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jazz  
& blues report



MONTEREY  
jazz festival

MJF59 / September 16-18, 2016

# jazz & blues report

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



# Monterey Jazz Festival

**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, Davina and the Vagabonds, and Many Others**



Brian Blade

Photos by Ron Weinstock

Monterey, Calif. - Tickets for the 59th annual Monterey Jazz Festival are still available. The festival features over 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, from September 16-18, 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.

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, plus access to all activities on seven additional Grounds Stages.

Friday Arena highlights include The A&M Years, an exclusive all-star tribute to Quincy Jones and his trio of trendsetting 1969-1971 albums on September 16, with five-time GRAMMY®-winning bassist Christian McBride acting as musical director, and GRAMMY-winning John Clayton conducting the Monterey Jazz Festival Orchestra. "Those three albums are some of the best examples of being able to cross over, if you will, but still have the foothold remain in traditional jazz," says McBride of Quincy's ground-

breaking recordings *Walking in Space*, *Gula Matari*, and *Smackwater Jack*. Mr. Jones will be an honored guest at the Jimmy Lyons Stage in the Arena, and will make opening remarks after being introduced by MJF board member Clint Eastwood. The performance will be the first time that Quincy Jones has been on the Arena Stage since 1972.

Showcase Artist Joshua Redman performs three times over the weekend, with *Still Dreaming* on Friday, September 16; with *The Bad Plus* on Saturday, September 17, and his own Quartet on Sunday, September 18. "You could argue," Redman says, "that [*Still Dreaming*] is a concept band, a tribute band. But it's really just taking that music as a jumping-off point." With *The Bad Plus*, Redman continued, "I wanted to enter their musical world, learn their language and be a part of their real group spirit and collective approach to music making. I really feel it's a singular entity."

Sunday, September 18 Arena highlights include Wayne Shorter, the Festival's Commission Artist, debuting "*The Unfolding*." Based on a recent visit to Stanford University's Linear Accelerator Center where he encountered new ideas about the Big Bang, "*The Unfolding*" features his quartet with the Monterey Jazz Festival Wind Ensemble conducted by Nicole Paiement. "These astrophysicists [at Stanford] said they've seen a glimpse of what was going on that far back," says Shorter. "It was when there was a multiverse...The scientists say it's not a point in time because there was no time. So what they're seeing is not the beginning but more like an unfolding."

Making her Monterey debut as a leader on Saturday, September 17 in the Arena will be 2016 Artist-In-Residence, drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, and her GRAMMY-winning Mosaic band, which features Ingrid Jensen, Tia Fuller, Helen Sung, Elena Pinderhughes, Valerie Simpson, and Lizz Wright. She'll also perform with the festival's high school all-star band, the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, on Sunday, September 18. "I'm always surprised that so many kids are excited about and love jazz," said Carrington. "It makes me feel like, 'Oh, yeah, [jazz is] not a dying art form. It's very much alive.'"

Making his debut as a leader at Monterey on Sunday afternoon, September 18 is saxophonist Kamasi Washington. The multiple critics poll winner has broken out this year with his triple-disc recording *The Epic*, but Kamasi has played the Arena the stage before, with Gerald Wilson's Orchestra in 2007, when they premiered Wilson's *Monterey Moods* as part of MJF's 50th year. "We used to drive up to [Monterey] when we could," Washington recalls. "One year, Sonny Rollins was playing. We drove up, caught Sonny and drove back in the middle of the night [to Los Angeles] because we had a gig the next day. It's such a beautiful environment."

London-based composer Jacob Collier also makes a debut on Sunday night, September 18 in the Arena. Collier has earned a large following on YouTube with a



Branford Marsalis

series of multi-tracked videos that have seen millions of views. Bringing that idea to the road in 2016, Collier has developed a live interactive presentation that uses a high-tech system created at the MIT Media Lab. "We've created a completely solo show, and developed a way to have a big circle of instruments so I can bounce around and play them the at the same time. Everything is generated live," says Collier.

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 nearly 100 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



Billy Hart

Jones with Clint Eastwood.

Information about the Arena and Grounds artists for the 59th Monterey Jazz Festival can be found on [www.montereyjazzfestival.org](http://www.montereyjazzfestival.org).

**Lineup for the 59th Monterey Jazz Festival,  
September 16-18, 2016  
(in order of appearance)**

**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 Simpson & the Monterey Jazz Festival Orchestra

**GROUND:**

**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 Raelettes; The Bad Plus Joshua Redman; Terri Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project featuring Lizz Wright and Valerie Simpson; Branford Marsalis Quartet featuring Kurt Elling

**GROUND:**

**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



Christian McBride

Porter; Wayne Shorter Quartet; Jacob Collier; Pat Metheny with Antonio Sanchez, Linda Oh & Gwilym Simcock

**GROUNDS:**

**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 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](http://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.

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Photo © Robyn Churchill

# Pennsylvania Blues Festival Celebrates 25 Years Of Pocono Blues

By Ron Weinstock

Photos by Ron Weinstock



Gaye Adegbalola & Wild Rutz

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 Ronnie Baker Brooks with special guest Eddie Clearwater, 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 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



Eddie Clearwater

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 highly entertaining set. The guitarist and vocalist fronted James Cotton's band for a number of years and on his

own 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 Bluetones, 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 Raful 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 high energy blues of Ronnie Baker Brooks, who will have a full horn section and also special guest, Blues Hall of



Ronnie Baker Brooks

Famer, Eddie 'The Chief' Clearwater. Son of blues legend Lonnie Brooks, Ronnie helps keep the family blues tradition alive and replaces the originally scheduled Buckwehat Zydeco who has health issues.

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 Text 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 bring 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.

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. Vocalist 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 Swisssippi Records label that Mike Wheeler played on.

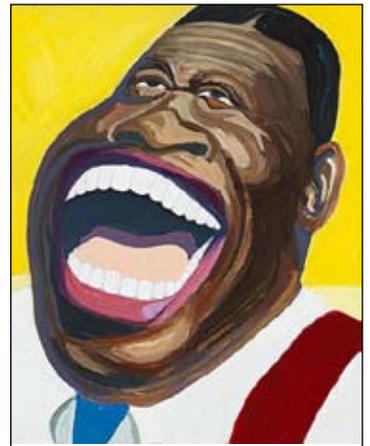
The Main Stage closes with Ronnie Earl and the

Broadcasters. Earl's career included stints in Sugar Ray & the Bluetones, 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 done 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.pennsylvaniabluesfestival.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, Gun and Glory, and roots-rock songwriter Paul Thorn. For more information on the Pennsylvania Music Festival, visit <http://www.pamusicfestival.com>.



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



Los Lobos

### 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 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



Bobby Rush ©Ron Weinstock



Nikki Hill ©Ron Weinstock

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>

## 2016 Daytona Blues Festival

October 7-9

Lineup includes Joe Louis Walker, Marcia Ball, Tinsley Ellis, Alvin Youngblood Hart



Joe Louis Walker - photo by Michael Weintrob

Daytona Beach, FL. - Join in for year 7 of the Daytona Blues Festival October 7-9 at Jackie Robinson Ballpark in historic downtown Daytona! All festival proceeds benefit the Halifax Health NICU and Project WARM, Women Assisting Recovering Mothers.

Friday, October 7 – The blues will begin at 2:30 pm with Vanessa Collier followed by Long Tall Deb with Colin John at 4 pm. Katy Guillen and The Girls return to the DBF stage at 5:30 pm and Carolyn Wonderland will start at 7:15. Friday night's finale is Shakura S'Aida (9 pm).

Saturday, October 8 starts with Florida's own Willie Green Band at 1 pm and The Delgado Brothers, who won the 2016 International Blues Challenge band division, at 2:30 pm. Next up will be Tas Cru (4 pm) and Alvin Youngblood Hart's Muscle Theory (5:30 pm). Joe Louis Walker (7:15 pm) and Saturday night's headliner (9 pm slot) is

PAGE TEN

Marcia Ball.

Day 3 of the 7th Daytona Blues Festival begins at 1 pm with 2016 IBC solo/duo winners Joe Hunter and Ben Seamons and The Paul Deslauriers Band, 2nd place IBC band winner at 2:30. The afternoon continues with Tinsley Ellis at 4:15 pm and BMA nominee Sugaray Rayford Band at 6 pm. The DBF tradition continues with 2016 double BMA winner Victor Wainwright & The WildRoots closing.

For more info, visit [www.daytonabluesfestival.com](http://www.daytonabluesfestival.com)



Photo: Aaron Meekoms courtesy of Chick Corea Productions

## Chick Corea Celebrates 75th Birthday With Globe-Spanning Tour

22-time GRAMMY® Winner Reveals Epic 2016 Schedule:

177 Shows, 26 Ensembles, 60 Musicians

LOS ANGELES, CA - Music legend Chick Corea is spending his 75th birthday at home: on the road.

Corea has spent 50 years on the world's most venerated stages, playing with a pantheon of fellow-traveling musical compatriots, and now he's packing it all into one year.

For 2016, he's lined up an Iron-Man marathon of tour dates, literally circling the globe: Phoenix to Minneapolis to Naples to Stuttgart to Tokyo to Beijing to Honolulu and back to LA.

This activity will lead up to the greatest jazz birthday party ever: an unprecedented two-month residency at New York's Blue Note Jazz Club this fall, where Chick has assembled an unprecedented lineup of giants to do what they do best: create music magic, two shows a night, for eight straight weeks.

But it all started in April, which opened with Chick at the star-studded International Jazz Day concert, broadcast nationwide from The White House lawn. An East Coast duet tour with Béla Fleck preceded a solid month of shows in Japan with fellow pianist Makoto Ozone-including two nights with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo playing Mozart's "Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra." July brought European concerts with the all-star "Homage to Heroes" quintet, featuring Wallace Roney, Kenny Garrett, Christian

McBride and Marcus Gilmore.

The past week at Catalina Jazz Club in Hollywood - ask any Chick fan - has been a long time coming: the Chick Corea Elektric Band returned, (Aug. 17-24) for a celebratory 7 nights and 14 sold-out shows at the iconic Hollywood club, which has hosted many legendary Corea performances. The classic lineup is in force: Corea, Dave Weckl (drums), John Patitucci (bass), Eric Marienthal (sax), Frank Gambale (guitar). The Elektric Band will also do a handful of U.S. theater dates in October, and kickoff Chick's landmark residency at the Blue Note New York.

An Italian excursion in September finds Chick renewing his legendary lifelong duo conversation with vibraphonist Gary Burton, including headlining La Villette Jazz Festival in Paris.

In the run-up to the Blue Note Celebration, Chick has managed to fit in three different configurations of his Trilogy trio: Following US performances in June and July with the GRAMMY®-winning band with Christian McBride (bass) and Brian Blade (drums), including performances at the Newport Jazz Festival where Chick was named Artist of the Year, younger firebrands Avishai Cohen (bass) and Marcus Gilmore (drums) join Chick for appearances in September in Israel, Kiev, and more throughout Europe and Asia. The trio will headline the grand opening of the Blue Note Beijing on Sept. 13. The legendary Eddie Gomez (bass) falls in with Corea and Blade for a residency at the Blue Note Hawaii (Sep. 21-24) and the San Francisco Jazz Festival (Sep. 29 - Oct. 2), plus West Coast concerts in September and October.

Back in his musical home, New York City, the Blue Note residency (Oct. 19 - Dec. 11) is the kind of honor and celebration befitting a career like Corea's: 22 GRAMMY® wins. NEA Jazz Master. Downbeat Magazine Hall-of-Famer. An artistic voice that has influenced and been inspired by countless musical traditions: modern jazz to traditional flamenco, western classical to electric jazz-fusion, acclaimed solo performances to many high-profile collaborations.

All the facets of his restless creativity will be on display at the Blue Note, in 80 shows with 60 iconic musicians playing in 15 bands (see [bluenotejazz.com](http://bluenotejazz.com) for a detailed listing).

These include a tribute to his mentor Miles Davis with other Davis alumnae; a week with longtime partner-in-crime and drum legend Steve Gadd; two nights of experimental electronica with drummer Marcus Gilmore and guests; and the return the Flamenco Heart. The Harlem String Quartet will join the simpatico duo partnership with Gary Burton. Perennial fan-favorite projects with Origin and the 15-piece Trondheim Jazz Orchestra will also occupy the Blue Note stage, plus a three-night series of duets with pianists yet to be announced.

The final two weeks of the run will feature the music of Return to Forever and more in two different contexts: the acoustic lineup (Nov. 30 - Dec. 4) includes Ravi Coltrane (sax), Hubert Laws (flute), Avishai Cohen (bass) and RTF drummer Lenny White; an electric band (Dec. 8-11) dubbed Return to Forever Meets Mahavishnu, featuring fellow legend John McLaughlin on guitar, bassist Victor Wooten and

drummer White, will also delve into some classic Mahavishnu Orchestra material.

Corea's 2016 tour schedule is a shorthand sketch of his entire musical life: a virtuosic summary of 50 years of creativity, and a confident step toward exciting new possibilities for the future.

For more updates as this landmark year continues to unfold, visit [chickcorea.com](http://chickcorea.com), [facebook.com/chickcorea](https://www.facebook.com/chickcorea), and @ChickCorea on Twitter.

Ticketing information for these appearances is available at [chickcorea.com/concerts](http://chickcorea.com/concerts) and on each venue's website.

#### **TOUR DATES:**

##### **Chick Corea & Gary Burton Duet**

September 1 - 2, Blue Note Milano, Milano, Italy (2 shows per night)  
September 4, Jazz a La Villette, Paris, France

##### **Chick Corea Elektric Band**

October 12, Capitol Theatre, Clearwater, FL  
October 14, Schermerhorn Symphony Center, Nashville, TN  
October 15, The Carolina Theatre, Durham, NC  
October 16, Wilbur Theatre, Boston, MA  
October 17, The Birchmere, Alexandria, VA

##### **Chick Corea Trilogy (Corea / Gomez / Blade)**

September 21 - 24, Blue Note Hawaii, Honolulu, HI (2 Shows Per Night)  
September 25, Maui Arts & Cultural Center, Castle Theatre, Maui, HI  
September 28, Kuumbwa Jazz Center, Santa Cruz, CA (2 Shows)  
September 29, San Francisco Jazz Festival, San Francisco, CA  
October 4 - 5, Jazz Alley, Seattle, WA (2 Shows Per Night)  
October 7, Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall, Detroit, MI  
October 8, Xavier University Jazz Series at Gallagher Theater, Cincinnati, OH

##### **Chick Corea Trilogy (Corea / Cohen / Gilmore)**

August 30, Red Sea Jazz Festival, Eilat, Israel  
September 5, Jazz a La Villette, Paris, France  
September 7, Openluchttheater Rivierenhof, Antwerp, Belgium  
September 10, Equi Jazz Festival -Equides Club, Kyiv, Ukraine  
September 13 - 17, Blue Note Beijing, Beijing, China (2 shows per night)  
September 18, Shimibun Akabane Hall, Hokkoko, Japan

##### **Blue Note New York Residency**

October 19 - 23, The Chick Corea Elektric Band (10 shows)  
October 26 - 30, For Miles (10 shows)  
November 2 - 3, Three Quartets Band (4 shows)  
November 4 - 6, The Leprechaun Band (6 shows)  
November 9 - 10, Experiments in Electronica (4 shows)  
November 11 - 13, Chick's Flamenco Heart (6 shows)  
November 16 - 17, Chick Corea & the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra (4 shows)  
November 18 - 20, The Piano Duets (2 shows each with three pianists TBA)  
November 22 - 23, Chick Corea & Gary Burton feat. The Harlem String Quartet (4 shows)  
November 25 - 27, Origin II (6 shows)  
November 30 - December 4, The Music of Return to Forever (Acoustic) (10 shows)  
December 7, TBA (2 shows)  
December 8 - 11, Return to Forever Meets Mahavishnu (8 shows)

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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

powerfully on the piano, but it was the full orchestra that he considered his most compelling instrument. He introduced improvisation to his compositions — a process unheard of using a 15-piece orchestra. The result was a different approach to jazz that sparked a revolution and an evolution.



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

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



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

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

Jazz is art, you dig? Art can really transform lives. In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And the more likely they'll become well-rounded, cool members of society. For *Ten Simple Ways* to get more art in kids' lives, visit [AmericansForTheArts.org](http://AmericansForTheArts.org).



**Art. Ask for More.**  
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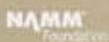
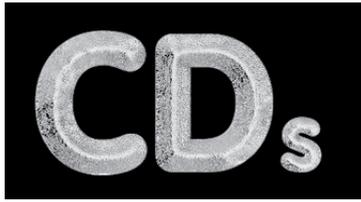
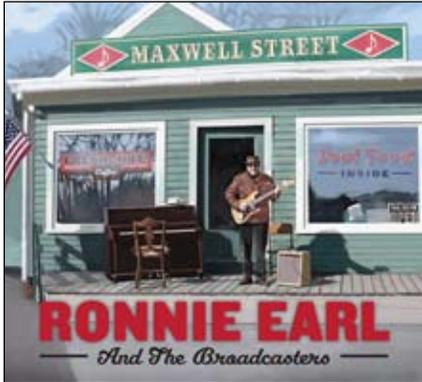


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We only bring you  
the Cream of the Crop!



## RONNIE EARL & THE BROADCASTERS

**Maxwell Street**  
STONY PLAIN

The title of the new album by Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters, "Maxwell Street," is a reference to the late pianist (and former broadcaster) David Maxwell, to whose memory this recording is dedicated. Earl's guitar is joined by his band of David Limina on keyboards, Jim Mouradian on bass, Lorne Entress on drums and Diane Blue on vocals with Nicholas Tabarias appearing as a guest on guitar. This recording is split between instrumentals and vocals and provides plenty of space for Earl's guitar, but also allows Limina to showcase his piano and organ chops.

Using the word chops to describe Ronnie Earl or Limina's keyboards is perhaps inappropriate as both are musicians whose instrumental mastery is tied to a keen musical intelligence. Earl especially is a player of nuance and subtlety, with his employment of small changes in pitch, as well as his use of space recalling such blues guitar legends such as Earl Hooker, Johnny Heartsman, Clarence Holliman and Mel Brown. Listening to the spiritual feeling of the opening original "Mother Angel," and his T-Bone Walker tribute "In Memory of T-Bone," as Limina's hauntingly beautiful tribute to Maxwell "Elegy For a Bluesman," and Earl's own "Blues For David Maxwell," makes this evident. One also must note the responsiveness of Limina and the excellence of the rhythm section throughout.

Diane Blue has developed into an outstanding, soulful singer, first heard on the Earl-Blue original "Kismet," with its spiritual message, followed by a lengthy rendition of Otis Rush's "Double Trouble," on which Earl again revisits one of his musical inspirations with both Limina and Earl taking lengthy solos. There is a surprising, bluesy rendition of the Gladys Knight

and the Pips hit "Imagination," a nice reading of "You Don't Know Me," owing more to Ray Charles than Eddy Arnold, before the album closes with a moving rendition of the classic Peppermint Harris tune (credited to Don Robey), "As the Years Go Passing By."

Ronnie Earl, in his brief notes, comments about how deep Dave Maxwell's playing was, and that observation is true about the music here. Earl extracts so much emotion with his sublime guitar playing which touches deep into the listener's heart, and the result is the superb "Maxwell Street." **Ron Weinstock**



## TOM MCCORMICK

**South Beat**  
SELF-PRODUCED

South Florida saxophonist and flutist Tom McCormick impresses as a musician, composer, arranger and leader on his new self-produced recording, "South Beat." McCormick, a Professor at Miami-Dade, is joined by Pete Wallace on piano, Nick Orta or Eric England on bass, Carlomanga Araya or David Chiverton on drums, Edwin Bonilla on congas, and Humberto Ibarra on guiro, with guest appearances by guitarist Jonathan Kreisberg and with trumpet and flugelhorn solos from John Lovell.

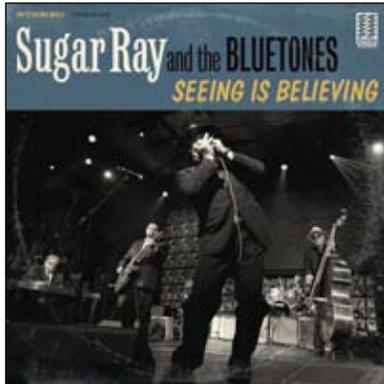
This is bouncy, lively latin-flavored straight-ahead jazz that opens with the bouncy title track that displays the leader's robust tenor sax along with crisp solos from Wallace and Lovell. "Iridescence" is another lively number with the rhythm helping percolate the performance before the leader's fruity solo. "Mantra" features the leader's airy flute along with Kreisberg's soaring guitar solo on a selection that has somewhat of an early Return to Forever feel to it. McCormick attractively scores Coltrane's "Naima" for the three horns on this recording as well as provides a nice rendition of this familiar jazz classic with outstanding backing from his rhythm section.

Wallace also takes a choice solo before John Kriker's trombone takes the lead on the performance's closing section. Horace Silver's "Barbara," benefits from the Latin flavor McCormick provides and Wallace is again outstanding on this as is the leader who displays a presence with his solo followed by some flugelhorn. The standard "My Foolish Heart" showcases

McCormick's very appealing manner with a ballad with considerable warmth in his tone and bassist England also soloing here.

"Blue Cha" again showcases McCormick's flute along Lovell's trumpet. Guitarist Leo Quintero guests on the soul-jazz tinged "Feel the Spirit," with Wallace's adding a touch of funk before the leader's gritty solo. A lively Latin Jazz take on the Dietz-Schwartz standard "Alone Together," with marvelous tenor sax, trumpet and piano provides a lively close to a recording that displays some of the marvelous talent down in South Florida.

*Ron Weinstock*



## SUGAR RAY AND THE BLUETONES

**Seeing Is Believing**  
SEVERN RECORDS

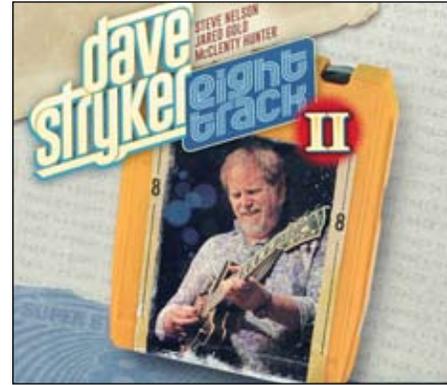
"Seeing Is Believing" is the latest from One of today's top blues groups, Sugar Ray and the BlueTones. Once again the quintet has produced a dozen blues grooves including eleven originals from the band members. Ray Norcia has certainly become a most expressive singer while Monster Mike Welch a superlative guitarist such as when he evokes Otis Rush on the title track behind Norcia's Junior Parker-like soulful crooning. Add Anthony Geraci's two-fisted piano, Michael Mudcat Ward's rock solid bass and Neil Gouvin's crisp drumming, and you have one superb band.

One should not be surprised by the variety in the mix of sounds here including Geraci's rock steady "Noontime Bell," where Norcia sings about leaving his ex-before that noontime bell before taking a charged harmonica solo while Geraci takes a piano break that would have made Otis Spann smile. On "Keep On Sailing," Norcia opens in the manner of one of Rice 'Sonny Boy Williamson' Miller's unaccompanied solo performances with the band joining halfway in, and then followed by a hot shuffle, "Blind Date" that provides another showcase for Norcia's harp as well as Welch coming across like a cross of a country swing version of Willie Johnson. Welch is showcased on an instrumental rendition of B.B. King's "You Know That I Love You," suggesting, but not imitating, King's guitar sound. What a nice tribute to the late legend.

The rest of the album is similarly first-rate with strong songs (including the blues ballad "Not Me" and the Muddy Waters' styled "Two Hundred Dollars Long"

with terrific slide guitar), fine vocals and a superb band, which should not be surprising since they have had the same line-up since Welch joined them 16 years ago (and the other four have been together 40 years). Hearing is believing Sugar Ray and the BlueTones with "Seeing Is Believing" being another terrific recording of tough Chicago-styled blues.

*Ron Weinstock*



**DAVE STRYKER**  
**Eight Track II**  
STRIKEZONE RECORDS

Long before the term "crossover" was in common usage in the music biz, jazz artists periodically found their way onto pop and r&b charts covering hits of the day. Some of these became bona fide hits in their own right including 60's smashes for Ramsey Lewis- "The 'In' Crowd" and Jimmy McGriff- "I've Got A Woman".

Guitarist Dave Stryker offers up his second set of pop tributes, first mining these veins on his well-received 2014 release, "Eight Track". Here his timeline spans from late 60's into the early 80's. Fronting a modified version of the classic jazz organ trio lineup, including vibraphonist Steve Nelson alongside Jared Gold (organ) and McClenty Hunter (drums), Stryker digs into major chart-toppers with a spirit that conveys a sense that these takes were as much fun as they were musically fruitful.

Stryker and Gold are solid soloists throughout, Hunter provides adequate drive at all times and Nelson's contributions are a refreshing departure for the format, exemplified by his smart, agile chorus on Marvin Gaye's "Trouble Man". While that track and the theme from "Midnight Cowboy" follow the script with close adherence to the original themes, the group's takes on the Isley Brothers' "Harvest For The World" and Prince's "When Doves Cry" are more straight-ahead jazz affairs with regard to groove and setting. Other ear-catching include James Ingram's "100 Ways" and the Zombies' "Time Of The Season". Good stuff

*Duane Verh*

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## DENNIS GRUENLING

Ready Or Not  
VIZZTONE

Harmonica wizard Dennis Gruenling has a new release on VizzTone, "Ready Or Not." Like his previous recording, 2012's "Rockin' All Day," he is backed by guitarist Doug Deming & the Jewel Tones (bassist Andrew Gohman and drummer Michael Bram). Also, Dave Keyes adds piano to 4 tracks and Doug Sasfai adds saxophone to 4 selections, plus producer Steve Conte adds acoustic guitar to one song.

The liner notes note that the album was focused on a rock and roll styled record, harking back to the 1950s with artists like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley and Fats Domino. Gruenling wrote all the songs (some in collaboration) and for the first time takes all the vocals and he comes across credibly with his straight-forward delivery, although his vocals are not on the same level as his harmonica playing. The Jewel Tones and the others certainly do their bit to help create the feel and the lyrics have a school hop flavor.

There are many pleasures starting with the opening Little Richard flavored "Knockin' My Knees," that evokes some of the recordings of Kid Thomas (although Gruenling is somewhat straight-laced compared to Kid Thomas' frenzied singing). "Simmer Down" is musically related (not lyrically related) to the Roy Montrell classic "(Everytime I Hear) That Mellow Saxophone" and featured some tasty interplay between Gruenling and Deming.

The groove on "Little Sugar" suggests some Gary U.S. Bonds recordings with some very tasty guitar along with a nice harmonica solo, while on "Ready To Burn" it sounds like he sings through his harp mike, giving his vocal a distorted feel that matched the hot harp on this. There are two instrumentals, the blistering, "Rockin' With The Rev," and the moody sounding "Count Chromatic," where his fat tone is marked by Deming's Luther Tucker sounding fills that closes the 13 song recording up.

"Ready Or Not" is another highly enjoyable recording that fans of Gruenling and Deming will certainly love, and for those unfamiliar with the two, it is musically a solid introduction to the music.

*Ron Weinstock*

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## BARBARA DANE WITH TAMMY HALL

Throw It Away ...  
DREADNAUGHT MUSIC

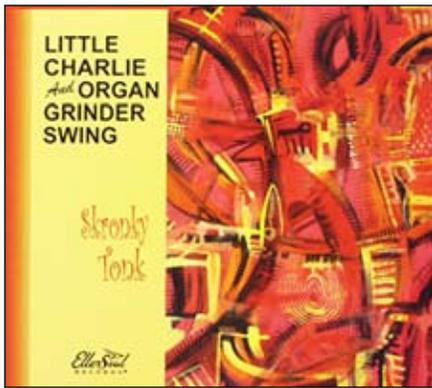
What marvelous career Barbara Dane has had, ranging the whole spectrum of American music. From her classic jazz recordings, and her memorable album shared with Lightnin' Hopkins over a half century ago, she remains a singular presence on the music scene. Now at 88, she teamed with a wonderful pianist, Tammy Hall and produced "Throw It Away ...," with some classic blues, torch songs and a few more modern gems. Filling out the backing is bassist Ruth Davies (best known from her time with Charles Brown) and drummer Bill Maginnis with Pablo Menéndez adding blues harp on three tracks and Richard Hadlock adding soprano sax on one.

Dane may not have the range as a singer she once had, but the jazzy accompaniment allows her to "explore entirely new ways of singing." Certainly this is evident in the opening rendition of Memphis Minnie's bawdy "I'm Selling My Porkshops," where her delivery evokes Helen Humes and Ruth Brown in their latter days, which is followed by her take on Leonard Cohen's "Slow," with its humorous, half spoken vocal about her partner wanting to get there fast, but she wants to get it to last, and that she always liked it slow because it is in her blood. There are a number of other gems including Abby Lincoln's song that provides the CD its title, and that sometimes it is best to let go; Paul Simon's "American Tune," Duke Ellington's "All Too Soon" to which she added lyrics and Hadlock's soprano sax suggests Johnny Hodges, and the Lennon and McCartney classic "In My Life."

There is plenty of humor here such as Lu Mitchell's "The Kugelsburg Bank," celebrating a little old lady that is enjoying her slice of the pie south of the border after years of being the bank's outstanding employee, as well as her rendition of Mose Allison's "My Brain" (set to the "This Train"/"My Babe" melody). She does not ignore her progressive leanings whether in her environmentally conscious "King Salmon Blues" and her rendition of a Leroy Carr standard "Tell Me How Long" as he asks when we will get justice, tell me how long.

Not the singer of her youth perhaps, but her experiences have helped her shape these performances marvelously and Tammy Hall is a stellar accompanist with the rhythm rendering apt, complementary backing. "Throw It Away ..." is a gem of a recording.

*Ron Weinstock*



## LITTLE CHARLIE AND ORGAN GRINDER SWING

Skronky Tonk  
ELLERSOUL RECORDS

While best known for his blues guitar, Little Charlie Baty has been including playing some jazz-like material with Little Charlie and the Nightcats. While with that band, he did a solo project in 2005 rooted in the swing era that Alligator passed on. A few years later he had an opportunity to do a blues and jazz CD which he was delighted with, but alas still as not been released.

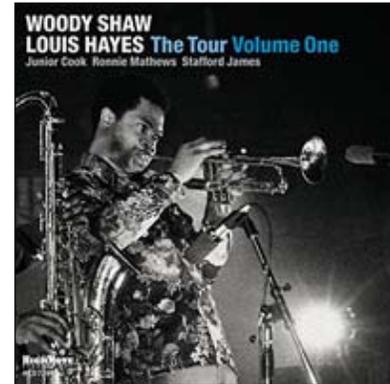
He since has left fronting the Nightcats and has been engaging in a variety of different musical activities including touring with Anson Funderburgh and James Harmon, playing gypsy jazz and other jazz settings. In any event, as Baty says, the third time is the charm, as Ellersoul has issued his first jazz recording by Little Charlie and Organ Grinder Swing, "Skronky Tonk" with Lorenzo Farrell on the Hammond B-3 (and bass on one track) and J Hansen on drums and percussion.

The mood is set on the opening title track, a blues, that provides the trio's sound and feel, with Baty displaying the taste and technique and musical imagination one expects. Listening to this recording one can hear a variety of influences at different times, Charlie Christian, Django Reinhardt, Kenny Burrell, Barney Kessel and Les Paul. Paul's influence perhaps is most evident on passages of "How High The Moon," but even here Baty mixes in some bebop later. One can't underestimate Farrell's contributions whether comping or taking some greasy solos. Django Reinhardt's "Nugages" may be this listener's favorite track, with Baty outstanding with his nicely nuanced playing and warm tone and followed by his mix of single note runs and chords on "Pennies From Heaven," which also sports some deep fried grease from Farrell.

Baty's original bop tune, "Gerontology" is followed an evocative rendition of John Lewis' tribute to Reinhardt "Django," with Farrell evoking a church organ on this chamber jazz-type performance. Then there is the peppy Charlie Christian classic "Swing to Bop," and a nice rendition of the Brazilian choro classic from Pixinguinha, "Um a Zero." "Flying Home" closes this very solid guitar-organ trio album.

I have not mentioned J. Hansen's contribution, but

he is constantly in the pocket and pushing this swinging recording along. Farrell's Hammond B-3 playing is a revelation for a person who is known as a bass player, but definitely has displayed his mastery of the organ. Charlie Baty, with his consistently inventive, fluid jazz guitar, exhibits a side of his musical personality that many have not previously heard, and one looks forward to more from him in this vein. *Ron Weinstock*



## WOODY SHAW - LOUIS HAYES

The Tour Volume One  
HIGH NOTE

Word of a release of a previously unissued recording by the Louis Hayes-Junior Cook Quintet from a 1976 tour was the cause of great anticipation. It is released under trumpeter Woody Shaw's name, that reflects the fact that the late Shaw became subsequently one of the most brilliant trumpeters, composers and band-leaders of the seventies and eighties.

Not long after this European tour, saxophonist Cook left and Shaw took over as co-leader with Rene McLean (Jackie's son) replacing him, but with the same rhythm section of the highly under-appreciated pianist, Ronnie Matthews, Stafford James on bass and Louis Hayes on drums making for one of the most formidable rhythm sections of that time. I saw the Hayes-Shaw band at the original downstairs Tralfamadore Cafe in Buffalo in winter 1976-1977 and there is a live recording of the Hayes-Shaw group from Lausanne Switzerland from 1977 available.

That 1977 recording is very good indeed, but this March 19676 recording simply has become my favorite Shaw recording, opening with "Moontrane," which Shaw wrote when he was 18 and had recorded with organist Larry Young. Explosive is an understatement of this performance with Matthews really playing at such a high level, and then listening to James under the Shaw's solo while Hayes pushes things along. Things don't cool at all on Larry Young's "Obsequious," which features Cook's hot playing followed by Shaw along with the astounding rhythm section. Things cool down just so slightly on a terrific rendition of Walter Booker's up-tempo bossa/samba, "Book's Bossa," before the band takes flight again on pianist Matthews' burner "Ichi-ban" (the title track of a studio album the group

made). This stellar recording closes with a standard by Bronislaw Kaper, "Invitation," which gets a very personalized interpretation by this group.

Listening to Shaw here one cannot help but be astonished by his ability to compose his ideas at such a fast tempo, the brilliant execution, articulation of his playing and the warmth of his tone. It is why such major trumpeters of today as Brian Lynch and Terrence Blanchard regard Shaw and his legacy so highly. Of course when you add the more than impressive playing of Cook and the superb rhythm section, it characterized what was, in its somewhat brief existence, one of the great jazz groups of seventies. Woody Shaw III, Woody's son, contributes the liner notes in the accompanying booklet for this CD release which is available as a pdf file on the iTunes download of this CD (which is where I purchased this). I do not know if the liner notes accompany downloads from other sites.

With the superb music here, one hopes that Volume 2 will be coming out shortly, as this music here is that good.

*Ron Weinstock*



**MARK MAY BAND  
& THE SOUL SATYR HORNS**  
Blues Heaven  
COMMON RAY/BAD FORK

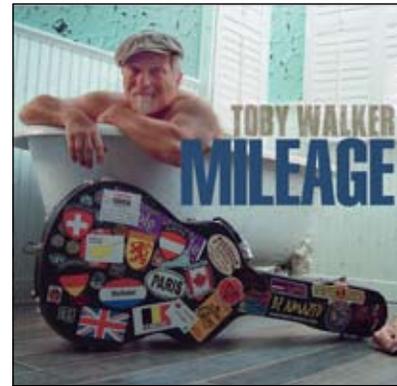
Columbus, Ohio isn't known as the epicenter of the blues, but native singer/guitarist Mark May is trying his best after moving back after a couple decades in Houston, Texas. Now out with his sixth solo project, the former guitarist with Dickie Betts Great Southern gives a tour de force of blues styles during "Blues Heaven."

May leads the way on the "Boom Boom" original via guitar and wah wah pedal. Greg Martin from the Kentucky Headhunters shows up on slide during the upbeat rocker "She's A Keeper." Sax man Eric Demmer sets the table on the title selection, which offers an interesting thought in "if I get to blues heaven, will all my friends be there?" My friends might be in a spot somewhere warmer, but it is worth a thought. Steve Krause's harmonica puts the boogie in "Put Down That Poison" as May's guitar pleads its case during "Leaving Houston." Krause's harmonica then battles it out with John Popovich's B-3 during "I'm Her Fool," while Eric Demmer's sax whips it out throughout "Garden

Of Truth."

There is something for everyone during "Blues Heaven" and just dropping Albert Collin's name as an influence would be a cheap way to summate the disc.

*Peanuts*



**TOBY WALKER**  
Mileage  
SELF-PRODUCED

Long Island's Toby Walker, who is among the most gifted acoustic blues and roots performers around today, has just released his latest album "Mileage." The title comes from the miles of traveling Walker has traveled over the decades of his career illustrated from the stickers on his guitar case pictured on the cover. There is a nice mix of finger picking blues, some Doc Watson styled flat-picking and a Muddy Waters' cover ("She Moves Me") where his steel slide playing evoked the Black Ace.

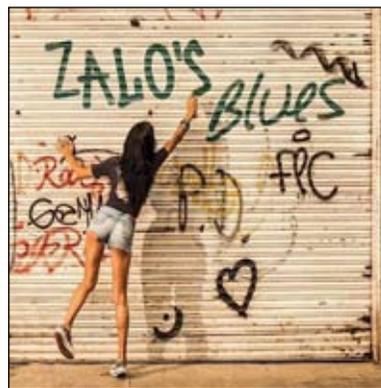
Things get started with a delightful original co-written with Tom Griffith, "Seven-Dy Wonder," a humorous reworking of the having a woman every day of the week theme with superb Piedmont styled guitar followed by a slightly rebranding of a classic Blind Lemon Jefferson, "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean." "Jimmy Brown The Newsboy, is one of several numbers that have him in an old-timey/bluegrass/Irish folk mode reminiscent of Doc Watson, with similar wonderful picking on "Daly's Reel/Stoney Lonesome" and "Temperance Reel." Mookie Wilson's "My Baby Owns A Whiskey Store" is a delightful blues romp about having a new baby who takes care of Toby's needs since "he don't have to buy no more," set against a brisk, propulsive accompaniment.

Toby says he "can hardly get through without cracking up," when he performs Tim Wallace's "You Don't Really Care," and listening to this one wonders how many takes it took to record this delightful performance. It is followed by a classic honky-tonk styled country number, "Dim Lights, Thick Smoke." A brisk "Shortnin' Bread" is followed by a solo, acoustic rendition of Tiny Powell's recording "My Time After A While," that was covered for Chess by Buddy Guy who copied Johnny Heartsman's guitar as well. Walker sounds vocally a bit like John Hammond here.

Other pleasures include another Walker-Griffith

collaboration, “Shakin’ Her Bacon,” with amusing, slightly naughty lyrics with his strutting accompaniment, a lively interpretation of Fats Waller’s “Lulu’s Back In Town, the melancholy ballad “Delia,” and the hokum fun of “You’re Gonna Look Like A Monkey When You Get Old,” where Walker’s slide playing sounds like he is in a Western Swing group. It is an exhilarating close to an album of diverse and varied material that is superbly performed. This marvelous recording can be purchased from Toby directly, <http://www.littletobywalker.com/my-new-cd.html>, as well as better retailers.

*Ron Weinstock*



## GONZALO BERGARA

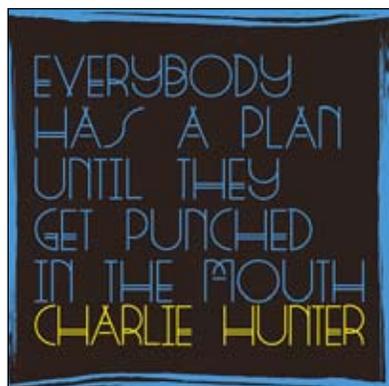
**Zalo's Blues**  
SELF-PRODUCED

The Buenos Aires-based Gonzalo Bergara may best be known for his gypsy jazz quartet, Charlie Baty notes that when he first met the Argentinian, Bergara was developing as a blues guitarist. Then he changed gears and immersed himself in the gypsy jazz tradition (something Baty himself has done).

Now Bergara has made a ‘blues’ recording, which also includes his vocals. Baty calls him “one of the most talented guitarists in the universe” and he certainly displays his chops and appealing vocals on an album of originals with the exception of a Jimmy Reed cover, backed in 2015 by his trio of Mariano D’Andrea on bass and Maximiliano Bergara on drums (except for one track with Vince Bilbro on bass and Michael Partlow on drums that was recorded in 2003).

While Baty calls this Bergara’s 1st “Blues” album, it transcends the genre with a fair dose of blues-rock and country in the songs along with a focus on his guitar playing which incorporates doses of surf-guitar and country-billy that evoke a Danny Gatton or Tom Principato. The opening “Drawback” certainly dazzles, followed by some very credible singing on “Drinking,” a nice rock & flavored tune crisply played with some more guitar fireworks which doesn’t obscure how inventive and logically he plays. “Singing My Song” is more of a classic rock styled song, but again one is impressed by his guitar playing, especially in his use of space and tone. Covering Jimmy Reed’s “You Don’t Have To Go,” he opens sampling Reed’s original but tearing into the performance with his vocal very much reflecting Reed’s influence, even if it is a bit more emphatically done than the lazy Reed original.

“Dirty Socks” is another sampling of his blistering fretwork set against a funk groove, followed by “Gotta Go,” a country-rockabilly romp followed by a driving shuffle groove on the original blues “No More.” “Whoosh” is another brisk instrumental with some jazzy accents that was based on Charlie Baty’s “Percolatin’,” and on which Baty not only felt Bergara captured his sound, but had a more interesting theme. Starting off as a lament, “Been Runnin’” is a dose of blues-rock and his playing explodes here (although likely my least



## CHARLIE HUNTER

**Everybody Has A Plan**

**Until They Get Punched In The Mouth**

GROUND UP/VERVE

That jazz is rooted primarily in the blues is a foregone. Guitarist Hunter and crew here celebrate that connection in a way that extols both sides of that bond in a fresh and exuberant manner. Teamed with drummer Bobby Previte and a brass duo consisting of cornetist Kirk Knuffke and trombonist Curtis Fowlkes, Mr. Hunter imbues bluesy motifs with varied, ear-fetching “heads” frequently (and charmingly) idiosyncratic in nature.

The brass voices often take on a “talking” mode that calls up a very Charles Mingus-like atmosphere (think “Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting”) and provides most appealing punctuation for Hunter’s tasty blues excursions. Providing his own primal bass support on his seven-string axe distinguishes each tune from the ground up. The steamy title track gives way to the lumbering, quirky “(Looks Like) Someone Got Ahead Of Schedule On Their Medication” - talk about a Mingus-like touch. Other standouts include “We Don’t Want Nobody Sent”, “Latin For Travelers” and “No Money No Honey”.

*Duane Verh*

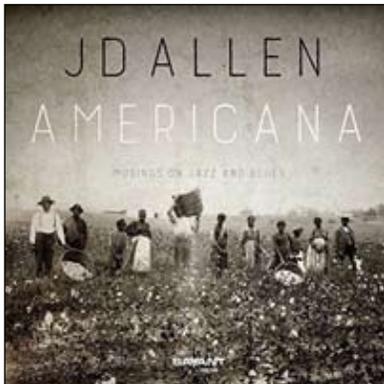
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favorite track). “Levi” is a nice medium tempoed blues instrumental with a mix of restraint and explosive guitar followed by a lovely tone poem “Ines,” another display of technique, taste and dynamics. The closing “Won’t Stay With You” contrasts with understated accompaniment supporting his vigorous singing.

Listening to “Zalo’s Blues,” one is most impressed by the superb guitar work from Gonzalo Bergara and if not a great singer, he does deliver his vocals with a definite appeal. With his trio, he has provided a recording that will certainly have many take notice of his talent.

*Ron Weinstock*



**JD ALLEN**  
**Americana:**  
**Musings on Blues and Jazz**  
**SAVANT RECORDS**

The remarkable tenor saxophonist JD Allen describe’s his newest album, “Americana,” as his “personal investigation of the blues at this point in my evolution as a musician.” With the exception of two selections, his seven original compositions are based on I-IV-V-I blues progressions, although listening to earlier blues artists he realized that structurally the 12 bar blues form and the so-called blues scale actually have very little to do with the blues.

Great blues artists such as Skip James and Bessie Smith certainly support this argument. ... “In my opinion the blues is the gateway to the past and present of American music, the well from which gospel, jazz, rock, country, rhythm & blues and hip hop are drawn. The spirit of the blues, be it subtle or overt, manages to show itself in every genre of American music. Without a doubt, it is my connection as a person and a musician to the definition of Americana.”

I do not know if I fully agree that the Blues is the roots of all American vernacular music, but there is no question that J.D. Allen and his trio of bassist Gregg August and Drummer Rudy Royston have produced a remarkable recording of instrumental blues. Allen’s playing has been compared to Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane, although in interviews he also mentions Dexter Gordon’s influence. With respect to this recording, Coltrane’s sound perhaps is most evident. I point out the remarkable interpretation of Vera Hall’s lament that was originally recorded for the Library of Congress by Alan Lomax, “Another Man Done Gone.” The tenor echoes the field holler quality of the la-

ment and complemented by August’s stunning Arco bass and Royston’s turbulent turns on the drums.

“Cotton” opens with August’s bass line before Allen’s tenor brings a solemn tone as he constructs his solo here. It is followed by a brighter groove on “Sugar Free,” a blues that has a bit of Ornette Coleman’s influence, followed by “Bigger Thomas,” named after the main character in Richard Wright’s “Native Son.” Allen and the trio’s playing here is suggestive of Coltrane’s “Chasin’ The Trane,” with Royston, in particular, complementing Allen. A similar feel marks the closing “Lillie Mae Jones,” but “Lightnin’” also merits attention with the Middle-Eastern sonority of Allen’s playing.

Allen, August and Royston have been playing together for sometime and this is reflected in the cohesiveness of the trio throughout this recording. It is an outstanding exploration of the blues in jazz by one of its leading artists.

*Ron Weinstock*



**THE MIGHTY ORQ**  
**Love In A Hurricane**  
**CONNOR RAY**

At first glance at the cd’s cover here, you might think it is the soundtrack for a Saturday morning kid’s cartoon show. Not even close. What we have is the first release from a long-time Houston, Texas, blues guitarist. Filled with 10 originals and a couple covers, the Mighty Orq has the feel of a Texas legend, Stevie Ray Vaughan, within his own style.

While noting a funky, in a good way, presentation of Freddie King’s “Pack It Up,” I noticed riffs The Mighty Orq has picked up along the way from other guitarists. First being the Joe Walsh influence during the title cut and the Bob Seger feel on “The Possum Song,” with help from Barry Seelen on B-3. Seelan is back via piano to help give some slow textures during “Carry Me Home” as Seelen also shows off on accordion during “You’re In Love (That’s Alright)” (I can swear I just heard this song recently under another title, the two numbers must be first cousins to each other).

“Love In A Hurricane” finishes off slow and thoughtful, due to the Mighty Orq’s Weissenborn guitar playing on the grand finale instrumental “Cannon Ball.” Bottom line is it’s all good and, if you like a Texas stew of musical styles, there’s a lot to like during “Love In A Hurricane.”

*Peanuts*



**JULIO BOTTI**  
**Sax To Tango**  
**ZOHO MUSIC**

“Sax To Tango” is the second CD collaboration between Argentine born, but New York domiciled saxophonist Julio Botti and his celebrated mentor and colleague, Nuevo Tango pianist, arranger and composer Pablo Ziegler.

The prior recording, a Latin Grammy nominee, featured classic quintet settings with occasional string quartet accompaniment, while the present recording is more ambitious in its arrangements featuring The University of Southern Denmark Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Argentine conductor Saul Zaks in a selection of nine iconic Astor Piazzolla Nuevo tangos, one Tango standard, and three compositions by Pablo Ziegler who also plays piano. The recording sessions were scheduled in connection with a live concert of the material.

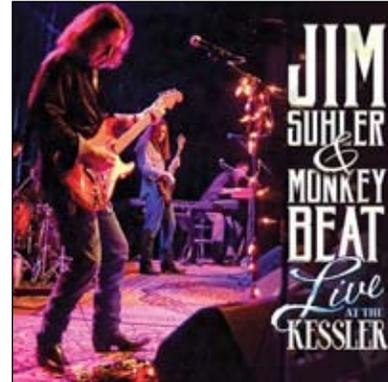
As Ziegler observes the saxophone was never a traditional tango instrument, but he finds Botti able to express Nuevo Tango as if a tango singer and the orchestrations both frame his vocalized and passionate playing but also add to the romanticism inherent in the music.

This becomes clear on the opening “Primavera Porteña,” part of Astor Piazzolla’s “Los Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires),” which was inspired by Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons but composed at different times and not primarily intended to be performed together or in seasonal sequence. This composition is a celebration of spring and is followed by “Invierno Porteño,” a celebration of winter. Both compositions and the lovely orchestration allow plenty of space for Botti to sing on the soprano and dance through the orchestrations with various shifts in tempo and mood with Ziegler’s piano itself adding to the music. Much the same can be said of the performances throughout.

The music is beautiful, passionate and invigorating with the orchestrations enhancing the many delights of Botti’s voice as he brings life to the rest of Piazzolla’s “Los Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas,” along with the beautiful melody of Juan Carlos Cobian’s “Nieblas del Riachuelo,” the lively “Fuga Y Misterio,” with sax dancing along with Ziegler’s piano, the Piazzolla com-

position “Oblivion,” with some hauntingly beautiful saxophone, and Ziegler’s own “Rojotango,” with its sense of drama in the orchestration.

“Sax To Tango” is a remarkable recording full of many listening delights. *Ron Weinstock*



**JIM SUHLER & MONKEY BEAT**  
**Live at the Kessler**  
**UNDERWORLD RECORDS**

Jim Suhler & Monkey Beat is a Dallas Texas blues-infused rock and roll and roots band based out of Dallas, Texas. Singer-songwriter and guitarist Suhler and the band have been together over two decades and had four albums on Lucky Seven and two prior ones on underworld while Suhler had a solo acoustic release on Topcat.

The band includes Jim Suhler (guitar, vocals), Chris Alexander (bass, vocals), Shawn Phares (keyboards) and Beau Chadwell (drums, percussion). On the new release, “Live at the Kessler,” they are joined by Tim Alexander on keyboards and Tex Lovera on cigar box guitar. Heard on these live performances from the Dallas venue are 13 songs that originally appeared on the studio albums, “Panther Burn,” “Tijuana Bible,” “Bad Ju Ju” and the solo acoustic “Dirt Road,” plus two new songs, “Doin’ the Best I Can” and “Reverie.”

There is plenty to like from Suhler’s straightforward, heartfelt vocals along with his strong guitar playing that is crisp and focused, leading one to understand why he plays lead guitar with George Thorogood. His band provides tight, well-paced backing adding to the enjoyment of the songs which range from strong rollicking original blues shuffles like “I Declare” and the rollicking “Scattergun” (with some solid slide guitar); the slide-drenched blues-rock of “Panther Burn”; the gritty rootsy depiction of a border city in “Tijuana Bible”; the wistful bluesy feel of “Deja Blue” (with some Tex-Mex flavored accordion in the backing); the Traveling Wilbury’s feel of his celebration of the gulf coast in “Texassippi”; and his affectionate tribute to Lightnin’ Hopkins, “Po’ Lightnin’.”

There is not a bum moment on “Live at the Kessler,” and it is so good to hear Jim Suhler & Monkey Beat still doing it so well today.

*Ron Weinstock*



**DICK OATTS/MATS HOLMQUIST  
NEW YORK JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

**A Tribute To Herbie +1  
SUMMIT/MAMA RECORDS**

Dick Oatts/Mats Holmquist New York Jazz Orchestra is a band comprised of some of the finest New York players with several distinguished Scandinavian players. Oatts is a lead player and artistic director of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra while Holmquist currently serves as Artistic Director for the JZ All Star Big Band in Shanghai. Holmquist suggested a big band tribute to Herbie Hancock, and with John Mosca's expertise as contractor and lead trombone to bring together a formidable cast of musicians that include Walt Weiskopf on tenor saxophone, Frank Basile on Baritone saxophone, Joe Magnarelli on trumpet, and

Adam Birnbaum on piano. Holmquist provided all the arrangements on this as well as contributed an original, "Stevie R," reflected in the "+1" in their recording's title, "A Tribute To Herbie +1."

These are some impressive interpretations of some of Hancock's iconic compositions including "Cantaloupe Island," "Chameleon," "Dolphin Dance," "Maiden Voyage" and "Watermelon Man." Influenced by minimalist composer Steve Reich, Holmquist which he describes in his arrangement of Chameleon... "In Chameleon I use a technique inspired by Steve Reich's famous composition "Drumming," starting with one note, adding one more, and another one, etc., until the thread of notes becomes a whole musical phrase." On this number he changes tempos as well as recomposes and reharmonizes the theme with tenor solos from Walt Weiskopf and Robert Nordmark standing out. Oatts on soprano sax and pianist Birnbaum are featured on "Dolphin Dance," while the uptempo "Eye of the Hurricane," has some blistering trumpet from Joe Magnarelli, along with hot tenor sax from Weiskopf, soprano sax from Oatts and a drum solo from John Riley. Magnarelli is featured with on "Stevie R.," Holmquist's original which also illustrates his construction of complexity from simple elements, and again on the marvelous "Maiden Voyage" with more marvelous trumpet and soprano sax, while there is a playfulness in the reworking of "Watermelon Man" that showcases Weiskopf's tenor sax and Basile's baritone sax along with some terrific support from the rhythm section.

Herbie Hancock's music has produced some of the most compelling performances of the past half century, particularly under his own name. The marvelous music on "A Tribute To Herbie +1" reflects the freshness that Hancock's music still has, along with the marvelous Holmquist arrangements and superb playing of the Oatts/Holmquist Big Band.

*Ron Weinstock*

**the BIG SOUND of LIL' ED and THE BLUES IMPERIALS**

**"ELECTRIFYING, RAUCOUS, PURE CHICAGO BLUES...LIL' ED IS A GUITARIST EXTRAORDINAIRE...SLASHING SLIDE AND FLAMBOYANT STAGE PERSONA." -Chicago Tribune**

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**NANCY WRIGHT**

**PLAYDATE!**

**DIRECT HIT RECORDS/ VIZZTONE**

It was Bob Porter who alerted me to saxophonist Nancy Wright, whose playing on a Blues Cruise deeply impressed him. She has just issued a recording titled "Playdate!" that was produced by Christoffer 'Kid' Andersen and recorded at his Greaseland Studios. Andersen also contributes guitar with the backing band

**PAGE TWENTY ONE**

including Chris Burns on keyboards, Joe Kyle Jr. on bass, J Hansen on drums, Tom Poole on trumpet, and Faris Jarrah on trombone, behind Wright's sax. There are a number of guests here that I will highlight as well, and I take it that Wright takes the uncredited vocals on this.

Listening to Wright's raspy sax (with plenty of vibrato) I am reminded of Junior Walker and Eddie Shaw, which certainly has an appeal. Certainly her playing stands out on the rocking reworking of a New Orleans recording "Why You Wanna Do It," with the fabulous soulful Wee Willie Walker taking the soulful vocal. As a singer, she has a bit of country in her sound but does a nice job of covering Koko Taylor on "I Got What it Takes," which features Tommy Castro on guitar and her own blistering solo. Victor Wainwright adds boogie laced piano to her original rocker "Yes He Do," which she rides out on sax. There is a pretty straight cover of Eddie Shaw's "Blues For the Westside" with Joe Louis Walker on guitar while Wright evokes Shaw's heavy vibrato on sax. Lonnie Mack (to who this album is dedicated) was the source of "Been Waiting That Long" that Frank Bey sings, while "Trampled" is a driving Junior Walker-styled instrumental with Jim Pugh on organ with Andersen taking a terrific Motown inspired guitar solo.

Wright's vocal on the gospel number "Satisfied" has her backed by a gospel choir, while Terry Odabi sings "Warranty," with a choice Wright lyric, followed by a capable vocal on Henry Glover's "Cherry Wine" originally done by Esther Phillips for Federal. Elvin Bishop is on guitar for a raspy instrumental take on "There Is Something On Your Mind," that I believe Big Jay would enjoy. Mike Schermer adds guitar to "Back Room Rock," a medium tempo rocker that sports solos from him and Wright and some call and response between them towards the close. "Good Rocking Daddy" is a Wright original, not the Etta James number, and is evocative of some sixties Chicago soul recordings.

Another instrumental, the moody "Soul Blue" with Chris Cain on guitar, closes this album on a strong note. Her sax on this is a bit more nuanced (less vibrato) and the underrated Cain shines as do all the players on this. The musicianship throughout is first-rate and in addition to the solos, the arrangements are solid and avoid being hackneyed, and the production is up to the high standards expected from Kid Andersen and the Greaseland Studios. There is so much music to enjoy on Wright's "Playdate."

**Ron Weinstock**



## THE HOT SARDINES French Fries & Champagne UNIVERSAL MUSIC CLASSICS

The Hot Sardines, led by bandleader Evan Palazzo and lead singer Elizabeth Bougerol, might be simplistically described as a retro-swing jazz ensemble, featuring lively, crisp, brassy band accompaniments to Ms. Bougerol's flirty vocals, that evoke in part the music 52nd Street and Paris cabarets. The band includes the trumpet of Jason Prover, drummer Alex Raderman, saxophone and clarinet by Nick Myers, and trombone and cornet from Mike Sailors with a number of selections effectively employing a string section.

As a vocalist Ms. Bougerol might invite comparisons to Cyrille Aimee and delights with her voice and her understated delivery that is so delightful on the unexpected rearrangement of Robert Palmer's "Addicted To Love," as well as the Doris Day-like novelty "Sweet Pea." The jazz standard (sung by Billie Holiday among many others) "Come Love," opens as a minuet (piano and strings) before Ms. Bougerol sings in her native French before a stride piano break followed by her turning to English with some brassy horns led by Prover's blistering trumpet and Myers clarinet. Similarly original is the rendition of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "People Will Say We're In Love," taken as a tango with string embellishments adding to the performance's flavor.

Alan Cummings duets with Ms. Bougerol on "When I Get Low I Get High," which Ella Fitzgerald popularized and songs like a soundtrack from a late thirties' cartoon. The country-tinged Bougerol original "Here You Are Again" receives an urbane pop treatment followed by a lovely rendition of "Until The Real Thing Comes Along," that was made famous by Pha Terrell's vocal on the Andy Kirk original. The title track might lightly celebrate having a frolic even when times might not justify them. After "La Fille Aux Cheveux Roux (Weed Smoker's Dream)," sung in French to the melody of Kansas Joe McCoy's "Weed Smoker's Dream," that itself evolved into the better known "Why Don't You Do Right?" Since "La Fille Aux Cheveux Roux" translates as "Women With Red Hair," I suspect this might have original lyrics in French.

Palazzo's instrumental tribute to his own neighbor-

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hood “Gramercy Sunset,” has a nice trombone solo along with his almost cocktail-styled piano with a lush strings overlay, that provides a coda to a recording that may not break any new ground, but certainly entertains with these gems of performances. **Ron Weinstock**



## LIL 'ED AND THE BLUES IMPERIALS

The Big Sound of Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials  
ALLIGATOR RECORDS

It has been 30 years since Lil' Ed Williams and the Blues Imperials signed with Alligator and they have had the same lineup of Williams, bassist (and half-brother) James 'Pookie' Young, guitarist Michael Garrett and drummer Kelly Littleton for a staggering 27 years.

On their 9th Alligator album, “The Big Sound of,” they are joined by the keyboards of Sumito 'Ariyo' Ariyoshi on a program of houserockin' slide guitar blues and boogies that make them favorites in the blues world. There are twelve originals and two covers of songs from his legendary uncle J.B. Hutto.

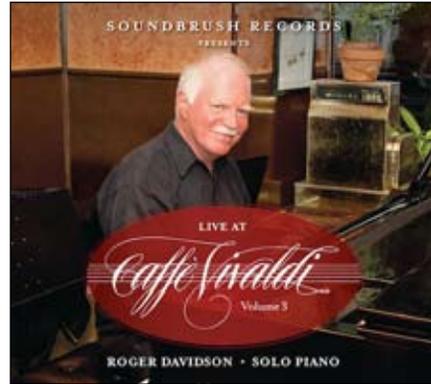
There is the insistent groove of the opening of “Giving Up On Your Love” followed by another original, “Raining in Paris,” with its neat incorporation of the “Dust My Broom” licks into the song which sounds like something his uncle could have written as Ed sings about crying about his lover being gone and when it's raining in the city of lights, all he can do is walk out in the rain. A strong topical blues “Poor Man's Song,” about nothing coming his way and can't do anything right is followed by a driving cover of Hutto's “Shy Voice,” with more slashing slide.

“Black Diamond Love,” built on an insistent riff played by Garrett with a memorable chorus line, is followed by “Whiskey Flavored Tears,” a driving original using the “Dust My Broom” groove. The other Hutto cover, “I'll Cry Tomorrow,” is a terrific slow blues and the rest of the album is musically at a consistent high level, which should not be surprising given that the band has been playing together for so long.

One might add that Ed Williams is perhaps underestimated as a songwriter. In addition to songs I highlighted above, the others, “I Like My Hot Sauce Cold,” where he notes he likes his barbecue warm and hot sauce cold as well as the observant “Troubled World” are standouts. The driving “Green Light Groove,” where

Ed celebrates everything going his way and lays down some hot slide guitar closes this recording.

Ed has built his worldwide following of 'Edheads' through his houserockin' blues, but it is easy to overlook how much musical meat, not simply fun, Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials lay down. “The Big Sound Of” is simply superb. **Ron Weinstock**



## ROGER DAVIDSON

Live at Cafe Vivaldi Volume 3  
SOUNDBRUSH RECORDS

In 2012, Soundbrush Records started a regular Wednesday night performance series at the venerable Caffe Vivaldi in New York City's Greenwich Village. The timeless cafe became their informal home. In 2013 Soundbrush Records began recording these perfor-

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mances. "Live at Cafe Vivaldi Volume 3," is the third release featuring pianist, composer and label founder Roger Davidson, who is best known as a classical artist. The first two were duo and trio recordings, and this one is a solo recording.

14 of the 16 selections are Davidson's Brazilian inspired compositions with renditions of Cole Porter's "I Love You," and Joseph Kosma's "Autumn Leaves." Davidson impresses as a pianist and composer with the touch and fluidity of his playing as well as the liveliness of the performances starting with the opening "Alegria Brasileira," while at other times his playing has a stately eloquence as on "Bossa Para Você." He can convey considerable beauty ("Amazing You" and "Saudade Do Brasil") and charm ("Amor Brasileiro"). At times his compositions recall jazz classics as "Dia Feliz," a musical cousin to "Back Home In Indiana," which also sports some of his most intriguing improvisations as does his first lyrical rendering and then imaginative deconstruction of "I Love You."

This is a wonderfully recorded by Luis Bacque with the audience audible at the conclusion of these most charming and delightful performances.

*Ron Weinstock*

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