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Monterey Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Tour

2007 Holiday Gift Guide

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Editor & Founder Bill Wahl

Layout & Design Bill Wahl

Operations Jim Martin
Pilar Martin

Contributors

Michael Braxton, Mark Cole, Kelly Ferjutz, Dewey Forward, Chris Hovan, Nancy Ann Lee, Peanuts, Matt Simpson, Wanda Simpson, Mark Smith, Dave Sunde, Duane Verh, Emily Wahl and Ron Weinstock.

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Main Office 216.651.0626

Editor's Desk ... 440.331.1930

Comments...billwahl@jazz-blues.com

Web www.jazz-blues.com

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ON THE COVER

L-R: Benny Green, James Moody, Terence Blanchard, Derrick Hodge, Kendrick Scott
Photo © 2007 by John Green

Photo of James Moody (R) by Tom Ehrlich



"Buffalonious"

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

Monterey Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Tour

MJF/50 All-Star Band Features Terence Blanchard, James Moody, Nnenna Freelon, Benny Green, Derrick Hodge & Kendrick Scott

54-Date Tour Kicks Off January 8 In Washington State, Continues Through 52 Cities In 22 States From January – March, 2008



Nnenna Freelon



James Moody

Monterey, CA – Building on the exciting and unprecedented legacy of fifty years of historic jazz presentation, the Monterey Jazz Festival is proud to announce the nationwide, 10-week, 54 date tour of the Monterey Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Band. Heralded as a meeting of three generations of jazz masters, the MJF 50th Anniversary Band showcases the leaders of the past, present and future with Terence Blanchard on trumpet, James Moody on saxophone, musical director Benny Green on piano, Derrick Hodge on bass, and Kendrick Scott on drums. Vocalist Nnenna Freelon will also be a featured member of the group as they embark on the 54 date, 22 state tour starting in January 2008.

Each member of the 50th Anniversary Band has a special relationship with the Monterey Jazz Festival, and has a commitment to the Festival and the cultivation of jazz audiences worldwide. Saxophonist James

Moody made his first appearance at MJF in the early 1960s with Dizzy Gillespie; Benny Green participated in MJF's educational programs as a teenager in the 1970s; Terence Blanchard was MJF's Artist-In-Residence in 2007; Nnenna Freelon has been performing at MJF since the mid 1990s; Kendrick Scott was a three-time member of the Berklee-Monterey Quartet from 1999-2002, and Derrick Hodge has been a member of Terence Blanchard's bands that have performed at Monterey.

"We wanted to create a lasting legacy for our 50th anniversary," says Monterey Jazz Festival General Manager Tim Jackson. "To kick it off, we've assembled some of the masters of jazz who have a close relationship with the Festival to carry the MJF name across America. We've had all-star groups who have performed at Monterey in the past, but they've never gone on a multiple-week tour in the US, so this is an historic occasion for us. All the members represent the spirit and educa-

tional enthusiasm of the Monterey Jazz Festival that we'd like to present to the country...plus they're an incredible band, they were mesmerizing at the 50th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival in September 2007. They embody the past, present and future of jazz history."

The Monterey Jazz Festival 50th Anniversary Band will begin their ten-week tour in the Pacific Northwest in Bellingham, Washington on January 8. They will appear at major performing arts organizations in many regions of the county including California, the Southwest, Texas, Florida, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, the Washington DC area, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, the New England states, Indiana and Michigan. For a complete list of shows, see below. Each of the shows will feature a selection of standards and favorites from all periods of jazz, including the Tin-Pan Alley, bebop, and modern eras.

All-Star Bands at Monterey have been a long-standing tradition at MJF. Starting in 1966, the Festival assembled master musicians under the "Monterey All-Stars" moniker. At least 17 Monterey All-Star Bands have graced the stages of Monterey and have included Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan, Elvin Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, Ray Brown, Sonny Stitt, Max Roach, John Lewis, Shelly Manne, Bobby Hutcherson, Hank Jones, Milt Jackson, and many more as members. All together, the members of the MJF 50th Anniversary Band have performed at Monterey twenty-eight times.

About the Band

Trumpeter Terence Blanchard, a leading musician of his generation, won the 2005 Grammy Award for "Best Jazz

Album," and was nominated for four other Grammys and for the Grand Prix du Disque. Blanchard has written over 40 film scores, including Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*, *Malcolm X*, *Inside Man*, and *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts*. His compositions have received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations. Blanchard was chosen by the Monterey Jazz Festival to be its 2007 Artist-In-Residence, and performed extensively at MJF/50 in September, where his band premiered *A Tale of God's Will: A Requiem for Katrina*.

Vocalist Nnenna Freelon is a six-time Grammy Award-nominee, her latest with the 2005 release *Blueprint of a Lady: Sketches of Billie Holiday* on the Concord label. Nnenna is the winner of the Eubie Blake Award, and was twice nominated for the "Lady of Soul" Soul Train Award. Don Heckman of the Los Angeles Times wrote "there is no doubt that Freelon has now positioned herself in the very top echelon."

At the age of 24, pianist Benny Green became a key member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and has played with such artists as Freddie Hubbard, Ray Brown, and Oscar Peterson. In 1993, Peterson chose him as the first recipient of the City of Toronto's Glenn Gould International Protégé Prize in Music. Green started his association with MJF as part of the Monterey Jazz Festival High School All-Star Big Band in the 1970s.

Bassist Derrick Hodge first came to acclaim by winning the Berklee College of Music's Outstanding Soloist Award in 1996 and 1997. He has gone on to perform and record with numerous artists including Terence Blanchard, Mulgrew Miller, Kanye West, Clark Terry, Freddy Cole, and many others. Also a composer, he has written for artists such as Terence Blanchard and Q-Tip.

One of the true jazz legends, versatile reedman James Moody has been sharing his musical genius with audiences for over five decades. In the mid-'40s, he joined the seminal bebop big band of Dizzy Gillespie; in the mid-'50s, he had a huge hit with "Moody's Mood for Love" and in 1998, he received the Jazz Master Award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Moody will be Grand Master of the show, and has been performing at MJF since the early 1960s.

Drummer Kendrick Scott began his relationship with MJF playing with the Berklee/Monterey Quartet, and has gone on to perform with such artists as Terence Blanchard, Kenny Garrett, Stefon Harris, and Joe Lovano. He received the 1999 Clifford Brown/Stan Getz fellowships from IAJE and the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. He released his debut CD, *The Source*, in 2007.

The dates for the U.S. tour are as follows:

- Jan. 8 - Mount Baker Theatre, Bellingham, WA
- Jan. 9 - Washington Center, Olympia, WA
- Jan. 11 - Rio Theatre, Santa Cruz, CA
- Jan. 12 - Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
- Jan. 14 - Campbell Hall, UC Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA
- Jan. 15 - Gallo Center for the Arts, Modesto, CA
- Jan. 16 - Cal Poly Performing Arts Center, San Luis Obispo, CA
- Jan. 17 - Irvine Barclay Theatre, Irvine, CA
- Jan. 18 - Royce Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA
- Jan. 19 - Citrus College, Glendora, CA

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

Jan. 20 - UNLV Performing Arts Center, Las Vegas, NV
 Jan. 22 - Lancaster Performing Arts Center,
 Lancaster, CA
 Jan. 23 - California Lutheran University,
 Thousand Oaks, CA
 Jan. 24 - California Center for the Arts, Escondido, CA
 Jan. 25 - Chandler Center, Chandler, AZ
 Jan. 26 - Centennial Hall, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
 Jan. 27 - Popejoy Hall, Univ. of New Mexico,
 Albuquerque, NM
 Jan. 31 - Stephen F. Austin State, Nacogdoches, TX
 Feb. 1 - McFarlin Auditorium, Dallas, TX
 Feb. 3 - Mississippi State University, Meridian, MS
 Feb. 4 - Thomasville Cultural Center, Thomasville, GA
 Feb. 5 - Gaillard Municipal Auditorium, Charleston, SC
 Feb. 6 - East Carolina University, Greenville, NC
 Feb. 7 - Appalachian State University, Boone, NC
 Feb. 8 - Atlanta Symphony Hall, Atlanta, GA
 Feb. 10 - Riverside Theatre, Vero Beach, FL
 Feb. 11 - Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, Sarasota, FL
 Feb. 12 - Kravis Center for the Perf. Arts,
 W. Palm Beach, FL
 Feb. 14 - Phillips Center, Univ. of Florida,
 Gainesville, FL
 Feb. 16 - Ferguson Center, Newport News, VA
 Feb. 17 - University of Richmond, Richmond, VA
 Feb. 19 - The Music Center at Strathmore,
 N. Bethesda, MD
 Feb. 20 - Grand Opera House, Wilmington, DE
 Feb. 21 - Community Theatre, Morristown, NJ
 Feb. 22 - McCarter Theater Center, Princeton, NJ
 Feb. 23 - The Mainstage at Proctor's, Schenectady, NY
 Feb. 24 - Baker Hall, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA
 Feb. 26 - Mechanics Hall, Worcester, MA
 Feb. 27 - Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield, MA
 Feb. 28 - The Music Hall, Portsmouth, NH
 Feb. 29 - Jorgensen Auditorium, Storrs, CT
 Mar. 1 - Jorgensen Auditorium, Storrs, CT
 Mar. 2 - Zeiterion Theatre, New Bedford, MA
 Mar. 4 - Fine Arts Center, Amherst, MA
 Mar. 5 - Colonial Theatre, Keene, NH
 Mar. 6 - Purchase College, Purchase, NY
 Mar. 7 - North Fork Hall, Brookfield, NY
 Mar. 8 - Hershey Theater, Hershey, PA
 Mar. 9 - Mason University, Fairfax, VA
 Mar. 11 - NYS Univ. at Buffalo Center for the Arts,
 Buffalo, NY
 Mar. 13 - Madame Walker Theatre, Indianapolis, IN
 Mar. 14 - Music Hall Center for Perf. Arts, Detroit, MI
 Mar. 15 - Music Hall Center for Perf. Arts, Detroit, MI
 Mar. 16 - Forest Hills Fine Arts Center,
 Grand Rapids, MI

For additional information, or to purchase tickets online please, visit www.montereyjazzfestival.org/MJF50-band/.

jazz-blues.com

5th Annual Portland Jazz festival to offer 'Best in Jazz - Inside & Out'

Over 150 Events Planned between February 15-24

Portland OR – A great deal of contemporary mainstream jazz, generally speaking, is risk free. Most jazz festivals in America play it safe, sticking with a successful and predictable stable of artists who rarely take the music beyond its resting place in history.

The fifth annual Portland Jazz Festival, presented by Qwest & The Oregonian A&E, set for February 15-24, dares to go where few jazz festivals in North America have ever been — moving ever forward. Indeed, any jazz event which opens with free jazz innovator Ornette Coleman and later closes with avant-garde pianist Cecil Taylor, is admittedly 'out there.' But, along with the likes of Parker, Coltrane, Rollins, Monk, Mingus and Miles, these were the players who kept pushing jazz forward; more afraid of standing still perhaps than spinning off the road out of control.

Yet even with the emphasis on the cutting edge art, the 2008 Portland Jazz Festival remains a diverse experience — a kaleidoscopic view of the myriad sounds and of jazz.

When one adds during this 10-day event the names of Joshua Redman, Bela Fleck & The Flecktones, Kenny Barron, Ron Carter, Maceo Parker, Tord Gustavsen, Nik Bartsch's Ronin, Jillian Lebeck, Avishai Cohen, Rob Scheps, Glen Moore, Myra Melford, Tim Berne, Joe Lovano, Dave Douglas, Stefon Harris, the Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Bill Charlap, Nancy King, Fred Hersch, The Bad Plus, Portland Jazz Orchestra, Miguel Zenon, Renee Rosnes, Eric Harland, and the Oregon Symphony, you've got the ingredients for a spicy, yet delicious jazz stew that should please the tastes of just about everybody who claims to be a jazz aficionado.

For the full calendar of events, visit online at www.pdxjazz.com.

In addition to each of the 18 ticketed performances, Portland Jazz Festival will present approximately 75 free performances, showcasing local and regional NW talent, and nearly 50 jazz education and outreach events.

Two weekends of headline programming act as bookends to support community education and outreach efforts on the festival week days. A focal point of these outreach efforts are performances of The Incredible Journey of Jazz, a 60-minute music-theater piece tracing Black History movements and events in parallel setting to the evolution of jazz music as America's only indigenous art form. These performances are staged for free at selected Portland area middle schools, and are presented exclusively for full-school assemblies where students are exposed to African rhythms, drumming, the singing and chanting on slave ships, to the eventual evolution of gospel, ragtime, blues, and the syncopated swing of jazz through rap and hip hop.

Last year's highly popular PDX Jazz Pavilion at Pioneer Courthouse Square, a heated tent, has expanded from 1,600 to 8,000 square feet in order to accommo-

date various student jazz ensembles from big bands to smaller trios and quartets. Student bands will have the opportunity to audition in November. The PDX Jazz Pavilion, which acts as the hub of the festival, will operate from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, February 15-17. It is the primary meeting site during the frenetic festival pace, a place to hang and relax, and to secure essential facts from representatives at the Festival Information Booth.

Through support from the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, Portland Jazz Festival has secured the Winningstad Theater for expanded instructional programs, including workshops, master classes, and individual clinics on Saturday and Sunday, February 16-17, between 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Within an open learning environment, serious music students can participate in separate 60-minute instructional sessions ranging from percussion, horns, reeds, keyboards and bass to improvisation methods and composition.

For some time, Portland Jazz Festival has worked on a plan to form a resident jazz ensemble comprised of the region's finest musicians and music educators. The Portland Jazz Orchestra, as the resident ensemble of the Portland Jazz Festival, is an integral part of the PDX Jazz goal to spread the language of jazz throughout the Northwest. Under the direction of Charley Gray, chairman of the Portland State University Music Department, and trombonist Lars Campbell, the 17-member band plays new arrangements of classic compositions by Thad Jones, Clare Fisher, Charles Mingus, and among others, plus original new work by Gray.

The superior musicians who form this group also teach at regional middle schools, high schools, and college music programs. The personnel consists of Brian Dickerson, Mary Sue Tobin, Tim Jensen, Scott Hall and Tim Bryson on saxophones and reeds; David Bryan, Jeff Uusitalo, Lars Campbell and Doug Peebles on trombones; Paul Mazzio, Farnell Newton, Rich Cooper and Matt Carr on trumpets; Ken Ollis, drums, Tom Wakeling, bass, Dan Gaynor, piano, and conductor Charley Gray.

The Portland Jazz Orchestra will perform on Wednesday, February 20, 7:30 PM, at the Crystal Ballroom.

As the resident ensemble of the Portland Jazz Festival, members of the Portland Jazz Orchestra will also act as instructors in conducting seminars, workshops, and master classes in fulfilling the Winningstad instructional schedule. Other members will act as guest soloists with student ensembles performing in the PDX Jazz Pavilion.

Included among these are the intimate and insightful Jazz Conversations, a jazz oral history collection with participating artists and journalists involved in one-on-one Q&A sessions before an intimate, live audience. Those sessions are subsequently broadcast on KMHD-FM and also available at the Portland Jazz Festival website, pdxjazz.com.

Despite the multiple venues, this year's edition of the Portland Jazz Festival has streamlined ticketing procedures with all shows on sale at local TicketMaster locations, PCPA box office, by calling 503-228-JAZZ (5299), or visiting the Portland Jazz Festival online at pdxjazz.com.

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release Blues.... **J.J. Cale-** *Rewind- The Unreleased Recordings*; **Stevie Ray Vaughan-** *Solos, Sessions and Encores*; **Doug Sahm-** *Live From Austin, Tx*; **Shannon Curfman-** *Fast Lane Addiction*; **Nick Moss and the Flip Tops-** *Play It 'Til Tomorrow*; **Billie Holiday-** *Lady Day: The Master Takes and Singles*; **Grayson Capps-** *Songbones*; **Kilborn Alley Blues Band-** *Tear Chicago Down*; **Dion-** *Son of Skip James*; **Sonny Boy Williamson II-** *The Original*; **Buddy Guy-** *Live at the Checkerboard Lounge*; **Bill Lupkin-** *Hard Pill to Swallow*; **Bessie Smith-** *Itinerary of a Genius*; **Deborah Coleman-** *Stop the Game*; **Roy Harper-** *Return of the Sophisticated Beggar*; **Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson-** *Blues, Boogie & Bebop-Meat's Too High*; **Eric Bibb-** *An Evening with Eric Bibb*; **The Phantom Blues Band-** *Footprints*; **Warner Williams and Jay Summerour-** *Down 'N' Dirty*; **Jason Ricci & New Blood-** *Rocket Number 9*; **Big James-** *Thank God I Got the Blues*; **Dennis Binder-** *Hole In That Jug*; **Sharrie Williams-** *I'm Here to Stay*; **Various Artists (Mel Brown, mark Hummel, Snooky Pryor, Billy Boy Arnold, Sam Myers and others)-** *Maximum Mojo- 10 years of Electro-Fi Records* **In the Library blues....** Community Radio Station WWOZ is the epicenter of the New Orleans Jazz, Blues and Roots music scene. In the wake of hurricane Katrina, which nearly wiped out its tape storage facility, the station has donated more than 7000 hours of live jazz and blues recordings to the Library of Congress. The tapes, accumulated during the last 15 years, feature the likes of Professor Longhair, Clifton Chenier and countless other icons and are a priceless snapshot of vital music. The Grammy Foundation has contributed significant funds to help assure preservation of the collection....**New piggie....**Blind Pig Records has announced the signing of **Webb Wilder**, the Nashville-based roots rocker, film producer, actor, and radio DJ. In January 2008 Blind Pig will release *Born To Be Wilder*, a live CD that was recorded at WorkPlay in Birmingham, Alabama....**Get into the spirit blues....** On May 22nd through the 24th the Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois will be hosting a symposium on the legacy of the blues and gospel music. Featuring academic presentations, blues and gospel workshops, visual arts and photography exhibits, a Chicago Blues Club crawl and all manner of other blues and gospel related activities the symposium could be the perfect way to kick off your summer blues season. For more information call (708) 524-6050 or check out www.dom.edu/bluesandthespirit.

If you find yourself bewildered about what to purchase your favorite blues buddy for Christmas or if you

are stumped about what to put on your own list so that your clueless non-blues friends don't buy you a another House of Blues T-shirt, consider a few of the following ideas:

1. Read all about the blues: A Subscription to Blues Revue Magazine- \$23.95 a year (6 issues). Call 1-800-258-7388. Subscribers will also receive three Blues Revue sampler discs featuring a wide variety of established and up and coming artists; A subscription to Big City Blues Magazine- \$25 per year (six issues), \$50 for two years (12 issues) and \$75 for three years (18 issues). Send a check or money order to Big City Blues, P.O. Box 1805, Royal Oak, MI 48068-1805 or A Subscription to Living Blues- \$23.95 a year (6 issues). Call 1-800-390-3527.

2. Decorate with the blues: Cool, blues related art – HYPERLINK "<http://www.pimitivekoolart.com>" — www.pimitivekoolart.com. Get a personalized blues poster or blues record label with your name as a performer along with the likes of Muddy Waters or Lightnin' Hopkins- available through Mojo Hand at www.mojoand.com; Vintage W.C. Handy Awards posters and other memorabilia is available at www.bluesmuseum.com;

3. Organize your life around the blues: Keep track of your schedule with the blues by grabbing a copy of the R. Crumb Heroes of Blues, Jazz and Country 2008 Wall Calendar (Amazon.com) .

4. Play the blues: How about learning how to play the blues? Put one of the following books on your list: Blues Guitar for Dummies- By Jon Chappel; Jazz & Blues Piano: The Complete Guide (with cd) – By Hal Leonard; Blues Lick Factory: Building Great Blues Riffs- By Jesse Gress; The Art of Acoustic Blues Guitar: The Basics (with cd)- By Woody Mann; Fingerstyle Blues Songbook: Learn to Play Country Blues, Ragtime Blues, Boogie Blues and More- By Steve James; Paul Butterfield- Blues Harmonica Master Class: Book/cd- By Paul Butterfield (all available at Amazon.com);

5. Taking a Blues Road Trip? Then you need the following books- The Blues Highway: New Orleans to Chicago, 2nd Ed.: A Travel and Music Guide- By Richard Knight; Lonely Planet Road Trip Blues and BBQ (Road Trip Guide)- By Tom Downs (both available at Amazon.com);

6. Get up to speed with blues history: Still confused about Sonny Boy 1 and Sonny Boy II? Do a little research in the All Music Guide to the Blues: The Definitive Guide to the Blues- By Hal Leonard Corp or The Big Book of Blues- By Robert Santelli;

7. Couch Potato blues history: Want to watch the blues and get a history lesson? Check out the PBS series "Martin Scorsese Presents the Blues", a 7 disc DVD release available at www.shoppbs.org;

8. Activist blues: Want to make a statement along with your blues? Check out the merchandise at www.bluesforpeace.com which is based on the concept that if more people took up music, there would be a more peaceful world.

9. Freshen up your CD and DVD collection.

Have a great holiday with the blues!!

San Francisco State's International Center for the Arts Debuts 'Generations' Fellowship and International Competition for Emerging Jazz Combos

Unique post-graduate fellowship for musicians; Fellows to receive pre-professional training through collaboration with established jazz artists

San Francisco CA – The International Center for the Arts at San Francisco State University recently announced "Generations," a unique post-graduate Fellowship and International Competition for already-formed combos of aspiring musicians to receive advanced pre-professional training and career preparation from distinguished jazz artists, invaluable performance opportunities, alone and in collaboration with their mentors. This opportunity for an established jazz combo of exceptional promise to obtain a year-long fellowship at San Francisco State University is the only one of its kind in the world. Kicking off in Fall 2007, the one-year fellowship is supported by a company of master jazz musicians including saxophonist Eric Alexander, trumpeter Marcus Belgrave, percussionist Jimmy Cobb, bassist Ray Drummond, pianist Ronnie Matthews and the program's artistic director, saxophonist Andrew Speight.

Young combos from around the world comprised of three to seven outstanding jazz musicians will compete for the opportunity to become Generations fellows. Members of the selected groups will be accomplished jazz musicians who demonstrate an exceptional level of artistic accomplishment, cohesive ensemble and the potential to benefit from a Generations fellowship experience. Finalist combos will be invited to San Francisco State University in May 2008 for a mini-residency with the Generations mentors, which will culminate with a public performance by all finalists and the selection of one combo to return to San Francisco in Fall 2008 for the beginning of the first one-year fellowship residency.

"Our goal is to act as both an incubator and springboard for the winning combo," said Jeffrey Babcock, executive director of the International Center for the Arts. "These musicians will have an unprecedented opportunity to take their performance to the next level, individually and as a combo while preparing to launch successful careers."

The competition gives high performance combos an unmatched opportunity to showcase their artistry, as well as interact with and learn from musical encounters with other talented ensembles under the guidance of renowned jazz artists. Collaborating with Generations mentors in a variety of venues will contribute in a significant way to the artistic and professional development of each individual musician and ensemble.

"We are creating an environment where young musicians will go beyond the walls of the classroom and learn through hands-on mentoring, group collaboration and professional advice," said Andrew Speight, Generations' artistic director and mentor. "We hope to bring

growing artists a greater awareness of possibilities for spontaneous expression when working in a group, and nowhere are the tenets of real-time group creativity better exhibited than in jazz music."

The timeline for the Generations International Competition follows:

- Mid-November 2007: Guidelines and applications available to combos whose members are less than 30 years old as of May 1, 2007 and whose personnel has been stable for at least twelve months.
- March 14, 2008: Final date for receipt of applications.
- April 4, 2008: Finalist combos announced
- Week of May 12: Finalist combos in San Francisco for mini-residency with Generations' mentors.
- Saturday, May 17: Finalist combos perform; fellowship combo announced.
- Fall 2008: Winning combo arrives at San Francisco State University to begin fellowship residency with Generations mentors.

Combos interested in applying for the first Generations International Competition may request application information beginning November 12, 2007. Early request for guidelines and applications may be emailed to ica@sfsu.edu with Generations Competition in the subject line.

About the Mentor Ensemble

The Generations Mentor Ensemble is an all-star group of professional musicians who have experience shaping the legacy of jazz. Together the group's legacy goes back more than 60 years and spans three of the most creative, vibrant and influential generations of contemporary jazz. Members of the ensemble have been integral to the sounds of Miles Davis, Dinah Washington, Nat and Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, McCoy Tyner, Ray Charles, Benny Carter and the Marsalis Family, among others.

Generations' mentors were selected because they learned their art through playing with a group of like-minded musicians who nurtured and explored through collaboration. This vital part of jazz musicianship is what the Generations fellowship strives to provide its up-and-coming ensembles. Believing that the jazz tradition of inspired collaboration is learned through study and practice with a group, these mentors will lay a musical foundation through community.

"These three generations of mentors spanning the 1940s to today have played with the best groups and honed their art with the jazz community's greats," said Speight. "This is an opportunity unlike any other for a young ensemble to play with musicians who learned by collaborating with giants and are willing to pass along their wisdom. I can't wait to hear what comes out of this first group of Generations musicians."

The talented and experienced mentor group includes:

- Eric Alexander, a tough-toned tenor saxophonist known for his sophisticated hard and post-Bop style. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists, including Harold Maburn, Ron Carter, Horace Silver and Nicholas Payton.
- Marcus Belgrave, a trumpeter and vocalist whose

career spans five decades of jazz styles. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists, including Ray Charles, Charles Mingus, Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

- Jimmy Cobb, an exciting and powerful drummer who has been the foundation of many of the greatest jazz combos and recordings. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists, including Miles Davis, Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, Wynton Kelly and John Coltrane.

- Ray Drummond, a buoyant and percussive bassist who has been the heartbeat of many great jazz ensembles. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists, including Johnny Griffin, Billy Hart, David Sanchez and Stephen Scott.

- Ronnie Matthews, a virtuosic and sensitive piano stylist who has been an inspiration for many important artists. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists including Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon and Freddie Hubbard.

- Andrew Speight, a clear-toned hard driving alto saxophonist known for his incendiary bebop lines. He has performed and recorded with many leading artists, including Benny Carter, Nat Adderley, Ellis and Branford Marsalis.

About Generations Fellowship & International Competition

Generations Fellowship and International Competition, the International Center for the Art's inaugural post-

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graduate fellowship for gifted artists, builds upon San Francisco State University's half-century of commitment to and leadership in jazz. For decades, the Bay Area's leading jazz artists, including jazz legends Cal Tjader, Paul Desmond, John Handy, and George Duke, received their training at San Francisco State University. The Generations fellowship continues that tradition by providing this significant opportunity for promising jazz ensembles to move from advanced students to sustainable professional ensembles.

Led by Generations' Artistic Director and internationally acclaimed jazz saxophonist Andrew Speight, renowned jazz artists serve as artist-mentors to a competitively-selected post-graduate ensemble of gifted young jazz combos (up to five musicians) who are awarded year-long residencies at San Francisco State University. Generations' fellows receive intensive coaching, career development support, and public performance opportunities.

Under the guidance of Generations' mentors, the fellows will gain valuable knowledge and experience in navigating the challenges of functioning as a business entity and managing the numerous administrative, promotional, financial and presentation issues that enable a full-time professional jazz combo to thrive in a challenging market. The International Center for the Arts will provide numerous performance opportunities, including national and international competitions during the Residency, and will explore opportunities in publishing, recording, and production of DVDs, webcasts, documentation of workshops, commissioning new work and protection and distribution of today's digital-centered intellectual property.

About the International Center for the Arts

The International Center for the Arts is an interdisciplinary creative, research and producing organization focused on the future of the arts in a global society.

Founded in 2005 with a generous gift from San Francisco State University alumni George and Judy Marcus, the International Center for the Arts has presented acclaimed artists and their work in exhibitions, DOC Film Institute film screenings and festivals, performances and related programs on the San Francisco State campus, in prominent locations throughout San Francisco, and in partnership with leading cultural institutions in the United States, Europe and Asia.

This fall, the International Center for the Arts launches a series of career-entry fellowships for gifted post-graduate artists who are selected through annual international competitions. Fellows receive financial support, explore new creative territory and pursue career goals under the guidance of distinguished artist-mentors.

The International Center for the Arts pursues cross-disciplinary initiatives that connect campus participants with creative, cultural, entrepreneurial, academic, and community-based partners in the arts, humanities, sciences, education and technology, in the Bay Area and abroad.

For more information, please visit online at <http://ica.sfsu.edu>.

LA Music Academy Announces Bass Scholarship Opportunities For Music Students

Pasadena, CA – LA Music Academy, which celebrates the 10th anniversary of its first graduating class this October, has announced that scholarships for its bass department, headed by legendary musician Jerry Watts (Sergio Mendes, Billy Idol, Herbie Hancock, Steve Vai), are available immediately. The scholarships are for incoming domestic and international students interested in attending the Academy. Candidates must demonstrate exceptional musical potential and are evaluated on a variety of skills including feel, technique, musical vision and overall musicality.

"We are delighted to be able to increase the number of scholarships made available to bassists around the world," says Tom Aylesbury, president of LA Music Academy. "The bass department instructors including legends Watts, Steve Billman, Lynne Davis, Hussain Jiffry, David Levray and Philip Bynoe offer students a once in a lifetime opportunity to experience a wealth of experience, insight and understanding in the classroom."

For more information, contact Tom at LA Music Academy by calling 800-960-4715. Visit online any time at www.lamusicacademy.edu

LA Music Academy in Pasadena, a suburb of Los Angeles, CA, offers an intimate and friendly, yet serious and rigorous contemporary music education to male and female students 18 and over through its vocal, drum, bass and guitar programs.

Founded in 1996, the Academy is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music and has provided a solid musical foundation for more than 1,000 international and domestic students. LA Music Academy's 35 instructors immerse students in practical courses.

The Academy offers a significant number of real world playing situations with professional musicians, not just peers, setting the school apart from other prestigious music institutions. LA Music Academy gives its students the skills necessary to apply their learning in a wide variety of professional situations in the music industry.

**jazz
& blues**

From the Editor:

Some of you have noticed that a number of the reviews from the past year are not in our searchable database. We were undergoing some problems, but have been in the process of replacing reviews that "disappeared". Indeed, it is taking some time, and will continue to do so. So please, bear with us!

—Bill Wahl



REVIEWED
By Bill Wahl



Typical St. Croix...shot at the Carambola Beach resort

Should you ever want to combine a vacation with live music, there is an ever-increasing number of events to choose from in a wide variety of settings. It is just a matter of finding a festival with bands you'd like to hear, taking place in a locale or certain setting you'd like to visit. And there are many in areas that are prize destinations for travelers.

We have reviewed many over the years, such as the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise, New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, Montreal Jazz Festival and Pocono Blues Festival. Between Ron Weinstock and myself, we have been covering as many as possible, although Ron is certainly our main festival reporter, leaving me way back in the dust. But I did recently join a group of reviewers from various print and online publications around the country for a memorable experience on the beautiful island of St. Croix to witness the inaugural Blue Bay Jazz Fest in mid-November. The festival was a kind of New Orleans meets St. Croix type of thing, with many artists from the Crescent City in the lineup including Donald Harrison, Christian Scott, Stephanie Jordan and her brothers Marlon and Kent and their sister Rachel, Henry Butler, Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews, James Andrews and others. In addition, many local St. Croix jazz musicians took part both on the main stage and in area restaurants. I found that quite a number



A city street scene

of New Orleans residents made it down as well.

I will now to give you some information on the festival, and a rundown on St. Croix and the trip itself.

St. Croix is the largest of the three U.S. Virgin Islands. It is south of Puerto Rico and is a 30-minute plane ride from San Juan. Of the three U.S. Virgin Islands, St. Thomas is the most cosmopolitan and commercialized, being a popular cruise ship port with its many shops and restaurants. St. John is the most natural, with its pristine beaches and vast national park. St. Croix is the most "old world" when it comes to the many buildings and plantation estates from its days as a Danish sugar-producing colony. You will see some churches going back to the 1600s as well as forts and other interesting historical structures. The people who live there are among the friendliest I have encountered anywhere...and I have been to a lot of places over the years. I am told that many of them trace their ancestry to places like Antigua and Dominica.

The two cities on the island are Christiansted on the northeast side, and Frederiksted to the far west. Christiansted is the larger of the two and has more shops,



Ames Joseph - our driver and guide

but each city has its own special charm. Our group was lucky enough to have a cab driver with a large van to take us around and point out things with some history lessons. His name was Ames Joseph and he was recently named Virgin Islands Taxi Operator of the Year at the annual Tommy Star awards presented by the V.I. Hotel and Tourism Association. I could see why. He was not only a very good driver as he navigated the hilly, curvy terrain, but also had a wonderful personality throughout the trip. If you go there, be



The trumpeters make their entrance sure to look for him. It seems that everyone there knows him.

The festival itself took place in Frederiksted. It was inspired by the very successful Sunset Jazz series that takes place the third Friday of every month at the Frederiksted Harbor. The main stage was set up with its back to the harbor and facing the buildings on Strand Street, which very much resemble the buildings in New Orleans' French Quarter.

The music began on Friday around 6pm with the rhythm section playing on the stage and the four trumpet players, Christian Scott, Marlon Jordan, James Andrews and Troy Andrews doing the second line thing emerging from a storefront across the street playing and marching slowly to the stage. Kermit Ruffins was supposed to be the fifth trumpet player, but he was unable to make the trip. Joining the hard working rhythm section, who seemed to work most of the night, the trumpeters delivered a fine set billed as the New Orleans Trumpet Summit, including such songs as the opening "Caledonia," plus "Caravan," "St. James Infirmary" and more. Stephanie Jordan made her first appearance of the night looking stunning in a white dress and sounding very fine singing a few songs. By this time there was quite a crowd gathered, with many in lawn chairs in front of and on both sides of the stage for quite a distance in either direction. About 500 feet from each side of the stage there were white tarps stretched between palm trees with close up video projected of the artists on stage. This was a nice touch, and especially helpful for the many folks who were actually quite far from the stage.



The wonderful Henry Butler

The latest in a long line of master pianists coming from New Orleans, the versatile Henry Butler took the stage next and treated the crowd to a nice mix of songs, including "Let

'Em Roll," some blues and even a Tynneresque piece. The blind pianist/vocalist definitely electrified the crowd and got them on their feet and moving and was a highlight of the festival. Dr. John refers to him as "the pride of New Orleans..." Many, myself included, are not aware of the fact that he is also a very highly respected photographer. You can see some of his pictures on his website, www.henrybutler.com, if you look for the links under the group picture in the center after you get past the intro page and into the site.

After Butler got the crowd riled up, Stephanie Jordan came back again, this time in a bright red dress, accompanied by her sister Rachel on violin, Marlon on trumpet and Kent on flutes and kept the crowd energized with a well balanced set of uptempo swingers, ballads, blues and some modal pieces. Among the many songs heard were "Please Answer Me, My Love" and "Good Morning Heartache." I believe she also sang "Girl From Ipanema" and "September In The Rain" in either this set or her earlier appearance, but my notes on that are quite unreadable, so I am going mostly by memory on that one...and more for that matter. There is no question that this family, all children of saxophonist and professor Edward "Kidd" Jordan and Edvige, their mother, who is a classically trained pianist, were born with some serious talent. Billed as Stephanie Jordan and the Jordan Family, this musically educated family had developed some serious skills over the years and used them to treat the crowd as they closed out the main act portion of opening night.

Saturday afternoon featured a Crucian-Cajun-Creole Food Fest with a local Quelbe (indigenous Virgin Islands folk music) band and lots of food. Also in the afternoon was the Art & Wine Walk on the Strand showcasing Caribbean artists and wine and cheese was featured in area restaurants.



Trombone Shorty got the crowd moving

Saturday night opened with Trombone Shorty and his band Orleans Avenue serving up their brand of driving New Orleans funk, and the crowd ate it up right off the bat. As good as Shorty was on trumpet the night before, he was really shining on trombone. His powerful solos mixed with the muscle of the band and the tight ensembles with his sax player James Martin had everyone shaking, bobbing, smiling and dancing throughout the set. This was one hot quintet. Unfortunately we missed Christian Scott's set due to scheduling conflicts, but did get to him in other sets. Next



Donald Harrison kept them moving

up was the headliner, alto saxophonist Donald Harrison Jr., known as the “King of Nouveau Swing,” a style merging acoustic swing with modern R&B, second-line, hip-hop, Mardi Gras Indian music and reggae. Harrison and his band also mixed it up with straight-ahead, funk and smooth jazz and had the crowd, or the women in the crowd for the most part, dancing and turning in unison as if choreographed. It is known as the Electric Slide which, when done right, is fun to watch (and when done wrong, it is *really* funny to watch). Most of the dancers this night had it down, rather than the versions you might see at some weddings. Then the trumpet players came up, as did Henry Butler for one of the finest jams I have heard in some time. During the closing set, Alvin Batiste’s widow, Edith, came onstage to recite a poem backed by Henry Butler on piano. After the main stage events, the music continued, as it did the night before, in local venues.



The crowd – all ages were into it

Two things I did not mention which must be noted are that this event, presented by F.E.D.A. (Frederiksted Economic Development Association) was entirely free of charge; and the sound was excellent throughout. The staging was also very well done. Although the show started a bit late the first night, the whole event went off extremely well, especially for an inaugural event. Hopefully it will be the first of many Blue Bay Jazz Fests to come. Regarding the second point about the sound, before it started I wondered how it would work out, with the buildings in close proximity and all. But the sound company certainly knew their stuff, and even as one walked far to either side of the stage (there were sets of speakers also pointed to the sides as well) it

still sounded clear and balanced. And as one would wander deeper into the city it still sounded fine...a bit muffled, of course...but that is to be expected. The stage lighting was done very well too. Since the main events were all at night, I did not get as many good pictures of the artists as I had hoped due to the limitations of digital cameras after daylight, but I am hoping a few came out good enough to run with this piece.

It has generally been our policy to give you more information on the area when we review these festivals. I had thought I went a bit overboard describing the actual day-to-day experience when reviewing the Blues Cruise. But the feedback I got was just the opposite. Many folks found the info useful when deciding whether to go, and what to expect in the ports. So a rundown of some of what we did on St. Croix would certainly be in order.



A St. Croix beach – this was at the Carambola

We stayed at the Carambola Beach Resort, which is, of course, right on the Caribbean and is about halfway between the two main cities. The suites were wonderful, with either ocean or garden views and a screened porch, so if you leave the actual doors open you can hear the surf roll in all night long. It had a stove, refrigerator and dishwasher so if you want, you could cook your own meals. I chose to visit some of the many restaurants the island has to offer. The Carambola, which will soon become a member of the Renaissance Hotels & Resorts family, has three fine restaurants. We tried one for breakfast and one for dinner and the food was very good. We did find the service to be slow at times, but we found that to be true at most places as things go at that old “island speed.” But then, you are on vacation, so what’s the hurry? Each suite is over 500 square feet and can accommodate up to four people. It would be a real nice, romantic spot for a couple for sure. If interested, you can check it out at www.carambolabeach.com.

Among the other restaurants we ate at that I could easily recommend is The West End Grill in Frederiksted, which offers local and Latin meals with extremely reasonable prices. I actually went out on a limb and tried a local dish – Goat Stew! It was very tasty, as was the seasoned rice that came with it. At this place the service was super fast. In the same city, just a couple of blocks away, we tried the Blue Moon for dinner. Here I tried a scallops and shrimp over noodles thing with a Cajun sauce and it was way more than I could eat, so I took some back to the room. It was a real treat, though you should order it hot. I had the medium but



Barrels of rum at Cruzan Rum Distillery

wished it were hotter. Then again, I order the hottest hot sauce in Mexican restaurants so you might want to use that as a barometer. The Blue Moon turns into a jazz club at night, or at least it did on that particular night. Just outside downtown Frederiksted was a "gay-friendly" hotel called Sand Castle On the Beach with very reasonably priced rooms and an open-air restaurant called Beachside Café, right on the bay. Everyone was casual and the both the food and the atmosphere were very good. We went to another hotel, the Buccaneer near Christiansted, for a breakfast buffet. The buffet was quite good, and the grounds are impressive, and it is another consideration for anyone who plans a visit to St. Croix, although it is rather pricey compared to others on the island. I can suggest the Turtle's Deli in Frederiksted for an informal lunch of generous size sandwiches or salads. Again, I had to take some back to my room to finish later.

One thing we did that I can definitely recommend to all is the tour of the island's famous Cruzan Rum Distillery. Here you can see just how rum is made and in the process walk by the top of the huge tanks and breath in the vapors coming off the top from the hot rum. At the end you get to sample a rum drink. Another side trip that will give you a St. Croix history lesson is a tour of the Whim Plantation. Here



Our guide at the Whim Plantation

you can get a feel for the old days when sugar cane was the big thing on St. Croix. Be sure to check out the museum as well, where we had a very knowledgeable tour guide.

In closing, I will say that I have always wanted to visit St. Thomas after hearing Sonny Rollins' famous tune by that name. I had originally planned to take the seaplane

over for the short hop and spend the first day there and return later that evening before the Jazz Fest started the next day. But, I found St. Croix to be so charming and relaxing that I scrapped the idea and chose to veg out at the beach at the Carambola rather than toss myself into the hustle and bustle of the shopping metropolis of St. Thomas. In the end, I believe I chose the right path.

Hopefully the Blue Bay Jazz Fest will continue. But either way, St. Croix is definitely a good place to visit. You have to love the palm trees, white sand, turquoise sea and those cute little geckos. For information on the event, and updates on the 2008 version, go online to www.frederiksted.org.



Another crowd scene at the Blue Bay Jazz Fest

jazz-blues.com

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 2007

We have been running our Holiday gift Guide for quite a few years now. While there have been less boxed sets released this year than in the past, there are still some which are worthy of your attention which we have included here. As with recent years, we have also included some CDs and DVDs in other genres which we found to particularly stand out. While we have reviewed some in earlier issues this year, we are presenting some different recent releases here. This way you can cover your friends who are not necessarily jazz or blues fans. We also plan to post our lengthy 2005-2006 Holiday Gift Guide on our site for download the first week of December. That will give you a slew of additional ideas. Have a great holiday!



MILES DAVIS
The Complete
On The Corner
Sessions
COLUMBIA/LEGACY
BOXED SET

As the '70's progressed it became obvious that Miles Davis's foray into the electronic funk universe had reached well beyond the turning point. Many fans and admirers of his earlier work (folks who would probably rejoice were the man to spend his time remaking *Kind Of Blue* and *Sketches Of Spain*) were no doubt puzzled, most likely disappointed and even outright offended by Miles' fascination with all that percussion, all those guitarists, the pedals and gizmos and those big ass amplifiers.

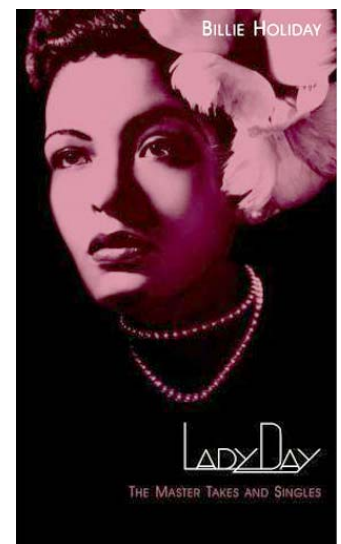
Second only to his creative genius was Miles' mystique which was- forgive the wordplay- only amplified by his immersion in this most-potent brew. Whether artistic restlessness or the desire to reach a new audience- or a measure of both- was his motivation, Miles heard things in the funky sound not available to the average ear. And nearly 35 years after the sessions that comprise this six-disc gem of a collection representing sessions from *On The Corner*, *Big Fun* and *Get Up With It*, the results are just as fascinating.

The typical MD ensemble of the mid-'70's was fundamentally an expanded rhythm section, assembled to generate multiple pulses and textural layers. Future soul star Michael Henderson's *basso ostinato*, deliberately uncomplicated in its nature, typically served as anchor for multi-chambered constructs that were downright protoplasmic in their ability to evolve and redefine themselves sometimes by the minute. Their open-ended character were more continuums than compositions: it was often as if Miles & company "tuned out" of

them rather than simply ended them. (The beginnings of this approach can be heard on one of Miles' last recordings with more obvious "jazz" personnel, 1969's *In A Silent Way*, on the track "It's About That Time".) Riding atop or just as often snaking through these hot, funky labyrinths is where Miles or one of his sax partners (Bennie Maupin, Dave Liebman, Carlos Garnett, *et al*) were to be found.

In Tom Terrel's essay/notes that accompany this set he describes *On The Corner* as "its own genre" which shorthand the fact that verbal descriptions can go only so far with creation this unique. Handsomely packaged, metal-boxed, lavishly-notated and bedecked with Corky McCoy's splendid "period" illustration, the music will re-tell its own story again and again. Miles is no less compelling in this century than he was in the last.

Duane Verh



BILLIE HOLIDAY
Lady Day: The Master
Takes And Singles
COLUMBIA/LEGACY
BOXED SET

As is the case with Miles Davis, Billie Holiday has also been the subject of many CDs and boxed sets from the folks at Columbia/Legacy. While many other labels have forayed into jazz and blues reissues, mostly with improved sound...Legacy seems to be the only label to issue these gems consistently, year after year after year.

While the most complete Billie Holiday boxes are the 10-

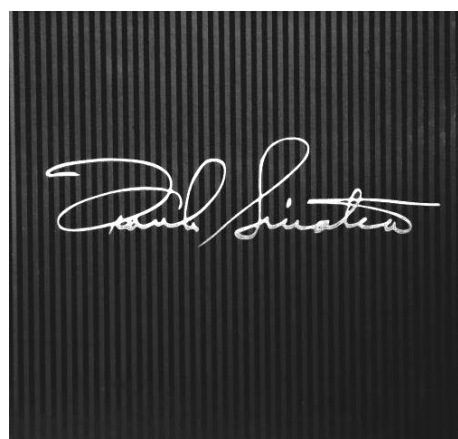
CD complete Columbia set (1933-44) and the complete Verve set (1945-59), also a 10-CD set, both of those sets include a lot of alternate takes, air checks and rehearsal banter. Each is also in the \$150 range. This brand new 4-CD set lists at a third the price, and you can probably do even better. And while those complete large sets would be great for the huge Holiday fan, you would be well served by this set as a gift for someone you know who would like a good amount of her music without all the extras.

A total of 80 tracks were chosen for this set, and none are alternate takes. In fact, all the cuts here were 78 rpm A-sides or B-sides from her recordings on the Brunswick, Vocalion, Columbia, OKey and Harmony labels. So, all of these were the singles she recorded during her young years from the ages of 20 through 26.

Most were recorded with Teddy Wilson & His Orchestra with the remainder by Billie and her orchestra and a handful with either Benny Carter or Eddie Haywood and orchestra. Back in those days, a seven piece band could be referred to as an orchestra. Some of the other many musicians heard on this music are Ben Webster, Benny Goodman, Lester Young, Cozy Cole, Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Claude Thornhill, Roy Eldridge and Harry Edison. There are a host of well known songs here, such as "The Man I Love," "Night And Day," "My Man," "God Bless The Child," "I Can't Get Started," "Body And Soul" and "Gloomy Sunday," to name only a few. And, as has been the case with serious reissue programs, the sound here is better than ever...more full and rich sounding with improved tonal balance.

The enclosed 40-page book includes all the recording information most people would need, interesting notes on each track by reissue producer Michael Brooks, pictures and a lengthy essay by Gary Giddins. Simply put, this is a wonderful set that would make a great gift for most any true jazz and blues fan...or yourself for that matter.

Bill Wahl



FRANK SINATRA
A Voice In Time
1939-1952
COLUMBIA/RCA
VICTOR/LEGACY
BOXED SET

This four-disc compilation recorded by Frank Sinatra (1915-1998) celebrates his seminal big band years, a 14-year period when the skinny kid from Hoboken had over 100 Top 30 hits. Thematically arranged, the discs contain 80 singles (20 per disc), including previously unreleased alternate takes and radio airchecks of songs Sinatra recorded for RCA Victor with the bands of Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, and others and as a solo artist for Columbia.

Titled "The Big Band Years 1939-1942," Disc One includes popular favorites such as "I'll Never Smile Again" and

"I'll Be Seeing You," "Fools Rush In (Where Angels Fear to Tread)," recorded with the Tommy Dorsey orchestra during the crooner's early years when he sang with dance bands and had little control over his material.

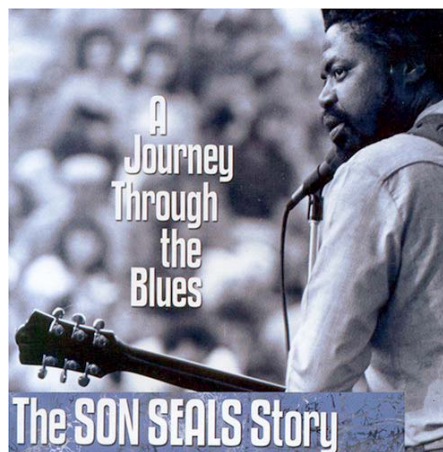
Sinatra's popularity blossomed by 1944 and he became a teen idol after he recorded gems such as "I Fall in Love Too Easily," "Nancy (With the Laughing Face)," "You'll Never Know," "Five Minutes More," which can be heard on Disc Two ("Teen Idol 1943-1952") with other songs. Obviously having more control over his career, Sinatra's innate musical sensibilities come through on the 20 tunes on this disc.

Compiled on Disc Three, "The Great American Songbook 1943-1947," are recordings with a studio orchestra conducted by Axel Stordahl, with Sinatra singing "All of Me," "Body and Soul," "All the Things You Are," "September Song," "It Had to Be You," and other American Songbook classics.

"We Kiss In A Shadow" and "Autumn in New York" are among my favorites on Disc Four, "The Sound of Things to Come 1949-1952."

The set comes with a 116-page, six-inch square hard-cover book containing recording data for each tune, sections about each era by Will Friedwald and reissue producers Charles L. Granata and Didier C. Deutch, session and publicity photos, and a foreward by Sinatra's daughter, Nancy. Granata and Deutsch and a team of engineers have done a superb job of remastering 16" glass and aluminum session (and live-recorded) discs to achieve the best possible sound. Providing hours of listening, this attractively packaged black and silver box set would make a great gift for the Sinatraphile in your circle.

Nancy Ann Lee



SON SEALS
A JOURNEY
THROUGH
THE BLUES:
THE SON SEALS
STORY
VIZZTONE DVD

Frank 'Son' Seals was arguably the most important discovery of Alligator Records and its chief honcho, Bruce Iglauer. Such albums as **The Son Seals Blues Band**, **Midnight Son** and **Live and Burning** are among the finest blues of the past four decades.

Son Seals passed away in 2004 and his friend Peter Carlson has produced a documentary just issued on DVD,

A Journey Through the Blues: The Son Seals Story (VizzTone), which will appeal to his many fans and will hopefully introduce others to this marvelous artist and person.

The centerpiece of the documentary is interview footage of Son along with Bruce Iglauer, members of Son's family, Koko Taylor, Dr. John and others set against footage of Son in performance, although the soundtrack for the documen-

tary is taken from his recordings. Son's early days in Arkansas, growing up in a home that served as a juke, learning drums and then guitar and the move to Chicago which led to his being discovered by Alligator are discussed here as well as an overview of his music and performances. There is footage (without sound) of his terrific nineties band that included horn player Red Groetzinger among others. It's a nicely done, although short, bio-doc of him that is well put together. Also included are three live concert performances of Son from three different events that display how powerful a performer he was, although these are taken from after 2000 and it would have been nice to have included footage of his earlier bands (assuming such exists with sound). Perhaps a European TV show of Son with his great band with Lacey Gibson and A.C. Reed will show up. Son was one of this writer's favorite performers and I miss him, as does anyone who got to meet and talk to him. I simply hope there is more available than what is provided here on a well-done video.

Ron Weinstock



**THE WAR
A KEN BURNS FILM
Deluxe Edition: Soundtrack
and Music from the
Second World War
LEGACY RECORDINGS
BOXED SET**

This four-disc box set, a superb soundtrack album and companion to the PBS broadcast of Ken Burns's film, **THE WAR**, would make an excellent gift set, especially for anyone who recalls the music of the Second World War era.

Two of the discs, titled **Sentimental Journey** and **I'm Beginning To See the Light** compile 40 popular American wartime favorites performed by the orchestras of Duke Ellington, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Gene Krupa, Charlie Barnet, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and many other bands and artists. The former contains popular favorites such as the title tune, "We'll Meet Again," "I'll Get By," "I'll Be Seeing You," and more nostalgia. The latter includes gems such as "In the Mood," "Tuxedo Junction," "American Patrol," "Sing, Sing, Sing," and more dance hits.

The War (The Soundtrack) disc offers a broad scope of music performed by Wynton Marsalis, Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, Amanda Forsyth and Bill Charlap, Edgar Meyer, and other current musicians, as well as recorded war-era music by the orchestras of Duke Ellington and Count Basie, Nat "King" Cole Trio, and others. Norah Jones's haunting performance of "American Anthem" (words and music by Gene Scheer) is previously unreleased and exclusive to this album. A 12-page liner booklet contains studio photos and descriptions of the tunes.

The fourth disc, titled **Songs Without Words**, contains

classical music from the film score by composers Walton, Dvorak, Copland, Ligeti, Faure, Liszt, and others as recorded between 1963—2006 by the London Philharmonic, Yo-Yo Ma with the New York Philharmonic, the New Philharmonia Orchestra under Aaron Copland, and others. If you watched the PBS series on TV, you should recognize much of the music on this disc as accompanying some of the more heartrending WWII film clips.

The attractively packaged set comes in a 6" X 12 X 1-1/2" black box with a 24-page booklet containing Ken Burns's essay about World War II with still photos, many of which were included in the PBS film. Each disc will also be available separately but the box set is destined to be a keepsake evoking memories of the World War II era.

Nancy Ann Lee

**HOLIDAY CDs
PETER WHITE
DAVE KOZ
BONEY JAMES**

The holiday CDs we received this year are all in the smooth jazz format, a style that actually fits very well with Christmas music. Both Peter White and Dave Koz have been doing multicity tours each year during the holiday season, so seeing such a disc from them is no surprise at all.

Peter White Christmas is on the Artizen Music Group label and finds him on the company of his annual holiday tour partners, trumpet player Rick Braun and saxophonist Mindi Abair. The dozen songs are a mix of very well-known Christmas songs, such as "Silent Night," "White Christmas" and "Greensleeves" along with some originals by Abair and Braun. Then there are John Lennon's "Happy Christmas" in a medley with "O Holy Night" and Joni Mitchell's "River." Several of the cuts have vocals, six sweetly sung by Abair. Jeffery Osborne joins in on vocals for Abair's "The Best Part Of Christmas." If you have ever seen the White/Braun/Abair holiday tour, you will know exactly what to expect, as this is pretty much a studio version of that very nice, uplifting concert.

Fans of saxophonist **Dave Koz** have likely seen his holiday tour as well. Though I believe he is Jewish, he has the Christmas spirit as well...along with the Hanukkah spirit that is. **Memories Of A Winter's Night** on Capitol Records pretty much brings Dave's holiday tour to your home as well, with 12 songs, most of which are well-known holiday carols. He has some guest vocalists on this one, with Kelly Sweet on "White Christmas," Kimberly Locke on Charles Brown's "Please Come Home For Christmas" and Brenda Russell on Leon Russell's "Boogie Woogie Santa Claus." "Little Drummer Boy" features Rick Braun, Peter White and David Benoit. A very nice touch included here, which Koz does in his holiday concerts, is his one original, the title track, which is a song for Hannukkah, and is subtitled as such. It is one of the most enjoyable tracks on a very listenable disc.

Saxophonist **Boney James** has put out what I believe is his first Christmas CD titled **Christmas President**, on Concord Records. After his previous concord outing, which was his first for the label, I expected this to be the most slick/R&B of the three covered here. But it starts off with a straight-ahead, lightly swinging version of Vince Guaraldi's "Skating," a song from Guaraldi's Charlie Brown Christmas. Then Chanté Moore lends her vocals to "Santa Baby" before James finally

funks out with "O Tannenbaum." Oddly enough, Boney also decided to cover Joni Mitchell's "River," done here as a sweet soprano sax/piano duet. No problem here though, as it is a very beautiful song. Included among the six remaining songs are "The First Noel," "Silent Night" and one for bringing on 2008, "Auld Lang Syne." This is a very tastefully done set of holiday music from Boney James, which turns out to be much more laid back than funkied out.

In closing, each of the three smooth jazz holiday CDs for 2007 has a good a number of sweet listening selections to brighten up your holidays.

Michael Braxton

RAY CHARLES

Live At Montreux 1997

EAGLE VISION DVD

The latest in Eagle Vision's series of live recordings from the Montreux Jazz Festival is this set from the late Ray Charles, filmed 10 years ago.

While I have seen Ray Charles footage from many years, or decades ago, this is among the more recent live concert video of the legendary pianist/vocalist to come along. Except for his voice being a bit buried right at the beginning, the sound is quite good throughout and the camera work is up to the usual standards for the Montreux DVDs we have seen.

Ray and his orchestra take you on a one hour trip with songs such as "Georgia On My Mind," "Busted," "I Can't Stop Loving You," "You Made Me Love You" and seven more before bringing it all home with "What'd I Say." He brings up his background singers, The Raelettes, for the latter part of the show.

The choices for sound on this one are stereo, Dolby Surround 5.1 and DTS. With a suggested retail of 14.98, this is a good choice for any of the many Ray Charles fans out there.

Bill Wahl

THE SPIKE JONES STORY

STORYVILLE FILMS DVD

Originally filmed in 1988, this 60-minute documentary tracks the life and genius of musical humorist Spike Jones through historical clips. Jones is most memorable for his chart-topping 1940s novelty tunes and his 1950s television show featuring his City Slickers.

Through interviews with comedian-friends Milton Berle and Danny Thomas, Jones family members and former City Slickers, Spike Jones is revealed as a serious musician who found his niche in satirizing classical and popular music. In the opening film clip, he's jokingly billed as "the man who set music back 10,000 years."

Born December 14, 1941 in Long Beach, California, Lindley Armstrong Jones began trombone lessons at age seven, got his first drum set at age 11 and was drummer in his high school band, playing hot jazz. The son of a railroad man and a schoolteacher, Jones allegedly got his nickname because he was so skinny that he resembled a railroad spike. Jones formed his first novelty band in 1935 and freelanced during the late 1930s. He made his radio debut in 1941 with the City Slickers and signed with RCA. Two years later, they made their first film for MGM. They toured with their Musical Depreciation Revue and entertained U.S. troops overseas

during World War II. After the War, their stage/variety show led to a two-year stint with CBS Radio. During the 1950s, Jones had a weekly NBC-TV show and in the 1960s, he continued to record. He died on May 1, 1965.

This documentary is as entertaining as Jones' original live television shows and handful of films. Anyone who remembers his recordings will find that the documentary "fleshes out" the person of Spike Jones whose stage/studio antics included firing a gun, playing gag instruments, ferociously chewing gum, wearing outrageous suits and conducting hilarious skits around satirized music by musicians who were required to be able to play classical as well as popular music.

Jones inspired other innovators, such as Monty Python's Flying Circus and Ernie Kovacs. The comic genius and musicianship of Spike Jones and his City Slickers comes through splendidly on this nicely edited documentary film. The DVD includes a biography but no other extras. This is one in a series of Storyville Films on various jazz artists.

Nancy Ann Lee

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

AND DOUBLE TROUBLE

Pride And Joy
EPIC/LEGACY DVD

This brand new treat for Stevie Ray Vaughan fans is the first DVD issue of the VHS **Pride And Joy** released in 1990. That release contained six video clips for promotion of Vaughan's albums from the years 1983 through 1989, plus two live performances - "Superstition" from the Live Alive sessions and "I'm Leaving You (Commit a Crime)," a Howlin Wolf song SRV performed in New Orleans in 1987.

For this new DVD edition, the original eight videos are included, plus nine more for a total running time of 70 minutes. Stevie was one of the first performers on MTV's Unplugged series, and three acoustic versions of songs from his **Texas Flood** album from the Unplugged sessions are included - "Rude Mood," "Pride and Joy" and "Testify." Then there is a video of Jimi Hendrix's "Little Wing" from **The Sky Is Crying** sessions, two TV commercials for Stevie's albums and three promo videos for the Vaughan Brothers **Family Style** album (1991), one of which is the Vaughan Brothers EPK, which contains footage of Stevie and Jimmie talking (Jimmie actually does most of the talking) about the album and some short video clips interjected here and there. Many will probably find the extra live material DVD version of the most interest, and, for some, especially the MTV Unplugged performances.

Released on November 6 and out well before the holidays, this would make an excellent gift for any Stevie Ray Vaughan fans you might know...that is if they have not already scarfed it up by then. Keep the receipt and take a chance. They can always return it for another DVD if they beat you to the punch.

Bill Wahl

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BEING PREZ: THE LIFE & MUSIC OF LESTER YOUNG

Dave Gelly

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS (2007)

It's been nearly five decades since Lester Young passed away and while he has been served by a few very scholarly biographies, the level of detail and technical discussion of his music may have put off some, which is a shame since Young was a major innovator in jazz history. At a time when Coleman Hawkins was the man on tenor saxophone, Lester created a totally new style that influenced not only countless subsequent tenor players, but saxophonists of all styles including the musical revolutionary Charlie Parker. British music journalist and saxophonist Dave Gelly has provided us with a concise consideration of Young's life and music making use of the important works of Frank B. Chmurn-Muller, Louis Porter and Douglas Henry Daniels among others. Gelly takes us from Young's youth, his father's "abduction" of him from his mother's home and growing up in the family band his father led, to the last days as his health was failing him and his passing.

Lester Young's journey includes playing as part of a circus in a minstrel show and also on the T.O.B.A. circuit. Then, in 1926-27 the winter was spent in Minneapolis and while he later went back on tour with his father's show, he dropped out rather than do another tour in the Jim Crow south. Eventually he hooked up with Art Bronson's Bostonians, and then the Blue Devils, Bennie Moten, a tour with King Oliver and eventually Bill 'Count' Basie. Lester established himself in the Kansas City scene and was a feared competitor in a jam session as recounted in the legendary one when Coleman Hawkins came to Kansas City. Not that long thereafter he was recruited for Fletcher Henderson's Band but was never accepted there as the band wanted someone more along the line of Hawkins' style. A return to Kansas City led to his being back with Basie and the emergence of the Count and his band, which had their own travails to go through, including being induced to sign a horrible contract with Decca. But finally it led Lester into a recording studio where he waxed four sides for the American Record Combination under the name of Jones-Smith, since Basie was signed to Decca. Gelly writes: "This was the moment when Lester Young finally sidled out of the shadows, the moment when he ceased to be just a name, a rumour from the territory, a set of tall tales concerning jam sessions in bars and hotel lobbies and shoeshine parlours, and became a sound. For the first time, his music was caught, frozen onto shellac grooves and sent out into the world..."

About the first recording, "*Shoe Shine Boy*," "Basie and the rhythm section play the introduction, setting tempo and mood, and then, after forty-five seconds, Lester young bursts forth. The first impression is of blazing energy and complete self-assurance. He plays with all the confidence and poise of a young man fully aware of his powers and in complete control of them. ... Faced with such unhesitating fluency, it is easy to understand why other musicians at jam sessions

would simply lay down their instruments and look goggle-eyed. ... Here, constrained by the three-minute limit of the ten-inch, 78 RPM record, he confines himself to two choruses, sixty-four bars, lasting exactly one-minute, but it is obvious that he has barely hit his stride. The take was a perfect one... "

From there on we follow Lester with the Basie Band as it plays various hotel rooms that the band perhaps was not suited for and start to make their marvelous recordings. He meets and begins a life-long friendship with Billie Holiday (some under Teddy Wilson's name) and participates on a number of her finest recordings as well as plays behind her when she sings with Basie. Then there is his relationship with Texas Tenor Herschel Evans, whose style was more akin to Hawkins, and how Basie exploited the contrasting styles on many recordings and performances. Evans alas was one of many jazz artists who died so prematurely. Lester would leave Basie and lead his own group, although as an individual he lacked the temperament and relied on assistance of others while producing more wonderful recordings. There was the reunion with Basie and then the disaster of his army experience when he should never have been inducted and which he became the victim of southern racism. The army experience shaped his sensitive personality even more and after the war he would resume his career which Gelly traces while interweaving a thoughtful dissection of pertinent recordings, taking us to the legendary couple bars he played behind Billy Holiday at The Sound of Jazz television show and some final performances at the Blue Note Café in Paris (This was part of the inspiration for the character played by Dexter Gordon in the movie **Round Midnight**).

Gelly's concise and lively written biography certainly presents Young's formidable musical legacy to us as he notes, "The beauty of Lester Young's music endures." Included is a thoughtful selected discography of Young's recordings that add to the value of this biography of one of the seminal artists of jazz history.

Ron Weinstock

REGGAE SCRAPBOOK Roger Steffens & Peter Simon INSIGHT EDITIONS

"We're fans first." So disclaim journalist/deejay Roger Steffens and photographer Peter Simon to producing the definitive volume on reggae. They credit great timing and good fortune for the bountiful feast of pix, anecdotes and multimedia memorabilia contained within the covers of this captivating work. That the aptly titled *Reggae Scrapbook* is also a warehouse of information on the globally celebrated sound of Jamaica, told in an orderly, linear fashion makes for an even stronger case for ownership.

The assortment of photos range from stage and studio shots to intimate scenes featuring artists known worldwide: Marley, Tosh, Cliff, Toots and the Maytals, *et al* as well as artists less familiar to the casual, non-native fan. Through these photos, posters, flyers and album art, the history of reggae is told from its evolution from its ska and rock-steady predecessors. Celebrated as well are the producers such as Coxson Dodd and Lee "Scratch" Perry that shaped the sound alongside the singers and players.

For both the longtime hard-core devotee and the enthusiastic newcomer, *Reggae Scrapbook* easily rates as a must-have item.

Duane Verh

more good ideas

VAN MORRISON JETHRO TULL JUDY COLLINS

Most all of us have people on our holiday list that are not fans of either jazz or blues, or at least not to the extent that we may be. Here we will give a brief rundown of some other good choices for those folks.

Two **Van Morrison** collections have been recently released. The first is **The Best of Van Morrison Volume 3** on **Manhattan Records**. This one is a 2-CD set with some 31 songs spanning his very long career. Van has always been one to mix it up with various genres, including jazz, blues, rock, folk, Celtic and, recently, even country. Although the title might suggest this to be simply another collection of songs from previous albums, it is rather handpicked (by Van himself) cuts most of which are live, unreleased or alternate tracks. He's heard on quite a number of these with guests, including John Lee Hooker, Ray Charles, Junior Wells, Tom Jones, Bobby Bland, B.B. King, The Chieftains, Carl Perkins and Jimmy Witherspoon. This should even please a Van Morrison completist, though that would be an expensive road to follow for sure. There are many unheard gems on this one.

For anyone who might be just finding out about Morrison, or who has little or no CDs by him, a good place to start would be **Van Morrison: Still On Top**, just released on Hip-O Records. This is a single disc set serving up many of his biggest hits, such as "Here Comes The Night" and "Gloria" from his early days with the band Them, and on to "Brown Eyed Girl," "Crazy Love," "Domino," "Have I told You Lately," "Moondance" and many others...for a total of 21. Many of his classic songs released on the Decca, Bang, Warner Bros. and Polydor labels are included on this disc.

Eagle Vision has recently released **Jethro Tull Live at Montreux 2003** in both CD and DVD formats. I saw Tull back in 1971 (and perhaps earlier, but due to certain circumstances some of the events from that era are unrecountable...if you know what I mean). While back then they were a rock band with some jazzy overtones, the more recent versions of the band find them blending jazz, classical and rock in a fashion that has some classic rock fans wondering what is happening. But, as you'll find out on this set, they realize who most of their fans are and begin to rock them out around the midpoint. Except for the opening blues, which just does not come off real well, Ian Anderson and company put on a fine performance on a program of 19 songs covering ground from the classical sounds of "Bourée" and "Pavane" through various other territories and on to the rockers such as "Aqualung" and "Locomotive Breath." The sound is good in both formats, and the DVD gives you some well shot concert footage. Sound on the DVD is offered in stereo, Dolby 5.1 and DTS. The same exact program is featured in both formats. Unlike some of Eagle's releases, the two discs do not come together in a set.

If you might know someone, probably of the baby boomer age group, who likes folk singers and The Beatles, you might want to give them a copy of **Judy Collins Sings Lennon & McCartney**. Just released on **Wildflower Records**, this col-

lection of a dozen Beatles songs shows that Collins still has a silky, beautiful voice even as she approaches the age of 70. She's picked some lesser-covered songs for the set, such as "Golden Slumbers," "We Can Work It Out," "I'll Follow The Sun" and "Norwegian Wood," along with some of the more popular fare such as "Hey Jude." It is nice to hear that one without all the screaming at the end. The accompanying musicians, in different groupings on each song, add to the success of the project. As expected, very sweet stuff from Judy Collins.

Bill Wahl

gear

TUNE BUDS

for iPod

GRIFFIN TECHNOLOGY

TuneBuds made by Griffin present an alternative to the traditional headphones made by Apple for your iPod. These earbuds offer three different sizes for your ears and clear, crisp sound quality. They also are available in matching colors for your iPod and are compatible with other audio devices. Although they lack in their lower register bass quality they shine in more classical tracks featuring acoustic guitar. Nevertheless, considering overall sound quality and versatility these offer a superior option to the standard phones and do a better job of shutting out the noise of the outside world, which is half the reason people enjoy taking their music wherever they go—recommended.

Matt Simpson

That's it for this year's Holiday Gift Guide. Check the site soon for the 2005-2006 Gift Guide and download it for more ideas! Turn the page for this month's CD reviews. More in January. Happy Holidays!

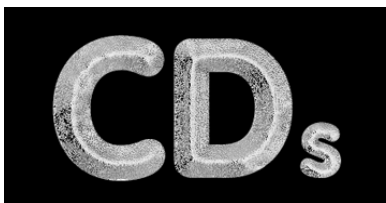


THE WAY THINGS GO is a fresh take on traditional Blues from the veteran Bluesman. **CLEVELAND FATS** once again shows that he is a master singer, guitarist, and songwriter highlighting his talents on nine originals and three covers. This recording includes the re-teaming with his former boss and mentor **ROBERT LOCKWOOD, JR.** and special guest **BILLY BRANCH** on harmonica.



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We only bring you
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NICK MOSS & THE FLIP TOPS

Play It 'Til Tomorrow

BILL LUPKIN

Hard Pill to Swallow

GERRY HUNDT

Since Way Back

BLUE BELLA RECORDS

Writing about **Nick Moss & the Flip Tops**, Bill Dahl notes that they simultaneously preserve and advance the Chicago blues tradition. "Yet youthful vitality and imagination thunders from their sound, boding well for their future and that of the idiom itself." Listening to the double CD by this group, **Play It 'Til Tomorrow** (Blue Bella) one quickly realizes that this isn't faint praise. There are two discs. One is an electric recording while the other disc is an acoustically oriented unplugged one. What is most striking is how strong the ensemble playing is throughout. The Flip Tops are a band whose whole is much more than the sum of the individual parts. At work listening to this, this writer first thought this was a Magic Slim disc I had purchased. Then I looked and realized it was Moss & the Flip tops. Like Magic Slim & the Teardrops, Nick Moss & the Flip Tops have a tight sound and get a similar chugging rhythmic groove going. Moss' stinging guitar also evokes the playing of Jimmy Dawkins. Eddie Taylor Jr. guests on several tracks, while Moss handles the vocals. He also plays some harp in addition to guitar, with the Flip Tops backing him throughout. The Flip Tops are: Willie Oshany (ex-Legendary Blues Band) on keyboards (bass for a few tracks), Gerry Hundt on bass (guitar for several tracks) and Bob Carter on drums. Moss is heard mostly on originals that sound like they are covers of unissued Chess or Vee-Jay recordings as well as interpretations of Luther 'Georgia Snake Boy' Johnson's *Woman Don't Lie*, Lefty Dizz's *Bad Avenue* (sounding like Magic Slim on an uptempo reworking of this) and Floyd Jones' *Rising Wind*. It's refreshing to hear a band handle this material so well and so idiomatically and without any showboat guitar gymnastics. The acoustic disc is equally good as Hundt adds harp and mandolin and the original material suggests Muddy, Jimmy Rogers and Tampa Red. Barrelhouse Chuck guests on one of these tracks as well. This is among the best new releases I have heard in 2007 and most highly recommended.

Nick Moss is the guiding force behind Blue Bella Records and besides his own recordings with the Flip Tops he produces other acts that are well versed in classic Chicago blues but present their own original take on it. Harmonica player-vocalist **Bill Lupkin** has been practicing

his craft for some forty years, spending some time with the likes of the legendary Jimmy Rogers (he's on *Gold Tailed Bird*) and pianist Bob Riedy. Backed by Moss on guitar, Gerry Hundt on guitar or mandolin, Steve Lupkin on bass, Mark Fornek and bass and Tim Wire on keyboards, Lupkin takes us on a rocking set of original Chicago blues on **Hard Pill to Swallow**, with plenty of fine harp and solid singing. Lupkin has a nice tone (reminding of some of Jerry McCain's classic recordings) and sings naturally. Perhaps the opening *Think It Over Baby* may be taken at too fast a tempo, but no complaint can be leveled at the rocking shuffle *Funny Way to Show Me You Care*. His *Fine Little Thing* employs a similar melody to Jimmy Rogers' *The Last Time*, and it's nice to hear the band supporting his soaring solo. *I'll Be Over You Someday* evokes *Sitting on Top of the World*, while his harp is more in a Sonny Boy Williamson vein and Moss takes a strong solo before Lupkin takes the harp mike. *Elgin Bounce* is a swinging instrumental shuffle that showcases his playing some more. Another shuffle, *Cell Phone Blues*, has a nifty lyric about too many gizmos at home and why he can't just be alone with his woman, but she is either on the computer or cell phone. *See That Little Girl* slows things down and features Gerry Hundt's rolling mandolin and some exceptional piano from Tim Wire on an outstanding performance. *Where You Goin'* is another slow blues which evokes Big Walter Horton's *Hard Hearted Woman*, with Lupkin's harp intro, while the title track ends this set of Chicago-styled blues harp with another rocking shuffle. Perhaps after 40 years, this exceptional disc may make him into another not-quite-overnight sensation.

Another new Blue Bella release, **Since Way Back**, features the versatile **Gerry Hundt** as leader. On this disc he focuses on the mandolin as well as vocals, while Nick Moss handles the bass and acoustic guitar, and fellow Flip Tops, Oshawny and Carter handle the bass and drums respectively. Lead guitar is played by Josh Stimmel while Bill Lupkin contributes his full-bodied harp. As Dick Shurman notes in the liner booklet the breadth of his musical influences and his learning from the past masters of blues mandolin, Johnny Young, Yank Rachell, and Carl Martin is well displayed here, and his efforts here follow recent CDs by Billy Flynn and Rich Delgrosso as well as recordings by Andra Faye of Saffire. Vocally he has a bit of a slightly harsh-sounding style, which suits the hard rocking grooves heard here. *I'm Ready to Go* is a rocker that recalls some of Johnny Young's shuffles, while, *Bad Water*, inspired by the experiences of drummer Carter's relatives who drank bad water from a well, is a nice slow performance with Lupkin's crying harp riding over the rolling staccato mandolin. *The Union Meeting* has a different, more country-ish feel to showcase Hundt's playing against Oshawny's rollicking piano. *Hard Road* is another shuffle that again evokes Johnny Young although the groove is a tad bit heavier and Hundt's vocals lack Young's ebullient tone, while his vocal is a bit more effective on the menacing *Whiskey Makes Me Mean*. One of the two covers on this release, Otis Spann's *Burning Fire* is a fine duet with pianist Oshawny with marvelous playing, and is followed by Jimmy Rogers' *You're the One*, which benefits from Hundt's more relaxed vocal

and the swinging shuffle groove. The *Lakewood Bump* is another nicely done Chicago styled blues whose melody suggests Wolf's *How Many More Years*. This entertaining disc concludes with a marvelous instrumental duet with pianist Barrelhouse Chuck, *End of the Day Blues*. This is a noteworthy release despite some flaws. As mentioned the rhythm gets a bit heavy at spots and Hundt's vocals can be a bit harsh sounding but otherwise this is a very fresh sounding release that is well worth sampling.

Ron Weinstock

LALO SCHIFRIN

Lalo Schifrin & Friends

ALEPH RECORDS

Pianist-composer Lalo Schifrin (b. 1932, Buenos Aires) returns to his jazz roots with this nine-tune disc featuring guests Alex Acuna (drums), Brian Bromberg (bass), Dennis Budimir (guitar), James Moody (saxophones), and James Morrison (trumpet, trombone).

Schifrin and friends perform a mixture of standards and six tunes by Schifrin. While the band does justice to standards such as "Besame Mucho," "Tin Tin Deo," and Oscar Peterson's "Hymn to Freedom," it's Schifrin's melodious originals that percolate with lively beats and provide his guests with peak moments in the spotlight. One of the prettiest is his ballad, "Winter Landscapes," performed in a trio setting to highlight Schifrin's piano playing. You can hear the snow falling.

Born in Argentina, Schifrin received classical training, became interested in jazz at age 16, and formed his own modern jazz group during the mid-1950s in Buenos Aires. He moved to the USA in 1958, was arranger for Xavier Cugat and served as pianist-arranger for Dizzy Gillespie from 1960-62. Schifrin began a career in the USA that includes jazz performances and more than 100 scores for films and TV.

Recorded in Los Angeles in March 2007, this enjoyable straight-ahead session reaffirms 75-year-old Schifrin's jazz chops and outstanding composing talents. Every Schifrin tune is a sweet work of art.

Nancy Ann Lee

BOBBY RUSH

Raw

DEEP RUSH RECORDS

Best known for his raucous and rowdy blues and soul revues, Bobby Rush throws a curve ball here with a disc of stripped down blues.

Featuring nothing more than Rush on vocals, harmonica and guitar and Shawn Kellerman on dobro, this 13 track release moves along at an unhurried pace and gives Rush the chance to relish such chestnuts as Muddy Water's

Howlin' Wolf or Sonny Boy Williamson's *School Girl*. While full time acoustic guitarists like Steve James or Doug McCloud won't be looking over their shoulder at the new competition, Rush knows his way around the guitar well enough to provide a suitable backdrop for his tales about cold women, *9 Below Zero*, too many women, *I Got 3 Problems*, futility, *What's the Use* and waiting for promises to be fulfilled, *How Long*.

Like the title suggests, this is blues reduced to its bare bone elements with a focus on the lyrics rather than on getting the party started.

Mark Smith

SOUL CON TIMBA

Live At Bohemian Caverns

DUKE ELLINGTON JAZZ FESTIVAL RECORDINGS

The best way to describe Soul Con Timba is as a soul-Latin-hard bop gumbo. The director of this band is trumpeter Michael Philip Mossman who spent time in the orchestra of the legendary Mario Bauza and was musical director of Out of the Blue and had stints with Horace Silver, Dizzy Gillespie's United Nation Orchestra. Saxophonist Antonio Hart is probably the other best known member of this group which also includes Cliff Korman on keyboards, Corcoran Holt on bass, Ricky Padron on guitar, Cliff Almond on drums, Reanto Thoms on percussion and Mayte Vicens on vocals.

In April, 2007, the Duke Ellington Jazz Festival presented them at the legendary D.C. area club Bohemian Caverns and this new album, the first on the Duke Ellington jazz Festival's label, was issued during the 2007 Duke Ellington Festival. It is the first live recording at this venue since the 1964 Ramsey Lewis recordings that included the best-selling *The In Crowd*.

Performing to an enthusiastic audience, Soul Con Timba opens with the Booker T. & the MG's instrumental blues *Green Onions*, reinventing it with the Latin grooves, followed by a relaxed, refreshed take on Bobby Timmons' *Moanin'*, and a revamped James Brown classic, *Soul Power*, with Mossman and Hart playing nicely off each other with the rhythm section just locking the groove in place and taking off. Four Mossman originals follow, the best of which might be *Dance of Denial*, a composition that evokes a Mideast caravan with Hart adding a bluesy sounding solo. Another standout track is *Bro' Ray*, which features another strong solo from Hart as well as superb playing from Mossman backed by the driving Afro-Cuban groove. More strong original reinventions, of *Sidewinder* (taken at a very brisk tempo) and *Ain't No Sunshine* close a consistently excellent performance that truly takes its diverse musical elements and produces a truly wonderful synthesis that is lively and so masterfully played.

This may be hard to find, so you may have to check the Duke Ellington Jazz Festival website, www.dejazzfest.org, or email info@dejazzfest.org, for more information.

Ron Weinstock

FRANKLIN & BAYTOP

Searching For Frank

PATUXENT RECORDS

Rick Franklin and Mike Baytop are two of the most accomplished acoustic blues artists in the Washington DC area. Franklin has been a staple of the area's acoustic scene for over two decades including a lengthy partnership with Neil Harpe. Baytop was mentored by the late Archie Edwards and became President of the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Barbershop that still operates out of Archie's Barbershop, holding the weekly jam sessions that Archie had hosted along with workshops and concerts. He has recorded with DC native Mike Roach on harmonica and recently with projects associated with the Foundation. He has also grown as a guitarist and also plays bones, guitar and mandolin.

Franklin & Baytop have partnered for this new disc, which takes its name from legendary Memphis Bluesman

Frank Stokes, whose twenties and thirties recordings for Victor and other labels in the company of Dan Sane and others were amongst the finest recordings of the pre-World War II era with the intricate interplay between the two and Stokes strongly delivered vocals. The album contains fourteen performances, several directly taken from recordings of Stokes and his associates but transformed so its no simple cover. Their intent was to evoke those classic duo recordings, but not to simply replicate the originals. Furthermore, several tracks have Baytop on harp and/or bones, so while all tracks are duos, not all are guitar duos. They make the music their own. *Nobody's Business* transforms the Memphis references of Stokes' *Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do to Washington DC*, as well as updates Stokes' *You Shall as You Shall Be Free*, a tune that likely came out of the minstrel tradition.

Other material includes Blind Blake's *Champagne Charlie*, Pink Anderson's *I Got Mine*, an adaptation of Furry Lewis' *Judge Harsh Blues (Jail House Blues)* and the Mississippi Sheiks' *Stop and Listen Blues*. The two play wonderfully and its delightful to hear Memphis in the twenties evoked. While neither are great singers, they both deliver their vocals in unforced, husky, good-natured styles. One can hear in these performances how much they enjoy playing this material and they do not sound like they are too studied or reverent with respect to the material, which increases the pleasure of this disc. Also, they avoid over-recorded early blues recordings so thankfully we are spared second rate Robert Johnson covers

This release is available from the Patuxent Records website at www.pxrec.com or email Rick Franklin at rick.franklin@onebox.com for information on how to purchase this. **Ron Weinstock**

LOS ANGELES GUITAR QUARTET

Lago Brazil

TELARC

Countless musicians have been inspired by Brazilian music and the four musicians of the Grammy winning Los Angeles Guitar Quartet are no exception. With guests Luciana Souza (vocals) Katisse Buckingham (flutes) and Kevin Ricard (percussion) performing on some tracks, the LAGQ delivers 15 tunes that total over 54 minutes of diverse listening on their fourth recording for Telarc.

With this recording, the three founding members John Dearman, William Kanengiser, Scott Tennant welcome Matthew Greif who replaces long-time member Andrew York. Together, they explore compositions by Antonio Carlos Jobim, Jorge Ben, Baden Powell, Clarice Assad, Marco Pereira, Matthew Dunne, Hermeto Pascoal, Raimundo Penaforte, and Paulo Bellinati. One of the prettiest tunes performed by the LAGQ alone is "A Lenda do Caboclo (The Legend of the Native)," a tune by Heitor Villa-Lobos originally written for solo piano in 1920.

Souza, the Sao Paulo-born jazz vocalist/composer joins LAGQ for Sergio Assad's "Medley" of Jobim tunes and a quartet version of Pereira's "Sambadalu." Her encouragement led to the foursome's recording of this album.

Previous Telarc recordings include their debut, *Latin*, their second Telarc album, *Guitar Heroes*, which won a

Grammy for Best Crossover Classical Recording in 2005 and their third album, *Spin*. This new CD is a satisfying extension of their usual fare and demonstrates their willingness to explore fresh turf even though they have been performing and recording for nearly three decades.

Nancy Ann Lee

MAGIC SLIM

The Essential Magic Slim

BLIND PIG

Morris Holt, best known as Magic Slim, has had a celebrated recording career over 40 years, and rarely produced a blues record that was merely good. It is misleading for Blind Pig to call the compilation of some of the best tracks from his half dozen or so Blind Pig albums "The Essential," since any compilation of Slim's recordings that do not span his entire career, including the superb records that have been issued on Rooster Blues, Alligator and the Austrian Wolf label, can hardly be called Essential. Best of Magic Slim on Blind Pig would be more accurate.

This is not to say that the music here is substandard. In fact the music here is typical of the hard-driving rocking Chicago blues that Slim has been producing since his 1966 45 of *Scufflin'*. Opening with a rocking rendition of Bo Diddley's *Before You Accuse Me*, rocketing through the terrific shuffle, *Mind Your Own Business* and continuing with a driving updating of Jimmy McCracklin's *Think*, Magic Slim forcefully delivers his lyrics while laying down some stinging guitar. He is one of the few who can produce a listenable *Mustang Sally* while going down in the alley on the slow groove of *Crazy Woman*. Those backing him here include guitarists John primer, Steve Freund, Michael Dotson and Jon McDonald, with brother Nick Holt handling the bass on most of the 15 tracks.

This may not be "The Essential" Magic Slim, but it is an excellent introduction to his music if you are not familiar with his distinctive and recognizable style. **Ron Weinstock**

ETTA JONES AND HOUSTON PERSON

Don't Misunderstand

HIGHNOTE

The collaborations between the late vocalist Etta Jones and saxophonist Houston Person produced so much musical magic, which ended when she passed in 2001. HighNote has just issued this 1980 live recording from a New York City club, Salt Peanuts, that will delight the pair's many fans. Jones' vocal career started in Buddy Johnson's Big Band before joining Earl 'Fatha' Hines. Later she hooked up with Prestige Records and in 1968 first recorded with tenor saxophonist Person, a musical relationship that would last over 30 years with many albums for Muse and HighNote before she passed on.

On this live recording they are backed by Sonny Phillips on organ and Frankie Jones (no relation to Etta) on drums. The gritty soul-jazz setting was a second home for Person, who first was heard from in Johnny 'Hammond' Smith's combo. The recording opens with a fine rendition of *Blue Monk* by Person. Ms. Jones is first heard on the title track, a wonderful ballad the late Gordon Parks wrote, and she has a blue teardrop in her off-the-beat delivery. The groove picks up a bit as Jones delivers *Exactly Like You* at a medium

walking tempo with a fine solo by Person, with more of the same on *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Her contribution to this ends with a lesser-known number *I Saw Stars*. The disc then has three instrumentals that showcase Person's ballad and blues playing with his take on Milt Jackson's *Bluesology* being particularly wonderful. Phillips shines on the B-3 on *I'm Glad There is You*, while on *Bluesology* he gets on down to church.

Don't Misunderstand is a disc that will be enjoyed by fans of soul-organ jazz, soulful jazz tenor sax and one of the great jazz vocalists of the past several decades.

Ron Weinstock

NAPPY BROWN

Long Time Coming

BLIND PIG

It's been a decade since Napoleon Brown Goodson Culp, better known as Nappy Brown, last had a new recording out. Thanks to producer Scott Cable, Brown has a terrific new disc available on Blind Pig, **Long Time Coming**. Helping on this new recording is a fine band that includes guitarists Bob Margolin, Junior Watson and Sean Costello, keyboardist Jim Pugh, bassist Mookie Brill, saxophonist and harpist John Nemeth, and drummer Big Joe Maher.

There is a mix of new versions of some of the songs most associated with Nappy (*Don't Be Angry* and *The Right Time* (which Ray Charles did as *Night Time is the Right Time*) along with a nice selection of material that ranges from hot jump blues like the opening *Keep On Pleasin' You* to the more


downhome feel of Lightning Bug Rhodes *Aw Shucks Baby*, *You Were a Long Time Coming* and the Little Walter classic *Who*. *Aw Shucks Baby* is the one track not from this session as it was from a performance at the Phoenix, Arizona club, The Rhythm Room. Brown's voice sounds like he has lost little over the years, comparing his renditions of *Aw Shucks Baby* and *The Right Time* with renditions on a 1991 Ichiban album by him. The new versions benefit from a much crisper band that adds more punch to the proceedings. I know Margolin has performed with Nappy over the years, but special mention must be made of Big Joe Maher's drumming. Maher also has played with Nappy, and besides his own swing based jump blues, has been a sought after drummer for touring acts as diverse as Earl King, Johnny Adams, James 'Thunderbird' Davis, and Jimmy 'T-99' Nelson. The foundation of Maher's in the pocket drums and the electric bass of Mookie Brill is one reason the music here sounds so crisp and vigorous. There is plenty of terrific guitar throughout and Nappy is in real good voice, whether employing a sauntering shouting vocal on *Don't Be Angry*, caressing a ballad, *Give Me Your Love*, or singing with faith on the closing *Take Care of Me*.

One would be hard pressed to find any recording by Nappy as good as this one since his classic Savoy recordings. Highly recommended.


Ron Weinstock

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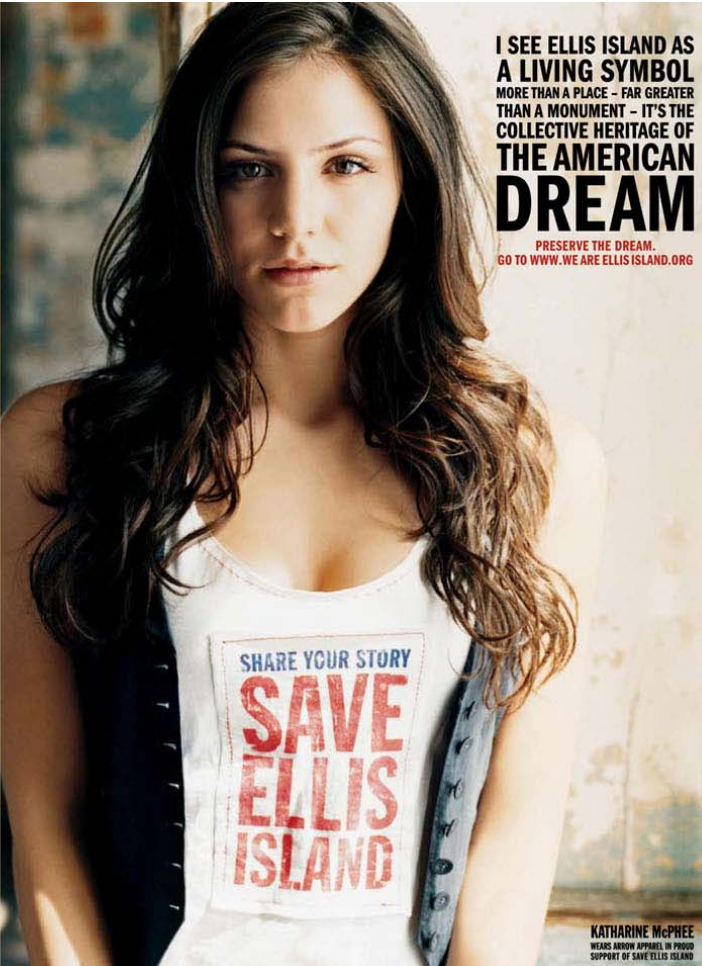


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