

jazz & blues report

november/december 2005

issue 277

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Sam Cooke

American Music Masters Series
Rock & Roll Hall of Fame & Museum

31st Annual Holiday Gift Guide

Jazz & Blues Report

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Cover photo of Sam Cooke courtesy of Michael Ochs Archives.com



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Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's 10th Annual American Music Masters Series

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF SAM COOKE

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductees Aretha Franklin and Elvis Costello Headline Main Tribute Concert

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and Case Western Reserve University will celebrate the legacy of Sam Cooke during the Tenth Annual American Music Masters Series this November. Sam Cooke, considered by many to be the definitive soul singer and crossover artist, a model for African-American entrepreneurship and one of the first performers to use music as a tool for social change, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in the inaugural class of 1986.

The tribute will extend from October 31 - November 6 and will feature panels, films, educational programs, a day-long conference at Case and two tribute concerts. The main tribute concert will feature Cooke's pop and R&B material and the gospel show will focus on his spiritual music.

Sam Cooke was one of the most influential performers in the history of American popular music. His work cut across genres of gospel, R&B and pop, and Cooke is credited as being one of soul music's primary architects.

Cooke's career with the Soul Stirrers was enough to secure his place in the annals of music history, but his ambition and talent would take him much further still. He was a pioneering figure in African-American entrepreneurship, gaining remarkable artistic control of his music and the business surrounding it. Recognizing the importance of owning publishing rights to music, he founded his own record label and publishing company after being courted aggressively by the leading record labels of the day.

His extraordinary voice and unforgettable melodies appealed to black and white audiences, and the popularity of his music helped introduce many other black performers to mainstream audiences. When he died in 1964, Cooke was one of the most financially successful black artists up to that point.

Sam Cooke's music expanded from its gospel roots into more mainstream R&B and pop genres while managing to keep the interest of many among his core gospel following. Cooke was also a force in harnessing the power of mu-

sic for a socially conscientious cause. He recognized both the growing popularity of the early folk-rock balladeers and the changing political climate in America, using his own popularity and marketing savvy to raise the conscience of his listeners with such classics as "Chain Gang" and "A Change is Gonna Come." In point of fact, the use of "A Change is Gonna Come" was granted to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for fundraising by Cooke and his manager, Allen Klein, in 1964.

Sam Cooke was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a solo artist in the inaugural class of 1986.

The tribute concerts are as follows:

Main Concert

The main tribute concert will take place Saturday, November 5 at 8 p.m. at the State Theatre, Playhouse Square.

Scheduled to perform are:

- Aretha Franklin
- Elvis Costello
- The Dixie Hummingbirds
- The Blind Boys of Alabama
- Cissy Houston
- Peter Wolf
- Taj Mahal
- Otis Clay
- William Bell

See the ad in this issue for the last minute update on performers.

Tickets for this concert are \$20, \$30 and \$40 and are on sale through Tickets.com). Note: With the purchase of a full price Saturday tribute ticket, buyers will receive 50% off the price of a Sunday tribute concert ticket.

Gospel Tribute

The Gospel tribute will take place the following night, Sunday, November 6, at 6 p.m., also at the State Theatre, Playhouse Square.

Scheduled to perform are:

- Aretha Franklin
- Lou Rawls
- The Blind Boys of Alabama
- The Dixie Hummingbirds
- Cissy Houston
- Taj Mahal
- Otis Clay

See the ad in this issue for the last minute update on performers.

Tickets for this concert are \$15, \$25 and \$35 and are on sale through Tickets.com. packages are available for the Sunday Gospel concert for group of 20 or more (216-515.1228)

Conference

A day-long conference will take place at Case Western Reserve University's Ford Theatre on Saturday, November 5, from 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. (registration begins at 9 a.m.)

The conference will feature: Keynote speaker Peter Guralnick (whose book *Dream Boogie: The Triumph of Sam Cooke* was published by Little, Brown in mid-October); Chair of the NAACP and legendary Civil Rights activist Julian Bond; Leroy Crume of the Soul Stirrers; Ira Tucker of the Dixie Hummingbirds; Legendary R&B MCs Early Byrd and Gorgeous George; and Sam Cooke's brother L.C. Cooke.

Tickets to the conference are \$30 are on sale through Ticketmaster. (Note that the conference tickets are NOT available through the same outlet as the tribute concerts. Tribute concert tickets are available through Tickets.com.)

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum present this year's American Music Masters, with the sponsorship participation of ABKCO Records and Case Western Reserve University.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum exists to educate its visitors, fans and scholars from around the world about the history and significance of rock and roll music. The Museum carries out this mission through its efforts to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret this art form.

The Museum is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. On Wednesdays the Museum is open until 9 p.m. Museum admission is \$20 for adults, \$14 for seniors (60+), \$11 for children (9-12) and children under 8 and Museum members are free.



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You Can Teach an Old Dog...

Chords 101 The Berklee Method Online Guitar Course Reviewed

By Jim Martin

With a rekindling of my musical ambitions this year I needed to take stock of what I can and can not do. My conclusion, I had a lot of musical gaps that needed to be filled. Having played guitar from the age of 14, I have subjected myself to a mishmash of teachers, styles, methods and a pile of unrelated books creating a fractured mosaic of disjointed information and knowledge – all probably written by guys who got theirs through the same mishmash of teachers and poorly written method books...the proverbial stack that would reach to the moon. So this summer I decided to do something about it and enrolled in the Berklee College of Music online summer program. **Chords 101** was my starting point. Not exactly being what you call college material, I was reluctant and a bit nervous.

First and foremost the teacher, guitarist Rick Peckham. With a B.M., from Ohio State University, M.M.Ed. from the University of North Texas State, he is an internationally active jazz guitarist, composer, writer, and clinician. Then add that he's a frequent contributor to *Down Beat* and other magazines, as well as a co-author of Berklee textbooks for ear training and musicianship. Now add in real world touring experience and a very laid back, confident and well thought out teaching style visa-vie the video files. Bottom line...you have a good guide to get you through the material.

The course itself is taught over six weeks, each week being a lesson supported by streaming videos, mp3 files and a series of PDFs with two assignments due each week. The curriculum covers chord construction from basic major and minor triads, progressing to more complex chord voicings in various positions on the neck. The assignments consists of a PDF chord chart and two mp3 files. One with a rhythm section and guitar (performed by Rick Peckham) so you can hear what your suppose to sound like, and one without the guitar. Your job is to record a guitar track, mix it down and email it back for grading. Class participation is achieved through a Berklee chatroom where you get to interact with the teacher and other students through a well written website. In addition each lesson you incorporate songs that allow you to apply what you

have just learned to real tunes.

Course requirements – obviously a computer and internet access, but you will need to have the ability to play back and record mp3 files. I started my first class in Manila, class two from Tokyo, winding up in Miami then Cleveland...so this is a portable and convenient process. You start out playing simple chord charts and finish off playing "Stella By Starlight," a tune that carries a lot of tradition around the Berklee campus.... kind of the old school song for music nerds.

Chords 101 does starts out simple, but the speed at which the information is taught is rapid, so you don't want to fall behind. Note to seasoned players...you shouldn't get overconfident, because you will get lost in the chord drills.

Having played guitar for nearly 30 years it seemed to take what I knew and organized it to be more effective and accessible. Referred to as the Berklee system, or method, the course proved itself when one of my bandmates brought in the latest John Scofield CD, *The Music Of Ray Charles: That's What I'd Say* and I wanted to play one of the tunes. I proceeded to pick off a tune, and it was effortless. Before the course I would have diddled around with for a day or two trying to pick off Scofield's voicing, but magically it all just fell out of my fingers... It Works!

For information on this course and others, as well as Berklee Press books and videos, go to www.berkleepress.com.

Sammy's Celebrates 25 Years Nov. 18 with Benefit for Tri-C

A Cleveland institution, Sammy's in the Flats (1400 W. 10th St, Cleveland) celebrates its silver anniversary, "25 Years of Hot Food & Cool Jazz," on Friday, November 18, 7 pm to Midnight. Single tickets are available at the \$100 and \$175 levels.

The special benefit, "Keep the Jazz Fires Burning," will support Cuyahoga Community College's Jazz Studies and Community Music Scholarship Programs. The party is a tribute to Cleveland jazz legend Hank Geer, Sammy's in the Flats' well-known house mainstay. Proceeds from the benefit to the two programs will honor the late saxophonist (1922-2000), acknowledged by many as "the dean of Cleveland jazz musicians."

Among those performing are Ernie Krivda & Swing City, Evelyn Wright & Jazz Alive, Grupo Brasil, The Jackie Warren Quartet and The Tri-C Jazz Studies Performance Combo

For more information about the event or to order tickets, call 216.523.5560.



Jazz & Blues Report

31st Annual Holiday Gift Guide

As is the case every year at this time, this section will give you some ideas on holiday gifts to pick up for a friend...or to drop hints on for yourself!

As usual, most of these are boxed or 2-CD sets and DVD concert or documentary videos, although we have chosen some single CDs as well. Most are very new, some a bit older titles that we have just recently latched on to. None have been previously reviewed. As has been our custom, after the jazz & blues section we have several items in other genres for those folks with diverse tastes, or those who are not into jazz or blues as such.

Happy shopping!



RAY CHARLES

Pure Genius

The Complete Atlantic Recordings (1952-1959)

RHINO/ATLANTIC BOX SET

Rhino Records has long been championing the cause and leading the pack for multi-disc reissues. This 7-CD/1-DVD set might be their most extravagant release to date.

Ray Charles recorded for Atlantic from '52 to '59. In all, there are 155 tracks on the CDs and nine more on the DVD. Beginning with a NYC session in September of '52, which is thought to include Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ) drummer Connie Kay (although he would not know that for 3 years), and ending with a session in the same city in June of '59, this set offers Charles in so many recording dates, with so many different musicians, playing so many tunes that it might just take the proud owner of the set so many hours to digest it all that the thought is a bit mind boggling. (Boy, I finally got out of that sentence!) Right at this very moment I am listening to a '57 session with Milt Jackson as they play "How Long Blues" - one of many cuts included here pairing Ray with the MJQ vibist. Oscar Pettiford is on Bass and Connie Kay is back on drums for this date, which includes a variety of other players on different tunes.

PAGE FOUR

Almost all the sessions were produced by either Ahmet, or his brother Nesuhi, Ertegün, and most all of those were co-produced by Jerry Wexler. Many boxed sets offer reissues of the actual albums the way they were released. Sometimes that makes sense, but not in this case. Many of Ray's albums included tracks from a number of different sessions. This set is produced in strict chronological order by recording session. Not only does that make for better continuity and flow music wise, it also provides the listener with the best possible audio experience. You are not constantly jolted by the shift in sound characteristics which would be experienced by bouncing from one session to another. There were some albums that were recorded in one session and released intact. One example is *Fathead/Ray Charles Presents David Newman*. It was recorded at a single session in late '58 which featured "Fathead" Newman on tenor and alto sax, Marcus Belgrave on trumpet and Hank Crawford on baritone sax, before he switched to alto-which became his instrument of choice. But the eight songs from that session, which included a sweet version of "Willow Weep For Me," are presented here not in the same order as on the original album, but rather *exactly* the way they were recorded - masters #1385-1392 all in strict order. Now that is what I call chronological. Rhino deserves big kudos for this.

The music in this set is in no way, shape or form a rehash the songs you heard in the movie. Sure, a lot of his hits are here, like "I've Got A Woman," "What'd I Say," "Hallelujah I Love Her So," "Drown In My Own Tears" and many more. But the real joys in this set are the tunes most people have never heard before...Ray playing jazz or blues, and often jazz *and* blues, with some first rate musicians on board.

As if the music isn't enough, there is the box and the book. Let's start with the box as it is so unique. It looks like one of

those old fashioned light brown suitcases from the fifties. It has a carrying handle and a gold latch. When you open it you see an old turntable like I had as a kid. On the spindle is a 45 of Ray's Atlantic single "Mess Around," and it has one of those yellow plastic adapters in the hole so it can be played on a spindle meant for 33 rpm albums. The speed selector includes 78, 45 and 33. Of course 45 is selected. Don't try to play it though - it is a fake, a mighty good looking one...but still a fake. Above it, on the inside of the case, is a big label congratulating you on your purchase of the fine new high-fidelity instrument and a step by step explanation of how to use it.

Lifting the fake turntable exposes the 80-page hard cover 9x11 book. The semi-gloss pages offer all the discographical information you will ever need on this music, many black and white (some color) pictures of Ray, full color reproductions of concert posters and the original Atlantic album covers, and text - a lot of text. There is a short forward by Ahmet Ertegün preceding a lengthy piece by David Ritz, who co-wrote *Brother Ray: Ray Charles' Own Story*, and wrote biographies on many other musicians. Then the original liner notes from Ray's Atlantic albums are reprinted, followed by notes on Ray Charles' compilations by Leonard Feather, Jerry Wexler and Nat Hentoff.

In addition to all his Atlantic output, close to an hour of previously unreleased performances are included. If all this is not enough, Disc 8 is a DVD of video footage shot at the 1960 Newport Jazz Festival. The eight songs are mostly Ray's hits and all are previously unissued. The band includes David "Fathead" Newman and Hank Crawford, and the Raeletts add backing vocals to 5 songs. The DVD also includes an interview with Ahmet Ertegün.

In a nutshell...wow...what a package! You can't go wrong with this one for a Ray Charles fan.

Bill Wahl



THE RUDY VAN GELDER EDITIONS

From 1953 to 1967, Alfred Lion produced a body of work that ranks as the most innovative series of recordings in modern jazz. Almost all of these masterpieces were documented by the extraordinary Rudy Van Gelder; a self-taught engineer who more than set a new standard. Devoid of caution or timidity, he captured the full power and rich sound of jazz ensembles with dazzling clarity. His contribution to the focused approach that Blue Note took at every stage of any album was immeasurable. Decades later, Rudy agreed to take a second look at the original recordings, bringing them into the digital domain with the same skill and focus. Six more RVG Editions have just been released. If you think you've heard these gems before, listen again.



Let Me Tell You 'Bout It, Leo Parker



Down With It, Blue Mitchell



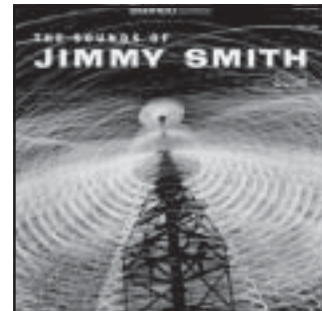
That's Where It's At, Stanley Turrentine



Reach Out, Hank Mobley



Turning Point, Lonnie Smith



The Sounds of Jimmy Smith, Jimmy Smith

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Fuego, Donald Byrd • *Symphony for Improvisers*, Don Cherry • *Music from 'The Connection'*, Freddie Redd • *The Big Beat*, Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers • *Sunday Morning*, Grant Green
Inventions & Dimensions, Herbie Hancock • *Oblique*, Bobby Hutcherson • *Time for Tyner*, McCoy Tyner • *Boss Horn*, Blue Mitchell • *Judgement*, Andrew Hill • *At the Organ, Vol. 3*, Jimmy Smith

ARTIST SELECTS SERIES: A SELECTION OF THEIR PERSONAL FAVORITE BLUE NOTE RECORDINGS, SELECTED & SEQUENCED BY THE ARTIST



Freddie Hubbard



Gerald Wilson



Kenny Burrell



Lou Donaldson

PLUS....

**A Major Find on Blue Note...
Never Before Released!**

Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane Live at Carnegie Hall

These newly-discovered sonically-pristine concert tapes from Carnegie Hall in November 1957, found in the Voice of America archives at the Library of Congress in Washington DC earlier this year, capture 51-minutes of remarkable music from two legends at the height of their powers.





MILES DAVIS

The Cellar Door Sessions 1970 COLUMBIA/LEGACY BOX SET

When this music was recorded at Washington DC's Cellar Door, Miles was in the early stages of a two year live recording stint. It had begun in March with the recordings at the Fillmore. In the fall of that year Miles changed the personnel somewhat, retaining Keith Jarrett/piano, Jack DeJohnette/drums and Airto/percussion; and adding Gary Bartz to replace Steve Grossman on saxes and Michael Henderson to replace Dave Holland on bass. Chick Corea had also left the band, so Jarrett would have the piano chair all to himself. This stripped down unit was actually guided by the directions Jarrett and DeJohnette would decide to go in, as they created the framework for the solos of Miles and Bartz in each song. Still very much in the vein fusing jazz with rock, there are many fine moments to savor here, and sameness is not a word to be used to describe the musical events taking place throughout this 6-CD set.

Somewhere around 85 minutes of the total of roughly 350 minutes of music in this set was previously issued on the 2-LP set *Live Evil*, but it was chopped up and edited to the point that, in reality, all the music should be looked at as presented here for the first time. At this point, Miles was introducing some different material. While the Fillmore recordings from earlier in the year

featured several songs from *Bitches Brew*, the Cellar Door recordings here have only one - Wayne Shorter's "Sanctuary," and the 3 versions heard are all very short (no pun intended.) The other songs from the Fillmore recordings heard here are Joe Zawinul's "Directions" (5 versions) and Miles' "It's About That Time" (2 versions). The rest of the songs here are: 1 version of "Yesternow," 5 versions of "What I Say," 4 versions of "Inamorata," and 4 versions of Keith Jarrett Improvisations. Keith is wonderful to hear on the electric piano. For someone who considers electronic instruments to be toys, he can certainly make the Fender Rhodes sing like no one else. I don't recall ever actually enjoying solos in that instrument quite so much. And, as with his majestic acoustic work, be it solo or trio, he just keeps those fresh ideas constantly flowing....and flowing.

As much as I have always been a fan of Davis' previous saxophonist Steve Grossman, I have likewise enjoyed the playing of Bartz. He has a lot of fine moments throughout these 28, mostly extended cuts. Henderson does what he is supposed to do on bass to allow Jarrett and DeJohnette to share the driver's seat. Miles...well, he is Miles - what can I say? All the music here came from recordings done from Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday night performances on December 16-19. On the last night, guitarist John McLaughlin showed up for the second and third sets and added a whole new dimension to the music - Hendrixifying it as some have said (perhaps no one said it exactly like that - that word looks kinda funny, but I'll go with it). Airto didn't show on Wednesday night, so there are actually three different versions of this band over the four nights. But, like I said, there are four nights and several versions of some of the songs, but they all sound quite different. By the way, the songs, or parts thereof, used for the *Live Evil* album all came from the Saturday night sets with John McLaughlin. The others have never been released before in any fashion.

As has been the case for the premier Legacy Miles Davis box sets, this one is marvelously packaged with a book containing essays by Airto, Gary Bartz, Jack DeJohnette, Michael Henderson, Keith Jarrett and John McLaughlin - all written earlier this year. They will certainly give you an insight into this band, the music, the experience and the main man himself. Another plus - the sound is actually quite good. This is especially true when you compare it to the Fillmore recordings.

A great gift for a fan of Miles' early 70s fusion period.

Bill Wahl

November/December 2005 • Issue 277



JOHN COLTRANE

One Down, One Up Live At The Half Note

IMPULSE RECORDS 2-CD SET

What an absolute treat it is to hear previously unreleased recordings from the John Coltrane Quartet and Miles '70 band both in the same month. And just two months earlier, we were treated to the Monk & Coltrane recordings from Carnegie Hall.

Just released by Impulse Records, this 2-CD set captures Coltrane with McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones at New York City's Half Note in 1965. They had been playing together since 1960 (Garrison since '61) and were at this point about as well-oiled as a unit can get.

Originally recorded as a radio broadcast, the sound quality is actually quite good. Until now, many saxophonists had much lower fidelity copies of the Half Note broadcasts which they guarded with their lives. Coltrane was allowed to pretty much do what he wanted when playing the Half Note, so he could experiment with new avenues coming up with some quite lengthy and intense music. That is most obvious with the 28-minute opening track on disc one - "One Down, One Up," which opens with Garrison on bass and quickly turns into a Coltrane tour-de-force improvisation, for a period backed only by Jones' drums. In fact, Elvin's bass drum pedal breaks partway through, but it doesn't hinder a thing - nothing could get in the way when Jones was in motion. This version definitely stands by itself, as it is nothing like the other two versions of the song Coltrane recorded. Next up on the first disc is a 13-minute run of the 'Trane classic "Afro Blue," for which he switches from tenor to soprano. Again, this is more intense than the earlier recordings of the song. Check out the incredible McCoy piano solo at the beginning of the journey.

Disc two opens with a song they would record in the studio ten days later for the album *John Coltrane Quartet Plays* (the liner notes say it was ten days earlier - one

Cleveland Fats

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of us is wrong, but I guess it really doesn't matter, does it). He's back on tenor for this 20-minute journey that starts out like a hymn and goes somewhere beyond that, also very much unlike the studio version. Then, the 23-minute version of a Trane signature tune "My Favorite Things" finds him switching back to soprano again with another fine solo from Tyner, propelled by Elvin and all kept together by Garrison.

There are a couple of glitches here and there, and some fadeouts where the show's radio host, Allen Grant, would take over to make the closing announcement when the allotted time for the live broadcast ran out. Not a big deal!

The enclosed 20-page booklet features an essay from writer Ashley Kahn and Coltrane's son Ravi, who produced the set. As mentioned above, this is the first authorized release (there were some lousy sounding bootlegs) of this material from 1/4-inch stereo tapes, recently discovered in a Coltrane family closet, by a band which was reaching some fiery heights during this period. It would not be that long before Coltrane would hire a second drummer (Rashied Ali) which would lead to Elvin leaving the group less than a year from this recording. Tyner left the band too, and

Garrison would be the only member of the quartet to stay on.

But they all are here, and any fan of this classic Coltrane quartet should love this one. Grab one for yourself while you are at it.

Bill Wahl

JOHN LEE HOOKER

Come See About Me/ The Definitive DVD

EAGLE EYE DVD

While most of the DVDs we review are relatively new releases, sometimes it is a while before we get our hands on certain titles. This is one of those, as it was released over a year ago, but it is so good we have to spread the word.

This DVD offers a mix of interview footage with John Lee and several others mixed with live performance footage recorded throughout the long career of the late great blues giant. It opens with a duet version of "Baby Please Don't Go" with Van Morrison in 1992 and is followed by some black & white footage from the 60s with a Hooker performance of "Maudie" with the Muddy Waters Band at the 1960 Newport Jazz Festival, and solo videos featuring "Hobo Blues" and "It Serves Me Right To Suffer."

Next is interview segments with Bonnie Raitt (one of many artists who contribute their thoughts throughout) and John Lee, followed by "Crawlin' Kingsnake" with Foghat and Paul Butterfield in 1978.

The remaining live footage in store is performances of "The Boogie" (1980), "Never Get Out Of These Blues Alive" (1981), "Worried Life Blues" (w/ Charlie Musselwhite, 1981), "Too Many Women" (w/ Ron Thompson & The Resisters, 1984), "Boom Boom" (w/ the Mark Naftalin Band, 1984), "I'm Bad Like Jesse James" (1986), "I'm In The Mood" (w/ Bonnie Raitt, 1990), "Bottle Up And Go" (w/ John Hammond at the Newport JVC Jazz Festival, 1991), "Tupelo Blues" (1993), "Hobo Blues" (w/ Ry Cooder, 1990), "The Healer" (w/ Carlos Santana, 1990), "Boogie Chillen'" (w/ Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones, 1989) and "I Need Love So Bad" (1994).

While there are a lot of interview clips in between the songs on this DVD, it is not bothersome as it is with some concert DVDs. This is a different type of presentation as it is a tribute to the life and music of John Lee with all the live footage coming from different sources rather than being a single concert. The clips of-

10TH ANNUAL AMERICAN MUSIC MASTERS

TRIBUTE CONCERT

Saturday, November 5, 8:00 p.m.
State Theatre, Playhouse Square.

Aretha Franklin, Elvis Costello, Solomon Burke, The Dixie Hummingbirds, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Cissy Houston, Peter Wolf, Taj Mahal, Otis Clay, The Manhattans, Gavin DeGraw, William Bell
Tickets for this concert are \$20, \$30 and \$40 through Tickets.com (search "Sam Cooke") or at Tickets.com outlets at area Tops stores.

CONFERENCE

A day-long look at Sam Cooke's influence at Case's Ford Theatre
Saturday, November 5, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Keynote speaker **Peter Guralnick**, author of *Dream Boogie: The Triumph of Sam Cooke*; Legendary Civil Rights leader and Chair of the NAACP, **Julian Bond**; **Leroy Crume** of the Soul Stirrers; AFD Bandleader, **Harold Battiste**; **Ira Tucker** of the Dixie Hummingbirds; Sam Cooke's brother, **L.C. Cooke**; Legendary R&B MCs **Early Byrd** and **Gorgeous George**; the **Highway QCs** and more.

Tickets available through Ticketmaster.

GOSPEL TRIBUTE

Sunday, November 6, 6:00 p.m.
State Theatre, Playhouse Square.

Aretha Franklin, Lou Rawls, Solomon Burke, The Blind Boys of Alabama, The Dixie Hummingbirds, Cissy Houston, Taj Mahal, Otis Clay, The Manhattans, Michelle Williams of Destiny's Child
Tickets for this concert are \$15, \$25 and \$35 through Tickets.com (search "Sam Cooke") or at Tickets.com outlets at area Tops stores. Get half-price tickets to the gospel show with the purchase of a full price ticket to the Saturday concert. Group packages are available. For more information, call 216.515.1228.

Sam Cooke, considered by many to be the definitive soul singer and crossover artist, a model for African-American entrepreneurship and one of the first performers to use music as a tool for social change, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986.

SAM COOKE

A Change is Gonna Come

fer very interesting and informative insights into the man himself. Some of the people who offer statements are John Lee's daughter Zakiya Hooker, Santana, Bonnie Raitt, Charlie Musselwhite, John Hammond and Ry Cooder.

The DVD's bonus material includes a performance of "Boogie Chillen'" with Roy Rogers from the Blues Against Blindness benefit concert in Berkeley in 1992, and an interesting 13-minute set of interview clips with Zakiya Hooker on her father's private and personal life, and growing up with Hooker as a father, his joking around, why he always wore sunglasses, describing him as "like a willow in the wind" - a kind and giving, non-confrontational person, that "he epitomizes 'cool'"...and the like. There is also a short interview with John Lee and his discography.

I had the pleasure of booking John Lee Hooker into Peabody's Downunder in Cleveland a couple of times in the mid eighties. I'll never forget his performances and the times I got to chat one-on-one with him. I'll also never forget his rider. While many bands asked for so many ridiculous things with regard to sound, lights, band room accommodations, etc. - I remember his stage lighting section of the rider which read like this: "There should be a light on stage at all times. At no time should the stage be completely dark."

John Lee is missed, but he sure left us a wealth of recordings to remember him by. This DVD should be a real treat for any blues fan, period.

Bill Wahl

TOMMY DORSEY

The Sentimental Gentleman of Swing - The Centennial Collection BLUEBIRD/LEGACY BOX SET

This delightful Tommy Dorsey collection compiles 70 tracks on three CDs inside a hardcover 24-page book and includes trombonist Dorsey's sideman sessions as a studio player from 1928-34 and Dorsey as leader of his own band from 1935-55 as well as air checks from 1939-56.

Born in Shenandoah, PA on November 19, 1905, Tommy Dorsey played in bands with his older brother Jimmy before moving to New York. Although he'd later become known for his beautiful trombone tone, Tommy occasionally doubled on trumpet in the 1920s. During the Depression, Tommy kept busy as a studio player until he agreed to co-lead the Dorsey Brothers Band in 1934. A blowup on stage in late 1935 led Tommy to form his own big

band. Major hits ("Marie" and "Song of India") in 1937 boosted the band's popularity and top instrumentalists, singers and arrangers kept the band in the spotlight. Dorsey expanded the band with a string section in 1942, but by the end of World War II and the waning of the swing era, he dropped the strings and cut back a bit, taking a hiatus in 1946 until he reformed his orchestra in 1947. In 1953, Jimmy Dorsey agreed to join with his brother and the band, emphasizing nostalgic dance music, was renamed Dorsey Brothers Orchestra until Tommy's sudden death in November 1956.

Disc One contains earliest tracks gleaned from Tommy's recordings with the Golden Gate Orchestra (which also featured Jimmy) and bands led by Sam Lanin, Paul Whiteman, Ed Lang, Red Nichols, the Dorsey Brothers, and many others. Highlights include a nostalgic 1929 Dorsey Brothers Orchestra version of "Mean To Me," a hot, swinging version of "Bugle Call Rag" with Ed Lang and his Orchestra from the same year, an amusing small-band track ("Sentimental Gentleman From Georgia") with the Boswell Sisters, a rousing "Shoutin' In That Amen Corner" from 1933 featuring vocalist Mildred Bailey, and plenty of other gems.

Disc Two features recordings by Tommy Dorsey as leader of his own orchestra ("the band that made swing music good music"). It begins with a lilting version of "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" recorded in July 1937 and ends with a version of "Dippermouth Blues" recorded in New York in May 1955. There are plenty of melodious highlights in between, including a swinging version of "Marie" featuring vocalist Jack Leonard and a host of band soloists and a tidy uptempo take on "Song of India," both featuring trumpet soloist Bunny Berigan. Also notable are a jumpin' arrangement of Pinetop Smith's "Boogie Woogie," a lindy-hoppin 1944 version of Tommy's hit tune "Opus #1, and other tunes that old-timers like me will find familiar-sounding and enjoyable.

Disc Three features air checks (1939-1956) spotlighting vocalists Frank Sinatra, Connie Haines, The Pied Pipers, Jo Stafford, Dick Haymes and, yes, Elvis Presley! Best about these tracks is improved sound quality, fine soloists, and drummer Buddy Rich who is featured on all but about five of the 21 tracks. Top tracks include a spicy "Rhumboogie," featuring Haines, and the Sinatra tracks, "Star Dust," "East of the Sun," "I'll Never Smile Again," "The Song Is You," and others. Duke Ellington sits in on piano for a 1946 version of "Take the A

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Train" with the Tommy Dorsey orchestra.

The arrangements and instrumental soloists are superb! With extensive liner notes by Richard Sudhalter, historic photos, and all the nostalgic swinging music, this attractively packaged set makes a great holiday gift for Dorsey fans or big band enthusiasts in general.

Nancy Ann Lee

BILL EVANS

The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961

RIVERSIDE RECORDS BOX SET

One of the greatest jazz trios of all time recorded just two studio albums, both for the Riverside label, and this live set at New York's Village Vanguard. It was a magic Sunday as piano great Bill Evans, bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian played a total of 22 songs between the two afternoon matinee sets and the two evening shows. The sheer melodic beauty, creative sensitivity and interplay between these three musicians set them apart from any other piano trios of the time.

As good as their studio albums were, those being *Portrait In Jazz* (1959) and *Explorations* (1961), these live Vanguard recordings to my ears are even better. It is often the case with jazz, especially when you have a group that works so well together, as the audience and the nightclub atmosphere spurs creativity much better than the more sterile and empty confines of a recording studio. The original release of some of these cuts, *Sunday At The Village Vanguard*, is long out of print, but Fantasy/Riverside did reissue most of this music on the CD version of that album and *Waltz for Debby*. What makes this set stand out, in addition to the improved sound, is the fact that the music is presented in the exact order as it was recorded. The tapes kept rolling between songs and you hear it all here, such as the final audience reaction- no breaks, no fadeouts. You even hear the "Few Final Bars" at the end of disc 3. They also restored the original room sound and ambience as originally recorded, and included the original take of Gloria's Step," the first song of the day which was flawed by a short power outage. It is the first U.S. release of that take. But we get a full 5:41 of the song before it happened.

Some of the songs are repeated in different sets. So what you hear are anywhere from one to three versions of "Gloria's Step," "Alice in Wonderland," "My Foolish Heart," "All of You," "My Romance," "Some Other Time," "Solar," "My Man's Gone Now," "Detour Ahead," "Waltz For Debby,"

Porgy (I Loves You Porgy),” and “Milestones.” This set sounds fantastic due to the remastering in analog utilizing 20-bit K2 Super Coding System.

A tragic car accident just 10 days after this music was recorded took the life of Scott LaFaro, one of the finest bassists jazz has ever known. This excellent set will be a welcome addition to the collection of any Bill Evans fan, particularly those who loved this magnificent under-recorded, short-lived trio with La Faro and Motian. *Bill Wahl*

RAY CHARLES
Genius & Friends
RHINO

This brand new Ray Charles albums presents him in a beautiful series of duets with a quite diverse group of singers. While the recording information is a bit sketchy - except for the fact that the tracks were supposedly recorded in '97 and '98, and it was Ray's wish before he passed away that the music be located and released. Normally this would drive me crazy...needing to know who the musicians are, more recording info and the like. Then I put the CD on. You know what? Who cares about any of that.

From the opening track with neo-soul (a genre fusing contemporary R&B, 1970s style soul, and hip hop) singer Angie Stone I began to become entranced with this music. It is about Ray and his partner singers and the identity of the musicians no longer mattered - there is an orchestra, and that's about all I can tell you. Ray is in top form and each of his duet partners shine alongside him. Most of the songs are ballads, even the version of Gene McDaniels "Compared To What" with Leela James is taken at a slower tempo than the norm.

There are many highlights here, such as his soul-ballad duet with Mary J. Blige on "It All Goes By So Fast," John Lennon's "Imagine" with Ruben Studdard & The Harlem Gospel Singers, a ballad duet with George Michael on Stevie Wonder's "Blame It On The Sun" and "Surrender To Love" with Italian pop star Laura Pausini. Other "friends" on the album are Chris Isaak, Gladys Knight, Diana Ross, Idina Menzel (from the award-winning Broadway musical *Wicked*), John Legend and Patti LaBelle.

The last two songs obviously were not from the '97-98 duet recordings. There is a live version of "Busted" with Willie Nelson from the TV special *Ray Charles: 50 Years In Music* done back in '91, and Alicia Keys' version of "America The Beautiful" recorded live at the Superbowl XXXIX Pre-

Game Show in February 2005 sung as a tribute to Ray. It is paired with a recording of Ray singing the song much like the "Unforgettable" duet with Natalie and her father Nat King Cole.

Very different from last year's more informal, more jazz-oriented album *Genius Loves Company*, the new *Genius & Friends* is a highly produced effort, for the most part more in the R&B/pop vein. It is also an extremely enjoyable recording that will please a very wide audience. *Bill Wahl*

**ERIC CLAPTON/
DAVID SANBORN/
MARCUS MILLER/
JOE SAMPLE/STEVE GADD**
Legends Live At Montreux 1997
EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

So what happens when you mix a blues/rock guitar star with four stars of the light jazz genre? Well, you get a little bit of everything.

Putting these five guys with heavy credentials together gives you some blues, some acoustic jazz, some funk and some light jazz - all in one show. There is even some ragtime with Sample going solo on the Steinway grand for a version of "Shreveport Stomp." There is no doubt that all these guys can play, and they play very well.

Those into Clapton will get to hear him stretch out like rarely before. When he does solo, rather than trying to sound like a jazz guitarist, he just plays like Clapton...but better. And Sanborn gets down when he's playing the blues, as we all know he's capable of. In short, these guys have no producers or pencil pushers telling them what to do, or how to play. Clapton does sing several too.

A major highlight is the medley beginning with Duke Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood," played by Marcus Miller on bass clarinet, Sample on the grand and Sanborn...then Miller's bass clarinet gently segues into Clapton's "Layla," which is one that Clapton sings as he plays acoustic guitar with Sample on the grand again, plus Sanborn and Gadd. After that, the show closes with a jazz/blues version of "Every Day I Have The Blues," with another Clapton vocal.

In Short - a very different kind of show played by 5 guys who have no trouble pulling it off. The video is good, the sound is very good and the music is even better. Sound offerings are stereo, Dolby 5.1 and DTS. A good gift for a variety of people. *Bill Wahl*

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MILES DAVIS

'Round About Midnight: Legacy Edition

COLUMBIA/LEGACY

Within one day of Miles' signing with Columbia Records in 1955, the sessions for his first album, **'Round About Midnight** began. The personnel in the quintet are all hierarchy in the history of jazz - Miles, John Coltrane, Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. Miles' first Columbia album would begin a long and prolific recording career with the label, which in recent years has been releasing a slew of excellent reissues and boxed sets for Davis through its Legacy division utilizing up-to-the-minute improvements in sound technology.

The original album contained six songs taken from three recording sessions in New York in '55 and '56: the title track, "Ah-Leu-Cha," "All of You," "Bye Bye Blackbird," "Tadd's Delight" and "Dear Old Stockholm." This new release in the Legacy Edition series of expanded releases in 2-CD sets offers four more tunes from the same three sessions which were not on the original album, but were on the 2001 CD version and were also released on other compilation albums.

Disc two brings us nine more gems - and all of them are live in concert. The opening version of "Round Midnight" features Miles with Zoot Sims, Gerry Mulligan, Thelonious Monk, Percy Heath and Connie Kay at the '55 Newport Jazz Festival, and it was previously released on a Newport tribute album. The remaining eight feature the same personnel as on the **Round Midnight** album (Coltrane and all mentioned above), and are previously unreleased. All were recorded in 1956 in California at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, and it is a smokin' set to say the least. Included are "Walkin'," "Woody 'N You," "Salt Peanuts," "Chance It" (aka Max Is Making Wax) and a very short version of "The Theme." Then there is the gorgeous version of the ballad "It Never Entered My Mind." Simply put, this quintet with Coltrane was one hell of a band! All of the music on disc two was recently restored by noted sound master Malcolm Cecil.

So, if you already have the **'Round Midnight** album on CD, you might want to consider an upgrade. With the Legacy Edition you get all the songs from the original album, plus an extra CD, 40 more minutes of music (most of which is previously unreleased), all with great sound quality and a color booklet with rare photos, George Avakian's original 1957 liner notes and more notes from Bob Blumenthal penned for the 2001 CD release and this set.

A great gift for any Miles Davis fan, yourself included if you fit that category. Watch for more Legacy Editions in the future. Congrats go out again to the folks at Legacy for their fine reissue productions.

Bill Wahl

FRANK SINATRA

The Essential Frank Sinatra & Tommy Dorsey Orchestra

BLUEBIRD/LEGACY CD SET

Part of a series of Legacy's "Essential" recordings, this two-disc set spotlights 44 tunes originally recorded for RCA Victor by Frank Sinatra during the short time he was with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra during 1940—1942.

Sinatra left the floundering Harry James band in 1940 to become the new male vocalist for Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra. This set culls the very best of their recordings during a time when 25-year old Sinatra began learning the essence of vocal phrasing.

PAGE TEN

As he sings Disc One gems such as "I'll Be Seeing You," "Stardust," "I'll Never Smile Again" and other songs, Sinatra doesn't take many chances or improvise his vocals as that may have interfered with the precision of the charts. Ditto for Disc Two where you'll enjoy highlights such as "Everything Happens To Me," "Blue Skies," "Street of Dreams, and 18 other tunes.

This isn't the best Sinatra collection available but it offers samples of the singer at the beginning of his more than five-decade career and nicely documents his collaboration with the Dorsey band, featuring charts (some during Dorsey's brief flirtation with a string section) that make this 2-CD set a true listening treasure. A 12-page liner booklet contains historic photos, a written intro by Sinatra's daughter, Nancy, and notes by Sinatra historian Charles L. Granata.

Nancy Ann Lee

CREAM

Royal Albert Hall

RHINO DVD

Rhino has just released a 2-DVD set filmed at Cream's four night concert stint at London's Royal Albert Hall in May of this year. Eric Clapton, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker formed Cream in 1966 and the group broke up just under three years later. In that time, they recorded three very successful albums - **Fresh Cream**, **Disraeli Gears** and **Wheels of Fire** (some live albums also came out after the breakup). Those three albums contained several big songs for the band, like "Spoonful," "I'm So Glad," "Badge," "Born Under A Bad Sign," "White Room," "Crossroads," "and "Sunshine Of Your Love." All those and many more are seen and heard on this set which includes 19 songs and three alternate takes. You'll also see interviews with Clapton, Bruce and Baker.

When I first heard of the release of this video, I must say I was very curious. Clapton has remained in the limelight for all these years, but I'd not heard from Bruce in some time, and, quite frankly, I didn't even know if Baker was still alive. But they are all alive and well indeed, aged to be sure, but then we all are, aren't we? Not only that, they all appear to be in good shape! I'm glad to report that they also sound good, both instrumentally and vocally (they all sing some lead), and the filming is topnotch. Same goes for the sound quality - the DTS surround sound makes you feel like you're right there in front of them at Royal Albert Hall.

These concerts marked the first reunion of Cream in two decades.

This DVD should please even the casual Cream fan, and will really charge up their big time followers. Rhino has also released a 2-CD set of the music for those who care to go that way. A surprisingly enjoyable concert video.

Bill Wahl

GERRY GARCIA

Live At Shoreline

RHINO DVD

Gerry Garcia fans will want to get their hands on this just-released concert DVD shot at Shoreline Amphitheater in Mountainview, California. The 1990 concert featured Garcia's band, which included Melvin Seals on Keyboards and Hammond organ, bassist John Kahn, drummer David Kemper and background singers Gloria Jones and Jackie LaBranch. The program is a mixed bag of cover material. Among the 14 songs are two motown classics, "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You" and "I Second That Emotion," Peter Tosh's "Stop That Train," the Beatles' "Dear Prudence," Van Morrison's "It Stoned Me," two from Bob Dylan, "Tangled Up In Blue" and "I Shall Be Released" and a

version "That Lucky Old Sun," originally a hit for Frankie Laine in 1949, and the blues "Think."

The band is in good form mixing R&B, blues and rock with a gospel tinge delivered by the singers. The quality of the video is good, especially when focused on closeups of Garcia either singing or playing - which is what you will see most of the time. The audio quality in Dolby 5.1 is very clean, but I found the recording level low compared with other DVDs. Crank it up and boost the bass a bit.

The DVD extras include a Blair Jackson interview with Robert Hunter, a mini-documentary, interviews with band members and photo galleries. *Bill Wahl*

GERRY GARCIA

The Gerry Garcia Collection Vol. 1 LEGION OF MARY RHINO CD SET

In 1974 Grateful Dead guitarist/vocalist Gerry Garcia formed a band known as Legion of Mary for a seven month concert tour. He had Merl Saunders/keyboards, Martin Fierro/sax and flute, John Kahn/bass and Ron Tutt/drums on board for this jazzy/bluesy voyage which produced the 14 songs on this 2-CD set. Most of the songs were recorded at Great American Music Hall in San Francisco and Keystone Berkeley, which was near the UC Berkeley campus. Opening with Bob Dylan's "Tough

Mama" and closing with the Holland/Dozier/Holland soul classic "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You," the band covers blues and soul/R&B songs in between such as "I Second That Emotion," "Mystery Train" and "Neighbor, Neighbor." They also do Robbie Robertson's (The Band) "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," Ray Charles' "Talkin' About You" and Chuck Berry's "Let It Rock," plus an instrumental jam version of Smokey Robinson's "Since I Lost My Baby." Garcia was undoubtedly having fun here with tunes he liked written by others.

There are some audio glitches here and there, but as far as I know this music has never been released other than bootleg recordings, so Garcia fans will welcome this rare set, regardless. *Bill Wahl*

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Festival! The Newport Folk Festival film (1963-1966) EAGLE EVE MEDIA DVD

Eagle Rock has just released this documentary film released in 1967 featuring highlights from the 1963-1966 Newport Folk Festivals. While much of the focus is on folk music and bluegrass, there are several blues performances from the likes of Howlin' Wolf, Mississippi John Hurt, Son House, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Fred McDowell, Mike Bloomfield and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band.

The list of the other musicians seen

performing here reads like a who's who of the 60s folk and country music scene - such as Bob Dylan, Peter, Paul & Mary, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Judy Collins, Donovan, Johnny Cash, Jim Kweskin & the Jug Band, Odetta and many others. Then there are some other treats like the Ed Young Fife and Drum Corps, the Sacred Harp Singers, the Staple Singers and others.

Keep in mind that this is a documentary, so you don't see full songs as you were watching a concert. Rather you'll see parts of songs, mostly while viewing the performer, but sometimes the music is over shots of the festival-goers watching the shows, milling about or waking up squinting to the morning sun in their sleeping bags. You'll also get some chatter from people about the meaning of folk music, the issues of the time and the like. And you'll get some words from some of the performers, like Son House and Mike Bloomfield on playing the blues. House says "The blues don't call for no jumpin'. If it goes to jumpin', that ain't the blues." There are many notable blues clips here, including Howlin' Wolf doing "Howlin' For My Darlin'," after which it thunders and pours rain.

A very interesting documentary, shot in B&W of course, but good quality videos and decent sound considering the timeframe. A good choice for anyone into the 60s folk & blues scene. *Bill Wahl*

November

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| FRI 4 | ARMSTRONG BEARCAT BAND |
| SAT 5 | COLIN DUSSAULT'S BLUES PROJECT |
| FRI 11 | RHYTHM SYNDICATE |
| SAT 12 | TONY KOUSSA JR. BAND |
| FRI 18 | SOUL'D OUT |
| SAT 19 | TRAVIS HADDIX BAND (BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR TRAVIS) |
| FRI 25 | KRAKER BROTHERS |
| SAT 26 | COLIN DUSSAULT'S BLUES PROJECT |

December

| | |
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| FRI 2 | RENDEZVOUS (DANCE, PARTY, ROCK) |
| SAT 3 | COLIN DUSSAULT'S BLUES PROJECT |
| FRI 9 | SAM GETZ BAND |
| SAT 10 | WALLACE COLEMAN BAND |
| FRI 16 | CITY HEAT |
| SAT 17 | KG BLUES |
| FRI 23 | SWAMP BOOGIE BAND |
| SAT 24 | BROWNS GAME 1 PM! CLOSED IN PM |
| SUN 25 | ARMSTRONG/BEARCAT'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY |
| FRI 30 | FORTE' |
| FRI 31 | NEW YEARS EVE PARTY WITH TONY KOUSSA JR. BAND |



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|------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| SUNDAYS | BROWNS GAMES Nov 27 & Dec 4 RON HOWARD & CRUISIN' 5PM | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MONDAYS | EDDIE & THE EDSELS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 8 KENTUCKY THUNDER | 13 KENTUCKY THUNDER | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 TBA | 20 AND 27 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 30 BLUESTONES | 28 DON BAKER BAND | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| THURSDAYS | THE SAVANNAH JAM WITH BAD BOYS OF BLUES CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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CANDY DULFER
Live At Montreux 2002
EAGLE EYE MEDIA DVD

Smooth jazz and funk fans should enjoy this brand new concert video from Dutch alto saxophonist Candy Dulfer. While I have not much from her own albums (she has seven) I have been impressed with her work with others - especially on one of Van Morrison's albums - his 1993 double live set **A Night In San Francisco**. She's also opened for Madonna, played with Pink Floyd, Aretha, Blondie and Prince among others. This concert at the 2002 Montreux Jazz Festival features Dulfer on lead vocals and alto sax with a second front line singer, Monique Baker, and a tight, very funky band made up, I would guess, mostly of Europeans...that's judging by their names. The instrumentation, besides Dulfer, is sax, trumpet, guitar, bass guitar, two keyboard players and drums.

Her 2002 set here includes originals covering ballads, funk and smooth jazz. The bonus tracks from the 1998 Montreux are just as funky as she mixes originals with her smooth jazz version of the Isley Brothers' "For The Love Of You" and Bonnie Raitt's "I Can't Make You Love Me," which she does instrumentally first, then hints at George Michael's version as she adds a second vocal part to that of Roger Happel (one of her keyboard players). A very nice job - I'm sure Bonnie approved.

A well rounded set from Candy Dulfer offering much more than I expected. She can be quite soulful for a very cute, blonde white girl from Holland. And yes...I've got to throw this in...she is by no means hard to look at!

The sound and video quality is superb throughout. The audio choices include Stereo, Dolby Surround 5.1 and DTS.

Bill Wahl

NIACIN
Live In Tokyo
EAGLE VISION DVD

I was totally unfamiliar with Niacin until this DVD came along, but they have apparently been around since the mid 90s. formed by bassist Billy Sheehan, they are a jazz-fusion power trio - a guitarless one at that with John Novello on keyboards and Dennis Chambers on drums. Sheehan graduated from a rock background with the likes of Talas, and David Lee Roth. Chambers has been heard with a lot of bands in the jazz-fusion vein, including John McLaughlin, George Duke and Stanley Clarke, to name a few. But it is Novello who carries most of the weight here, and he does most of it on the Hammond organ. Now that I like.

Most of the songs were written by Sheehan and Novello, and one standout is "I Miss You (Like I Miss The Sun)" - I love those power trio ballads. The two covers are standouts as well - Weather Report's "Birdland" and The Supreme's "You Keep Me Hangin' On" - according to Vanilla Fudge, that is.

Recorded and filmed at the Blue Note in Tokyo in 1997, the video portion itself, while not great, is certainly decent and pretty typical of nightclub footage. The sound is quite good, but of course the Japanese are well known for that.

At first I wondered Why a DVD...why not just CD? But I can see how some young musicians out there might enjoy seeing these guys at work. In fact, I'm enjoying watching Chambers, who appears effortless but sure doesn't sound like it.

Niacin eh? OK..well now I know.

Bill Wahl

LEE RITENOUR
Overtime
EAGLE EYE DVD

Guitarist Lee Ritenour, a much sought-after studio guitarist for decades now, assembled a group of 16 musician friends in a Burbank recording studio with an audience for this set of 27 songs and came up with some first-rate music. Of course, why shouldn't he? Many of his "friends" are household names in the recording studio scene themselves, and many are known in contemporary jazz (or light jazz) circles, such as Dave Grusin, Patrice Rushen, Harvey Mason, Ernie Watts, Eric Marienthal, Anthony Jackson and Chris Botti. Also on hand is a wonderful vocalist, Kenya Hathaway, the beautiful daughter of the late Donny Hathaway.

Disc One opens with straight acoustic jazz fare, such as Lee Morgan's "Party Time" and Miles' "Blue In Green." Then there is a version of the late Hungarian guitarist Gabor Szabo's "Mizrab," a wonderful gypsy-like song I've not heard in years. From there they go into a Latin mode with Ritenour's "Sugarloaf Express" before featuring Brazilian vocalist Ivan Lins for three of his originals.

Disc two opens with Ritenour's "Captain Fingers," the first of five of his originals on the disc, and the third of seven in the set. One is a nod to the great Wes Montgomery titled "A Little Bumpin'." They also do Dave Grusin's "Captain Caribe," Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Water To Drink (Agua de Beber)" and the Temptations' "Papa Was A Rolling Stone," nicely sung by Hathaway and Grady Harrell.

The music, Dolby 5.1 audio and the video are all first rate. I can easily see how a big Lee Ritenour fan would love this. But other folks may be put off by the interview clips from Ritenour and others interspersed between most of the songs. A concert video should be just that, with interviews by themselves as an extra. I tried to find a way to automatically bypass them, but had no luck. That is the only real fault with this DVD set, so if it does not bother you, go for it.

Bill Wahl

Different Genres

Here are some CDs and DVDs that have nothing to do with jazz, blues, funk, soul or R&B, but they are all good choices for those nostalgic trips or people who enjoy a variety of music styles. They are also some ideas for people on your shopping list who just aren't exactly into either jazz or blues.

CAT STEVENS
Majikat
EAGLE VISION DVD

Here is another one for all the baby boomers out there. I must admit, I am one of them. I first became aware of Cat Stevens when he opened as a solo act for a Moody Blues concert in Buffalo many, many years ago. Though unknown in the U.S., he pretty much had the entire audience enthralled for his entire set, and I believe they (we) demanded an encore. The rest is history. Stevens had 14 Top 40 singles, and 7 Top 10 albums between 1971 and 1977. This is the first ever concert DVD of one of the most successful solo performers of all time. Recorded on his Majikat tour in 1976, it captures the pop-folk artist in top form in Williamsburg, Virginia. He is backed by a 7-piece band and background singers as he plays both acoustic guitar and grand piano. It would be just a year and a half later that he would change his name to Yusuf Islam and leave the music business completely.

He sings many of his hits, including "Moonshadow," "Where Do The Children Play," "Hard Headed Woman," "Miles From Nowhere," "Lady D' Arbanville," "Tuesday's Dead," "Oh Very Young," "Sad Lisa," "Father & Son," "Peace Train" and many more.

The bonus material includes five more live songs, three of which are from 1971, and a recent 35-minute interview during which he answers many questions explaining why he walked away from an incredible career and what he is doing today, a "Father & Son" Island Records promo video and more. Both the video and audio quality are very good, and the Dolby 5.1 and DTS sound mixes are warm and full.

There is no question that this would more than please anyone who was ever a fan of Cat Stevens, and there are many millions of them (us) out there.

Bill Wahl

AUSTIN CITY LIMITS

Music Festival 2004

RHINO DVD SET

If diversity fits the musical tastes of someone on your gift list, think about this live concert 2-DVD set shot at the 2004 Austin City Limits Music Festival. Several quite listenable and very diverse indie rock bands are heard along with The Neville Brothers, Rosanne Cash, Phish guitarist Trey Anastasio, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Shelby Lynne, Sheryl Crow, Ben Harper, Los Lonely Boys and many others. The Blind Boys, Neville Brothers and Ben Harper are among my favorites, along with Anastasio's power jazz-funk performance with a hot band which includes a horn section. There are also a number of people I've never heard of that I'd like to hear more from. Two of these are Howie Day, a solo guitarist/singer from Maine who, as the song progresses, becomes a one man band via his percussive guitar slapping and creative use of a slew of foot pedals. Then there is the sultry pianist/singer Rachael Yamagata, and also a band known as Calexico, who I could only describe as flamenco rock. Both the audio and video quality are very good, with stereo and Dolby 5.1 audio choices.

The 2004 Austin City Limits Festival was the fourth annual event, and it drew over 70,000 people listening to over 130 bands performing on eight stages in Austin Texas - a city which has over the years become one hell of a live music mecca. Rhino has also released a single CD companion to the video, but it is a paired down version with 16 songs to the video version's 24. Yes...diversity is definitely the key word for this one.

Bill Wahl

THE 60S ROCK EXPERIENCE

Shout! Factory Box Set

This 3-CD set packaged in a digibook longbox offers 59 hits from the 60s (a few are early 70s) that will bring back some memories for those old enough to remember them. Names such as Lovin' Spoonful, The Kinks, Steppenwolf, The Mamas & The Pappas, The Turtles, Van Morrison, Percy Sledge, The Supremes, Canned Heat, Paul Revere & The Raiders, Procol Harum, The Byrds, Grateful Dead, The Chambers Brothers, Edwin Starr, The Animals, The Temptations and many more are represented. All the songs were bonafide charted pop hits - most in the Top Ten, so you won't find some people you might think of when the 60s come to mind - such as Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendryx. But the top pop stuff is certainly well covered. The attached 36-page color booklet offers a retrospective on the era, some band pictures, festival crowd scenes and the song listings as well as chart ranking for each song. I believe this set was originally a PBS pledge drive item. A great nostalgia trip for baby boomers.

Bill Wahl

THE SIRE RECORDS STORY

Just Say Sire

RHINO/SIRE CD/DVD BOX SET

If you were a fan of the diverse music which came from Sire records during the eighties, or you are shopping for a gift for someone who was, this set will be something to consider.

Not for jazz or blues purists by any means, this 3 CD/1-DVD set is about as diverse as you get. Sire Records was founded in 1966 by record entrepreneurs Seymour Stein and Richard Gottehrer. When Gottehrer left 10 years later, Stein teamed the label up with Warner Bros. From then until '96 Stein and Sire were in the forefront of breaking new music with great success and launched many a career. Three of the most notable of those were Madonna, Talking Heads and The Pretenders, but there were many others, such as The Ramones, Ice-T, The Replacements, Depeche Mode, Lou Reed, the English Beat and Ministry. They, of course, are all here.

The diversity of this set becomes obvious by just looking at the front cover. You'll see names like The Cult, Ministry, My Bloody Valentine, Deborah Harry, Tom Tom Club, Kid Creole & The Coconuts, k.d. Lang, Brian Wilson, Ofra Haza and Little Jimmy Scott...all quite different...all of them here. And there are a lot more. The music in the set was recorded between '76 and the mid 90s, with the vast majority coming from the 80s.

The DVD contains 20 videos of many of Sire's artists, including The Pretenders, Echo & The Bunnymen, Talking Heads, Petshop Boys, Depeche Mode and Madonna. The single fold, hard cover longbox holds the CDs on either side of the full color 68-page booklet, which contains essays from Stein & Gottehrer and others, plus photos with info for each band and tributes from many of the artists and music biz veterans.

A great gift choice for a very musically diverse person.

Bill Wahl

NATALIE MERCHANT

Retrospective 1990-2005

RHINO CD SET

I've been a fan of Natalie Merchant since first seeing her in Buffalo with 10,000 Maniacs before most people had ever heard of them. They were soon signed to Elektra Records and the rest is history. Rhino issued a 10,000 Maniacs retrospective last year, now it is time for Merchant's solo retrospective.

After leaving the Maniacs, Natalie released several very successful solo albums, beginning with **Tigerlily** in 1995. While she did receive airplay on rock stations everywhere, she was a staple of the AAA radio format. Never heard of it? Well, unfortunately, many cities, including Cleveland, don't have an AAA station. It stands for Adult Album Alternative and it is a great format. They don't play the same 20 songs over and over again. Rather, they play all sorts of album tracks from many bands, so you never get tired of listening. Internet Radio listeners know it well.

This 2-CD set offers many of her best album tracks on disc one, and a number of much less familiar songs on disc two, such as performances with Billy Bragg and Michael Stipe of R.E.M., plus a song from the Woody Guthrie Tribute album and her version of "I Know How To Do It" with Booker T. & the MGs, Dr. John, Jim Keltner and others from the 1995 opening concert for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. There are also two songs she rerecorded this year for the retrospective, "Thick As Thieves" and "Tell Yourself."

Natalie also compiled the set, which was remastered for improved sound, and wrote the liner notes which include com-

mentary for each track. Don't confuse this with the single disc release which covers 1995-2005.

A no-brainer for any Natalie Merchant fan, especially for the rarities on the second disc. *Bill Wahl*

MICHAEL McDONALD The Ultimate Collection RHINO

This is a good choice for someone on your list who enjoys pop/rock singer Michael McDonald, but doesn't have a lot of his albums. It's a mix of several of his Doobie Brothers hits, such as "Minute To Minute," "What A Fool Believes," and "Takin' It To The Streets," and many of his solo hits, such as "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" from his Motown album and "Yah Mo B There," a song he recorded with James Ingram.

In all, there are 19 McDonald hits in this tidy little package, which comes with a 12-page booklet. *Michael Braxton*

Tutorials & Gear

BERKLEE WORKSHOP LATIN JAZZ GROOVES

Victor Mendoza
BERKLEE PRESS DVD

Berklee Press, a publishing division of Berklee College of Music in Boston, has a large catalogue full of tutorial books and DVDs covering many different instruments, styles and techniques. One of its latest releases is this Latin jazz workshop conducted by Victor Mendoza, a Berklee instructor and Latin

percussionist/vibes player who has worked and recorded with Paquito D'Rivera, Danilo Perez, Claudio Roditi and many others.

On video he starts by explaining some of the fundamentals, such as keeping time, using a metronome, counting, the importance of the pulse, the upbeat vs. the downbeat, when to come in, what to play and what not to play and the like. He explains and demonstrates a number of Latin jazz patterns, such as Son Clave, Rhumba Clave, Cascara and Tumbao. For example, the Tumbao is a bass line used in Latin jazz and Mendoza explains how you can sing the bass line as you learn play along with it. His approach is such that he'll have you understanding and playing these rhythms in a surprisingly short time. In the beginning he mostly just claps his hands or strikes claves to demonstrate. Then he demonstrates on the vibes with a clave track accompanying him.

The first tutorial part of the DVD runs about 41-minutes. A second feature is the Victor Mendoza Quintet in concert for four songs. Then there is a section where you can practice different loops along with him as he plays solo claves for each pattern - in loops of course. The second part features nine harmonic progressions with piano, bass and drums that you can play along with, including Afro-Cuban 6/8. This loop chapter is a great idea!

This tutorial is very well conducted by Mendoza and easy to understand and follow. Check out this and the many other books and DVDs at www.berkleepress.com. *Bill Wahl*

NOISEBUSTER NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES

How often do you fly? Have you noticed that the headphones you can rent from the airline don't do anything to diminish that annoying sucking noise from the jet engines? It doesn't have to be that way.

Even though I find flying to be a real rush, I don't really do it that often. So it was some time after I got a set of NoiseBuster noise cancelling headphones before I got a chance to use them. But when I did....man - what a difference!

You may have heard of headphones with this technology. Here's how it works - NoiseBuster uses a microphone inside and outside the earcup to listen to the offending noise coming into the ear. Using electronics, the system takes the information from the microphone and uses it to create a noise wave that is identical, but directly opposite of, the one coming into the ear. This "anti-noise" wave is output through a speaker, also located in the earcup. When the two waves (the offending noise wave and the anti-noise wave) meet, the noise is significantly reduced. That's pretty much the idea in a nutshell, and all I really need to know.

My first flight with these things was on a plane that had no music or headphone jacks. What a bummer. But I put them on anyway and turned them on to see if they reduced the jetnoise. They sure did, and a lot. The next flight did have music. I put on the included airline adapter that plugs right in to the armrest jacks and low and behold...the music sounded fantastic, while the jet noise was so far in the background it was not bothersome at all. Yup...they really work.

Of course, you can use these things in places other than a jet airliner. You can use them with exercise equipment, mowing the lawn, ob rapid transit commutes - perhaps even the next time you need to drive a tractor.

There are many other companies that make noise-cancel-

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REALISM...A MASTERFUL
BLEND OF FIERY BLUES,
BALLSY BALLADS AND
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ling headphones, but these are the only ones I've had the experience of actually using. I've seen some pretty steep prices for these things, but I don't need \$300 audiophile headphone quality at 30,000 feet. Perhaps some of the pricey ones might sound better, but the fact that these drastically reduce the outside noise and the music sounds good is all I need. Their specs are decent, with a frequency range of 20 - 20,000 HZ. They come with the 3.5mm stereo adapter plug as mentioned and a AAA battery. You have to turn the power on to get the noise cancelling effect. The earcups are comfortable, and achieve a good seal without completely enclosing the ear (which can cause some sweat). They are also lightweight and fold up very small into the included pouch. One note...these are not meant to be your everyday set of headphones at home, but they still sound decent as long as they are turned on.

When I got these, they sold for \$69.95 - a decent price. Now I understand you can get them directly from the company for \$50, but only online at www.noisebuster.net. After December 31, they are supposed to go back to the regular price. You can also buy them at Amazon and other online retailers and at stores at many airports, but you'll probably pay the full price.

A great holiday gift for a traveler.

Bill Wahl



**We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!**

SONNY ROLLINS

Without A Song: The 9/11 Concert

MILESTONE RECORDS

Saxophone giant Sonny Rollins almost cancelled this first-rate sextet gig recorded live at Boston's Berklee Performance Center on September 15, 2001. His Manhattan apartment was only six blocks from the World Trade Center and, after watching the early rescue activities on 9/11, he returned to his apartment before the power went out and was rescued the next day along with neighbors.

Rollins, 71-years old at the time and in peak form himself, yields abundant time in the spotlight to trombonist Clifton Anderson, pianist Stephen Scott, electric bassist Bob Cranshaw, drummer Perry Wilson and percussionist Kimati Dinizulu. The 16-plus minute title track opener establishes the talents of each musician and shows how well this group works together. "Global Warming," a swinging Rollins original of nearly equal duration, has a bouncy Latinate feel and serves up impressively inventive and lengthy solos by Rollins and Anderson. Performed as a quartet with Rollins, Scott, Cranshaw and Perry, an almost 11-minute version of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" is given fresh meaning. Rollins launches a bopping 16-minute take on "Why Was I Born?" with an unaccompanied improv before the band jumps in to accompany him on the melody head. The 12-minute album finale, "Where Or When," gets an uptempo remake, highlighted by interchanges between Rollins and Anderson.



We're lucky that Rollins granted permission to Carl Smith to tape this performance and that Richie Corsello, Rollins's remix engineer, worked hard to produce the finished product. This is a magnificent recording that adds nicely to the saxophonist's extensive discography, proving that the septuagenarian has lost none of his creative edge.

Nancy Ann Lee

SUSAN TEDESCHI

Hope & Desire

VERVE/FORECAST

In its original incarnation the Verve/Forecast label preoccupied itself with artists prepared to take on larger audiences such as Richie Havens and Laura Nyro.

The current version remains true to this spirit in setting soul-blues vocalist/guitarist Tedeschi's transcendence from *niche* star to crossover rave. This release could easily accomplish this. On *Hope & Desire* Tedeschi lays down her axe and focuses on her straightforward and underplayed vocal delivery. Her set list features well-selected covers including both familiar and lesser-known r&b/soul gems. The classic Four Tops hit "Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever", Otis Redding's gem "Security" and the lesser known but exquisite Candi Staton workout "Evidence" get the personal treatment. Tedeschi's singing is propelled by a solid backup unit, heavy on the keyboards and highlighted by distinctive guitar touches courtesy of her husband, jam-band hero Derek Trucks.

There's not a weak track present and the disc scores more points with each play. *Hope & Desire* is one of '05's very best.

Duane Verh

PONCHO SANCHEZ

Do It!

CONCORD PICANTE

One of the stalwarts of Latin jazz, percussionist-bandleader Poncho Sanchez breaks new ground with this energetic 11-track release that features two tracks with the entire nine-member Tower of Power group, two tracks with legendary South African musician Hugh Masekela, plus more.

There's plenty of lively, colorful fare featured on this disc. Sanchez's band launches the CD with a novel take on the Chano Pozo classic, "Tin Tin Deo. Hugh Masakela contributes vocals to the catchy, danceable "Ha Lese Le Di Khanna" and his smooth original, "Child of the Earth." The instrumental soloists clinch the engaging title track by trombonist Francesco Torres. Two foot-tapping Latinate funk-jazz numbers, "Squib Cakes" and "Shotgun Slim" spotlight the Tower of Power band along with percussionists Sanchez (who also sings lead vocals on the latter), Sal Vasquez and George Ortiz. Hammond B-3 soloist David Torres spices up his original "The Kyper."

Sanchez, who's been making music for 25 years, got his first big break when he met Latin music luminary and label mate, Cal Tjader, with whom he worked for nearly 8 years before beginning his own recording career. He's made numerous recordings since joining Concord in 1982. Visit either www.concordrecords.com or www.ponchosanchez.com for more information.

Diverse band arrangements, multi-talented musicians, catchy beats and extraordinary solos make this CD the ultimate adventure in listening for Latin-jazz fans. Mark your calendars for April 28, 2006 when Sanchez is scheduled to appear at the State Theater in Cleveland.

Nancy Ann Lee

BONNIE RAITT

Souls Alike
CAPITOL

For most of her career Bonnie Raitt has been a predictable commodity. It's a safe bet that any album she turns out will be a top-notch production with quality material, which will have some connection to the roots. *Souls Alike* is no exception and should find its way in due course onto a good many radio playlists. While here and there a touch of quirkiness may show up, this set by and large is mainstream adult pop, well executed and laced with enough bluesy touches to recall Ms. Raitt's core identity. While the whole set is most respectable, the standout track shows up at the very end, a jazzy, moody departure, "The Bed I Made". Her fans should be pleased.

Duane Verh

MARC ANTOINE

Modern Times

RENDEZVOUS ENTERTAINMENT
PRAFUL

Pyramid In Your Backyard

RENDEZVOUS ENTERTAINMENT

Founded by saxophonist Dave Koz, Rendezvous Entertainment has put together an impressive catalogue of smooth jazz recordings in a short period of time. Two of the most refreshing of the lot so far are these new releases by Marc Antoine and Praful, both of whom were featured on the recent Dave Koz and Friends concert tour.

Marc Antoine stands out in a sea of smooth jazz artists due to his unique and easily recognizable guitar sound. Antoine, who was classically trained, plays with a vibrant flamenco style while blending Latin and funk with world music and smooth jazz coming up with some outstanding results throughout this album. While he gets a lot of airplay on the WAVE stations throughout the country, there are many cuts which you probably won't hear in their format.

Two standout tracks are "Cantar Al Amor," with chant-like vocals by Beatriz Nunez and "Umbele," both of which are very much leaning in the world music direction. Antoine wrote all but one of the 11 songs (Sting wrote the other one with Dominic Miller). Bobby Martinez/flutes and David Ferraro/all programming and samples provide most all of the instrumental work along with Antoine, who is heard on guitars, bass, oud and keyboards. A very nice release from Marc Antoine.

Praful opened the Dave Koz & Friends

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concert tour with his blend of world music, jazz and electronic club music featuring a group of musicians from several parts of the world. German-born Praful plays soprano and tenor saxes, flute, bansuri (Indian bamboo flutes), harmonium, guitar, keyboards and melodica. The recording session was done at a floating recording studio in Amsterdam, and joining the leader were several other musicians used on different tracks, including several vocalists, a bassist, a keyboard player, a guitarist, a trombonist and a barker (yes..a barker.) Afra Mussawisade plays a variety of percussion instruments, congas, bongos and things with very strange names throughout and is definitely a major part of the success of the project. Katia Moraes adds some sweet vocals to two cuts. The infectious rhythms and ethnic diversities heard on each of the dozen songs, combined with Praful's multi-instrumental talents and songwriting, percussionist Mussawisade and the vocalist's contributions make for a very interesting and enjoyable world journey. Very different stuff.

Praful's band, Marc Antoine and Katia Moraes (with her singing and dancing) pretty much stole the show at the Dave Koz & Friends concert recently at the Palace Theatre in Cleveland, and I presume everywhere else they played. These two albums explain why.

Bill Wahl

JACOB FRED JAZZ ODYSSEY

The Sameness of Difference

HYENA

If the JFJO hangs around for long enough, they will rightfully join the likes of the Modern Jazz Quartet or the classic Gary Burton groups of the late 60's as distinguished outfits with a mission; groups with a discernable philosophy about the music they play. Pianist Brian Haas, drummer Jason Smart and bassist/effects meister Jason Mathis perform pieces of brief duration that frequently come off as mini-suites due to mood swings and peculiar points of departure within any given tune's typical four-minute-or-so lifespan. They do this possessed of first-rate jazz chops and instincts.

Interspersed among tailor-made originals are clever and masterful takes on Mingus- "Fables of Faubus", Brian Wilson- "Wonderful" and Lennon & McCartney- "Happiness Is A Warm Gun". Few jazz line-ups in the last decade match the JFJO for a fresh take on the idiom. Check them out.

Duane Verh

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SHIRLEY HORN

But Beautiful

The Best Of Shirley Horn

VERVE RECORDS

Over the past two issues I have mentioned that we do not review a whole lot of jazz vocal albums, and that I review very few myself. That was in the reviews of albums by singers Lizz Wright and Judith Owen. Well, here I go again, now it is Shirley Horn.

Definitely one of my absolute favorite female singers, we have five reviews of her Verve albums on our website's database. Looking back at those reviews, let's see what was written. In 1992 for the album *Here's To Life* I wrote "The program is ballads, and no one sings them like she does - with that combination of the perfect feel, magnificent tone, and the presence of that air in her voice... There's no question about it. Shirley Horn's voice is like a fine wine - simply exquisite." In 1994 for *I Love You, Paris* I referred to her as "The smooth, sultry voiced singer..." and in 1996 in a review of *The Main Ingredient* I wrote that "Horn's voice is always silky smooth and wonderfully romantic. These qualities, coupled with her smoky, low key delivery result in an always engaging, instantly recognizable sound.

Then in 2003 Nancy Ann Lee wrote in a review of *May The Music Never End* "Horn has a distinctive vocal style that's been lauded by critics and other vocalists as "the personification of the word 'cool'," "the preeminent jazz vocalist of her generation," and "the sexiest voice alive." Indeed, whether Horn's singing a ballad or a swinging blues number, she delicately shapes each song for peak emotional impact"

Diana Krall, who lists Horn as a major influence, once said "You can't categorize Shirley Horn... she is sexy without trying. I loved her the first time I heard her."

Obviously, all that is said above still holds true on this collection of 12 songs culled from seven of her Verve albums (one is an older track from a Mercury album). Three are from one of my favorites, *You Won't Forget Me* (for some reason that one is not in our database - a glitch I'll have to look in to), a wonderful album which included Miles Davis and Toots Thielmans. The gorgeous title tack with Miles on muted trumpet is one of those heard here. Another of the

standouts included is her version of "Fever," the song made famous by Peggy Lee.

This is a great introduction to one of the absolute top female jazz singers. Some are some small groups, some with strings and some with horns. As a bonus three previously unreleased cuts are included at the end which were recorded in January 2005 at Au Bar in New York City. Very sweet indeed.

Sadly, we just learned at presstime that Shirley Horn passed away October 20 in her hometown of Washington, D.C. after a lengthy illness. She was 71 years old. She will be missed.

Bill Wahl

BLIND ARVELLA GRAY

The Singing Drifter CONJUROO RECORDS

Street singer Blind Arvella Gray was a fixture on Maxwell Street around 40 odd years ago long before the University of Illinois Chicago Campus decided historical preservation was less important than yuppified urban condos. Cary Baker, who today is involved in publicity for blues and other roots music, put together Blue Flame, a blues fanzine, and also helped get Gray recorded for a rare LP on the Birch label that he has arranged to get reissued as **The Singing Drifter**, for his own Conjuroo label.

Gray can be seen in the Mike Shea video **And This is Maxwell Street**, and Dylan's *He Was a Friend of Mine* was inspired by Gray which itself is likely derived from a Southern prison song, *Shorty George*. Born in Texas he came from Chicago via Peoria. Gray had lost his eyes and two fingers from birdshot propelled by a shotgun and came to Chicago playing a National dobro on which he is heard on much of this fascinating recording, which includes four previously unissued sacred performances.

His repertoire ranges from an unaccompanied *Arvella's Work Song*, the country *There's More Pretty Girls Than One*, and gospel *Take Your Burden to the Lord* and *When the Saints Go Marching In*. His signature tune is a vibrant rendition of *John Henry*, and there is a terrific *Those Old Fashioned Alley Blues*, another traditional song sung with a husky vocal delivery and forcefully played with a strong rhythmic attack and slide to the melody of *St. Louis Blues*. In all, a fascinating document of

a street performer and an era that seems so distant today. *Ron Weinstock*

KEN SAYDAK

IT'S MY SOUL EVIDENCE

Pianist Ken Saydak has been around the blues block a time or two with the likes of Mighty Joe Young, Lonnie Brooks, Johnny Winter, Dave Specter and the band Big Shoulders. Along the way he has polished his piano skills and vocals to a bright shine and has honed his songwriting to a fine point.

The results of his journey have found their way to this, his third solo release. The thirteen cuts collected here touch heavily on the broken heart and bad lover blues bases.

Half Assed Love is a kiss off to an uncommitted lover which is only slightly less acidic than the "drop dead you wench" rant of *Love in the Dumpster*. *Hanging By A Thread* is a demand that the object of his affections declare her intentions regarding the relationship while *Darling I'll Pray For You* is a no regrets promise to a partner after a failed relationship.

Two of Everything is a witty, yet regret filled, rumination about a marriage that has two of everything except only one wife who considers him half a man. Not all is doom and gloom in the Saydak's love department.

The rollicking *Bonedance* extols the virtue of sex in a chair and *All I Really Need* is a thank you card to a lover who lifts his spirits. Saydak jumps out of the love swamp on the upbeat *Learned My Lesson* where he shares the wisdom of dropping the B.S. in daily conversations and simply telling things the way they are. While he doesn't mind lecturing you, he isn't keen to be lectured to by the suits who repeatedly tell him what he already knows, *Preaching To the Choir*. With a voice that evokes rocker Dave Mason, Saydak pulls you into his stories with ease.

Since he mostly avoids the standard blues shuffles the disc often has more in common with Bruce Hornsby or even Billy Joel than the typical blues piano disc.

Skip this if you are looking for Pinetop Perkins or Jay McShann but pick it up if you're looking for something bluesy in spirit but a little different in approach. *Mark Smith*

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live events

Joe Lovano

Blue Note recording artist and Cleveland native Joe Lovano will be a special guest of the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra at The Bop Stop, 2920 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland Fri. & Sat., November 11 & 12 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$40 from CJO at 440-942-9525, online at www.clevelandjazz.org.

Kassaba

Appearing at Fairmount Presbyterian Church 2757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Hts. Sun., Nov. 13, at 4 p.m. Admission: free-will offering. 216-321-5800.

Peanuts

The Peanuts All Star Jam 2005 will take place on Thanksgiving Eve, Wed., Nov. 23 at the Beachland Ballroom, 15711 Waterloo Road, Cleveland. As always, there's no cover!



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BLUES HIGHLIGHTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4:

In celebration of the Sam Cooke American Music Masters celebration The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum presents: Friday Night Party!

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19: DEBORAH COLEMAN - \$10

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A veteran of the Detroit Wheels, The Seigal-Schwall Band, The Buddy Miles Band, Cactus and The Rockets. \$10

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

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ECM REISSUES

STEVE KUHN

Trance

JULIAN PRIESTER

Love, Love

ECM RECORDS

Back in the late-70s I had a Sunday afternoon jazz radio show known as "Jazz Contours." Starting at noon I would always begin with something light, bright and very musical and end at 2, well, somewhere else. The title track from Steve Kuhn's **Trance** album was quite often the opener of choice.

Long out of print, ECM has just issued the album for the first time on CD in the U.S. My German LP pressing has been long worn out, and hearing this song again sure brought back a lot of memories.

Many may not even be familiar with Kuhn. He was actually the original pianist in John Coltrane's first quartet, just after leaving Miles' band, in 1960. He is a well trained musician who can play a variety of styles with ease, which is evident throughout **Trance**. The title track is still one of the most beautiful and melodic jazz tunes I've yet to hear. Accompanied by Steve Swallow on electric bass, Jack DeJohnette on drums and Sue Evans on percussion, Kuhn is simply majestic playing acoustic piano and backing himself on electric. It sounds as fresh today as when it came out in '75. Evans' percussion work is a perfect compliment to the mood.

Never to be stuck in a rut, Kuhn follows with a quick-paced tune on electric piano starting much in the vein of Chick Corea's RTF before shifting into a hard swing. He follows with a slightly-out modal tune on acoustic with some fine improvs with DeJohnette. Then there's another somewhat free, yet melodic venture, a Latin-ish electric cut, a short piano solo statement and a hard-funk piece before closing, fittingly, with "Life's Backward Glance."

As good as the rest of the album is, I'll always make sure I hold on to this disc just for the song "Trance," a tune which couldn't have a more fitting title.

Julian Priester was the trombone player in Herbie Hancock's Mwandishi band in the 70s. Priester carried on much in the Mwandishi style with his 1973 release **Love, Love**. Fusing jazz with electronics and rock, improvising over repetitive bass lines and drum patterns, it was really a continuation of much of what Miles introduced years earlier. Only two songs are heard, each clocking in at just under 20 minutes, but

many deep moods are travelled. Priester is heard on bass, tenor and alto trombones, baritone horn, whistles and percussion. Pat Gleeson is on a variety of electronic keyboards and synths. Hadley Caliman, a name I've not heard in a while, offers some outstanding work on flute, soprano and tenor saxes and bass clarinet. Bayete Umbra Zindiko plays pianos and clavinet. Each song features a different bass/drums team - Henry Franklin and Leon Chancellor on one, and Eric Gravatt and Ron McLure on the other. David Johnson/sax and flute and Bill Connors/guitar are on one tune each. Believe me, there is a lot going on here, yet it manages not to get overcrowded.

It is a treat to hear this music again after so many years. Yes indeed - time for blastoff - it's jazz in deep space.

Two very fine yet different reissues from ECM. Let's hope there are many more to come.

Bill Wahl

MARIA MULDAUR

Sweet Lovin' Ol Soul

STONY PLAIN

Those in the reading audience into the old school, country Highway 61 strain of the blues should have a pleasure circus going via Maria Muldaur's latest nod to the genre's history. Twelve songs from the past materialize in the present with new arrangements and instrumental help from, among other supporting players, the likes of Pinetop Perkins, Taj Mahal and Alvin Youngblood Hart.

Starting off with Memphis Minnie's "I Am Sailin'," Muldaur revisits the honky tonks of long ago as Mahal kicks in some banjo work on the title cut, augmented by Suzy Thompson's fiddle solo. Perkins uses his 92 year old fingers to massage the ivories during "Decent Woman Blues," as Mahal and Muldaur have a flirtatious duet in the course of "Ain't What You Used To Have."

Duets are a big part of **Sweet Lovin' Ol' Soul** as Muldaur teams up with Hart during "She Put Me Outdoors," then Tracy "Mother Earth" Nelson in "I'm Goin' Back" and once more with Mahal during the gospel favorite "Take A Stand." At this point, Neil Diamond must be jealous he never got a chance at the harmony festival going on here.

Sweet Lovin' Ol' Soul is the middle release in the planned Maria Muldaur three disc arc that will spotlight the work of early female blues singers of the last century. If nothing else, Muldaur's take on Bessie Smith's "Empty Bed Blues" here will make a great live medley when teamed with her earlier FM radio hit, "Don't You Make Me High (Don't You Feel My Leg)." **Peanuts**

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BLUES WATCH

By Mark Smith

New Release Blues.... Well, time is running out for new additions to your blues collection this year before you create your Christmas list. Here's a few to tide you over until then: **Zac Harmon- The Blues According to Zachariah; Mel Melton & The Wicked Mojos- Papa Mojo's Roadhouse; Sista Monica Parker- Can't Keep a Good Woman Down; Harry Manx- Mantras for Madmen; The No Neck Blues Band- Quvaris; Bill Wyman & His Pleasure Kings- Live; Fleetwood Mac- Men of the World: The Blues Years; Mississippi Heat- One Eye Open- Live at Rosa's Lounge, Chicago; Otis Rush- All Your Love I Miss Loving- Live at Wise Fool's Pub, Chicago; Various (Bonnie Raitt, Sue Foley, Joanna Connor, Deborah Coleman, Ana Popovic, Etta Baker and others) - Blues Guitar Women; Brian Blain- Overqualified for the Blues; Johnny "Guitar" Watson- The Funk Anthology....** **It's all about Sam....** The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland is hosting a week long Tribute to Sam Cooke from October 31 to November 6. Sam Cooke, considered by many to be the definitive soul singer and crossover artist, a model for African-American entrepreneurship and one of the first performers to use music as a tool for social change, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in the inaugural class of 1986. The Tribute to Cooke will feature panels, films, educational programs, a day-long conference and will culminate in a secular concert on Saturday, Nov. 5 spotlighting Cooke's pop and R&B material and a gospel concert on Nov. 6 that will focus on his spiritual music. † Otis Clay will perform at both concerts along with Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees Aretha Franklin and † Elvis Costello, plus Taj Mahal, The Blind Boys of Alabama, The Dixie Hummingbirds, Lou Rawls, Solomon Burke, Cissy Houston, William Bell † and original *Sou is I* Stirrer, Leroy Crume..... That's it for this month. Watch this space next month for Smitty's 2005 picks.

BOOKS

The Fifty Greatest Jazz Piano Players of All Time

Gene Rizzo

Hal Leonard Corporation

A nameless “electoral body” comprising top educators and musicians polled by The Hal Leonard Corporation (an international music sales and publishing house) and author Gene Rizzo have selected, analyzed and ranked in order the 50 greatest jazz piano players, based on “chops, originality, creativity and degree of influence.”

That the author doesn't reveal who or how many comprise this illustrious “electoral body” in the Preface or elsewhere in the book is an obvious problem when you scan the Contents page. Jazz aficionados (and historians) may strongly disagree with the rankings and analyses.

For example, the first four of 50 pianists presented in three-page bios with photographs are Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Bud Powell and Art Tatum, heavyweights in the jazz piano realm. But number 5 is Monty Alexander (born in 1944) and number 6 is Benny Green (born in 1963), hardly worthy of weightings so high on the list, especially when more influential pianists are ranked further down the list. Mary Lou Williams, the only woman included in the main 50, is ranked number 47. Other questionable rankings are Erroll Garner (24) Jelly Roll Morton (43), Lennie Tristano (30), Earl Hines (39) and Keith Jarrett (50).

Readers may wonder why some relatively obscure names were included on the list and other more influential players relegated to the “Honorable Mention” chapter or omitted entirely. In the three-page “Honorable Mention” chapter, you'll find some names you believe should be in the main 50. Omitted are such stalwarts as John Lewis, pianist of the Modern Jazz Quartet, so influential in developing Third Stream music, and Sun Ra (born Herman Blount) who so uniquely reinvented himself, the concept of big band music and modern-day musical vaudeville.

Although author Rizzo apologizes in the preface that there is only one woman in the main 50, seemingly as an afterthought he includes a Chapter of “Top Ten Women,” mentioned in order: Mary Lou Williams (again), Marian McPartland, Eliane Elias, Jessica Williams, Joanne Brackeen, Barbara Carroll, Dorothy Donegan, Lorraine Geller, Toshiko Akiyoshi, and Renee Rosnes.

Rizzo, currently Professor of Piano at Beaver College in PA, is no slouch but his biographs are hardly subjective and their lack of critical information will frustrate jazz historians. Although Rizzo's written several books on piano technique and related subjects and has performed and written music for more than four decades, knowledgeable readers should question cavalier statements such as, “Thomas “Fats” Wright Waller played wrote, and sang some of the happiest music in the history of jazz....Waller's popularity was only exceeded by Louis Armstrong.”

Fortunately, this \$20 book is affordable (cheaper online) if you decide to buy it solely for the splendid photographs from the Frank Driggs Collection and other sources.

Nancy Ann Lee

Incurable Blues: The Trouble & Triumph of Blues Legend

Hubert Sumlin

Will Romano

Backbeat Books

Hubert Sumlin is one of the most individualistic guitar stylists in the blues of the past fifty years, and one of the nicest persons you could ever meet. He is best known for his association with the legendary Howlin' Wolf on which his mercurial, unpredictable guitar played so important a role on so many recordings.

Will Romano has written this bio of Hubert that recounts Hubert's life and music from growing up in the Delta and learning to play in various juke bands; his association with the Wolf down in the Memphis area and later coming north to Chicago where he became an integral part of Wolf's band and music through the end of Wolf's life; and the thirty odd years since then with Hubert carrying on Wolf's musical legacy, as well as trying to establish a bit of his own, separate from Wolf. A premise of this book is that Sumlin is one of the great and influential blues guitarists and Romano tries to establish this through interviews with blues and rock musicians, discussions of a wide variety of recordings and performances that Hubert was a part of. It is not a completely successful book in part because the author focuses on the testimonials of rock legends to make his case of Hubert's impact and influence. But while Sumlin's best recordings exhibit his brilliant originality and invention, there are few examples other than testimonials to show his influence in the

blues world. The fact that Eric Clapton may have pushed to get Sumlin involved in the London Howlin' Wolf sessions when producer Marshall Chess may not have wanted him says more about Clapton's understanding of Wolf's recordings and what Sumlin brought to them. Chess' focus may have been on rock stars to sell this music but Clapton helped insure the music would come out right. Still, the admiration of many blues-influenced rock superstars does little to establish Hubert's influence compared to other equally talented blues guitarists.

The discussion of the various recordings, that post-date the Wolf's passing is fascinating but too lengthy, and while recognizing Hubert's limitations as a vocalist tries to make these as more important and seminal than some are. I am particularly thinking about the lengthy discussion about *About Them Shoes*, the recent Sumlin album that had Clapton, David Johansson, Bob Margolin, Paul Oscher, David Maxwell and others join him on a collection of mostly songs associated with Muddy Waters. It resulted in a pleasant recording, but one not nearly as remarkable as Romano suggests, as the grooves in Muddy's music do not lend itself to allow Sumlin's playing to shine. Of course part of the success of Wolf's recordings might have been Willie Dixon's production and shaping of the rhythms. Certainly songs like *Hidden Charms* and *Do the Do* are otherwise forgettable but for the hot, tight band, Wolf's ability to make anything sound good and Sumlin's staggering playing. Also for a book that chronicles Sumlin's life there is no mention of Big Mac's sixties Jewel 45, *Rough Dried Woman*, which sported Sumlin's guitar or a late sixties, early seventies Sunnyland Slim session with members of Wolf's band, along with Walter Horton backing the legendary pianist. Sumlin's guitar was prominently featured on this spirited date, which strikes me as a lot better than some of the European American Folk Blues Festival recordings that the author here praises.

Still, despite its flaws, the book does get a sense of Hubert's shy and sweet personality that has led many to really love him, and when he does get to play, he still can blow you away. If his influence is overstated, the quality of his best music is not overstated in this bio.

Ron Weinstock

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