

July/August 2004  
Issue 269  
Free

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**jazz**  
& **blues** report



**ELVIN  
JONES**

**Remembering Elvin Jones**  
**1927-2004**

# jazz & blues report

Published by Martin Wahl Communications

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## Corrections

In our last issue I erroneously referred to the Tadd Dameron Tribute Concert as the Mal Waldron Tribute. Unfortunately due to some kind of combination of mental block and dyslexia, aggravated by the fact that they rhyme, I have switched these two musicians names for many more years than I'd like to admit. My apologies to Tri-C JazzFest, Tadd's family and friends and anyone else who may have been offended. B.W.

# Remembering Elvin Jones

By Bill Wahl



Elvin Jones at the Chicago Jazz Festival in 1991. Photo by Nancy Ann Lee. Cover photo at the Tralfamadore Café, Buffalo, N.Y. in 1976. Photo by David A. Wahl.

Elvin Jones, the most innovative, influential controversial and formidable drummer in jazz, passed on from this world on April 18. He died of heart failure in a hospital in Englewood, N.J. at the age of 76. This issue is dedicated to Elvin, a man I came to know not only as a musician, but as a friend. More on that shortly.

One of ten children, he is survived by his brother Hank, a well known jazz pianist, and another brother, Thad, a trumpeter the co-leader of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra who passed on in 1986. Elvin's wife, Keiko, stated at the time of his death that "He's happy. No more suffering," and that "He's been fighting for so long." Elvin and Keiko had been happily married for the past 38 years. They met when he was touring in Japan.

Although he began his career in the late 40s, Jones became well known as the driving force behind the classic John Coltrane Quartet of the 60s. It was his powerful polyrhythmic drumming that propelled Coltrane to the majestic heights he reached. In fact, there were many times when pianist McCoy Tyner would lay out to let 'Trane, Elvin and bassist Jimmy Garrison go at it...which often ended with Garrison laying out making way for a Coltrane/Jones duet to bring a tune to a climax before all would join together

again to bring it home.

After he left Coltrane and signed with Blue Note Records in 1968, he began recording his many albums as a solo artist. He would later call his band the "Jazz Machine" as he toured the world amazing jazz fans everywhere. The Elvin Jones Jazz Machine would become a training ground for young jazz musicians, most of whom would become leaders in their own right, such as bassist Gene Perla, guitarist Ryo Kawasaki and many Coltranesque saxophonists such as David Liebman, Steve Grossman, Pat LaBarbera and Coltrane's son, Ravi.

This is where I come in.

In 1972 I was living in Buffalo and made one of my twice-monthly jaunts 90 miles north to Toronto. I was in a rock band at the time that played some jazz tunes, so you might say I had a bit of an interest in the music. While walking down Younge Street, I passed a nightclub that had Elvin Jones' picture in the window sitting behind his drums. I had heard of him, and with the cover being only 50¢ (my...how things change) I went in. The place was huge - probably held around 700 people, comfortably seated at tables. The band was on stage and they were on fire. Three young white guys and Mr. Jones. That night he had David Liebman & Steve Grossman on saxes and Gene Perla on



bass. It was unlike anything I had ever heard, and it was right in front of me. Somehow, during the break I talked with Elvin and told him I was a drummer. He took me on stage to show me the bass drum pedal he had invented. It had a chain drive (like a bicycle chain) instead of a leather belt. We stayed for the last set and returned to Buffalo.

At this point, I was hooked. I quickly bought every Elvin Jones album I could get my hands on, and all the Coltrane albums he was on. My band became more jazz-oriented and in 1974 I started the Jazz Report, which I printed myself at my father's printing company. Elvin had me deeply into this style of jazz...and there was no turning back.

By 1976, I was jonesing (pun intended) for more of Jones' music. So, with two partners, I began the Jazz Report Concert Series at the wonderful just-opened basement dive, Tralfamadore Café. After a relatively inexpensive show with Stone Alliance (Grossman, Perla & Don Alias), we brought in Elvin Jones.

At the time, he would always do a free concert at a nearby prison when he played a city. We set it up, and the prison was Attica - the notorious maximum-security lockup. I borrowed a van from a friend, picked up a six pack of Kirin beer for Elvin at his request, and we went to the prison. We were told that the band could go in the front door and I should take the van to the delivery entrance and the equipment could be loaded from the dock. Well, the next thing to happen was our downfall. I had to pull into a bay over a big pit and guards went underneath and inside the van for a thorough search. One came up with a lot of pills in one suitcase (we had just come from the airport), one of those small film canisters filled with what looked to be weed in another, and the six-pack of Kirin. Another came up with a box for a handgun under the driver's seat. Not good! Needless to say, the band inside waiting for the equipment was told I was "detained." They would have to play on "prison instruments" (which I found out later to be quite primitive, and that Jones had to play cymbals that sounded like garbage can lids-for the younger readers...garbage cans and lids actually used to be made of metal, but their tonal quality was horrendous no matter the quality of the can & lid.) The prisoners in the yard were giving me funny looks as I was surrounded by guards and Attica City Police...like I might be joining them soon or something.

I was "escorted" back to the prison to meet the band after the show where the prison officials threw a bunch of cheese sandwiches on Wonder Bread at us and told us to eat. That was nice. They had remembered that lunch was part of the deal. It was "in the rider," so to speak.

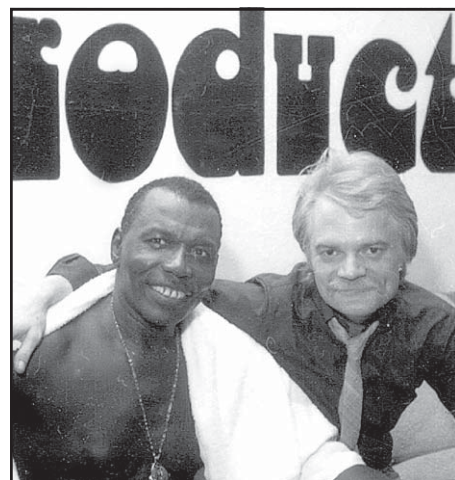
It was determined that the pills they found were vitamins, but what appeared to be beer was in fact beer, and what looked like weed was indeed weed. So the band took the van and went to Buffalo to set-up for the show that evening and try to get their heads together after the Attica Prison ordeal, and the musician who owned up to the weed (I won't say who it was, or even who was in the band at the time-but Elvin was only responsible for the vitamins) and I went with one of my partners who brought a car to a building in Attica which appeared to be a combination police station, court and jail. We were under arrest for "smuggling contaband into Attica Prison." We were photographed and fingerprinted and told that the judge was on a fishing trip in the next county, but he was on his way and was really pissed. We were sure glad they shared that with us.

Well, I don't know for the life of me what happened, but the judge thought we were really nice guys and decided to let us off on some three letter thing (like APB or something) and we would have a record for 6 months which would be completely erased if we were not arrested again within that time. Since it was the first time for both of us, we figured this would be easy. We thanked the judge up and down, thanked the cops and anyone else we saw on the way to the car and got the hell out of town and never looked back.

After we got back to the club I figured Elvin would be rather irritated. But he was only upset with the prison for not simply unloading the gear in front and wheeling it in from there. I believe he also said he probably would stop doing the prison gigs in every city. I must admit...I can see why. We became friends that weekend. He and Keiko came to my apartment for dinner and he played my drums (I think my neighbors thought a tornado was imminent) and gave me some lessons. The concert was sold out for every show and all is well that ends well.

Soon after, in December, 1976, I was invited to New York by Dexter Gordon (who had also just played the Tralfamadore) to see him record his "Homecoming" album live at the Village Vanguard. It was a fun-filled week-

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Elvin and I between shows at DownUnder. As you can see, we look very much alike. Photo by Randy Norfus (from the Peabody archives).

end. After the Vanguard Friday night, my wife, Paula, and I went to C.I. Recording Studio on Saturday to see Elvin record part of his video documentary "A Different Drummer" (probably only available on VHS, but a must for every E.J. fan) and then we hailed a cab with Elvin and Keiko and went to their apartment on Central Park West for dinner. One thing I will never forget was as Keiko and Paula were cooking Japanese food, Elvin and I were laying on his bed eating cherries out of a giant bowl and watching "The Bionic Woman" on TV. He said it was his favorite show and she was his favorite actress. "I just love watching her...she is one tough woman," he said with that deep laugh and wide-eyed, big tooth-filled smile of his.

One other time another club brought him to Buffalo, and since I picked him up at the airport I guess he figured it was my show (apparently Keiko did not tell him differently.) It bummed him out a bit because the club owner did not advertise and the attendance was low. The place was also tacky. Midway through the second set on the first night he became ill and informed me he had to go back to the hotel. I said I would drive him and he said "no, you need to stay here and take over on the drums for me!" I managed to convince him that the crowd would know the difference as we did not sound alike even in the farthest stretch of the imagination. And, unless he saw something I did not, I didn't think we looked alike either. So the club owners told the patrons they could come the next night for free and all was well in the end, again.

I brought Elvin's band to Buffalo once more, and then to Peabody's DownUnder in Cleveland after I had

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moved myself, the magazine and the concert series there in 1980 (although the magazine had already been there as a Cleveland edition since 1978.) Since leaving Peabody's in 1987, due to personal burnout and the fact that I figured that if I kept doing what I was doing I would not reach my 40th birthday, I was able to see Elvin somewhere every 5 years or so. Every time I'd see him he would give me that big smile, pick me up off the ground like I was a little kid, practically hold me parallel to the floor and give me a big, sweaty kiss on the lips. The last time I saw him was in Chicago in 1999. It was at the Jazz Showcase, a "non-smoking jazz club." He played the whole show with a cigarette dangling from his mouth as usual. Only in this case, it was not lit. At that time a non-smoking jazz club was a bit of an oxymoron. Of course, in New York it is the law now for every restaurant, bar and night club. In fact, I was recently at a great little club in Harlem named, oddly enough, "Smoke."

I was about due to get a dose of Elvin again and was planning to bring him to Cleveland for the 30th Anniversary of the Jazz & Blues Report. I thought I'd do one more concert, perhaps in tandem with Jim Wadsworth or Tri-C JazzFest. He had not been here since our second concert at Peabody's in 1986. It was not to be. His last gig was on April 26 at Yoshi's in Oakland, California where he had to bring an oxygen tank on stage and take hits between tunes. I remember him telling me that he wanted to play drums right up to the end. He did that. He also left us with a wealth of recordings, those with Coltrane, with others, and many with his own bands. The most important of his solo recordings are available on the definitive Elvin Jones boxed set. It is on Mosaic Records and is titled "The Complete Blue Note Elvin Jones Sessions." It was released in 2000 and is worth every cent of the price. We have reprinted the review of the set at the beginning of the CD Review section of this issue.

There are also three videos featuring Elvin. "A Different Drummer," mentioned above, is a 30-minute documentary and includes live footage at the Village Vanguard and Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit as well as C.I. Recording Studios in New York. Another is "Elvin Jones Jazz Machine," a live concert recorded in the mid 90s with Sonny Fortune and Ravi Coltrane on saxes, Chip Jackson/bass and Willie Pickens/piano. He can also be seen as the badass gunslinger cowboy Job Cain in "Zachariah," a 1971 cult movie starring

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a young Don Johnson which also featured Doug Kershaw, Country Joe & The Fish and The James Gang. It has recently been released on DVD, but I am not sure about the other two as yet.

David Liebman wrote in the liner notes of the Mosaic boxed set that "If it weren't for Elvin and Coltrane, I wouldn't be writing these notes. In fact, I doubt whether I would have seriously pursued jazz at all." Well, that first night hearing Elvin in Toronto had the same effect on me. This magazine and all those concerts I produced probably would never have happened.

Goodbye, my friend. You are with God now, and are no doubt changing the face of music in another place. I hope to see you later.

Below are some thoughts from some of the folks on our staff.

For a drummer like myself, Elvin Jones was at the pinnacle in terms of my own musical influences. Coming out of Danny Seraphine and Stewart Copeland as a youngster, Jones' incredible groove and complex rhythms immediately struck a chord as I delved into more mainstream jazz recordings. As the years have passed, countless other drummers have made an impression on me, but it's still Elvin who puts it in the pocket while contributing his own brand of complex fills. Recently, I commented to a student I was working with that the straightest path to figuring out how to come up with fills that swing was to listen to Elvin. Utilizing triplets that he moved around the various parts of the kit, Jones could get as busy as he wanted but still maintain a swinging foundation.

Although it was just within the past five years or so that I had the opportunity to see Elvin perform in concert at the Detroit Jazz Festival, I carry with me still the amazement of how much he put of himself into his performance. Now keep in mind that by doctor's orders Jones had to be careful in terms of how long he performed, but I never once got the sense that he was editing himself and the set was more than generous in length.

About a year and a half ago, I was there when Jones was presented with his NEA Jazz Masters award at the IAJE conference in Toronto. He graciously signed autograph after autograph and shook hands, even as the NEA entourage at his side insisted that they must leave to make the drummer's next appointment. He made us all laugh as he reveled in his remembrances of being

a cowboy in some long forgotten Hollywood movie, and yet it was obvious then that his health was on the decline. These recent memories will continue to be an inspiration to me personally as his jazz legacy and the great body of recorded work that Jones left behind will continue to stir generations to come.

-C. Andrew Hovan

I walked in on Elvin's group's final number one night at the Jazz Workshop in Boston after a night of club-hopping, summer of 1973. The band was hot for the several minutes worth I heard and at the close they were met with a rousing response from the audience, myself included. Elvin made it to the front of the stage and, grinning widely, he cordially thanked the crowd for the applause and for showing up. Then, in a instant, his demeanor changed and his looks could kill as he singled out an exception in the crowd. Apparently a night-long heckler, someone toward the front, drew Elvin's wrath. The drummer glared at the culprit and growled "I'll deal with you right know you \*%#@ sucker!" he shouted. I was never so glad to be someone else.

-Duane Verh

I was fortunate enough to be associated with the Jazz Report (original name of this publication) when it started in Buffalo in 1974, so when Bill Wahl and associates booked the Elvin Jones Jazz Machine at the Tralfamadore Café, I was able to see this legend several times and get a sense of him as a person. What can one say but to see Elvin Jones was such an thrilling experience, and he always had wonderful musicians in his bands over the years. I also got a sense of what a wonderful person Elvin was. After Ray Charles' passing, someone noted that often deaths come in threes, and after I posted about Elvin's death and that of Steve Lacy, Dick Waterman, who used to manage and/or book Bonnie Raitt, Buddy Guy & Junior Wells and Son House, among others, remembered that while traveling with the Rolling Stones he asked Charlie Watts who his favorite drummer was and Watts replied Elvin Jones. Watts in fact has recorded "Elvin Suite," a tribute to Jones, and a live recording of this song will be on Watts' next jazz cd, "Watts at Scotts," a 2CD live tentet recording at the fabled club, Ronnie Scott's. -Ron Weinstock

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Malaco recording artist **Little Milton** will be appearing at Wilbert's on Sunday, August 15.

## BLUES WATCH

By Mark Smith

New release blues.... Ah, the sweet heat of summer!!! Sunshine! Festivals! New Releases!!: **The Forever Fabulous Chickenhawks Showband and All-Star Revue** featuring **Big Luther Kent- Deep In the Heart**; **Paul Oscher- Alone With The Blues**; **Various Artists** (Clapton, Beck, Mayall, The Animals, Page, Peter Green, Van Morrison and more)- *The Big Box of British Blues*; **Mississippi John Hurt- D.C. Blues- The Library of Congress Recordings**; **Pauline York Band- Muddy Water**; **Dr. John- N'Awlinz: Dis, Dat or D'Uddda** (with Dirty Dozen Brass Band, B.B. King, Willie Nelson, Mavis Staples, Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown and others); **Tony Furtado- These Chains**; **Janiva Magness- Bury Him at the Crossroads**; **Blind Boys of Alabama- I Am a Soldier in the Army of the Lord**; **John Mayall- Turning Point** (soundtrack); **Rick Derringer- Spring Fever**; B.B. King- *Blues Summit Concert* (2 cds and DVD); **Jimmy Smith- Home Cookin'**; **Stan Webb and Chicken Shack- Going Up, Going Down: The Anthology 1968-2001**; **The Kingsnakes- Hot Snakes! Live at Copperfield's 1989**; **Jimmy Cavallo- Rock the Joint!** **Alvin Lee- In Tennesse.**

**Festival Blues-** Here's the scoop on notable festivals in July, August and September:

**July: Summer Fest-** June 24- July 4, Milwaukee, WI. Call 800-273- Fest or log onto [www.summerfest.com](http://www.summerfest.com) for further info.; **Blues Festival-** July 5-7, York Quay Centre, Toronto, ON. Canada 416-973-3000 or log onto [www.harbourfront.on.ca](http://www.harbourfront.on.ca) for more info. **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Kalamazoo Blues Festival.** July 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> Info on the Kalamazoo event is available at [www.kvba.org](http://www.kvba.org); **Chicago Rockin' Ribfest-** July 12-14, Chicago, IL, Call 773-348-784 or log onto [www.HitEvents.com](http://www.HitEvents.com) for info. **New York State Rhythm & Blues Festival-** July 16-18<sup>th</sup>, Syracuse, NY. Call 315-435-2168 or you can simply log onto

[www.nysbluesfest.com](http://www.nysbluesfest.com) for more info. **Toledo Rock, Rhythm and Blues-** July 23-24, Promenade Park, Toledo. Call 419-249-5018 or log onto [www.cityfest.org](http://www.cityfest.org) for more info;

**August: Queen City Blues Fest-** August 1-2, Cincinnati, OH. Call 513-684-GCBS or log onto [www.gcbs.org](http://www.gcbs.org) for more info. August 14<sup>th</sup> is the **West Michigan Blues Society's** third annual **Cow Pie Blues Festival** in Grand Rapids. Info on the Grand Rapids festival is available at [www.wmbs.org](http://www.wmbs.org). ; **Fire on the Mountain Blues Festival-** August 14<sup>th</sup>, Sonoma California. Call 209- 533- 3473 or log onto [www.fireonthemountain.com](http://www.fireonthemountain.com) for more info. **Blues and Ribs Festival-** August 17<sup>th</sup>, South Bend, IN. Call 219-277-4828 or log onto [www.bluesandribsfest.com](http://www.bluesandribsfest.com) for more info. **Riverfront Jazz and Blues Festival-** August 21<sup>st</sup>, Riehle Plaza, Lafayette, IN. Call 765-742-8241 or log onto [www.jazz-blues.org](http://www.jazz-blues.org) for more info. **Hot August Blues Festival-** August 27-29, Hardin, Ky. Call 800-325-0143 or log onto [www.kystateparks.com/kenlake2.htm](http://www.kystateparks.com/kenlake2.htm) for more info. August 28-29, Olin Park, Madison, WI. Call 608-36-8999 or log onto [www.madisonblues.com](http://www.madisonblues.com) for more info.

**September: Bean Blossom Blues Fest-** September 10-11, Bean Blossom, IN. Call 317-861-9444 or log onto [www.harppot.com/blues.cfm](http://www.harppot.com/blues.cfm) for more info. **Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival-** September 19-21, Gallup Park, Ann Arbor, Mi. Call 734-747-9955 or log onto [www.a2blues.jazzfest.org](http://www.a2blues.jazzfest.org) for more info. **San Francisco Blues Festival-** September 24-26, San Francisco, CA. Call 415-979-5588 or log onto [www.sfb Blues.com](http://www.sfb Blues.com) for more info. - **Madison Blues Festival.... RIP blues....**

Sadly, we lost another great one in the month of June. The legendary **Ray Charles** passed away at the age of 73 at his home in California. While he didn't get the state funeral afforded to former President Ronald Reagan who was buried the same week, Charles' passing was met with many heartfelt memorials by those in and out of the music industry. Thankfully, his prodigious recording habits resulted in dozens of albums which will serve to insure that his legend will live on for future generations to enjoy. That's it for this month. See ya!

## Roberto Ocasio Tribute Concert

There will be a Roberto Ocasio Tribute Concert on Saturday, July 10 at 9 p.m. at the Odeon Concert Club in the Flats.

The concert will feature Horns 'n Things, Carlos Jones & The P.L.U.S. Band, The Colin Dussault Blues Project, Rebecca Sweet Dancers, The Aphrodisiacs, Con Junto Carnavale, Dream Time, 40's Skatch Anderssen Orchestra & Roberto Ocasio's Latin Jazz Project.

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Blue Note recording artist **Cassandra Wilson** will be on a bill with Concord artist **Peter Cincotti** at the Allen Theatre on Wednesday, July 28.

The proceeds will benefit the Roberto Ocasio Foundation providing education, scholarships and entertainment to a diverse community.

Tickets are \$20 in advance at 216-241-5555 or 330-945-9400, and at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). The price at the door will be \$23 at the door. You may also purchase at tickets the Odeon box office

## Benoit/Freeman Project at the Allen Theatre

Two legends of the smooth jazz world, David Benoit and Russ Freeman, find themselves in the unique position of still playing a vital role in the development of the genre their classic music helped create. The two veteran artists collaborated in '94 on the successful album, *The Benoit/Freeman Project*, during which time Freeman's career with *The Rippingtons*, and Benoit's solo career were spearheading the modern fusion movement, while simultaneously expanding the rules on just what modern jazz is. A decade later, they reunite for *The Benoit/Freeman Project 2*, and a concert tour to support the album, which makes its Cleveland stop at Playhouse Square's Allen Theatre on Tuesday, July 27 at 8 pm.

Nearly two decades after working together on *The Rippingtons'* groundbreaking *Moonlighting* album ('86), the piano virtuoso and guitar icon (both multiple Smooth Jazz winners) are still fixtures in the upper reaches of the *Billboard Contemporary Jazz* chart. Last year, Benoit's *Right Here* went Top 10, while *Let It Ripp!* (Freeman's latest project with *The Rippingtons*) hit the Top 5.

Tickets for the David Benoit/Russ Freeman Project concert are \$28 & a special WNWV \$10. 73 price, on sale at the Playhouse Square Box Office; online at [playhousesquare.com](http://playhousesquare.com) or by phone at 216-241-6000 or 800-766-6048.)



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



## ELVIN JONES

### The Complete Blue Note Elvin Jones Sessions MOSAIC MAIL ORDER\

(Reprinted from our September, 2000 Issue)

There can be no doubt the Elvin Jones is one of the greatest drummers in the history of jazz. And, he and Max Roach are certainly the Finest jazz drummers living today. One of the best quotes I've heard to describe his playing (in a humorous yet accurate kind of way) is that Jones is "like a cross between an octopus and the percussion section of the Fifth Army Band." I'd credit the writer if I could remember who wrote it some 30 or so years ago. But I'll never forget that quote!

Jones propelled the John Coltrane Quartet (the classic unit with McCoy Tyner, and Jimmy Garrison) to unparalleled heights during the early to mid sixties before leaving that band in 1965 to pursue a solo career. While he had recorded some sides for Atlantic while still with Coltrane, and for Impulse just after, it was his Blue Note albums beginning in April of 1968 with the recording of *Puttin' It Together*, followed five months later with *The Ultimate* which really defined him as a leader in his own right. Between 1968 and 1973 Jones recorded a total of nine

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albums for Blue Note, and two of those, *Live at the Lighthouse* and *The Prime Element* were two-record sets. All seven of the single albums were recorded by the master himself - Rudy Van Gelder.

As we travel between '68 and '73, we see the Jones bands change from a top flight group coming straight out of the Coltrane mode to an instantly recognizable unit unto itself (although Jones' drumming always had that quality) often blending African and Japanese music with a variety of time signatures and Elvins' ever constant rhythmic whirlwind driving the proceedings. Albums such as *Poly Currents*, *Coalition*, *Genesis* and *Merry-Go-Round* came out roughly a year apart and are still today some of Jones' finest work as a leader. *That's the good part.*

Unfortunately, when CDs came along, and Jones was no longer on the label, we would see only three of his studio albums and the live *Lighthouse* set released on the shiny silver disc. Many Elvin Jones fans, such as myself and Chris Hovan, had to keep playing our worn out LPs to hear some of the great moments heard on Elvin's records - namely *Genesis*, *Merry-Go-Round*, *The Ultimate* and *Mr. Jones*. We kept begging Blue Note to reissue these albums, sneakily tagged at the end of our other Blue Note reviews. But, nobody listened. *That's the bad part.*

*Or did they?*

Well, as most of you probably know Mosaic has worked deals with a number of labels to release music of many artists in boxed sets. When I heard that this one was coming, I practically counted the days until I could hear some of these tunes again - and in pristine clarity rather than scuffed old LPs. *And that, my friends, is the best part!*

Some of the musicians to spend time in Jones' units on these recordings are Joe Farrell, Jimmy Garrison, George Coleman, Wilbur Little, Pepper Adams, Frank Foster, Candido Camero, David Liebman, Gene Perla, Steve Grossman, Jan Hammer, Don Alias, Chick Corea and Elvin's brother, Thad Jones.

Included is a 12x12 16-page booklet loaded with recording session information, essays on the sessions and photos. The sound of the music throughout is simply superb!

One final note. Elvin Jones is in a large way responsible for this publication's existence. I was a drummer in a rock band (which also played some jazz stuff) in Buffalo in the early 70s when I happened to go to a jazz club in Toronto where Elvin

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was appearing with a pianoless quartet which included Liebman, Grossman and Perla. This band ruled—I was totally blown away. I actually mustered up the nerve to talk to Jones on his break. He was among the most cordial musicians I've ever met (and I've met a lot to date). I went home, bought all his albums, then all the Coltrane albums and about year later started this mag. The rest is history – 25+years of it! This box has been a long time coming. Highly recommended!

Limited to 5000 copies, all recordings are available solely through Mosaic Records; 35 Melrose Place; Stamford, CT 06902; (203) 327-7111. Check their website at [www.mosaicrecords.com](http://www.mosaicrecords.com) for more information or to place an order.

*Bill Wahl*

## CAREY & LURRIE BELL

### Second Nature ALLIGATOR

Harmonica ace Carey Bell is one of the last major connections to the "golden era" of Chicago blues. His guitarist son Lurrie, is a most skillful player, capable of articulating deep, soulful blues with the finesse of a jazzman. This duet session, cut while father & son toured Finland with a full band in 1991, is an exceptional feast of intimate blues. The elder Bell's classic harp voice meshes well with his son's graceful acoustic style, which apparently evolved over the tour's duration. Carey's chromatic work, in particular, powers this set. The contrast between Carey's gruff vocals and Lurrie's smoother approach does much to distinguish the separate tracks. Lurrie's slick work on the surprising final tune makes for a great and unexpected sendoff.

*Second Nature* is a true "jam" album in the sense that the ongoing blowing and interplay ultimately matter more than any particular song. When we look back at 2004, this disc could easily be one of the best of the bunch.

*Duane Verh*

## DAVE BRUBECK

### Private Brubeck Remembers TELARC

Playing solo piano, Dave Brubeck reminisces on this two-disc set with a lovely collection of 14 World War II-era favorites recorded in January 2004. The bonus disc contains a one-hour interview with Walter Cronkite in which Brubeck performs and discusses his life, Army service, and more. A 15-page liner booklet contains photos and text about Brubeck's Army hitch.

Highlights on the music disc include a

jazz  
blues



poignant version of "Where or When," a haunting take on "Lili Marlene," a sweet reading of "You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To," a touching interpretation of "When I Grow Too Old To Dream," and other memory-laden gems inspired by his that particular timespan.

Brubeck is at his nostalgic best on the intimate studio session, pouring warmth and meaning into each tune while maintaining technical virtuosity. From the interview disc, we learn more about the legendary pianist.

**Nancy Ann Lee**

## ERIC BIBB, RORY BLOCK & MARIA MULDAUR

**Sisters & Brothers**  
TELARC BLUES

Acoustic country blues, R & B and a cappella gospel rave-ups are the bill of fare on this terrific collaboration between Eric Bibb, Rory Block and Maria Muldaur. Combining several Bibb originals with covers by the likes of Bill Withers, *Lean on Me*, Bob Dylan, *Gotta Serve Somebody*, and Block's well traveled, *Travelin' Woman Blues*, this set takes full advantage of the possibilities offered by the presence of three highly talented vocalists. Each solo turn is accompanied by well placed background vocals while the duets feature vocal trade offs that sound as if the partners have been singing these songs together on stage for years. A case in point is the seamless trade off between Block and Muldaur on *Travelin' Woman Blues* which sounds more like a band effort a la Saffire, the Uppity Blues Women, than a couple of solo artists cutting a one time collaboration disc. While the vocals are the centerpieces of the sound of this disc, the greasy organ and syncopated piano fills provided by Chris Burns keeps your toes tapping and your groove muscles working. A top notch release.

**Mark Smith**

## CAL TJADER

**Cuban Fantasy**  
FANTASY RECORDS

This album contains eight previously unissued Cal Tjader selections, recorded at the same 1977 live-recorded performance at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco that produced the 1979-released *Galaxy* album, *Here*, currently available on Fantasy (24743).

On his home turf when he performed the concert, vibraphonist Tjader was in tip-top form and his lively band included keyboardist Clare Fischer, electric guitarist Bob Redfield, bassist Rob Fisher, drum-

mer Pete Riso, and the young conga player who would go on to supercharge Latin jazz, Poncho Sanchez.

Highlights include a rousing version of the Divo-Menezes tune "Tamanco no Samba (Samba Blim)" featuring knockout drumming by Riso; a 10-plus minute reading of Israel "Cachao" Lopez's "Descarga Cachao," with background vocals; and Tjader's pretty descarga "Manuel Deeghit," spotlighting accomplished solos all around.

While these tunes sometimes have that fusiony "Seventies sound," the diverse material and first-rate performances provide an enjoyable listen.

**Nancy Ann Lee**

## PAUL OSCHER

**Alone With the Blues**  
ELECTRO-FI RECORDS

This writer remembers catching Paul Oscher's impressive performance at the Pocono Blues Festival in 2002. Oscher, was the harmonica player in the Muddy Waters Band between 1967 and 1971 and the first white to be a regular member of the blues legends band. He lived in Muddy's house and shared the basement with the great Otis Spann, from whom he learned blues piano just like Muddy was his model for his slide guitar playing. Not nearly as known as other Muddy Waters' alumni, it is a reflection of the fact that fame is often elusive. With the release of his new Electro-Fi album, one can hope that Oscher's time has finally arrived.

This is a varied album with a number of solo performances mixed in with some small group sides. The mood ranges from his chromatic explorations on Richard Carpenter's *Walkin'* (yes the tune known from Miles Davis' recording), a telling reworking of Jimmy Rogers' *That's Alright*, the zydeco groove of *My Sweet Suzanne* with his chromatic harp replacing the accordion, his recasting of the *Standing at the Crossroads* theme into how John Lee Hooker might have reworked the song back in 1950, *Blues and Trouble*, a slow Muddy Waters-styled blues with some strong slide playing, Chuck Willis' *You're Still My Baby* (on which he plays guitar and rather full-bodied rack harp), and the title track, an instrumental tour de force based on the instrumental *After Hours*, on which Oscher plays assorted harmonicas and the melodica. David Maxwell and ex-Muddy sidemen, Calvin Jones and Willie Smith, back his rendition of Robert Nighthawk's *Anna Lee*, while he plays the accordion on Mississippi John Hurt's *Louis Collins*. The versatility does not obscure the fact that Paul Oscher's playing is of the highest level and his vocals ring true on this superb disc that is obviously highly recommended.

**Ron Weinstock**

July/August 2004 • Issue 269

# Hot Nights— Cool Jazz



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## CHARLES LLOYD & BILLY HIGGINS

### Which Way Is East ECM

Using an array of instruments and voice, reedman Charles Lloyd and drummer Billy Higgins collaborate on this two-CD set of duets recorded in Montecito, California in January 2001, just months before Higgins died on May 3rd. Musical styles range from free-jazz to earthy blues to Arabic and Asian meditations.

Lloyd is a Buddhist and Higgins was a devout Muslim. So it seems natural that these two men, close friends since they were teenagers, would be as highly responsive to one another as they were attuned to the universe. They weave spiritual stories in four suites of original music on each disc, beginning with the four-part "What Is Man" Suite on disc one which traces man's evolution from "The Forest," to "Being and Becoming," to "Civilization," and the "Sea of Tranquility." Other disc one suites include the 3-part "Divans," 4-part "Salaam," and 4-part "All This Is That." Disc two features two 3-part Suites, "Desire" and "Light of Love," a four-part suite, "Devotion," and the final five-part suite, "Surrender."

Lloyd performs on tenor and alto saxophones; bass, alto and C flutes' piano, taragato (single-reed, conical-bore woodwind instrument), Tibetan oboe, percussion, and maracas. Higgins plays traps, guitar, guimbri, Syrian 'one string,' Senegalese, Guinean and Indian hand drums, Juno's wood box, and various percussion instruments.

As they collaborate in Lloyd's living room, sometimes they swing joyfully, sometimes the fare is somber. But regardless if playing inside or out, they make uplifting music together. Knowing that Higgins was quite ill at the time with liver failure (and in the 24-page liner booklet photos appears gaunt) makes this CD set all the more precious for the energy, creativity and emotion the two musicians shared.

*Nancy Ann Lee*

## GARY U.S. BONDS

### Back in 20 MC RECORDS

Talk about a long break between sets. For the first time in a couple decades, Gary U.S. Bonds has hit the recording studio, mixing his version of R&B and rock into a little cauldron of blues and out comes BACK IN 20. As always, it's good to have friends in high places as Gary includes Bruce Springsteen, Dickey Betts, Phoebe

Snow, Southside Johnny and various members of the Asbury Jukes to help along the process.

"Can't Teach An Old Dog New Tricks" is wrong in theory as Springsteen mans the guitar, Southside Johnny the harp and the latter's keyboardist, Jeff Kazee, whirls the organ for this radio ready gem, if radio would ever pay attention to something good. From the boogie woogie of "Murder In The First Degree" to the solid R&B of "Nothing But Blue," Bonds is on a basic hot streak here as he and Snow get into a call and response during the bluesy "Bitch/Dumb Ass," which might make a great theme song for this year's presidential election.

Southside Johnny uses his harp throughout BACK IN 20 with a case in point being "Take Me Back," as the harmonica darts in and out of Bond's plea to return. Saxman Joey Stann, a member of both the Jukes and Bond's band, puts his touch into some of the tunes including a haunting solo during the posthumous Otis Redding hit, "I've Got Dreams To Remember." Still, historically interesting is the re-make of the 1960 Buster Brown tune, "Fannie Mae," which Southside Johnny also covered on his first release, this version assisted by Jim Wicker's piano work and another Stann solo.

Bond and company nail a good one to the wall here, although I'm really hoping not to have to wait around until 2024 for the sequel.

*Peanuts*

## LARRY CORYELL

### Tricycles

### FAVORED NATIONS COOL

On his latest outing and debut for the Favored Nations Cool label, guitarist Larry Coryell teams up with Paul Wertico (drums) and Marc Egan (electric fretless bass) for a tasteful 10-tune set of mostly originals and a couple of Monk standards.

A native of Galveston, Texas, Coryell (b. 1943) was a fusion pioneer who made his recording debut with Chico Hamilton's band in 1966, joined Gary Burton's band in 1967 and in the 1970s formed his own fusion band, Eleventh House. He subsequently led other bands, collaborated with an array of jazz artists, and experimented with infusing various musical styles into his works.

Coryell's vision is broad-based and he's a lyrical player of rich imagination. On this recording made while on tour in Europe with his current working group, he's in peak form displaying amazing



technical virtuosity and composition skills.

Individual and collective trio performances are full of vitality and creativity. The threesome works tightly and industriously, bringing illumination and spirit to Coryell's engaging tunes. Highlights include Coryell's mid-tempo, bluesy opener, "Immer Geradeaus," his playful "Spaces Revisited" launched by Wertico's drumming, and an emotive 8-minute re-invention of Thelonious Monk's "Round Midnight." The trio also creatively remakes Monk's "Well You Needn't" with swinging verve and Coryell performs solo on the all-too-brief but beautiful version of the folk-like Lennon/McCartney ballad, "She's Leaving Home."

Coryell, now 61, has said he's "going more for the music substantially" and harkening "back more to Wes (Montgomery)." That's all evident in the warm, ear-appealing fare.

Nancy Ann Lee

## URI CAINE TRIO

Live at the Village Vanguard  
WINTER & WINTER

Recorded during a May 23-25, 2003 engagement at New York City's Village Vanguard, pianist Uri Caine's trio with bassist Drew Gress and drummer Ben Perowsky delivers a mixture of six originals and four totally remade standards.

Opening with an exhilarating take on Wayne Shorter's "Nefertiti," the trio establishes their expertise. They beautifully navigate a slow, sparse, reading of the Jimmy Van Heusen classic, "All The Way" and bop heartily on an angular, modern redo of Van Heusen's "I Thought About You" full of Don Pullen-like chording. Divergent and unique, Caine's own compositions ("Stiletto," "Otello," "Snaggletooth," "Go Deep" and others) contain elements of free jazz and often develop on the outside edge.

The trio deftly plays with elements of time and harmony to

create fare that's out of the ordinary. This is a sophisticated-sounding set that lasts nearly 77 minutes and shows off Caine's keyboard abilities, his top-notch composition skills and his broad vision.

Nancy Ann Lee

## BYTHER SMITH

Hold That Train  
DELMARK

With an efficient backing trio laying down steady, funk-tinged grooves, Byther Smith blasts out some stinging blues guitar and pleads his blues with plenty of heart on his third Delmark album. While he does cover some overdone songs like *The Thrill is Gone*, Willie Dixon's *300 Pounds of Joy* and Howlin' Wolf's *Killing Floor*, most of the material handled here is not nearly as familiar, as he opens with the late A.C. Reed's *This Little Voice*, Dixon's *Close To You*, Andrew Brown's *You Ought to Be Ashamed*, Junior Wells' *Come On In This House*, and Detroit Junior's *So Unhappy*. Other tracks include *Mississippi Kid*, set to the melody of Junior Wells' *Messin' With the Kid*.

More so than his prior discs, Smith's performances here suggest recent recordings by Magic Slim with the simple grooves, punched out stinging guitar lines and solid singing, although Smith's vocals are a bit higher pitched than those of Magic Slim.

*So Unhappy* is a stirring slow blues where Smith pours his soul in while he evokes Slim Harpo's *Scratch My Back* melody for his adaptation of *What My Momma Told Me*. *I Don't Like to Travel* is a strong performance suggestive of Otis Rush's classic *I Can't Quit You Baby*.

The only complaint would be that the tracks start to sound the same if one listens to this in one setting. Use of horns and/or keyboards on some songs would have provided more varied listening.

Ron Weinstock

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## VARIOUS ARTISTS

### The Colors of Latin Jazz: Cha Cha Soul!

CONCORD

This appealing compilation of selections from albums released between 1982–2003 should please Latin Jazz fans. There's not a dull tune in the bunch.

Featured are first-rate, often familiar, recordings by Poncho Sanchez ("One Mint Julep," "Listen Here/Cold Duck Time"), Tito Puente and His Latin Ensemble ("Guajira Soul," "Oye Como Va"), Mongo Santamaria ("Day Tripper"), Cal Tjader ("Evil Ways" featuring singer Carmen McRae), Caribbean Jazz Project ("Tell Me A Bedtime Story"), Eddie Palmieri ("Ay Que Rico II"), Ray Barretto & New World Spirit (Guaji-Rita"), Pete Escovado ("La Cuna"), and the live-recorded Latin Jazz All-Stars ("Guachi Guaro [Soul Sauce]" with Chick Corea on Fender Rhodes). Adding to your enjoyment, many ace soloists are spotlighted (though not listed in liner notes).

This special recording may inspire you to cook up some Latin soul food and invite in a few friends for a dance party. Or you might be so moved to acquire the nine other albums in The Colors of Latin Jazz series!

Nancy Ann Lee

## VERNON REID & MASQUE

Known Unknown

FAVORED NATIONS

Reid, known as leader, vocalist and high-energy lead player of the rock band Living Colour brings his lightning fingerwork, both serpentine and fluid in character, to this fusion side-project. The result is a tasty disc that celebrates the genre both from its rock side *a la* Jeff Beck with rock "heads" and bridges, and from a more

jazzy angle. The two strains meet head on a neat rock-tinged work-up of the Lee Morgan classic "Sidewinder". Those enamored with Reid's work should not be disappointed with the balls-out blowing which exists in abundance here. Drummer Martin Browden stands out in a solid supporting cast. *Known Unknown* grows on one with repeated listening. Fusion fans, check it out.

Duane Verh

## ETTA JONES

### Always In Our Hearts

HIGHNOTE

This disc contains choice tracks compiled from five albums vocalist Etta Jones recorded for her final label, Highnote, between 1996 and the year she died (2002). Albums mined are *The Melody Lingers On* (1996), *My Buddy* (1997), *All The Way* (1999), *Easy Living* (2000), and *Etta Jones Sings Lady Day* (2001). Various sidemen are featured, as well as her constant collaborator, tenor saxophonist Houston Person, who assembled these tracks claiming they were her favorites.

Jones had a special, expressive way of shaping a tune and tastefully injected that little note-bending, bluesy, near-yodel twist in her voice that made her readily identifiable. Tunes include "Did I Remember," "It's Magic," "All of Me," "God Bless the Child," "Mr. Bojangles," "Second Time Around," "For Sentimental Reasons," "Let's Beat Out Some Love," "Fine and Mellow," "I Should Care," and "What A Wonderful World."

Person nicely augments Jones' vocalizing with creative fills and solos. An array of other name musicians and guests nicely support Jones. This very listener-friendly compilation is a powerful reminder of the singer's unique talents and the high caliber of musicians with whom she worked. It's one CD you'll want to hear over and over.

Nancy Ann Lee

## VARIOUS ARTISTS- WHITE LINE FLYERS

### VARIOUS ARTISTS- BARE BLUES

### VARIOUS ARTISTS- IF THIS IS LOVE, I'D RATHER HAVE THE BLUES

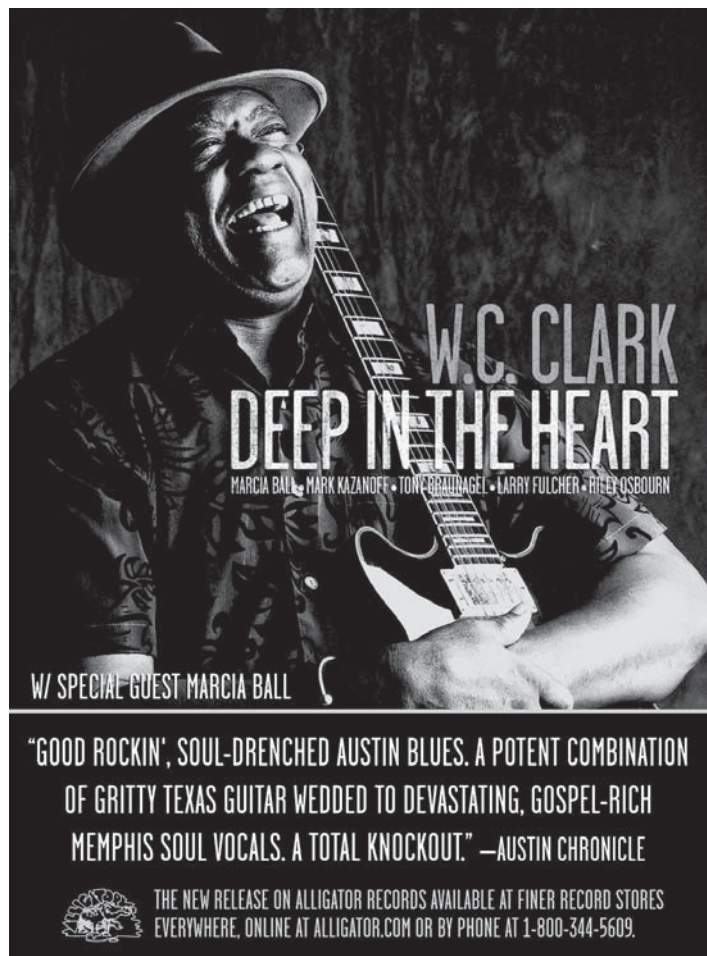
BLIND PIG

Blind Pig dipped into its rich catalog and assembled three very different slices of the blues. First up is

*White Line Flyers*, which assembles a number of cuts that extol the virtue of fast cars, fast relationships and plenty of freedom. The tone here is upbeat and rocking much like the Harley Davidson Road Songs series. While the musical back drop is the blues, the feeling is as free as Doobie Brothers classics like *Rockin' Down the Highway* or *China Grove*. Big fun is the order of the day with this disc.

Next up is *Bare Blues* which consists entirely of instrumental numbers. While the risqué cover conjures up images of a strip club, most of the cuts stay well away from the bump and grind routine. Instead, the 15 collected cuts include everything from zydeco to the blues to jazzy piano numbers. This is a great disc to put on when you want music playing but don't want to invite a singer into the action- it will work well at the office and at dinner parties. It will also be a nice addition to your Sunday morning jazz rotation.

Completing the series is *If This Is Love, I'd Rather Have the Blues* which is the most traditional of the group in the sense that it focuses on the tried and true blues formula of worthless, cheating, no good lovers and spouses. While the theme is consistent, the musical approach isn't limited to the "down and out" blues. There's plenty of sassy, saucy and upbeat material included to add some





sugar to the salt of your tears. Included on these releases are some of the biggest names from the past and present Blind Pig roster such as Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers, Debbie Davies, E. C. Scott, Big Bill Morganfield, Chris Cain, Magic Slim & The Teardrops, Tommy Castro, Lloyd Jones, Studebaker John, Deborah Coleman and a host of others. At a budget price, these discs are a great value and a great listen at the same time. **Mark Smith**

## SPYRO GYRA

### The Deep End HEADS UP

On their third release for Heads Up International, Spyro Gyra celebrates 30 years of making jazz-fusion and introduces the newest member of the band, drummer Ludwig Alfonso, who performs on one track of this colorful 11-tune session.

Highlights include the oriental-flavored "Monsoon," a high-energy tune saxophonist Jay Beckenstein says they've played live for a couple of years. A departure from their usual fare, "Wiggle Room" by bassist Scott Ambush is an uptempo number delivered with punchy flair and embellished with splendid solos from Ambush and guesting vibraphonist Dave Samuels (who also performs on three other tracks).

Solid musicianship and composing skills are the earmarks of this powerhouse band featuring Beckenstein, Ambush, Tom

Schuman (keyboards), Julio Fernandez (guitar/vocals), and departing member Joel Rosenblatt (drums). Other guests include drummer Billy Kilson, trumpeter Don Harris, and percussionists Cyro Baptista, David Charles and Daniel Sadownick.

There's plenty to like about this CD that follows Spyro Gyra's 2003 release, *Original Cinema*, and their 2001 *Heads Up* debut, *In Modern Times*. **Nancy Ann Lee**

## JODY WILLIAMS

### You Left Me In the Dark EVIDENCE

After a 30 years absence from the business, guitarist Jody Williams came back in a big way with the W.C. Handy award winning 2002 release, *Return of A Legend*. This follow up disc mines the standard blues territory where long gone lovers leave deep marks, *You Left Me In the Dark*, men mark out their territory, *Don't Get Caught Sleeping In My Bed*, the opposite sex leaves you bewildered, *What Kind Of Galls That?*, judgment gets thrown to the wind when that special someone comes along, *She's Got a Spell On Me* and older men have more tools in their kit than the new kid on the block, *Young Men Don't Know*. Williams is joined by a host of top-notch guitarists including Robert Jr. Lockwood, Lonnie Brooks and Billy Flynn who add stinging counterpoint to his sweet and swinging Gibson hollow body guitar. Saxophones,

keyboards and a trumpet add additional spice to the 14 tracks. On vocals Williams combines the bombastic delivery of Muddy Waters with the rich, soulful timbre of B.B. King. Relentlessly upbeat and jumping, this disc could fill dance floors at a wake. Miss this one at your own risk. **Mark Smith**

## ZOOT SIMS

### WITH THE JOE CASTRO TRIO Live at Falcon Lair PABLO

Although tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims (1927-1985) experimented for about two years in the mid-1950s with the alto sax, there's not been a release that documented him solely on the instrument in his customary setting, with a piano-bass-drums rhythm section - until now.

Falcon Lair in Beverly Hills, California was tobacco heiress Doris Duke's estate where Castro lived for several years and to whom he was married from 1956 until 1964. They built an apartment over a three-car garage where Castro's friends often gathered to jam. Aiming for a record deal, Castro recorded many of the sessions including this straight-ahead set in 1956 with bassist Leroy Vinnegar, drummer Ron Jefferson, and Sims, who by then had established himself as a remarkable tenor player through work with Benny Goodman, Sid Catlett, Woody Herman, Stan Kenton and Gerry Mulligan.

## July

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FRI 9	CRAZY MARVIN & THE BLUES EXPRESS
SAT 10	TONY KOUSSA JR. BAND
FRI 16	PETE 'BIG DOG' FETTERS FROM DETROIT
SAT 17	SWAMP BOOGIE BAND
FRI 23	CRUISIN WITH RON HOWARD
SAT 24	THE MERCURY'S WITH HOLLYWOOD SLIM
FRI 30	ARMSTRONG BEARCAT BAND
SAT 31	TRAVIS HADDIX BAND

## August

FRI 6	REMEMBER WHEN
SAT 7	BLUES ON PURPOSE
FRI 13	SAM GETZ BAND
SAT 14	COLIN DUSSAULT'S BLUES PROJECT CD RELEASE PARTY 'NOT TONIGHT BABY, I'VE GOT THE BLUES' OPENING ACT - ELDELYR BROTHERS
FRI 20	HIPNOTIC DOG
SAT 21	MIKE MILLIGAN & STEAM SHOVEL FROM INDIANAPOLIS CD RELEASE PARTY 'IF YOU DON'T CHANGE
FRI 27	MIKE LENZ BAND
SAT 28	TRAVIS HADDIX BAND



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An inventive and fluid improviser, Sims sparkles on alto with Castro's swinging group as they remake eight previously unreleased standards such as "A Night In Tunisia," "Pennies From Heaven," "I'll See You In My Dreams," "East of the Sun (West of the Moon)," "It's Always You," and three Castro originals.

With Vinnegar plucking deep walking grooves, Jefferson tidily handling brushwork, Castro delivering melody lines and improv with flair, and Sims revealing his talents on alto, this is a delightful listen from start to finish.

*Nancy Ann Lee*

## **W.C. CLARK**

### **Deep In The Heart**

#### **ALLIGATOR**

Small wonder, guitarist/vocalist Clark has been the inspirational figure to the Austin scene he's purported to be. Endowed with a voice resembling a youthful, less ravaged, O.V. Wright, and a solid blues instrumental style, he is the quintessential soul/blues journeyman.

*Deep In The Heart* is a straight-ahead mix of soul classics and competent originals that should be welcomed by fans of the genre. Highlights include strong covers of Joe Tex's "I Want To Do Everything For You" and John Hiatt's "Tip Of My Tongue". Production is first-rate Austin-style.

*Duane Verh*

## **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET**

### **Experience**

#### **JUSTIN TIME**

On their latest release, World Saxophone Quartet – David Murray (tenor sax, bass clarinet), Bluiett (baritone sax), Oliver Lake (alto, soprano saxes), Bruce Williams (curved soprano &

alto sax), Craig Harris (trombone, Didgeridoo) – lend their indelible sound to seven Jimi Hendrix tunes and the William Roberts number, "Hey Joe." Billy Bang (violin), Gene Lake (drums) and Matthew Garrison (bass guitar) expand the team.

The band and guests give cacophonous workouts to Hendrix classics such as "Freedom," "Little Wing," "Foxy Lady," and more. Portions of "If 6 Was 9" (arranged by Lake) may be too busy for some ears to absorb, but WSQ brings the tune to resolution at the end. Arranged by Murray, Hendrix's "Machine Gun" features shotgun sax riffs and Bang's furiously churning violin improves punched up by Lake and Garrison. Harris' spoken words and trombone adorn his arrangement of the mournful "The Wind Cries Mary." Saxes blend artfully to make beautiful sounds on Murray's arrangement of the sultry "Hey Joe." Best, though, is the unaccompanied quartet's soulful eight-minute-plus performance on Harris' imaginative arrangement of the Hendrix gem, "Hear My Train A Comin'."

WSQ is always inventive, always pushing the form within their saxophone soundscapes and this outing, recorded in March 2003, is no exception. A sterling addition to their existing discography, the disc contains music of many moods.

*Nancy Ann Lee*

## **JOHNNY WINTER**

### **I'm A Blues Man**

#### **VIRGIN RECORDS**

Johnny Winter's *I'm A Blues Man* was six years in the making. Winter, co-producer Dick Shurman, and co-producer Tom Hambridge have a little masterpiece in their hands. Winter combines with bass man Scott Spray, drummer Wayne June, and harpman James Montgomery; with guest appearances by keyboardist Reese Wynans and young 'Mother' Mike Welch. The band handles the vocals, not Johnny. Winter fills out with masterful electric and slide axe. Johnny used several New England sound studios, and the material comes from as far Prague, Yugoslavia.

*I'm A Blues Man* joins a string of others, but shows that Winter is maturing right before our eyes.

*Mark A. Cole*

## **MULGREW MILLER**

### **Live at Yoshi's: Volume One**

#### **MAXJAZZ**

Part of the MaxJazz piano series, this eight-tune live-recorded set features Mulgrew Miller with drummer Karriem Riggins and bassist Derrick Hodge performing at the San Francisco Bay area club in July 2003.

Launching with an uptempo, bopping reading of Frank Loesser's "If I Were A Bell," Miller pulls out all the stops to showcase his technical mastery and utmost imagination on the nearly 12-minute energetic spree. Mixing moods and maintaining a consistent level of creativity, Miller and pals give scintillating readings of Donald Brown's romantic "Waltz For Monk," Jobim's melodious Brazilian-jazz gem "O Grande Amor," Woody Shaw's time-switching "The Organ Grinder," Horace Silver's gently sweet "Peace," and other tunes, including a racing, angular Miller original, "Pressing the Issue," which closes the set.

It's been awhile since I've caught Miller in live performance or reviewed one of his recordings, and I hear a ear-pleasing difference in his playing on this recording. Perhaps it's because this tight unit had been playing a lot before this Yoshi's engagement or because the receptive crowd inspired the threesome, but this is one of the pianist's best-ever recorded sets probably for all these reasons.

*Nancy Ann Lee*





## TAD ROBINSON

### Did You Ever Wonder?

SEVERN/CITY HALL

Due to the proliferation of bad hip hop and rap music everywhere, when was the last time you heard a good soul release? Jerry Butler? Donny Hathaway? Wait no more because it appears Tad Robinson has put out the first good one in this century via **Did You Ever Wonder?**

The New York City native has had a long career since setting up shop in Indiana years ago and this release is loaded with nice touches, starting with Robinson's two secret weapons on keyboards, Benjie Porecki and Kevin McKendree. The latter two gents give some great fills and backgrounds to various tracks throughout with the funky "They Say," the emotional "Your Love Is Missing" and the bluesy "Suffering With The Blues" as the three best examples.

Brass is a big part of the adventure, thanks to soul singer Otis Clay doing the horn charts. Robinson can go from quiet and slow in "My Love Is Real" to the soulful "Woman Trouble" with ease, thanks to the team effort. Robinson even gets to cover the old Cornelius Brothers & Sister Rose's #2 charting "Too Late To Turn Back Now" from 1972 with some harp thrown in by the lead singer himself.

One more person I've got to mention on **Did You Ever Wonder?** is guitarist Alex Schultz, who gets his moments to shine including "Pockets Full Of Nothing," while channeling the late Wes Montgomery for some riffs during the aforementioned "Suffering With The Blues."

A well produced and solid disc, all I can add is to steal a line from Simon & Garfunkel and paraphrase it into "Here's to you, Mr. Robinson." **Peanuts**

## THE FRANK & JOE SHOW

"33 1/3"

HYENA

On their label debut, virtuoso acoustic guitarist Frank Vignola and master percussionist Joe Ascione team up to lead a fun-filled collection of 13 oldies. Guest vocalists Dr. John, Jane Monheit, and Janis Siegel perform on one track each and other musicians augment. The title alludes to an era when vinyl albums were like two-act plays with a beginning, middle and end and the pause to turn over the LP cleansed your palate.

Throughout, Vignola and Ascione show off their incredible chops fostered since they met around 1989. Both were members of Travelin' Light. Subsequent

recordings together and a standing gig on Sunday nights at the New York City club, Sweet Rhythm, have broadened their repertoire and perfected their playing. From gypsy swing to Latin grooves, the pair and their sidemen uniquely meld jazz to classic pop standards.

Most songs featured were popular in the 1940s and include gems such as Cole Porter's "Don't Fence Me In" which switches back and forth from normal to racing tempos and spotlights Siegel's blended vocals and Vignola's lightening picking. Dr. John has fun with a brief take of "Sheik of Araby," and Monheit delivers a seductive "Besame Mucho." Instrumentals include a swaying "Tico Tico, a peppy "Paper Moon," a Latinate "Alone Again Naturally," a racing "Flight of the Bumblebee," a gorgeous, waltzing "Stardust," clever originals such as "Sweet Rhythm" and "Mozart Jam," and a witty remake of the "Spiderman" theme.

Engaging and playful, this is Frank's and Joe's best recording together to date, bringing them to a higher tier and most deserving wider exposure. **Nancy Ann Lee**

## GAYE ADEGBALOLA

Neo-Classic Blues

HOT TODDY MUSIC

This is Gaye Adegbalola's most recent "embrace" of the classic blues and the classic blues women. Accompanied by pianist Roddy Barnes, Gaye interprets some well-known, and rescues some more obscure songs from the earliest days of blues recording. In addition, she sings several originals that are presented in the same vein as the early blues foremothers.

From the opening moments of Ma Rainey's *Black Bottom* to the last notes of Roddy Barnes' *Summer Sky*, we are treated to some exquisite performances. There is a fair number of selections associated with Ma Rainey in addition to the opening track that include *Yonder Come the Blues*, *Prove It to Me*, and the immortal *See See Rider*; all of which Gaye delivers wonderfully with Barnes' complimentary backing. The bawdy *The Dirty Dozens* receives spirited treatment as does Lucille Bogan's *BD Woman Blues*. Another Bogan song, *Sloppy Drunk*, is taken at a distinctively slower tempo than Ann Rabson performs the number with Saffire. Gaye's original, *Twisted Woman Blues* fits in seamlessly with Sippie Wallace's *Up the Country Blues*, while her ballad *How Can I Say I Miss You*, compliments her rendition of the Duke Ellington-Paul Webster classic, *I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good*. A couple of songs

July/August 2004 • Issue 269

## NIGHT TOWN

12387 Cedar Road  
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JWP



FRI-SAT JULY 9-10 9 PM

### FREDDY COLE

Telarc recording artist. Nat's brother. Vocalist and pianist returns to Nighttown.



### SUN JULY 11 7 PM MIKE PETRONE QUARTET

Pianist extraordinaire.



SUN JULY 25 7 PM

### REBEKAH WOLKSTEIN

CIM student in Nighttown debut leads quartet.



TUES JULY 27 7 PM

### MICHAEL MANRING

Electric bass player extraordinaire.



WED & THUR JULY 28-29  
7 & 9 PM

### JOAO BOSCO

Direct from Sao Paolo. Singer/Songwriter and Guitarist leads his Brazilian Quartet in exclusive Ohio appearance.

FRI JULY 30 9 PM

### CHUCHITO VALDES

From Cuba. Dynamic Pianist leads his five-piece group. Latin Jazz & Salsa.



FRI & SAT AUG 6-7 9 PM

### TONY MONACO TRIO

Hammond B-3 Burner hits Nighttown! With LOUIS TSAMOUS & ROBERT KRAUT.

MON AUG 9 7 PM

### LOU DONALDSON

Soul Jazz Legend returns with Quartet. Featuring DR. LONNIE SMITH on Hammond B-3 organ.



THURS AUG 12 7 PM

### FRANK & JOE SHOW

Guitarist FRANK VIGNOLA and Percussionist JOE ASCIONE lead exciting new Sextet.

SAT AUG 14 9 & 11 PM

### NICK SMITH QUARTET

Featuring STANLEY CLARKE, DENNIS CHAMBERS & HERMAN RILEY

8/13	..... ERNIE KRIVDA	8/21	..... JACOB FRED JAZZ ODYSSEY
8/16	..... BROCK MCGUIRE	8/24	..... JANE BUNNETT
8/18	..... BARBARA ROSENE	8/26	..... NICE & WELCH

from blues history are also refreshed by Gaye here, Perry Bradford's *Crazy Blues*, the bluesy Perry Bradford song that Mamie Smith recorded to launch the blues craze, and Alberta Hunter's *Down Hearted Blues* that was Bessie Smith's first recording. In addition to the wonderful performances, Gaye provides short but insightful comments on all the songs. This is simply a marvelous disc of blues performed with so much heart and panache that is unservedly recommended.

**Ron Weinstock**

## JANIS SIEGEL

### Sketches of Broadway

TELARC

For the first time, singer Janis Siegel turns to Broadway musical theater as her source of great tunes to reinvent in a jazz context. That she's successful is largely due to pianist Gil Goldstein who produced, arranged and performs on the 11 show stoppers by Lerner/Lowe, Stephen Sondheim, Harold Arlen, Vernon Duke, Richard Rodgers, Irving Berlin, Kurt Weil, Jerry Herman and Jule Styne.

In various musician settings, the instrumental backing enhances Siegel's singing. Goldstein also plays Fender Rhodes and accordion; John Patitucci, acoustic and 6-string electric bass; Romero Lubamba, acoustic and electric guitar; Antonio Sanchez, drums; and Stephon Harris, vibes. When Siegel stretches out with bluesy female background vocals riffing behind her on Arlen's "It's A Woman's Prerogative" (from *St. Louis Woman*), she sounds a bit like Patricia Barber. For the most part, though, her approach is pretty straight forward on ballads and most inventive on the uptempo numbers.

Siegel's an adventurous soul and that comes across in peak moments that should please her fans.

**Nancy Ann Lee**

## ELLIOTT SHARP'S TERRAPLANE

### Do The Don't

GAFF MUSIC

While many of the avant/blues experiments of recent years—the Fat Possum blues-and-beats stuff comes to mind—though usually clever and engaging for a spell, seemed destined for temporary notice. Other better-grounded primitive/modern cross-breeds exist that suggest the potential of a more durable musical movement. The seeds were sown with James Blood Ulmer's excellent 2001 release, *Memphis Blood*, and sprouting since is guitarist/tenor saxophonist Sharp's current offering. Free-jazz and bluesy sax references collide with high-energy sonic slide guitar assaults over bass-anchored blues patterns on a typical track from *Do The Don't*. Moods can evoke Mingus, Parliament/Funkadelic, Art Ensemble of Chicago or Beefheart. The result is an ear-grabbing hybrid that speaks genuinely from both of its sources. Former Howlin' Wolf guitar great Hubert Sumlin guests on three tracks. Like the avant-funk experiments of the early 80's (Material, Defunkt, etc.), this may not be music for the ages, but the energy, fun and authenticity here should not go unnoticed.

**Duane Verh**

## Thursday after-work jazz at HealthSpace Cleveland

HealthSpace Cleveland, Northeast Ohio's new destination for health education, shared learning and fun, has joined with The Northeast Ohio Jazz Society (NOJS), our community's leading voice for the presentation and promotion of Jazz music, to present a series of monthly after-work parties, themed "A Healthy Dose of Jazz." The first event was June 17, and the series continues July 15, August 19 & September 16 (with the possibility of adding other fall and winter dates) from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the lower level of HealthSpace Cleveland, East 89th Street and Euclid Avenue in the University Circle area.

Admission is \$10 and includes light hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, plus "live" Jazz music performed by some of the region's greatest Jazz masters. The series continues July 15, August 19 & September 16, with the possibility of adding other fall and winter dates. Those attending will also receive coupons for a substantial discount on future HealthSpace Cleveland visits.

"We're excited to showcase HealthSpace Cleveland to the community in yet another way, with the ongoing presence of the well-known Northeast Ohio Jazz Society," said Patricia Horvath, Executive Director and Chief Executive of HealthSpace Cleveland. "Following on the success of our Tri-C Jazz Fest presentation in April, plus the many community events and health-related programs we host on a regular basis, this is another reason for Northeast Ohioans to come and experience this dynamic new facility."

NOJS Executive Board member A.C. Alrey stated "our collaborative effort with the renowned HealthSpace Cleveland compliments our ongoing efforts to positively affect the quality of life in our community. This summer's '3rd Thursday' series further supports our mission as Greater Cleveland and Northeast Ohio's advocate for jazz as a true art form considered America's "classical" music. A Healthy Dose of Jazz provides the perfect prescription to those pre-weekend anxieties, middle-of-the-week blues or the 'I just want something new and exciting to do' desires. Our 'prescription' presents an outstanding, new networking venue while adding much to the expression — jazz and conversation."

Admission to the event will be available exclusively at HealthSpace Cleveland the afternoon of the event. Parking is available on site for \$4.



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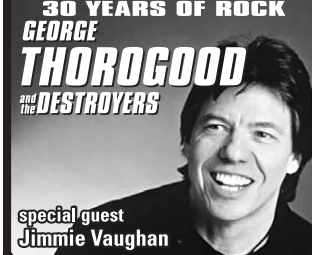


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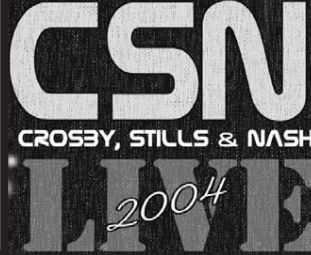
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