano with his band that included guitar, saxophones and flute, violin along with a rhythm section and percussion. Mixed in are classics from the jazz-fusion sphere from Joe Zawinul, Pat Metheny and Bob Mintzer of the Yellowjackets, several jazz standards from Benny Golson and Horace Silver, along with several Brazilian gems from Jobim, Egberto Gismonti and Ivans Lins and several original compositions from the leader.

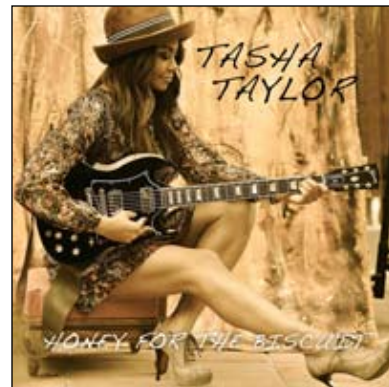
It’s a pretty varied and lively program and Bacelar and his ensemble transverse his brief lively warm-up number “Cordillera,” which leads into a driving rendition of the Weather Report classic “Birdland.” Benny Golson’s classic “Killer Joe” employs Quincy Jones’ arrangement and receives a funky reworking with Marcio Resende ripping a hot tenor sax solo. There is a dreamy feel to the treatment of Metheny’s “So May It Secretly Begin,” which is followed by the strident Mintzer composed “March Majestic,” with some bluesy tenor followed by the soft fusion take on Michel Legrand’s “The Windmills of Your Mind,” with Resende almost whispering on the sax while Marcus Vinicius Cardoso’s violin is quite striking, and is followed by an intriguing “Senor Blues,” with percolating percussion on an

adaptation of David Sanborn’s arrangement.

“Moviola” is a lovely original named after a cinema editing machine and has a lovely waltz-like feel. Several Brazilian classics include the somber rendition of the Buarque-Jobim “Sabiá”; the lovely Gismonti-Carneiro composition “Palhaço,” with lovely violin as well as piano; the breezy “Setembro” from Ivan Lins/Vitor Martins/Gilson Peranzetta; and “Água de Beber,” one of the greatest of all of Jobim’s songs (co-written with Vinicius de Moraes) with marvelous flute and violin along with the crisp, bouncy ensemble playing. Bacelar’s “Apartheid Blues” is a nice blues interpretation with guitarist Ronaldo Pessoa that takes off on a blues-rock solo that suggests John Scofield before Bacelar adds his own jazzy take on the blues.

Chick Corea influenced Bacelar, and an energetic take on Corea’s “Blues Miles” closes this document of one night’s performance with Bacelar on electric piano and solos from Resende and Pessoa. It concludes a live recording mixing a variety of material with a certain freshness in approach and performance.

Ron Weinstock



TASHA TAYLOR

Honey For The Biscuit **RUF RECORDS**

Given the fact that much of the Ruf Records catalog is oriented towards blues-rock, one is very surprised by the label’s new release by Tasha Taylor, “Honey For The Biscuit,” a record that is in the soul-blues vein. Taylor, the daughter of the legendary Johnnie Taylor, produced this recording and wrote all the songs (a few in collaboration with Tom Hambridge and/or Richard Fleming). Tasha (Vocals, guitar, percussion), was joined in the studio by Nathan Watts (bass), John Notto (guitar), Jon Taylor (guitar), Don Wyatt (piano/organ), Munjungo Jackson (percussion) with the following on drums; Gerry Brown, Ronald Bruner, and Stanley Randolph along with a full brass section with Jamelle Williams, Matthew DeMeritt, and Lemar Buillary. There are special guest appearances from Keb’ Mo, Robert Randolph, Samantha Fish and Tommy Castro.

A big influence was her father. “He was an inspiration and a special talent.” “I remember being on the road with my dad and if I was worn-out or sick, he’d say, ‘You don’t have to sing if you don’t feel good – or

you can be a trouper.' I guess I always choose to be a trouper." About the music on this, her third album, Tasha says "I always bring a soul element, and this record also has a touch of Nashville, which was a new thing for me to explore. ...and overall this record has more of my blues side exposed, from subject matter to musicianship. It also inspires some dancing, so be ready for that!"

Tasha sings with a voice that is soulful, yet soothing as honey as she launches into a solid dance groove with full brassy horns backing her vocal on "Feels So Good" when a relationship is over, and followed by "Wedding Bells," set against a Stax type backing with an insistent groove as she keeps hearing wedding bells yet wondering when they will be for her, while guitar and tenor sax helps frame the vocal. Keb' Mo adds backing vocal to "Family Tree," with a loping groove and a vocal plea for a relationship to grow.

"One and Only" is a terrific soul ballad that evokes classic Otis Redding in the manner of the performance and Taylor's singing. Robert Randolph's stinging lap steel enlivens Taylor's story telling on "Little Miss Suzie," while "How Long" is a rocker where she sings about this gentleman "how long are you gonna wait, if you wait to long, you just might be too late. A hint of reggae is present on "That Man," as she sings about dancing too slow and if Tasha does it wrong, he'll be the first to let her know. Samantha Fish guests on "Leave That Dog Along," adding her guitar (including a fiery guitar solo) and supporting vocal on this blues.

Tasha Taylor's vocals are like "Honey on a Biscuit." It says so much as her as a vocalist and producer of this remarkable recording that the guests here are simply seasoning to the robust and soulful musical stew here. Certainly this is a name that we will be hearing much more of.

Ron Weinstock



HECTOR MARTIGNON'S BANDA GRANDE

The Big Band Theory
ZOHU MUSIC

As Hector Martignon writes "Should you be insane enough to want to start a Big Band.... do it in New York! ... It was at that veteran of all venerable old Manhattan venues, the Nuyorican Poets Cafe in the Lower East Side, where my flirts with the Big Band format became a love affair, with all its challenges and intricacies.

Starting off as an experimental workshop, with personnel, compositions and arrangements varying every week, some suitable for the dance needs of the crowd and some suitable for a full concert, Hector Martignon's Banda Grande slowly but surely came of age."

"The 20 or so instrumentalists provides a composer and arranger with a wide palette of musical colors and styles which are explored here, 'from the Baroque sinfonia concertante, visiting the inquiring language of the sixties' and seventies' Jazz, to the Brazilian eccentricities of a Hermeto Pascoal, adding, of course, my own honest attempts at composing and arranging." Budgetary and space issues forced him "to divide the recording into four sessions, each of which left (almost) untouched: 1. rhythm section plus some soloists, 2. horns, 3. strings and 4. some solo overdubs."

The breath of his musical ambitions is heard early on in the opening "Hell's Kitchen Sarabande," with its contrasting musical colors set against a Latin-infused funky groove that celebrates Hell's Kitchen's strangely alluring decay before it became an extension of the touristy Times Square. There is marvelous alto sax (Alex Han?) heard here set against a surging background, followed by Andy Hunt's gruff but melodic trombone. The salsa flavored "99 Macdougall Street" was inspired by a year living on that Village street and was written while a member of Ray Barretto's New World Spirit. The leader's piano, Samuel Torres's percussion and Christos Rafalides's vibraphone, along with David De Jesus' hard bop styled alto sax stand out on this multi-layered performance that shifts from salsa to straight hard bop.

Martignon's creation of interesting instrumental voicings is also displayed on the rendition of the bossa standard of Bruno Martino, "Estate," with the leader playing accordion along with Christos Rafalides's vibraphone underpinning Chris Washburne's trombone along with tenor sax by Chelsea Baratz, with the leader's arrangement providing a swirling setting for the strong solo statements and the fresh take on this classic. This lively rendition is followed by songs inspired by his stay in Germany and the Christmas markets there. Groups of trombones playing Christmas songs there inspired "Trombone Chorale with its integration of a string quartet with the big band sonorities and all the four members of the trombone section are spotlighted. Similarly, bridging the classical and jazz worlds is a standard of European Sacred Music, "Erbarme Dich," one of the most haunting Arias (No. 47) out of the St. Matthew Passion by J.S. Bach, with an alto vocal by Brenda Feliciano.

A playful rendition of Bill Evans' "Interplay" has muted trumpets while Enrique Fernández' baritone helps anchor the performance with solos from Chelsea Baratz on tenor sax, John Benitez on bass, Vince Cherico on drums and Samuel Torres on congas and maracas. Martignon observes "Nostalgias del Futuro is the first movement of a "Concerto for Harp and Orchestra" I wrote for my fellow Colombian and harp

virtuoso Edmar Castañeda.” This also showcases his deftness in arranging strings in a big band context and avoiding a syrupy tone. “Maestra” was the first composition of Martignon for a big band and this Cumbia has Martin Vejarano on the indigenous Gaita (a sort of flute with reeds).

The closing “The Fruit Vendor’s Last Dream” was inspired by the fruit vendor who immolated himself on January 4, 2011, protesting against the corruption and abuse of power exercised by the authorities in Tunisia, giving rise to the Arab Spring. This performance has a stately quality with the centerpiece being a moving solo from bassist Benitez. It serves as a coda to a marvelous big band recording that will intrigue and fascinate listeners who will discover new delights with repeated listening.

Ron Weinstock



ALLIGATOR RECORDS 45TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION ALLIGATOR RECORDS 2-CD SET

It has been 5 years since Alligator Records produced its last label retrospective/sampler, so now it has issued the two-disc “Alligator Records 45th Anniversary Collection” that allows Bruce Iglauer to mix some of the recordings from the label’s history with tracks from more recent recordings. So a typical driving rocker from a 2008 Lil’ Ed & the Blues Imperials release is followed by some searing Son Seals from his 1973 debut recording.

Rather than go through every artist and track, let me say that there is plenty of fine music here, even if some of the performances are not to my taste. Listening to Shemekia Copeland’s rendition of her father’s “Devil’s Hand,” one is impressed by the freshness of her rendition, and roots artist JJ Grey and Mofro is one of the more compelling artists Alligator has promoted over the past decade or so. It certainly is a treat to hear fresh new (not necessarily young) voices such as Toronzo Cannon, Jarekus Singleton and Selwyn Birchwood, along with the bluesy roots of Moreland & Arbuckle. Then one has vintage Koko Taylor doing “Voodoo Woman” from her first Alligator album along with Jimmy Johnson’s “Your Turn to Cry from the “Living Chicago Blues” series.

The rockabilly of Lee Rocker is mixed in with the

roadhouse blues-country of Delbert McClinton and the rollicking Gulf Coast boogie of Marcia Ball. And it certainly is a treat to listen to A.C. reed with Bonnie Raitt guesting, along with some sizzling live Luther Allison and the gospel of Mavis Staples and the Holmes Brothers. Both Guitar Shorty and Joe Louis Walker have been prominent relatively recent additions to Alligator’s catalog although I would suggest that these are not the best recordings of their careers. Of course let’s not forget the likes of Billy Boy Arnold, Lazy Lester and Charlie Musselwhite.

Bruce Iglauer provides both an overview on the label and all the performances included. With about two and half hours of music among the 37 performances on these two-discs, it is priced as if it was a single disc so it represents good value along with the good music.

Ron Weinstock



CYRUS CHESTNUT Natural Essence HIGHNOTE RECORDS

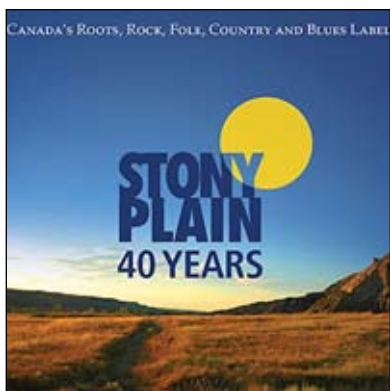
“Natural Essence” is the latest recording from pianist Cyrus Chestnut, and with bassist Buster Williams and drummer Lenny White is another reason to regard Chestnut not simply as one of the most formidable pianists in a technical sense, but one of the most imaginative and compelling jazz musicians of today. As Steve Futterman observes in the liner notes, “Chestnut has consistently shown himself as an improviser of rare ingenuity and grace ... [yet distinguished from other gifted pianists by] ... the sheer pleasure that radiates from all he plays.”

The ebullience that emanates from his playing is immediately evident on the opening interpretation of Joe Henderson’s “Mamacita,” which also displays the energy and drive offered by Williams and White, which is followed by a swinging reworking of “It Could Happen To You.” Four of the nine performances are originals including two from the leader, and one each by Williams and White. Chestnut’s “Faith Amongst The Unknown” has a spiritual underpinning anchored by Williams’ ostinato, while his other original “I Remember” has a definite charm about it. White contributed a lovely ballad “Dedication,” where Chestnut’s impeccable touch and sense of dynamics is mesmerizing with White’s use of brushes adding to the performance, while Williams’

"Toku-Do" is a spirited, perky performance.

Chestnut, Williams and White bring a fresh approach with the lively rendition of "I Cover The Waterfront," while the extended treatment of "My Romance" reflects attention to touch and tonal qualities and his orchestral approach to the piano on a hauntingly beautiful performance. This recoding closes with the trio taking off on the Gigi Gryce classic "Minority," a hard bop performance of irresistible drive and swing.

"Natural Essence" is a superb recording that provides more evidence of Cyrus Chestnut's stature of one of today's premier jazz pianists. **Ron Weinstock**



40 YEARS OF STONY PLAIN STONY PLAIN RECORDS 3-CD SET

Alligator Records is not the only independent label to issue a recent anthology celebrating its catalog. "40 Years of Stony Plain" is the latest installment in such compilations from the Canadian label, apparently the oldest independent Canadian record company still with the same ownership. Stony Plain is much more than a blues label, although love of blues and jazz is at the core of Holger Petersen who has also hosted blues radio programs for nearly fifty years, helped found the Edmonton Folk Festival and so much more. The Stony Plain catalog spans folk and roots to jazz and blues and has issued 15 albums from Canadian Country Icon Ian Tyson (formerly of Ian & Sylvia) as well as 20 Duke Robillard releases along with over a half dozen he produced with other artists, eight CDs and one DVD by Ronnie Earl and six releases from Eric Bibb. Richard Flohil provides an overview of Stony Plain including excerpts from his notes to earlier compilations as well as song notes in the enclosed booklet.

This celebration of the label has three discs. The first is entitled "Singers, Songwriters and much more" and includes performances from, amongst others, Colin Linden, Spirit of the West, Doug Sahm, Harry Manx and Kevin Breit, Emmylou Harris, New Guitar Summit, Rodney Crowell, Ian Tyson, Jennifer Warnes, Steve Earl and Eric Bibb featuring Taj Mahal, The Blind Boys of Alabama and Ruthie Foster. Highlights on this disc include is the acerbic roots-rock of Linden's "No More Cheap Wine"; the Irish flavored "The Crawl" from Spirit of the West; an unusual folky Doug Sahm performance; the atmospheric reworked blues of Manx and Breit, "Do

Not Stand at My Grave and Weep"; the revival of an Elvis Presley Arthur Crud-up cover by James Burton, Albert Lee, Amos Garrett, and David Wilcox; a hauntingly beautiful Emmylou Harris performance; Duke Robillard, Jay Geils and Gerry Beaudoin recorded a lightly swinging "Flying Home" as part of New Guitar Summit; the traditional country of Ian Tyson's "Cottonwood Canyon" and Tim Hus' "Wild Rose Waltz," and the Eric Bibb led gospel "Needed Time."

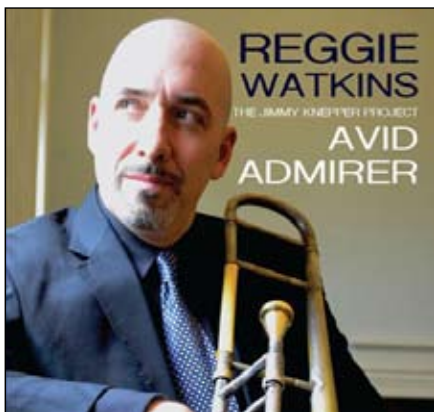
The second disc brings "Blues, R&B, Gospel, Swing, Jazz and even more," with performances by the likes of Kenny 'Blues Boss' Wayne, Joe Louis Walker, Rosco Gordon, Ronnie Earl & the Broadcasters, Maria Muldaur with Taj Mahal, MonkeyJunk, Jay McShann, Jeff Healey, Billy Boy Arnold, Ruthie Foster, Sonny Rhodes and King Biscuit Boy. There is a rollicking "Bankrupted Baby" by the Blues Boss from his most recent recording; Joe Louis Walker's revival of a swamp rockabilly number "Eyes Like a Cat"; late Rosco Gordon and Jay McShann (both from Duke Robillard produced sessions I believe); Ronnie Earl's revival of Otis Rush's "It Takes Time" with vocalist Michael Leadbitter from his latest album; Muldaur & Taj doing an impassioned take of Blind Willie Johnson's "Soul of the Man"; Jeff Healey's amusing swing era jive of "Hong Kong Blues"; a terrific Billy Boy Arnold Chicago blues; Ruthie Foster's excellent Memphis Minnie interpretation from Stony Plain's Memphis Minnie tribute album; and the late King Biscuit Boy's Louis Jordan cover. There are also acoustic blues interpretations from Rory Block and Big Dave McLean on this.

The third disc contains "Rarities and Previously Unreleased Material" starting with a couple of Duke Robillard numbers including a Smiley Lewis cover; two tracks from Eric Bibb including a hauntingly beautiful "Wayfaring Stranger"; live performances by Maria Muldaur of songs from Memphis Minnie and Reverend Gary Davis; a lively acoustic guitar instrumental blues by David Wilcox; Colin Linden and Doc MacLean backing the legendary Sam Chatmon on two songs from the long defunct Flying Fish catalog; two Bob Carpenter folk numbers and a closing instrumental by Shakey 'Walter' Horton backed by Hot Cottage. The inclusion of these rare selections enhance the already considerable value of compilations such as this one.

Ron Weinstock

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REGGIE WATKINS
Avid Admirer
The Jimmy Knepper Project
BYNK RECORDS

When it comes to jazz trombone, thinking of players who are still alive who I would like to see in a club I can only come up with a handful - Julian Priester, Clifton Anderson, Curtis Fuller, Wycliff Gordon, Steve Turre, Slide Hampton, Delfeayo Marsalis and Reggie Watkins. Watkins is not as well-known as the others on my list, but he is also the youngest. I have seen some of them over the years, including Turre a few times at festivals, Anderson several times with Sonny Rollins and Watkins when he was in Maynard Ferguson's band. Now Reggie Watkins has a brand new CD out titled "Avid Admirer," which is a fine tribute to trombonist Jimmy Knepper and is due July 13.

Watkins had long been an admirer of Jimmy Knepper, who was also in Ferguson's band for a while decades before him. Knepper is probably best known for his work with Mingus and the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra and he also worked with Gil Evans, George Adams & Dannie Richmond and many others. He also had many albums of his own on various labels dating back to 1957.

The two trombonists met at a Ferguson concert just before Knepper passed on in 2003. A chain of events followed which resulted in Knepper's daughter donating her father's instruments to Watkins. These included his "baby" - a Bach Stradivarius 36 trombone. So it is only fitting that Watkins would release an album as a tribute to him, and here we are. Of the nine songs here, eight of them are Knepper compositions, and we find out right off the bat how good a composer he was with the swinging "Figment Fragment." The non-Knepper song is the beautiful closing ballad "Goodbye," written by Gordon Jenkins, which Jimmy loved playing. The program of swingers at various tempos, blues and ballads was well chosen, consisting of songs Knepper played and/or recorded over the years.

Watkins' band for this album consists of Matt Parker on tenor and soprano saxes, Orrin Evans or Tuomo Uusitalo on piano, Steve Whipple on bass and Reggie Quinerly on drums and, together with the leader, they have come up with a marvelous recording that

will transport listeners who have been around a while back to the good old days. Jimmy Knepper high in the sky and his daughter Robin back on earth indeed have something to smile about.

Bill Wahl



ERIC BIBB
AND NORTH COUNTRY FAR
With Danny Thompson
The Happiest Man In The World
STONY PLAIN

Eric Bibb has a new release with the band North Country Far on Stony Plain Records, "The Happiest Man In The World." Recorded in the English countryside, it has Bibb's vocals and guitar supported by North Country Far, musicians he met while living in Finland: Petri Hakala on mandolin and mandola and Olli Haavisto on dobro and weissenborn as well as other slide instruments and Janne Hakala on drums. They are also joined by legendary upright bassist Danny Thompson for this latest installment in the five-decades career of Bibb, whose folk and blues roots continues to sprout exuberant as well as poignant new music.

Bibb's music has always been rooted in good songs, solid singing and guitar and an ear for fresh musical settings. North Country Far provides a definite string-band as well as country flavor to the music here and the songs themselves are usually far from the blues has got me down or mistreating women themes of many blues. The album opens with the title track which has a lyric as he celebrates the woman who stands by him. His gruff vocals (reminds me of early Dylan but with the gentleness of a Mississippi John Hurt) are set against a jaunty backing with mandolin and dobro adding to the atmosphere. Bibb's lyrical gift is evident on "I'll Farm For You" in which he incorporates a number of phrases, often used as double entendres, into what he would do for his woman, while on "Born To Be Your Man," where he sings that Stevie Wonder was born to be the master blaster, Louis Jordan born to sing 'Cal-donia,' Prince was born to sing Purple Rain,' Lazarus was born to rise again, and "You were Born to be my woman and I was born to be your man."

The folk side of Bibb can be heard on the lovely "Creole Café," as he sings about a place in the country, 40 miles west of Newport News where "she serves the

gumbo and I serve the blues,” with some nice mandolin fills during the vocal, on the reflective ballad “Prison of Time,” and charming “On the Porch.” “Tell Ol’ Bill” is a ballad that might not have been out of place in Leadbelly’s repertoire (and Bibb recently issued an excellent Leadbelly tribute CD). There is also an atmospheric instrumental, “1912 Skiing Disaster” a love song “Wish I Could Hold You Now,” before closing with a low-key cover of The Kinks “You Really Got Me” that after a pause segues into a short instrumental take of “King-Sized Bed” as a bonus track.

There is so much to like about marvelous Eric Bibb’s latest album. Perhaps not an album of deep acoustic blues, but with some wonderful songs (several worthy of covering), the congenial quality and charm of these performances has considerable merit.

Ron Weinstock



GROOVE LEGACY

Groove Legacy
SELF-PRODUCED

Established as a tribute to soul-jazz such as represented by the legendary Crusaders, The Meters, JB Horns, and Stuff, Groove Legacy is led by established mainstay musicians of the road and studio: Saxophonist Paul Cerra and keys master Bill Steinway, alongside bassist Travis Carlton (Larry’s son). Blues guitar virtuoso Kirk Fletcher, emerging drum star Lemar Carter, rhythm guitarist Sam Meek and trombonist Andrew Lippman join Groove Legacy on stage and record, along with guest appearances from Robben Ford and Larry Carlton. Groove Legacy has not attempted to copy the classic funk and soul-jazz recordings, but rather provides us on the eponymously titled recording with ten originals that evoke this bygone musical era.

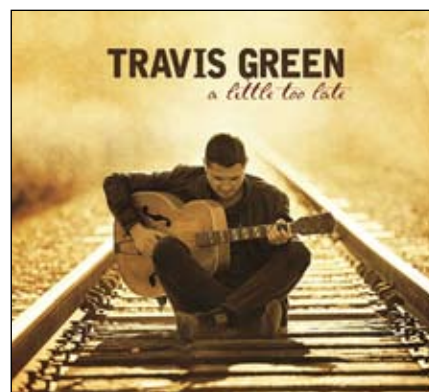
The mood is set by the opening “Sweetness (For Walter Payton)” with the twin horn lines of saxophonist Cerra and trombonist Lippman setting the mood over a funky groove with Travis Carlton’s bass lines helping set the foundation for the soulful tenor sax from Cerra followed by some bluesy guitar from Fletcher while Sam Meek’s guitar, along with some honking sax by Cerra and some blustery trombone, is featured on “Odd Couple” with its strutting groove.

Cerra and Travis Carlton collaborated on the bluesy “Cornell,” dedicated to Cornell Dupree, with appearances

from Ricky Peterson on Hammond B-3 and Larry Carlton who is featured on guitar. Robben Ford’s blues-rock guitar, along with Steinway’s Rhodes piano and Cerra’s tenor sax, is spotlighted on “The Know It All,” another bluesy composition. Having been a fan of Kirk Fletcher since his first recordings, it is nice to hear him outside a straight blues as on the funky “Moneybags.”

Nothing fancy about the music on this recording. Groove Legacy pretty straight R&B flavored jazz that should certainly appeal to fans that want some danceable, funk grooves and some husky solos the likes of which propel the performances here.

Ron Weinstock



TRAVIS GREEN

A Little Too Late

TG

After giving “A Little Too Late” some good listenings this week, I can’t figure out if I should call Austin-based singer/songwriter/guitarist Travis Green a roots-based bluesman or a blues-based roots rocker. No matter what tag you want to hang on it, it’s good stuff, that’s for sure.

Recorded out on the left coast with a crew led by guitarist Kid Anderson, “A Little Too Late” is what use to be called “radio ready,” as the longest cut clocks in at 4:45, so the stations can cram more tunes into each show, with one exception to be noted later that might find a tough time getting on the radio.

Jim Pugh’s piano gives the title piece opener some extra texture as Lisa Leuschner Anderson adds her co-lead vocal to Green’s in the heart warming “Please Don’t Cry.” Most bluesy of the deck is “The Only Love” with “Caroline” (Green pronounces Caro-lean) is fueled by Nancy Wright’s sax into an upbeat rocker.

The part that floors me is Travis Green not only met one of my ex-girl friends, but even wrote a song about her (no names, please). “Everybody Knows” expands on the chorus to “everybody knows you’re a bitch at heart,” a line that is repeated throughout the tune. Once again, Nancy Wright’s sax is the drive shaft for the song, which, with just a tad of tinkering to the arrangement, would make a good cover tune for a polka band.

So there’s my take on Travis Green’s latest. A little tough to narrow down as to the style, but still worth the effort to find.

Peanuts



ERNESTINE ANDERSON

Ernestine Anderson Swings The Penthouse HIGHNOTE

With the recent passing of the wonderful singer, Ernestine Anderson, the release in 2015 of "Ernestine Anderson Swings The Penthouse" should not be overlooked. This live performance comes from a 1962 Seattle performance long before Carl Jefferson added her to his Concord Records artist roster when Ray Brown had been championing her. Of course when this was recorded she had already worked with Johnny Otis, toured with Lionel Hampton, recorded with Gigi Gryce and recorded an album in Scandinavia that was licensed to Mercury. She was at the first Monterey Jazz Festival, named DownBeat's New Star Jazz Singer and recorded other albums for Mercury.

Of course her early career is overshadowed by her later day career in terms of the quantity of her recordings. But here, backed by a sterling trio of pianist Dick Palombi, bassist Chuck Metcalf and drummer Bill Richardson, she brings a vibrancy to a number of standards with her own swinging delivery, impeccable phrasing and vocal dynamics making for terrific renditions of such timeless classics as "You Make Me Feel So You," "On Green Dolphin Street," "Little Girl Blue," "Just in Time," "This Can't Be Love," "There Will Never Be Another You" and "Honeysuckle Rose." There is a duff track here as she is completely in control of the material and the trio swings hard backing her.

Ernestine Anderson certainly swung The Penthouse back when this is recorded, but the music still is fresh and vibrant and a most wonderful addition to her recorded legacy.

Ron Weinstock

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THE LUCKY LOSERS

In Any Town DIRTY CAT RECORDS

It was a little over a year ago that this writer praised the debut release by The Lucky Losers, "A Winning Hand." This band led by vocalists Cathy Lemons and Phil Berkowitz (who also plays harmonica), also includes Marvin Greene on guitar, Chris Burns on keyboards, Tim Wagar on bass and Robi Bean on drums.

Recorded at Kid Andersen's Greaseland Studio, Andersen also adds guitar, keyboards and percussion as well as co-produced this with Berkowitz and Lemons. Others contributing to this include Terry Hanck, Frank Goldwasser, Jeff Jensen, D'Mar and Michael Peloquin. Berkowitz and Danny Caron contributed four originals, Lemons five and there are a couple of renditions of songs not often covered among blues-roots bands.

Listening to the duo again, I remained especially impressed by Lemons natural and soulful delivery and Berkowitz's own unforced vocals complement her so well. This is evident on the opening Berkowitz-Caron original "So High," a strong performance that might evoke Delaney & Bonnie.

There is an unexpected, and very playful cover of the June and Johnny Cash duet, "Jackson," that shows the rapport between the two. Lemons' original "Don't Let 'Em SeeYa Cry," is a powerful slow blues set against a backing that recalls some of the Johnnie Taylor blues for Stax in the late 60s and early 70s (for example "Hello Sundown" and "Little Bluebird").

Greene suggests Little Milton with his solo on this which is followed by a nice harp solo from Berkowitz on a potent performance. Berkowitz sings "Blind Man In The Dark," for a nice blue-eyed soul performance. Frank Goldwasser plays slide on the rocking blues duet "I Can't Change Ya," while there is a reflective quality by Lemons on her title track.

A cover of Bobby Charles' "Small Town Talk," closes another fine recording by Lemons and Berkowitz. The quality and variety of material and the crisp, uncluttered and unhurried backing contribute to another superior recording from The Lucky Losers.

Ron Weinstock



ANDY BROWN

Direct Call
DELMARK RECORDS

Chicago guitarist Andy Brown's third Delmark album, "Direct Call," is his first with his own quartet of pianist Jeremy Kahn, bassist Joe Policastro and drummer Phil Gratteau that regularly play's at Andy's Jazz Club in downtown Chicago City (a fine room that I have been to in Windy City visits). After prior albums, which included one shared with fellow guitarist Howard Arden and the other a solo effort, this one is a delightful set of swinging tunes on a straight-ahead recording.

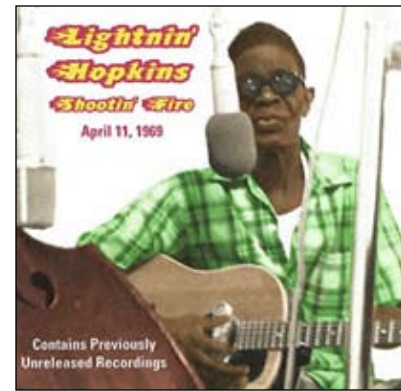
The recording's flavor is set with the bright opener, a piece of Ellingtonia with "The Jeep Is Jumpin'," with sparkling, lively guitar and a nice drum break. Contrast with this driving performance is provided by the lovely rendition of "Prisoner of Love," with some sublime fretwork as he squeezes every bit of feeling out of each note complemented by Kahn's short solo and fruity Arco bass from Policastro. Johnny Mandel's "El Cajon" features more scintillating Brown as well as Gratteau's nice brush work, and is followed by a solid performance of Hank Mobley's hard bop "Funk In Deep Freeze," with strong solos from Kahn and Policastro. The CD title comes from Django Reinhardt's "Appel Direct," with its evocation of busy city life and blistering guitar runs with more of Gratteau's deft brush work. In contrast, "Relaxing" comes from a classic Hank Garland album and showcases Policastro in addition to the leader's lovey lyricism here which is also heard on Jobim's "Ela É Carioca." There are lively renditions of Hoagy Carmichael's waltz, "One Day In May," and Joe Pass' "Catch Me," where on both Brown displays a warm tone, clean and deft playing and ability to take unexpected twists and turns.

A bouncy rendition of pianist John Coates Jr.'s blues, "Freak of the Week," closes this, straight-ahead album of swinging guitar blues. Brown and his quartet play with taste and panache making "Direct Call" such a delight.

Ron Weinstock

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LIGHTNIN' HOPKINS

Shootin' Fire - April 11, 1969
CICADELIC RECORDS

A release of the legendary, and iconic Lightnin' Hopkins that includes previously unissued studio recordings should be of interest to anyone that calls themselves a blues lover. Cicadelic Records has issued "Shootin' Fire - April 11, 1969" which contains 18 tracks from that date and two recorded in August 1961.

The original recordings were produced by Roy Ames and some selections have been issued with bass and drums mixed too high and the guitar lead too low with excessive reverb to make Lightnin' sound contemporary. This release has re-mixed the four track originals without the previous studio misjudgments. Accompanying Hopkins on these recordings are Cedric Hayward on piano, Lawrence Evans on bass and Ben Turner on drums.

The blues is on Lightnin's mind, as he says before launching into the opening track, "Born In The Bottom," a semi-autobiographical number as he was born in Warren's Bottom, Texas, although there are times he wished he was born dead. It is a pretty powerful performance with his spoken interludes and familiar biting guitar. It sets the pace for 77 minutes of deep Texas blues. "Rainy Day in Houston" is a similarly paced performance as Lightning sings that if it keeps on raining, papa can't make no time. And when he tells this woman who is not paying him no mind, but "A Man Like Me Is Hard To Find." Lightning can be hard to back with his tempo shifts and occasionally stretching verses beyond 12 bars, but the trio is solid on this moving performance.

One issue for more casual listeners may be the predominance of similarly tempo-ed slow blues, but he does pick up the pace on "Movin' On Out," as he will move early, so people won't see him make his way. The changes of this suggest "What'd I Say," although the performance is a bit more measured. "Shinin' Moon" is a theme Hopkins recorded before as he sings about the shining look pretty, shine down through the trees as he can see his baby when she don't see him with some impressive guitar. "Feel Like Ballin' The Jack" was originally recorded for Aladdin as "Feel So Bad," and it is Lightnin's thinly disguised rendition of Big

PAGE TWENTY ONE

Bill's classic "I Feel So Good."

"Lightnin's sense of humor is manifest on "Stinkin' Foot," as he tells his lady to put her shoes on, while on "December 7, 1941" Lightning sings about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor over a quarter century after the fact. "My Baby Ain't Got No Shoes," set to the "This Train/My Babe" melody, deals with the theme of poverty and deprivation as his baby also has no place to go, and is followed by a slow blues with a similar theme "My Baby Was Crying For Bread," as he sings she has taken all his money and threw it all away so, it ain't right the baby crying. "My Little Darling" is Lightnin's reworking of the Cecil Gant ballad "I Wonder," while a lively instrumental "Go Ahead" segues into "Battle Hymn of the Republic." "Similarly an alternate (Lightnin' rehearsing with the bassist) of "Movin' On Out" segues into "When the Saints Going Marchin' In."

The two last musical performances here, "Baby Please Don't Do Me Wrong" and "Good As Old Time Religion," are from April, 1961 and are strong performances with good piano and rhythm. The album closes with a brief "I'm Shooting Fire," where he plays a few riffs but explains why musicians have a tough time playing with him. The liner booklet gives some overview of the music and the circumstances of the recording along with photograph of the recording contract and cancelled checks. Some of the comments on the songs are a bit superficial, and a couple of performance sound not quite finished, but this is certainly a welcome addition to Hopkins' very extensive discography. Musically, he rarely disappoints and that is the case in this reissue of down-home Texas blues.

Ron Weinstock



MARLENE VER PLANCK
The Mood I'm In
AUDIOPHILE

The many charms of vocalist Marlene Ver Planck are evident as she sings the title track of her latest Audiophile release "The Mood I'm In." This bright and brisk vocal displays the warmth she brings as she is backed by a terrific trio of John Pearce, piano, Paul Morgan, Bass, and Bobby Worth, drums, with Mark Nightingale adding trombone behind her marvelous and joyful delivery on this performance. This recording

is her 24th for the Audiophile label, and an indication of her longevity as a performer and a singer of song. This trio, trombonist Nightingale and saxophonist/flautist Any Panayi recorded this during one of her annual tours of England.

This is a marvelous collection of songs, and while they come from such legendary composers and songwriters as Harry Warren, Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, Benny Carter, Sammy Cahn, Jimmy Van Heusen and Henry Mancini, these are songs that are not overly performed by others. These lyrical gems include her reflective delivery of the Kohler-Warren "Me and the Blues" with a deliciously gruff trombone solo on a number Mildred Bailey recorded in 1946, as well the bouncy rendition of the Troup and Mancini penned "Free and Easy," that opens with just her and bassist Morgan before the full trio and a touch of flute. A particular favorite is the lovely ballad "It Shouldn't Happen To a Dream," from Duke Ellington, Don George and Johnny Hodges. This is another of the performances where Nightingale's trombone adds so much to the performance as he does on her wistful rendition of "All Too Soon," another gem from the Ellington songbook with lyrics by Carl Sigman. Billy Eckstine's "I Want To Talk About You" is another marvelous love song with lovely flute by Panayi who switches to tenor for the buoyant treatment of Cahn-VanHeusen's "Come on Strong" where she briefly scats with some highly energetic sax.

There are other delights that Marlene Ver Planck brings us in "The Mood I'm In," with wonderful vocals, terrific backing, and a selection of choice, lesser-known songs.

Ron Weinstock



JEFF JENSON
Live - The River City Sessions
SWINGSUIT RECORDS

This disc recorded live in a Memphis studio features a few cuts from Jeff Jensen's terrific 2015 release Morose Elephant plus several new originals and choice covers of T-Bone Walker's "T-Bone Shuffle," Tom Waits' "Heart Attack and Vine" and Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower" While this release is stripped of the keys, guest vocalists and horns that propelled Morose Elephant into one of last year's best discs, the three piece line-up (Jeff Jensen on guitar and vocals, Bill

Ruffino on bass and Robinson Bridgeforth on drums) fills the stage with plenty of sound. As might be expected, Jenson spends most of the time in the spotlight with his earnest vocals and hot-wired guitar licks. Things kick off with his fluid, searing guitar leading the way through “T-Bone Shuffle” which only warms up the stage for the dizzying licks a couple of songs later on the original “JJ Boogie,” which breaks its way out of the boogie mold with a loping mid-song interlude before finding its way back to overdrive.

While Jenson can shred with the best of them, even in the context of the jazzy instrumental “Elephant Blue,” he can also ditch the frenzy and can get as lowdown as anyone as evidenced by his take on Waits’ “Heart Attack and Vine” and on the thumping blues grind of “Find Myself Alone.” He can also craft compact blues rock gems as evidenced by “Brunette Woman” and high brow guitar jazz worthy of Jon Scofield, “Can’t Believe We’re Through,” which features a piercing, ringing tone seldom found on a blues stage. While Jenson’s guitar typically does the heavy lifting he’s no slouch on vocals either as revealed most clearly on “Ash and Bone,” where the soul befitting this disc’s Memphis origins is on full display.

While for most guitarists it is a fool’s errand to take on Hendrix, Jenson’s version of “All Along the Watchtower” will leave few disappointed and it stands as a great end to a great performance. **Mark Smith**



CAROL SABOYA

Carolina
AAM MUSIC

Daughter of the legendary Brazilian pianist and composer Antonio Adolfo, Carol Saboya came to this writer’s attention on a collaboration with her father and harmonica player Hendrik Mullens titled “Copa Village,” which I characterized as an “excellent, enchanting recording.” The present recording “Carolina” is named after her birth name. It was recorded in Rio de Janeiro and produced by her father who plays piano and did the arrangements. Also on this are Marcelo Martins on flute, alto flute and soprano sax, Leo Amuedo on guitars, Jorge Helder on bass, Rafael Barata on drums, and Andre Siqueira and Rafael Barata on percussion with Claudio Spiewak on acoustic guitar on one selection.

These masterful Brazilian musicians back Saboya on a program of both familiar and lesser known Brazilian compositions with a couple of ringers. With a delicate light and airy voice, and perfect pitch, there is plenty of charm to be heard here whether on the opening Jobim classic “Passirim” or the following “1 X 0” by the legendary Pixinguinha, with lovely flute from Martins. A surprise is her playful rendition of The Beatles’ “Hello Goodbye,” with both Amuedo on guitar and Martins on flute soloing. Her other pop cover is a wistful rendition of Sting’s “Fragile,” with her father’s piano and Helder’s bass laying down the foundation here.

Other selections of note include lovely renditions of a couple of Jobim classics, the familiar bossa “A Felicidade,” and the ruminative “Olha, Maria,” the latter enlivened by Martins’ soprano sax. The remaining songs on “Carolina” are sung and played in a similarly delightful fashion on this marvelous Brazilian jazz recording. **Ron Weinstock**



KENNY ‘BLUES BOSS’ WAYNE

Jumpin’ and Boppin’
STONY PLAIN

Blues and boogie woogie pianist and vocalist Kenny ‘Blues Boss’ Wayne has a new recording, his tenth album and third for Stony Plain, titled “Jumpin’ and Boppin’.” It is certainly another album that will enthrall fans of jump blues in the vein of Amos Milburn, Little Willie Littlefield, early Ray Charles, Johnnie Johnson and Fats Domino. Duke Robillard is a special guest and spices up a number of tracks here. Others supporting Wayne here include Russell Jackson on bass, Charlie Jacobson on guitar, Joey Dimarco on drums, Sherman Doucette on harmonica, and Dave Babcock on saxophone.

With the exception of “You Don’t Know Me,” best known from Ray Charles’ rendition (which Wayne covers), the songs are Wayne originals. Highlights include the rollicking Amos Milburn flavored “Jumpin’ & Boppin’ With Joy,” the Johnnie Johnson flavored wry “Ciao, Ciao Baby,” the rollicking “Look Out! There’s a Train Coming,” with hints of Fats Domino and Milburn, the Ray Charles flavored topical blues “Bankrupted Blues,” the late night blues of “Back To Square One,” and the hot rock and roll of “Rock, Rock Little Girl,”

where he shouts out if you don't know how to rock, you don't know how to roll.

The rhythm section is terrific throughout, Robillard is superb where featured and Babcock's saxophone playing is spot on where adding punchy honking on "Blues Stew," or ripping out supportive rifts. Along with choice, idiomatic original songs and Wayne's two-fisted piano and solid singing, this release (produced by Wayne himself) will have listeners "Jumpin' and Boppin'" with joy.

Ron Weinstock



CORY HENRY

The Revival
GROUNDUP MUSIC

A member of the celebrated Snarky Puppy, Cory Henry has been filmed and recorded at Brooklyn's Greater Temple of Praise on performance on the Hammond B-3 for a new album titled "The Revival." Henry performs mostly solo on a program of old gospel classics, rhythm and blues, jazz and soul. He is joined on the recording by drummer James Williams and his godfather, Bishop Jeffrey White, who sings on one song.

The gospel element is predominant among the songs selected for this performance, opening with a simple rendition of "Lord's Prayer" where he is pulling out all the stops (pun intended) as this stately performance builds in intensity. In contrast to the sober opener, "He Has Made Me Glad (I Will Enter His Gates)" is a more spirited and ebullient performance, but both pieces illustrate his masterful use of dynamics and tone. After a sober "Precious Lord," with Williams adding some accents, Bishop Jeffrey White sings powerfully on another old gospel classic, "Old Rugged Cross." After a playful "NaaNaaNaa," with Williams on tambourine and the audience having fun singing the title track, there is a lively devotional number, "That is Why I'm Happy," followed by the fun (with audience clapping) "If You're Happy (and you know it)." Coltrane's "Giant Steps" opens in somewhat restrained manner but the heat builds with Henry's marvelous improvisation. After a musical deconstruction and reconstruction of "Yesterday," the performance closes with the exultation of "I Want to Be Ready."

"The Revival" is a wonderful display of Cory Henry's masterful B-3 playing, sometimes mesmerizing but always full of fervor and humor.

Ron Weinstock



MIKE WHEELER BAND

Turn Up !!
DELMARK RECORDS

The Mike Wheeler Band follows up their Delmark debut "Self Made Man" with "Turn Up !!" Guitarist-vocalist-songwriter Wheeler's band has not changed with Brian James on keyboards, Larry Williams on bass and Cleo Cole on drums with Kenny Anderson's trumpet and Hank Ford's tenor sax adding musical seasoning to the proceedings. Wheeler wrote 12 of the 13 songs (two in collaboration with bandmates) and there is one cover of a Little Milton number. About "Self-Made Man" I wrote that Wheeler's performances had quite a bit of fervor with "plenty of drive in his playing and urgency in his impassioned vocals."

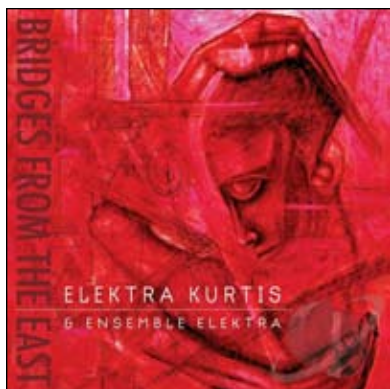
His range as a writer and performer are displayed



on the opening selection "Sweet Girl," and then the contrasting "You Don't Do Right," with an insistent groove supporting his fervent vocal complaint, blistering guitar to close this, and the punching horns. Brian James also adds considerable musical coloring under the vocal. "Yeah!" is a hard driving funk-blues followed by the heavy metal of "Brand New Cadillac." Others might disagree, but I found the backing and playing overbearing and the vocal sounds strained. To these ears, that is the only misstep on this recording. It is a relief after that track to hear the swinging shuffle "Talking To Myself," followed by the driving groove of the title track as he celebrates being turned up when around his girl.

Other standout tracks include the marvelous blues-ballad, "Nothing Lasts Forever," the hot funk-blues of the celebratory "Living the Dream"; the early in the morning slow blues, "A Blind Man Can See," with terrific guitar; a funky interpretation of Little Milton's "That's What Love Will Make You Do"; and the closing topical blues about wanting to cry watching the TV news, "Sad State of the World," with James' gospel-tinged piano adding to the mood. Once again, Mike Wheeler, and his outstanding band has delivered a terrific set of straight-ahead, soul-rooted modern blues.

Ron Weinstock



ELEKTRA KURTIS

Bridges From the East

ELEKTRA SOUND WORKS/MILO RECORDS

I have been fortunate enough to be able to travel to several countries during my life, and rather than to try to seek out jazz or blues, I would instead look for some music unique to the area. Places like the Caribbean Islands, Hawaii, Cambodia, Thailand and more - where some bands played music that was so different from what I was used to. This new album by violinist Elektra Kurtis reminds me somewhat of those experiences.

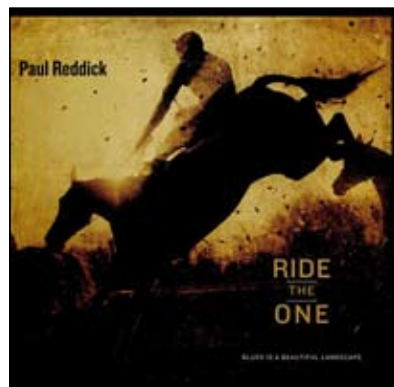
Elektra was born to a Greek family who emigrated to Poland from Egypt. She grew up in Warsaw. She was influenced by avant-garde contemporary music, jazz from the USA, Bartok and the folk music from Greece, Bulgaria, Africa and Tibet. After being molded by all those, she studied classical violin in Finland, and later moved to New York City where she was exposed to jazz musicians such as Henry Threadgill, Steve Coleman,

Lester Bowie, Leroy Jenkins and many others. Then she toured with Cuban bassist Cachao Lopez as she took in Cuban music. She then studied Arabic classical music and played in Simon Shaheen's Near Eastern Ensemble.

Now that you have an idea of her background, it should come as no surprise that her music is an amalgamation of so many influences that I am not going to attempt to describe it other than to say that it is quite different and very interesting. She has put together a band made up of New York musicians and they have put together a set of 16 of her songs played with a rather unique instrumentation consisting of two violinists, clarinet, electric bass and drums. Three of the songs, Trebble Duet Nr. 1, Nr. 3 and Nr. 3 are roughly 3 minutes each, but spread out, and are duets with just the two violins.

If this sounds like it could be as interesting to your ears as it was to mine, go to Amazon where you can sample each of the songs and buy the CD if you like, or choose the songs to make up a program of your own. After listening to this, I sure do miss traveling as it has been a while. I need to get on one of those very fast aluminum tubes again soon.

Bill Wahl



PAUL REDDICK

Ride The One

STONY PLAIN

This new disc of all original material features singer/harmonica player Paul Reddick leading a band that includes three guitarists, bass and drums to accompany his rough hewn vocals and finely honed harmonica chops. As with his prior discs, Reddick stays away from straight blues shuffles and boogies in favor of edgier fare like the stuttering below the surface beat of "Shadows," the rough and tumble "Celebrate," the shimmering, hypnotic, "Mourning Dove," the soul groove of "Gotta Find A..." and the rock swagger of "Watersmooth."

Throughout the disc Reddick uses his harmonica more like a spice than the main dish with the bulk of musical heavy lifting done by the rest of the band to the extent that on some tracks there is no harmonica at all. And that's not a bad thing. There is plenty of guitar interplay and atmospheric keyboard flourishes to keep

things interesting on tracks like “It Goes with You” and “Diamonds,” which could just as easily be on a main stream rock disc as on a blues oriented release. “Living In Another World” and “I Tried To Tell You” break the guitar-centric groove of the rest of the disc with Reddick unleashing a flurry of notes and adding plenty of heat to the grooves. The biggest change up from prior releases such as 2008’s *Sugar Bird* is the distortion added to Reddick’s vocals which sometimes approach Tom Waits territory with their fuzzy somewhat slurred delivery. Overall, a solid package of modern blues rock that pulls few punches.

Mark Smith



BOB MINTZER

All L.A. Band

FUZZY MUSIC

While perhaps best known for his tenure with the Yellowjackets, saxophonist-composer-arranger Bob Mintzer has been writing and leading big bands for some 40 years. His new album, “All L.A. Band” on Fuzzy Records, revisits ten of his compositions that he had written over the years. Drummer Peter Erskine produced this recording as well as anchored the rhythm section for this studio big band. Few of the band members are familiar to this listener and with few exceptions, the soloists are not identified.

There is a mix in material and grooves with several numbers having a definite Afro-Cuban slant, others a Basie-ite flavor and others a funk/R&B flavor. The mood is set with the tropical flavor of the lively opener “El Caborojeno,” followed by a Count Basie Band styled “Havin’ Some Fun,” and then “Home Basie” with a mix of R&B and Basie swing with terrific blues-rooted tenor sax playing (and while I might suspect Mintzer of being the player here he refers to the soloist in the third person in the liner notes). “Ellis Island” is another Afro-Cuban laced number with striking interplay between brass and reeds and a strong baritone sax solo.

“New Rochelle” was originally composed for The Yellowjackets and later recorded by Mintzer’s big band and again is a lively swinging number set against a back beat. Mintzer describes “Runferyerlife” as “a rhythm changes tune taken at a pretty good clip,” and his notes imply that he takes the tenor solo with his use of shorter percussive phrases to blend with the rhythm

section. There is nice scoring of the horns also backing a suitably blustery trombone solo. After the relaxed fun of “Latin Dance” with its funky bass line, Mintzer revisits the aptly titled, “Slo Funk,” which was originally written for Buddy Rich’s Big Band years ago.

The closing “Tribute” is another Basie styled number dedicated to “Thad Lewis and all of the great musicians who came out of the Basie band.” Nice piano from Russ Ferrante to set the tune and the rhythm of Edwin Livingston on bass and Peter Erskine is first-rate here as on this entire recording. There is plenty of wonderful playing on this album enhanced by the arrangements and the lively compositions. Not only does this make for fine listening, but all the music was originally recorded for the MINTZER Big Band Essentials play-along app, for all instruments which is available at the App Store.

Ron Weinstock



OMAR COLEMAN

Live! at Rosa's Lounge

DELMARK RECORDS

I found Omar Coleman’s Delmark debut, “Born and Raised,” one of the most striking new blues recordings of 2015. Delmark has followed it up with a live recording at Chicago’s Rosa’s Lounge. He is once again backed by his solid band of Pete Galanis on guitar, Neal O’Hara on keyboards, Ari Seder on bass (Dave Forte plays on 5 of the ten selections) and Marty Binder on drums and percussion. Recorded over several appearances, six of the songs are live renditions of songs from the prior studio album, while the others are covers.

Previously I suggested comparisons between Coleman’s music and that of Bobby Rush and Junior Wells. Coleman has mentioned that Wells is his favorite singer and his love of Wells (also an influence on Coleman’s harp) is evident from renditions of “Snatch It Back and Hold It” that opens this album (in a medley with Johnnie Taylor’s hit “Wall To Wall”), and the closing track “Two Headed Woman.” Those that have the earlier album will not be surprised by the performances or Coleman’s style starting with the opening track, a nice take on “Snatch It Back and Hold” that segues into Taylor’s dance hall classic. It is followed by a cover of a Muddy Waters classic “I’m Ready,” with Coleman capably delivering the boastful Willie Dixon lyric which is followed by his impassioned delivery of the semi-

autobiographical “Born and Raised” as he sings about scuffling to be a blues man, taxes so high and pay so low,” as he solos over the funk groove.

The funky “Sit Down Baby” about a sad situation and “so good to see you again” and “tell me where you been,” but trying to get her out of his mind that segues into “Jody Got Your Girl and Gone.” Like much of this album it is not hard to imagine the crowd at Rosa’s dancing as well as listening to Coleman and his band. Another strong performance is “Raspberry Wine,” and the highlight has to be the rendition of the ballad “One Request,” where he tells his girl he wants her to have his child, that if he is a boy he will raise him to be a man in every good way and if she is a girl I know his girl will raise her right. It’s an old-fashioned message perhaps, but delivered from his heart.

“Two Headed Woman,” a lesser known Junior Wells recording, opens with Coleman saying we have to go to the country which leads guitarist Galinas to some country styled fretwork before singing about this woman who knows everything I do, “with two eyes on me and two more eyes on you.” This Willie Dixon composition is musically a cousin “Got My Mojo Working,” and this spirited numbers closes this most enjoyable sophomore Delmark album. The band is solid behind Coleman whose passion and heart is evident throughout this.

Ron Weinstock



MIROSLAV VITOUS

Music of Weather Report

ECM

For a second time, founding Weather Report bassist reflects upon the music of that iconic fusion group- previous was 2009’s *Remembering Weather Report*. This release finds Mr. Vitous in the company of a pair of soprano/tenor saxophonists, Gary Campbell and Robert Basilono and drummers, Gerald Cleaver and Nasheet Waits. (Keyboardist Aydin Esen is technically in a twosome as well if the leader’s key work on the side is considered). This instrumentation provides all the requisite voices to emulate WR but this lineup’s approach to that group’s “book” is clearly distinct and “free” in character.

Following a tasty, teasing free-form take on the theme of WR co-leader Josef Zawinul’s “Birdland”, courtesy of the saxes and Vitous’ arco-bass, the dual

drummers expand the rhythmic pulse that is a defining characteristic of the tune. This attitude permeates the group’s work on Wayne Shorter’s “Pinocchio” and Vitous’ own “Seventh Arrow” and “Morning Lake”.

Duane Verh



SLAM ALLEN

Feel These Blues

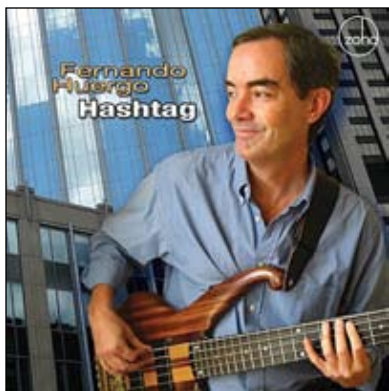
AMERICAN SHOWPLACE MUSIC

For years Harrison ‘Slam’ Allen could be seen fronting the James Cotton Band with his guitar and vocals. For a few years he played on a cruise line (nice work if you can get it). He has returned to the blues scene and has a new recording “Feel These Blues.” In addition to his guitar and vocals, Slam is backed by a rock solid band of John Ginty on keyboards, Jeff Andersen on bass guitar and Dan Fadel on drums for a program of 11 originals and a rendition of Prince’s “Purple Rain.”

There is nothing fancy about Slam Allen with his rock-ing, B.B. King influenced guitar and his strong vocals. His vocals strike me as his greatest strength, although he is no slouch as a guitarist. The album opens with the title track with its lament about being hard to find blues on the radio, but he will keep laying down these blues playing guitar while chanting you got to feel these blues. The B.B. King flavored shuffle “The Blues Is Back” is another song dealing with the blues as a genre, and is a highlight of this recording with some searing guitar. “All Because Of You” is a solid original whose melody evokes the Gladys Knight hit “My Imagination,” while “In September” is a nice slice of country soul with a terrific vocal. There is a funk groove for “35 Miles Outside of Memphis,” as Slam sings about stressful things on his mind but one of them sure ain’t his woman, which is followed by the intense slow, B.B. King styled blues “World Don’t Stop Turning.” Another strong straight blues in this vein is “You’re Wrong.” “Can’t Break Away from That Girl” is another solid southern flavored soul performance, similar to some of Johnny Rawls recent recordings.

“Feel These Blues” closes with a lengthy interpretation of “Purple Rain,” and one suspects this may have been popular on the cruises fortunate enough to have Slam Allen as an entertainer. Having seen Slam Allen several times, I can attest how entertaining a live performer he is, and this is captured to some extent on this solid recording.

Ron Weinstock



FERNANDO HUERGO

**Hashtag
ZOHOMUSIC**

Currently a professor at Berklee School of Music, Argentine-born bassist Fernando Huergo brings the tango as well as the folkloric music (including the chacerera 6/8 folkloric rhythm) of his native land together with the American Jazz he also grew up listening to for his seventh recording and label debut for Zoho. As quoted in Bill Milkowski's liner notes, "I'm from Argentina, I love the music from there, is in my blood. I love Astor Piazzolla and I love folklore music, but I also love Duke, Monk, Mingus and Benny Golson and all the jazz greats. So I tried to combine those things and create something hopefully interesting."

With his electric bass and group of Yulia Musayelyan on flute, Rick DiMuzio on tenor sax, Leo Genovese on piano and Fender Rhodes and Franco Pinna on drums, Huergo provides 8 originals and four interpretations from Thelonious Monk, Wayne Shorter, Mongo Santamaria and Billy Strayhorn. "Its"Hashtag" a diverse program of swinging grooves and moods wonderfully played with the leader's bass anchoring the music. The Argentinian rhythms provide accents underpinning the performances here starting with the opening title track with Genovese's Fender Rhodes and Pinna's touch and rhythms providing a base for Huergo's scintillating solo followed by DiMuzio's robust tenor. Throughout, the blending of sax and Musayelyan's flute lends a delightful flavor. Genovese, who I first was exposed to as part of Jack DeJohnette's Quartet with Joe Lovano and Esperanza Spalding, also dazzles here.

The twelve song program mixes the leader's wonderful originals with interpretations of some classic and less familiar compositions, including a fresh rendition of Monk's "Evidence" which opens as a duet with Pinna before the horns state the theme with clipped phrasing followed by some stunning piano from Genovese. Huergo's ballad "Cerca (To Fran and Clara)" opens with statement of the theme from the horns with a lovely flute solo from Musayelyan and Pinna is employing brushes. "Troesma" has more lovely voicings, as well as incorporating tango rhythms from the horns on the head with the Yulia's flute sounding more probing and insistent here (and there is nice counterpoint exchanges on the main theme between she and DuMuzio

here) while Genovese dazzles with his technique and imagination. Wayne Shorter's lovely "Infant Eyes" showcases the leader's virtuosity on the electric bass (Jaco Pastorius is obviously a major influence on him) as well as his arranging skills, while again the quintet freshly interprets Mongo Santamaria's "Afro Blue."

The album includes tributes to Weather Report ("Weather") and Astor Piazzolla ("Astor") and closes with a choice performance of Billy Strayhorn's "U.M.M.G. (Upper Manhattan Medical Group)." It is easy to recommend "Hashtag" with its mix of strong and varied compositions, scintillating arrangements, strong solos and marvelous ensemble playing.

Ron Weinstock



VARIOUS ARTISTS

**Blues For Big Walter
ELLERSOUL**

This all-star tribute to harmonica legend Big Walter Horton features modern day disciples of the "Mississippi Saxophone" including Kim Wilson, Mark Wenner (Night-hawks), Sugar Ray Norcia, Bob Corritore, Mark Hummeal, Steve Guyger, Li'l Ronnie Owens, Kurt Crandall and Andrew Alli.

None other than Willie Dixon proclaimed Big Walter the best harmonica player he ever heard and he was a constant presence on the Chicago blues scene from the 50's through his death in 1981 at the age of 60. In between he played for a who's who of the blues and left his mark on countless recordings. By its very nature, this is a harmonica heavy release with every track featuring a classic Chicago blues backdrop and solid renditions of Big Walter's single note lines and broad, horn-like tone. Things move at a deliberate pace with none of the million notes per bar that epitomizes the work of many modern players. As a result, tone, control and phrasing make all the difference in the impact of the cuts.

Highlights include Sugar Ray's eighteen minute plus medley of "That Ain't It, Walter's Boogie, Everybody's Fishing, I don't Get Around Much and Blueberry Hill," which could fill the dance floor at a funeral and contains a solid showcase of almost everything that can be done on a harmonica; Mark Hummel and Adrew Alli's separate solid takes on the classic, "Easy," Li'l Ronnie's "Think Big" and Bob Corritore's greasy reading of "Rambling On My Mind" which gets more than a little help from the legend-

ary Robert Lockwood on guitar and vocals.

The entire set benefits from a raw, unpolished production that dumps the glossy sheen of modern recordings and evokes the time that Big Walter stalked the stage - a trip in time well worth taking.

Mark Smith



MOON HOOCH

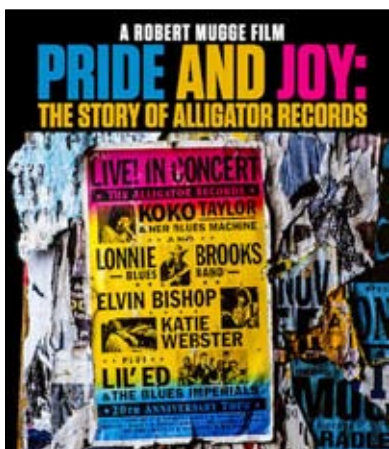
Red Sky

HORNBLOW/PALMETTO

Urgent, angular themes, frenetically punctuating percussion and decidedly oddball energy are the stock in trade of this unconventional NYC-based trio. Drawing on jazz, rock and electronic dance music, multiple reed players Michael Wilbur and Wenzl McGowen and drummer James Muschler serve up a nonstop quirk-fest heavy on punchy tenor sax statements and caffeinated drum breaks. *Red Sky* is not for laid-back listening but is certainly fun, exuberant fare.

Duane Verh

dvd



PRIDE AND JOY: THE STORY OF ALLIGATOR RECORDS

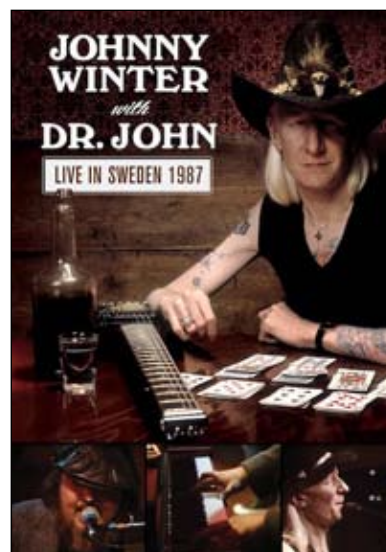
A Robert Mugge Film
MVDVISUAL BLUE-RAY DVD

Among recent Robert Mugge films getting reworked for Blue-Ray release is his 1992 film, "Pride and Joy: The Story of Alligator Records." This film was centered around a Philadelphia Concert during Alligator's 20th

Anniversary Tour" that featured performances by Koko Taylor and Her Blues Machine, the Lonnie Brooks Band, Elvin Bishop, Katie Webster, and Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials. Interspersed with the performances are interviews with Bruce Iglauer and others involved with Alligator, along with clips of staff meetings and discussions that give a sense of what was involved in running this independent blues label that is now celebrating forty-five years.

The core of the film is the musical performances with the exceptional performances by all the named performers. Seeing Katie Webster was especially moving with her solo boogie and blues piano and vocals standing out even in such company as Koko Taylor and Lonnie Brooks whose own performances are splendid. Everybody comes together for a closing, and rousing "Sweet Home Chicago" that is the musical climax of this wonderfully constructed documentary that marvelously integrates the performances and documentary segments. It is so welcome to have this new improved release.

Ron Weinstock



JOHNNY WINTER

Live in Sweden 1987

GAZELL/MVD DVD OR CD

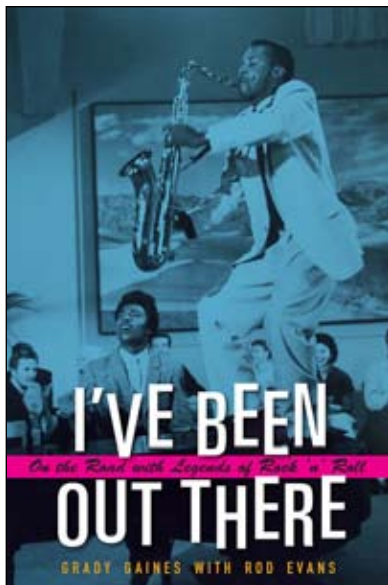
A live performance by Johnny Winter, on which his trio is joined by Dr. John for several tracks, Live in "Sweden 1987" has been issued on CD and DVD. This performance is around his time on Alligator with his trio of Jon Paris, bass and harmonica, and Tom Compton on drums. It is a pretty straightforward set, and the video is square format, not wide by any means.

This is typical Johnny Winter with his high energy attack with a rock edge. The set opens with a rocking rendition of his mentor, Clarence Garlow's "Sound the Bell," which is followed by a nice rendition of "Don't Take Advantage of Me," and then a rollicking treatment of J.B. Lenoir's "Mojo Boogie," with Paris adding harp behind Winter's slide guitar. Dr. John adds some New Orleans piano and vocal on "You Lie Too Much," with Winter providing solid backing, followed by a rocking

treatment of Muddy Waters' "Sugar Sweet" with Paris adding harp and Dr. John taking some of the vocal. They also share verses on "Love Life & Money," with some fiery Winter guitar. The album closes with a furious tempoed, "Jumpin' Jack Flash." The DVD has a bonus song, "Prodigal Son" from a 1972 performance.

There's very little here that will surprise Johnny Winter fans. The DVD comes from pretty straightforward video of the performers (with a brief bit of Winter and band on the bus before the gig). There is a fair amount of Johnny Winter available on DVD and this might appeal more to his fans or to those not already having much by him on DVD or CD. Ron Weinstock

books



I'VE BEEN OUT THERE: ON THE ROAD WITH LEGENDS OF ROCK'N'ROLL

Grady Gaines with Rod Evans

2015: TEXAS A&M PRESS (188 PAGES)

When the Blues Foundation announced only three selections for the Blues Hall of Fame for 2015, to accompany the opening of the actual Hall, this writer was upset (pun intended) that Little Richard was selected in part because his contributions were primarily as a rhythm and blues-rock'n'roll performer, and not as a blues man. It also struck me that they missed the opportunity to include the leader of Richard's band the Upsetters, Grady Gaines, at the same time (Grady's brother guitarist Roy also clearly deserves induction). Hopefully this will be rectified soon. In any event, with the assistance of Rod Evans, we have a chance to let Grady tell us his own story in this 2015 volume that is part of Texas A&M Press' John and Robin Dickson Series In Texas Music.

Evans has put together Gaines' recollections and life story intermixed with comments from those as-

sociated with Grady, including members of his family (brothers L.C. and Roy and son Grady Jr., among them), musicians and others who played significant roles in his band or life (like the Upsetters' drummer Charles 'Chuck' Connor, guitarist Milton Hopkins, guitarist John Andrews, trombonist-vocalist Paul David Roberts, Hammond Scott of Black Top Records and Susan Criner his current booking agent). There are also inserts giving background on other persons and events such as Sam Cooke's passing and Little Willie John's murder conviction and death in prison. While Little Richard had been contacted and willing to talk about Grady's contributions to his early career, his declining health prevented it. Also not able to contribute for health reasons was Grady's lifelong friend, and bandmate, Clifford Burks.

Grady's story starts while he was in his first band, The Blues Ramblers. Little Richard, who just had a smash hit with "Tutti Frutti," called Grady to recruit him and fellow saxophonist Clifford Burks to join him. Grady recalled they had played with Richard in Houston and described how the Upsetters (which Richard started calling his band) added other musicians and toured heavily. Then the story backtracks to his beginning. Grady recollects how he and Roy, inspired by a grandfather, got into music. Grady grew up in a small Texas town, although experienced little of the Jim Crow issues of other communities. The family moved to Houston after his father got a job in a lumberyard. In Houston, Grady, inspired by an uncle, started working doing a paper route and playing music, describing the process in which he learned to play saxophone. A significant influence was Calvin Owens, a student teacher at his school who taught him a variety of things including the importance of professionalism.

While in High School, Grady started his first band, eventually creating the Blues Ramblers, which became one of Houston's biggest bands. At the same time he was able to see so many legends like T-Bone Walker and B.B. King. The band got to be one of Don Robey's studio bands and recorded behind Earl Forrest, Gate-mouth Brown, Big Walter Price and even the Mighty Clouds of Joy. Mixing his recollections of playing, recording and developing his saxophone style, he recalls the vibrant nightlife in the Bayou City, and discusses when he was first playing with Little Richard before he became the sensation he was.

He spent three years with Little Richard, observing the incessant touring, with a few days off here and there. There would be mishaps like a driver dozing off and running off into a cotton field. Besides describing life on the road, he offers an overview of what a typical show was. Then there were the films including "The Girl Can't Help It" with the famous scene of Grady jumping and soloing on the piano while Richard was pumping away. There were side benefits too, including, as described by Connors, women throwing their panties on stage, and Grady, being handsome and prominent as saxophonist and the band's leader, had his share of

after show encounters.

It was in 1957 in Australia that Little Richard told the band he was quitting the business to become a preacher. He had hinted at doing this previously, but Down Under he actually made the decision during a tour. Richard allowed Grady to continue using the name the Upsetters, and when back in the US they toured California with Dee Clark. The band next hooked up with Little Willie John who had a smash hit with "Fever." Grady recalls that Little Willie John was a wonderful little guy, but kind of wild. They continued to tour with him until a California tour that included Sam Cooke. Cooke wanted the band as his own, so it became Sam Cooke's band and it toured with him until his early death. Included among the many pictures illustrating Grady's story is a poster from their early 60s tour of Jamaica.

After Cooke's death in 1964, Grady Gaines and the Upsetters became the main backing band for Universal Attractions, playing behind the likes of Etta James, Ruth Brown, Bo Diddley, Solomon Burke, Gladys Knight and the Pips, the Crystals, the Supremes and "anybody that was somebody." And the Upsetters worked hard at being entertaining. Grady himself would put a mic down the barrel of his horn, honk and walk the floor with a 150 foot cable including sometimes going outside and playing on the sidewalk. While Grady noted that he drank moderately, he stayed away from drugs and the Upsetters had few problems with alcohol or drugs.

Grady talks about disco coming in as among the things that led to decline of the Upsetters touring. The remainder of the book details him returning to Houston, playing primarily locally as well as taking employment outside of music. Grady's Texas Upsetters became a versatile band, doing a revue type of show and playing not simply nightclubs but also private parties and other functions with their considerable versatility. It was at this time that Hammond Scott, and his late brother Nauman, heard Grady and recorded him for Black Top, and this led to some European travel. He also recorded an album "Jump Start," that unlike the mostly original material of the Black Top releases, had mostly older material reshaped by Grady and the Upsetters, and they continue to still perform. One thing that comes across throughout this book is the professionalism he conducted throughout his career, still seen today by the fact that he picks up all the band members up for their gigs in the Houston area.

Over his career Grady has backed 71 artists who are in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, likely more than anyone else. Evans is making a case for him being selected as a sideman. Certainly it would be worthy, as would be his induction into the Blues Foundation's Blues Hall of Fame, as among those 71 artists are more than a handful of Blues Hall of Fame inductees. Additionally his own playing, and his recordings deserve recognition.

There are a couple of minor typos (Amos Milburn

called Wilburn), and it might have suited Evans to have looked at the excellent biographies of Sam Cooke, Little Willie John and John Ace, as well as Preston Lauterbach's book on "The Chitlin Circuit." The authors do rely on Roger Wood's marvelous "Down In Houston: Bayou City Blues," and Charles White's "The Life and Times of Little Richard" by Charles White. It is surprising that for a University Press book, a number of cites to www.allmusic.com, although most of the material is from Evans' interviews. In any event, Grady certainly has been out there and this well illustrated volume tells his story in a highly readable and concise manner.

Ron Weinstock

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release Blues.... Here's the soundtrack to your summer. Enjoy! **JJ James-** *Raw Sugar*; **Eddie Cotton-** *One At a Time*; **Grady Champion-** *One of a Kind*; **Mr. Sipp-** *Knock a Hole In It*; **Lucky Peterson-** *Long Nights*; **William Bell-** *This is Where I Live*; **Toni Lynn Washington-** *I Wanna Dance*; **The Bo-Keys-** *Heartaches By the Number*; **Alligator Records-** *45th Anniversary Collection*; **Moreland & Arbuckle-** *Promised Land or Bust*; **Sugar Blue-** *Voyage*; **Professor Longhair-** *Live in Chicago*; **Steve Dawson-** *Solid States & Loose Ends*; **Chris Beard-** *Eye of the Witch*; **Lisa Mann-** *Hard Times, Bad Decisions*; **Tweed Funk-** *Come Together*; **Eric Bibb and North Country Far-** *The Happiest Man In the World*; **Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne-** *Jumpin' & Boppin'*; **Stony Plain-** *40 Years*; **Big Jon Atkinson & Bob Corritore-** *House Party at Big Jon's*; **Nick Moss Band-** *From the Root to the Fruit*; **Big Harp George-** *Wash My Horse in Champagne*; **Little Charlie and Organ Grinder Swing-** *Skronky Tonk*; **The Mike Eldred Trio-** *Baptist Town*; **Jim Suhler & Monkey Beat-** *Live At the Kessler*; **Katy Guillen & The Girls-** *Heavy Days*; **Nick Schnebelen Band-** *Live at Knuckleheads vol.1*; **Little Boys Blue-** *Tennissippi*.

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