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**More Summer Festivals
Previewed • Reviewed**

jazz & blues report

Published by Martin Wahl
Communications

Editor & Founder Bill Wahl

Layout & Design Bill Wahl

Operations Jim Martin
Pilar Martin

Contributors

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

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Comments...billwahl@jazz-blues.com
Web www.jazz-blues.com

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On the Cover

A crowd scene from the 2008 St. Lucia
Jazz Festival. Dionne Warwick is
onstage in the orange shirt. All St. Lucia
photos by Emily Wahl.



"Buffalonus"

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

the St. Lucia Jazz Festival experience



By Emily Wahl

Every year, visitors from Europe, North America and the rest of the Caribbean fly into the island of St. Lucia to bask in its natural beauty and diverse attractions. Among them are the signature Piton Mountains and the St. Lucia Jazz Festival.

Getting to the island for the festival is fairly simple, as there are numerous inexpensive flights to St. Lucia available. Quite often visitors traveling from North America or Europe can find direct flights to the island. Many resorts are ideally situated near the festival and offer special packages for St. Lucia Jazz. Pigeon Island National Park is a small island connected to St. Lucia by a causeway and one of the Caribbean's most historic landmarks and certainly one of the most beautiful spots in St. Lucia. This island is the heart of the St. Lucia Jazz Festival.

The St. Lucia Jazz Festival, like many jazz festivals today, may not be all jazz, but rather jazz and an assortment of *mostly* closely related music genres. This is even true of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, which had Robert Plant of Led Zeppelin and the contemporary bluegrass artist Alison Krauss of Union Station this year. This mixed arrangement of musical talents was initiated in order to draw in a diverse group of patrons, and not just jazz enthusiasts to the festivals. It also serves to expose the many people drawn in by the popular musicians to jazz music.

Now in its 17th year, the St. Lucia Jazz Festival, or as the locals call it "Jazz," has become one of the leading go-to events of the year, next to Trinidad's Carnival. From its inception in the early '90s, Jazz has grown to achieve international recognition – ranking among the top of the many music festivals in the Caribbean each year. Over the years, the St. Lucia Jazz Festival has attracted such diverse and renowned musicians as



One of the locals selling her wares

Herbie Hancock, Gladys Knight, Patti Labelle, George Benson, Santana, The Isley Brothers, UB40, Luther Vandross and Smokey Robinson. Festival titan George Wein once ranked it among the top festivals in the world.

The festival is held amidst 44 acres of tropical grassland, forest and beaches. St. Lucia's exquisite natural beauty provides a majestic backdrop for the festival with performances taking place all over the island creating a very diverse and exciting musical experience. The festival always kicks off with a warm up jam at a casual local venue, where the atmosphere is relaxed yet high-spirited. These make the festival particularly special, and include Jazz on the Square and Tea Time Jazz, both in Castries, Fond D'Or Jazz in Dennery, Jazz on the Pier at Duty Free Point Seraphine (modern and extensive Duty Free Shopping Complex) in Castries, and Main Stage Jazz at Pigeon Island National Park.

Once you walk through the ticket booths at Pigeon Island, you will notice numerous locals with tables set up selling their handmade goods. Surrounding the main stage, the audience is seated on the lawn with blankets; and if you are aiming to blend in with the locals, be sure to bring your umbrella for shade. The stage was large, open, and outlined with numerous speakers and lights. The speakers boasted loud crisp sound with just the right level of all tones. Most of the show I was at front stage, although during Wyclef Jean's performance, I stepped back somewhat, and was hanging



Locals in the crowd used umbrellas for shade



David Sanchez

around one of the extremely large speakers. Although tremendously loud, and bass bumping and thumping throughout my body, it was tolerable and did not seem to bother the audience around me.

If you are thirsty or are in need of a quick snack, there are plenty of food and drink stands outlining the venue. Restrooms are fairly clean and lines ran smoothly. The atmosphere, with the backdrop of the Caribbean Sea and its breathtaking orange sunsets would be hard to beat anywhere in the world.

Held over a 10-day period during the month of May, the island and its patrons are treated to a global flare of artists. The various artists mostly focus on jazz and its offshoots, such as smooth jazz, new age, acoustic, soul, fusion and R&B. This festival will, without doubt, bring you world renowned acts who hail from North America, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Each artist brings something unique to the festival, but they all serve one purpose...and that is to bring joy and entertainment to the St. Lucian locals and international tourists. As Ledisi stated during her performance: "I've won 2 Grammy's this year, but ain't nothing better than being here with you".



Nick Colionne and Najee in conversation



Ledisi belts it out

This year's festival included performances by Jonathan Butler, Najee, Klimax, David Sanchez, Nick Colionne, Ledisi, Dianne Reeves, Dionne Warwick, Angie Stone and Wyclef Jean along with the exceptional musical talents of instrumental performers such as the Juilliard Quartet, featuring Ron Blake, Eddie Henderson, Carl Allen, Ben Wolfe and the Eric Ildefonse Quintet featuring Luther Francois. Two pop acts, Grammy Award winning American balladeer Michael Bolton as well as soft rock duo Air Supply completed the line-up. Jean and Stone along with Ildefonse and his Quintet closed the festival on Sunday, May 11.

Jazz at Pigeon Island premiered on May 8 with the New York based jazz saxophonist, Jacques Schwartz-Bart; Juilliard Quintet featuring the all-star lineup of saxophonist Ron Blake, pianist Kenny Barron, trumpeter Eddie Henderson, drummer Carl Allen and bassist Ben Wolfe; and for the last act and headliner of the night was the exceptional vocalist Dianne Reeves. Due to a very unfortunate situation, which resulted in my late arrival into St. Lucia, I missed this night's performances entirely. Of course, it was one night I was really looking



Dionne Warwick singing "Walk On By"

forward to due to the stellar lineup of jazz musicians. In talking with several fans and media people who did see the evening's performances, I found out it was a fantastic night of music. That was pretty much to be expected.

May 9's show started out with Sole Food, followed by Jonathan Butler, who sang "Falling in Love with Jesus" and Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry," and had his two vocally talented daughters join him on stage to sing throughout his performance. The night continued on with Air Supply, whose love for the Beatles gave them the inspiration to form their band, and the popular singer Michael Bolton. Bolton, though one of the acts that is far removed from jazz, seemed to be one of the favorite artists of the locals in attendance this night.

The show on May 10 was graced with stars like Barbara Cadet & Friends; the soul grabbing saxophonist David Sanchez, who's early inspiration came from artists like Dexter Gordon, John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins; Jazz Explosion – a contemporary, or smooth jazz artist combination packaged especially for St. Lucia Jazz 2008 starring Najee, who has been regarded by many as one of the finest instrumentalists on the smooth jazz scene; pianist Alex Bugnon; the forever amusing guitarist Nick Colionne and the sweet and spunky Ledisi, whose powerful voice and entertaining performance is one that is hard to forget. Then the infamous, classy, romantic soul singer Anita Baker, who with her strong, supple alto, sang a set including "Sweet Love" and "You Bring Me Joy."

May 11, the last day of the festival, arrived entirely too quickly but consisted of a remarkable lineup of the starting with Eric Ildefonse Quintet feat. Luther Francois, who offered straight ahead Jazz, and the international musical legend Dionne Warwick, who got straight down to business with many of her well-known hits and more, such as "Walk On By," "A House Is Not A Home," "What The World Needs Now," "Close To You" and wrapping up as her finale "That's What Friends Are For." Then there were Angie Stone, a singer, self-taught keyboardist, and a prolific songwriter who, for her finale sang "I Wish I Didn't Miss You Anymore," and the headliner, Wyclef Jean – a rapperstar, and, much to my surprise, an astounding guitarist. Wyclef Jean's performance was probably the most 'lively' to say the least. At one point he decided to climb a tree to the VIP quarter and leapfrog



Angie Stone is walking by



Wyclef Jean at the press conference

over Prime Minister Stephenson King's shoulders. His show was extraordinarily entertaining and truly got the audience energized, which was a wonderful way to end this 10-day festival.

The St. Lucia Jazz festival is exceptionally inspiring - from the finest performances, venues, personalities, or just the plain silent admiration for the many stellar performers. It is often argued that the festival alone is reason enough for visiting St. Lucia.

In keeping with our policy, we try to give our readers an idea of some of the festival location's attractions, accommodations and dining options. The fact is, that *most* people do not just pick up and go to a Caribbean island, or Mexico, for a festival without some planning and knowing a bit of what to expect when they get there. In effect, they are combining music with a vacation.

St. Lucia is certainly not a tourist trap. It's very relaxed and there's a laid-back 'island' feel circulating in the air. St Lucia's tourist facilities are top-notch, and, unusually, cater to all budgets - you can stay at luxury hotels or inexpensive guesthouses; dine in world-class restaurants or at roadside kiosks; and shop in large duty-free malls or at open-air village markets. I was fortunate to be able to join a press crew on the trip, making it easy to sample some restaurants and briefly visit some

hotels and resorts other than the one I was staying at, which was Discovery at Marigot Bay in Castries.

Because of a need to switch resorts last minute, I did not arrive at Discovery until midnight. The staff was wonderfully accommodating. Shout out to Chad!! Because of our late arrival, the kitchen had prepared some 'cold plates'; sandwiches served with plantain chips, and delivered them to the room. The room was beyond what words or pictures could describe, as nothing can truly give this resort justice.

My room, which I like to refer to as 'my sanctuary', was beautifully decorated in minimalist style with two (yes two!) decks, and exceptional views of mango trees in reach and the bay, that was home to a continual leisurely parade of cruising yachts and sailboats. Although this resort sits on the bay, you may get to the beach by taking a 3-minute boat ride, which is provided free of charge.

First class all the way including 20-foot ceilings, a full laundry room and kitchen (not all sanctuaries have laundry rooms and kitchens) with a fridge stocked with signature Piton beer, fruit juices, sodas and water (all free), 2 HD TVs and full entertainment centers, an enormous elegant bathroom including essentials such as bug spray and sun block. Furthermore, probably the most comfortable king sized bed (with mosquito netting to provide a romantic atmosphere) I have ever slept in. This was extremely important to me after long days at the festival and sightseeing...I slept like a baby every night!

There are both free WIFI and ethernet connections in the rooms and the Internet service is included in the room's cost. Do be aware that some of the rooms are located at the top of steep hills and involve climbing multiple stairs which may be difficult for some guests. Not to worry, as the staff has courtesy golf carts and will promptly pick you up to take you anywhere you need to go on the property. Discovery has its own quaint 2-story village on the property. Here you can find a grocery store, bank, bakery, ice cream shop, clothing stores, and of course a tourist shop.

The food at The Boudreau Restaurant, sits just feet from the bay and between the Hurricane Hole Bar and the spa treatment huts. This restaurant is excellent with a wide variety and fresh catch of the day. Breakfast buffet was plentiful and the fruit was so fresh and delicious (mangos and bananas picked straight from the trees on the premises). Service tends to be quite slow (this holds true for all the restaurants we dined at in St. Lucia), but keep in mind, you are in the Caribbean and island life is much more laid back than what you are probably used to. So remember to just sit back, relax and enjoy.

This resort is excellent; heaven on earth, the attention to detail is second to none. The staff is very attentive, and the property really sits right on the bay, you could not get any closer unless you were on a yacht. So, if you are looking for a relaxing holiday in a stunning setting, then this is the place to stay.

To discover news/events around St. Lucia, and for only \$2.00 EU (\$.50 US), try and pick up a copy of the St. Lucia Mirror, the island's local paper.

May 9, we arrived at Almond Smugglers Cove, for dinner. This Almond Resort has four restaurants and four



A bit of the grounds at Discovery



The Pitons as seen from Jade Mountain

bars. We dined at The Waterside Grill which specializes in seafood. There is also a Beach Grill and room service for lunch and dinner. The food at The Waterside Grill was so delicious, that we each sampled a bit from each other's plate. The setting was unsurpassed, as we sat about 8 feet from the beach accompanied by a heavenly breeze while the waves continually crashed upon the shore. I kept thinking "this is pure bliss," and it is certainly nothing like back home in Philadelphia.

On May 10, we arrived at Cotton Bay Village in Castries. This is not your traditional resort, but rather a collection of luxury villas, townhouses and apartments of peace and tranquility. We had quite a late start to our day, which resulted in the inability to tour the resort, but judging by the looks from the outside, I can only imagine how gorgeous they must have been on the inside. Rumor has it that many of the musicians stayed at this village during their stay in St. Lucia for the festival. We did however get to relax at their restaurant, The Beach Club 1461 for lunch, and it was here that I once again felt in true paradise. Sitting directly on the beach, with a soothing breeze that comforts you to your core while eating exquisite food...what could be better? Aahhhh....

On May 11 we arrived, via fabulous yacht ride, at Anse Chastanet & Jade Mountain resorts in Soufriere. Jade Mountain is Anse Chastanet's new and exclusive resort within a resort. Anse Chastanet's architect owner, Nick Troubetzkoy, has expanded upon his philosophy of building in harmony with its natural environment by introducing a new level of sophistication in the design of Jade Mountain.

Anse Chastanet is a romantic hideaway where rooms are decorated with stunning original artworks in an exceptionally intimate setting. Nestled within a 600-acre estate with two beaches, Anse Chastanet is a destination within itself, with many facilities and activities offered right at the resort. Part of the 600 acre estate is a lush tropical forest with 18th century remains of an old plantation and 12 miles of private estate trails to explore by foot or bike.

Jade Mountain is an experience of a lifetime; the pictures are stunning, but until you've spent an afternoon in these sanctuaries you cannot truly comprehend

how unique this experience is. There is a reason the rooms are called sanctuaries. As soon as you step foot on your private bridged walkway, you are entering your sanctuary. Every amenity you could want and/or need is probably already in your room (post bed, open bathroom, Jacuzzi tub, sun deck, fridge, coffee, etc. and, in most cases, an infinity pool). The rooms have three walls - with the fourth being a 265-degree view of St. Lucia, the twin Pitons or the Caribbean Sea. Jade Mountain and Anse Chastanet both offer all-inclusive packages for those who prefer to go that route, which is becoming increasingly popular.

We dined at Jade Mountain's fabulous restaurant, The Club, where the setting was beyond beautiful with amazing views of the infamous Pitons. The service was exceptional; the food was extraordinary - fresh seafood caught straight from the sea, fresh veggies and fresh fruits picked from the six-acre organic farm on the property. The staff went out of their way to make this an experience that I could never forget.

So there you have a few places to Google and check out should you be planning a trip to St. Lucia. I wish we could have checked out a few more, but there was only so much time and the days were exhausting as it was.

May 12 seemed to roll around much too quickly, and I was sad to say my farewells to this beautifully blissful island...but this goodbye is not forever, as I am looking forward to my next trip in the near future. I would highly recommend visiting St. Lucia for next year's Jazz, or heck, why wait that long? To find out more information on the St. Lucia Jazz Festival, visit www.stluciajazz.org, where you can also sign up for their email newsletter to bring you news of the 2009 festival.

You can see *lots* more pictures of the festival and St. Lucia at <http://picasaweb.google.com/JazzBluesReport>.



A St. Lucia beach. Say goodbye, Emily!

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21st Annual Long Beach Jazz Festival August 8–10

3 Days of music in Sunny Southern California

LONG BEACH, CA – The Long Beach Jazz Festival takes place the weekend of August 8, 9, and 10. Once again, the festival venue is the breathtaking seaside setting of Rainbow Lagoon Park on Shoreline Drive in Long Beach, California, where for two decades now thousands of faithful music fans have made the Long Beach Jazz Festival an annual family affair.

True to its reputation as a soulful and well-rounded summer music festival, the 21st Annual Long Beach Jazz Festival for 2008 is loaded with a wide array of musical talents for every taste. Not only is it a jazz festival celebrating straight ahead and contemporary jazz, but this year's weekend of magic includes top flight star talent from worlds of classic R&B, Neo Soul and Blues—ideal for the more seasoned as well as the newer generations of listeners.

Festival founder, Al Williams and his band Al Williams Jazz Society, featuring incomparable vocalist Barbara Morrison will once again delight jazz lovers with its highly anticipated set on Sunday. "I am really pleased to have such a great variety of artists this year" says Williams, in anticipation of 2008's star-studded festivities.

This year's lineup includes singer/composer Michael Franks and his well-known sensual and witty lyrics, tenor saxophonist star Kirk Whalum, and torchbearer of jazz and funk with tropical Latin flair, conga drum master Poncho Sanchez. An amazing assemblage of soul-jazz legends will perform under the umbrella title "The Superstars of Jazz Fusion" starring vibraphonist Roy Ayers, keyboard wizard Lonnie Liston Smith, trumpeter Tom Browne, original Jazz Crusaders trombonist Wayne Henderson and singer Miki Howard.

Female musicians are thoroughly represented by the piano artistry of Keiko Matsui, saxophonist/singer Mindi Abair and versatile, fleet-fingered guitarist Joyce Cool-ing.

Old school soul music lovers will swoon for the sounds of West Coast vocal legends, The Whispers and Grammy Award winning, The Commodores, while neo soul fans can check out the rousing and righteous sounds of acclaimed singer/songwriter Chrisette Michele, funk-soul-jazz party starter's Down to the Bone, and modern soul-jazz stars Nick Colionne on guitar and Euge Groove on sax.

New school popular soulful singer, KEM kicks off the three day fest Friday night. Additionally, a special appearance by G. Garvin, entertaining host of TV One's popular cooking show, "Turn Up the Heat," will share techniques and recipes from his new book "Dine in with G. Garvin" due to be release the first week of October.

This year, Linda Morgan from Rainbow Promotions, LLC is coordinating the Long Beach Jazz Talent Search, an event that encourages upcoming, jazz musicians. Two winners will be selected to open the festival on Saturday and Sunday.

Tickets are available through Rainbow Promotions, LLC at (562) 424-0013, or online at Ticketmaster.com. VIP tickets are \$150 per seat for Friday and \$175 per seat /per day on Saturday and Sunday—includes dinner, wine service and access to mingle with jazz artists. Reserved box seat tickets are \$60 per seat on Friday and \$75 per seat/per day on Saturday and Sunday. General admission/lawn seating is \$45 (prior to July 30) and \$50 at the gate. For the Friday show, gates open at 5PM, with a show time of 7PM until 11:30PM. For the Saturday and Sunday shows, gates open at 11:00AM with show times of 12 noon until 10:30PM.

Cadillac, Budweiser and TV One are among the main sponsors of the 2008 Long Beach Jazz Festival. Media sponsors include KTWV-FM, KJAZZ-FM, KJLH-FM and Jazziz Magazine.

Rainbow Promotions, LLC is responsible for producing the Long Beach Jazz Festival each August, and various special events and mini-concerts presented year-round. For 21 years, Rainbow Promotions, LLC. has produced the Long Beach Jazz Festival, a three-day city event averaging 24,000 in attendance. For more information regarding the Long Beach Jazz Festival, go to: www.LongBeachJazzFestival.com.

Tribute Concert in Chicago to Honor Buddy Guy

Guy to Receive First Annual Great Performer of Illinois Award

CHICAGO – Blues guitarist Jimmie Vaughan will headline a special tribute concert on July 20 honoring Chicago blues legend Buddy Guy during the Great Performers of Illinois festival in Millennium Park. Guy, an internationally acclaimed blues guitarist and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee, will receive the first Great Performer of Illinois award for his outstanding contributions to popular music and American culture.

The free concert, which will begin at 8 p.m. at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Chicago's Millennium Park, will feature Grammy-award winning Jimmie Vaughan and the Tilt A Whirl Band and Lou Ann Barton. Other special guest artists will pay tribute to Guy.

The tribute will be the highlight and finale of the annual Great Performers of Illinois festival, three days of free entertainment, July 18-20, by more than 50 performers from throughout the state presenting pop, rock, blues, Latin, folk, classical, and spoken word performances.

For more information about Great Performers of Illinois, call 312.742.1168 or visit online at www.greatperformersofillinois.com. Great Performers of Illinois 2008, the third annual celebration of the arts unique to Illinois, is presented by the Illinois Arts Council, the Chicago Office of Tourism, and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

Located in downtown Chicago on Michigan Avenue between Randolph and Monroe Streets, the 24.5-acre Millennium Park is an unprecedented center for world-

class art, music, architecture and landscape design. Among the park's prominent features are the Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion, the most sophisticated outdoor concert venue of its kind in the United States; the interactive Crown Fountain by Jaume Plensa; the contemporary Lurie Garden designed by the team of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel; and Anish Kapoor's hugely popular Cloud Gate sculpture.

For more information, visit www.millenniumpark.org.

29th Annual Detroit International Jazz Festival Announces 2008 Lineup

DETROIT – Festival organizers have announced the lineup for the 29th annual Detroit International Jazz Festival, which takes place Friday, August 29 through Monday, September 1, at Hart Plaza on the Detroit River waterfront.

Billed as *A Love Supreme: The Philly/Detroit Summit*, the 2008 festival will celebrate the storied jazz and soul traditions of these two great American cities. "I enjoy the challenge of designing the festival lineup around a theme," says executive and artistic director Terri Pontremoli. Philly/Detroit, jazz, and soul will be represented on opening night, which features Dianne Reeves, whose new Blue Note Records CD *When You Know* gives a nod to Motown's Temptations. A Philly/Detroit jazz tribute to Marvin Gaye, curated and arranged by Christian McBride, will also bow

that evening. McBride will present his own unique takes on Gaye's material with a big band of stellar Detroit-based musicians backing R&B vocalists Lalah Hathaway and Rahsaan Patterson. Joining the two veteran singers will be up-and-coming jazz vocalist Jose James.

Throughout the weekend, legendary artists from Detroit and Philly will include Hank Jones, Gerald Wilson (both turning 90 this year), Barry Harris, Benny Golson and Jimmy Heath. A gamut of guitar stylists will be showcased over three days with appearances by Stanley Jordan, Jim Hall, Pat Martino, Derek Trucks, Calvin Cooke, Grant Green Jr., and Mike Stern. But guitars won't be the only things that slide - trombones will also take center stage with appearances by Robin Eubanks, Slide Hampton, Bonerama, Trombone Shorty and the University of Michigan Jazz Trombone Choir.

A battle of the bands between the Count Basie and Gerald Wilson Orchestras promises to leave the audience breathless by the end of the night. Both bands will be on stage at the same time, along with GRAMMY award-winning singer Nnenna Freelon, Detroit legend Kenny Burrell, and other special guests (to be announced). The Dizzy Gillespie All-Star Jazz Band, with James Moody, Jimmy Heath, and Slide Hampton, will close out the festival on Labor Day, along with sensational vocalist Roberta Gambarini. A Saturday Night Fish Fry will feature masters of the Hammond B-3 with Reuben Wilson's Godfathers of Groove, Robin Eubanks + EB3, and Joey DeFrancesco with Karriem Riggins and Christian McBride. A tribute to Alice Coltrane, led by her son Ravi, will feature jazz giants Charlie Haden, Jack DeJohnette, and Detroit's own Geri Allen.

Classic jazz will be served up by Kenny Barron, Ted Nash, Roy Hargrove and a myriad of regional artists, while new music offerings include ICP Orchestra, Cyro Baptista & Beat the Donkey and Matt Wilson's Arts & Crafts. Alexander Zonjic will cross over Philly and Detroit with native Philly artists Jeff Lorber and Doc Gibbs and special guest Maysa and the Motor City Horns. GRAMMY-nominated Artistry /Mack Avenue bassist Brian Bromberg will be joined by Philly trumpeter Randy Brecker. Col. Bruce Hampton & The Quark Alliance will boast their brand of surreal funk. Dee Dee Sharpe will perform in a tribute to the Philly Sound and the achievements of R&B pioneers Kenny Gamble & Leon Huff, who are celebrating five decades in the music industry, along with their recent induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

The newly located Here & Now Stage will again feature emerging talents such as twenty-somethings pianist Gerald Clayton, bassist Esperanza Spalding, The Hot Club of Detroit and the surprisingly six-foot Trombone Shorty.

Detroit International Jazz Festival will continue to encourage young talent not only by inviting college and high school ensembles to showcase, but by giving them opportunities to perform with jazz veterans. The Wayne State University Big Band will perform the "Book of Heath" with Jimmy Heath; Temple University Big Band will perform the works of Thad Jones with trumpet legend Jon Faddis. Other visiting schools include the Berklee (Boston) Jazz Ensemble, the Brubeck Institute Jazz Quartet, and the Juilliard Jazz Quintet. And back by popular demand are the KidBop area and Arts & Scraps for the wee-boppers.

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

The Jazz Talk Tent will be full of stories, with Christian McBride, Jimmy Heath, Benny Golson, Barry Harris, Hank Jones, Jim Hall, Kenny Burrell, James Moody and Slide Hampton. Topics will range from the B3's role in blues to Detroit/Philly histories, the impact of John Coltrane and Dizzy Gillespie, discussions of Marvin Gaye, Gamble & Huff, Motown, and yes, sports.

"Detroit International Jazz Festival was voted one of the top five festivals in the U.S. in the January 2008 *JazzTimes* Reader's Poll," says Pontremoli. "The musicians will be having wonderful reunions, and the great Detroit audience, which always amazes me, will play a huge role in the brotherly love vibe."

Detroit International Jazz Festival is now the largest, free jazz festival in North America, attracting upwards of 750,000 people. It has become a major tourist attraction, with 25% of its audience coming from out of state. The festival has a significant economic impact on Detroit and showcases the city in the most positive light. The festival has received support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the NEA Jazz Masters, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), and the Kresge Foundation. Major corporate sponsors include Chase, MGM Casino, Motor City Casino, Carhartt and Absopure. The Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center is the official hotel of the 29th Annual Detroit International Jazz Festival.

For more information, including festival updates and details on how to become a member, visit www.detroitjazzfest.com.

29th Annual Long Beach Blues Festival

LONG BEACH, CA – Chuck Berry and Sly & the Family Stone will headline the 29th annual Long Beach Blues Festival, set to take place Saturday and Sunday, August 30 and 31, 2008 at a brand new venue. The Festival will move relocate from its long-time home site at the Cal State University Long Beach (CSULB) athletic field to a breezy new oceanfront location, the Rainbow Lagoon at Linden Ave. and Shoreline Dr. in adjacent downtown to the Long Beach Marina.

The Festival also announces the enlistment of two new co-producers: Bill Silva Presents and Rum & Humble. Executive producers are Global Jazz, Inc. and CSULB.

In addition to the great Chuck Berry, who will headline the Saturday show, and enigmatic R&B masters Sly & the Family Stone, who will headline on Sunday, a line-up of venerable artists from the blues pantheon has been announced. Saturday's performers also include Eric Clapton associate John Mayall, New Orleans' riotous the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, blues piano patriarch Pinetop Perkins, Northern Californian slide slinger Roy Rogers and the West Coast debut of Jamaican soul vocalist Roy Young. Sunday's performers also include Hammond organ virtuoso Booker T Jones, harmonica blower Charlie Musselwhite, straight up bluesman Joe Louis Walker, rising guitar phenomenon Ana Popovic and nascent act Baby Stone.

In its nearly three decades of existence, the Long Beach Blues Festival has become one of the nation's pre-eminent blues celebrations. As a major fundraiser for publicly supported radio station KKJZ-FM, the Festival serves not only as an annual weekend devoted to a classic American music form, but also to help sustain both jazz and the blues on the air all year long.

KKJZ-FM (previously known as KLON-FM) has been broadcasting jazz and blues since 1981. In December 2004, the station increased transmitting power, going from 6,500 to 30,000 watts as well as an HD Radio digital signal at 88.1 FM.

Over its 29-year history, the Long Beach Blues Festival has featured a who's who of influential blues and soul artists including Buddy Guy, Taj Mahal, Dr. John, Little Richard, Jerry Butler, Bobby Bland, Otis Rush, Etta James, Mavis Staples, Charles Wright & the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, Robert Cray, Bo Diddley, Little Milton, Otis Rush, Albert Collins, Jimmy Smith, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, Joe Liggins & the Honeydrippers, Big Joe Turner, Lowell Fulson, Lonnie Mack, The Blasters, Johnny Winter, Son Seals, Bobby Womack, Joe Cocker, the Allman Brothers Band, the Black Crowes, Irma Thomas and Betty LaVette, among hundreds of others.

According to co-producer Bill Silva, "We are thrilled to be producing this year's festival. With the new location adjacent to the marina coupled with an incredible artist lineup, we believe this will be a great experience

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—*Blues Revue*



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for all the fans of this established event.”

Rum & Humble’s Martin Fleischmann adds, “Over the past three decades, virtually every major blues performer extant has been part of the Long Beach Blues Festival. We look forward to working with KJAZZ and Bill Silva Presents to uphold that fine tradition as well as bringing the Festival forward, in keeping with the evolution of blues/roots music and its audience.”

“We see moving the Blues Festival to downtown Long Beach as another way for Cal State Long Beach to partner with the city in ways that lend more vibrancy and excitement to important community events,” said CSULB President F. King Alexander. “We believe this move will enable more community members to take advantage of what is one of the most popular events in Long Beach every year, and in the process, businesses in the downtown area will benefit as well. KJAZZ listeners, blues fans and Long Beach residents will all see a much more exciting festival this year.”

Advance tickets are available at the cost of \$45 (plus applicable service charges) for a single day or \$75 (plus applicable service charges) for a weekend pass via Ticketmaster. Day of show prices are \$50 for one day and \$85 for the weekend. In addition, the festival offers several VIP package rates, all of which include a donation to benefit KJAZZ: The Buddy Pack (two VIP weekend passes plus parking and beverages) for \$300; the Platinum Pass (two four VIP weekend passes plus VIP parking, food and beverages) for \$800. Also offered are the Backstage Pass (two four backstage weekend passes plus VIP parking, food and beverages) at \$1,650 and the Ultimate Backstage Pass (two four backstage weekend passes and a reserved seating area plus VIP parking, food, beverages and hotel or transportation) at \$5,000.

Tickets Enhanced VIP ticket packages are available directly from KKJZ-FM 88.1 FMKJAZZ, by calling (310) 478-5061 or online at <http://www.jazzandblues.org/longbeachbluesfestival>.

International Jazz Awards Rescheduled

BEVERLY HILLS, CA - The first annual International Jazz Awards, a global television special, celebrating over 100 years of jazz music, originally scheduled for June 29, has been re-scheduled to a new date, Sunday, July 27.

The event will take place in Beverly Hills, California at the International Ballroom of the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

Tamar Scarlet Entertainment, in association with Tall Pony Productions, Inc., presents the International Jazz Awards, which is scheduled to be an annual event.

Tamar’s Kitty Sears is creator and executive producer and Tall Pony’s Tony Eaton (3 time Grammy winner, Tim McGraw, Reflected; Usher – The Truth Tour) is co-executive producer.

Louis Horvitz (Academy Awards, Country Music Awards, etc.) will be the director. Igo Kantor will be the producer and Annice Parker will be co-producer.

Actor, comedian and writer D.L. Hughley will host the show.

The nominees were based on top jazz sellers, and will honor jazz in 24 categories

which include Contemporary/Smooth, Traditional, Swing, Latin, Brazilian /Afro-Cuban, Fusion and Dixieland.

Download or revisit our June issue for a more in-depth story. For more information, or to buy tickets, visit www.internationaljazzawards.com/jazz/

Rock Hall again receives Teacher’s Choice Award

CLEVELAND, OH – The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum’s distance learning program On the Road has received the National Teacher’s Choice Award for the Best Content Provider in the Fine Arts Museums and Organizations category. This program is made possible through generous support from the John P. Murphy Foundation and National City Bank.

For the third year in a row, the Rock Hall has received a Teacher’s Choice Award for its distance learning program which is quickly becoming the most well-known of its kind in the nation. The award is sponsored by Polycom, an interactive videoconferencing technology company.

This honor comes at a time when the Museum’s educational programming is experiencing an unprecedented growth in attendance, awards from respected institutions and increased interest from media outlets across the country and around the world including CBS’ The Early Show, NBC’s The Today Show, the Associated Press, Boston Globe and the Jakarta Post (Indonesia’s largest English language newspaper).

“The Rock Hall is an established music hub, but we have a long-term vision to use technology to provide our unique music based education programs to classrooms around the world,” said Terry Stewart, president and CEO of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. “We are thrilled to receive this exceptional acknowledgment of our work from teachers across the country. Music is an art form that merits serious study and speaks to students in a powerful way. It has the ability to deepen engagement with core subjects including language arts, history, social studies and technology.”

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is at the forefront of bringing popular culture into the classroom and utilizing it to shed light on the music that changed the world. The Museum’s state-of-the-art interactive videoconferencing technology allows it to offer incredible educational experiences, teaching children and young adults the ways in which music has played a part in some of the most important social, cultural and political issues in modern history.

Using a high-tech, fully interactive videoconferencing system, the Museum’s On the Road distance learning program has reached more than 10,000 students and teachers in more than 28 states, Mexico, Canada, En-

gland and Australia. Last year, the Museum won an Honorable Mention in the Best Content Provider category and in 2005, it won an award for Best New Content Provider.

"The Rock Hall's distance learning program touches upon key areas of interest to our foundation," said Nancy McCann, president of the John P. Murphy Foundation. "It's a groundbreaking program that has respected educators around the country buzzing. Music and technology are integral parts of the current generation's daily life and using them to encourage renewed interest in core subjects is remarkable."

On the Road makes use of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's extensive educational resources in order to increase students' knowledge of the history, the people, and the sounds of popular music. These programs promote interdisciplinary study and creative, analytical thinking - all without leaving the classroom. The classes are developed and conducted by the Museum's education department and include exclusive interview clips with key figures in the history of popular music, behind-the-scenes commentary with Museum curators, audio and video clips of Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductees, and more. On the Road classes, as well as pre- and post-connection materials, meet Ohio and National education standards in disciplines such as music, language arts, social studies, and technology.

Class offerings include:

- From Ambassador to the Orchestra: The Arranger in Rock and Roll
- Great Moments in Rock and Roll: Popular Music Through the Decades
- Hip-Hop Technology: From Turntables to Computers
- Rock and Roll Reactions: Records, Radios and the Birth of Teenage Culture in 1950s America
- Ball of Confusion: Rock Music and Social Change in the 60s and 70s

For more details about the Rock Hall's educational programs, visit www.rockhall.com/student.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is the nonprofit organization that exists to educate visitors, fans and scholars from around the world about the history and continuing significance of rock and roll music. It carries out this mission both through its operation of a world-class museum that collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets this art form and through its library and archives as well as its educational programs.

The Museum, located in downtown Cleveland, Ohio 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 \$22 for adults, \$17 for seniors (65+), \$13 for youth (9-12), \$18 for adult residents of Greater Cleveland. Children under 8 and Museum members are free. The Museum is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. When you become a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, the world of rock and roll becomes yours to explore.

Call 216.515.1939 for information on becoming a member. For general inquiries, please call 216.781.ROCK or visit www.rockhall.com.

ASCAP Adds Six Music Greats to Jazz Wall of Fame

Recipients of the 6th Annual ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Awards also Celebrated

NEW YORK — ASCAP President and Chairman Marilyn Bergman announced that ASCAP added six music greats to the ASCAP Jazz Wall of Fame on June 17 at an invitation-only event in New York.

The event was highlighted by the induction of three Jazz Living Legends: bassist Ron Carter, composer-arranger and saxophonist Bill Holman, and tenor saxophonist Sonny Rollins. The latest group of inductees also includes three posthumous honorees: trumpeter Bunny Berigan, drummer Art Blakey, and arranger/composer/pianist Tadd Dameron. Participating in the event as presenters and/or performers were Kenny Washington, Vanessa Rubin, Javon Jackson, Randy Sandke, Jay Leonhart, Jim Rotondi, Russell Malone and Stephen Scott.

In addition, critically acclaimed pianist /composer Gonzalo Rubalcaba was presented with The ASCAP Foundation Vanguard Award for his innovative musical activity as a pianist and composer in the field of Jazz.

The reception also celebrated the recipients of the sixth annual ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Awards. The program was established in 2002 to encourage the jazz creators of the future. The ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Awards recognize composers less than 30 years of age whose works are selected through a national competition. The recipients receive cash awards. The Young Jazz Composer Awards are in their third year of sponsorship by Gibson Foundation, the philanthropic arm of musical giant Gibson Guitar Corp. The Gibson Foundation supports The ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Awards in fulfillment of its commitment to educational excellence through music and the arts.

The award recipients are:

Roy Assaf, 25 (New York, NY); Sharel Cassity, 29 (New York, NY); Michael Dease, 25 (New York, NY); Jesse Elder, 24 (New York, NY); Quamon Fowler, 27 (Ft. Worth, TX); Ross Garren, 22 (Los Angeles, CA); Tyler Gilmore, 25 (Denver, CO); Nicholas Grondin, 25 (Lee, NH); Alex Heitlinger, 27 (New York, NY); Bryson Kern, 25 (Astoria, NY); Pascal Le Boeuf, 21 (Santa Cruz, CA); Remy Le Boeuf, 21 (Santa Cruz, CA); Ben Markley, 25 (Longmont, CO); Linda Oh, 23 (New York, NY); Rick Parker, 29 (Brooklyn, NY); Joshua Richman, 21 (Hatfield, PA); Sherisse Rogers, (New Castle, DE); Kendrick Scott, 27 (New York, NY); Jaleel Shaw, 29 (Paterson, NJ); Stephen Smith, 27 (Wichita Falls, TX); and Omar Thomas, 23 (Bear, DE).

The youngest ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composers, ages 14 to 16, are: Lucas Apostoleris, 14 (MA); Joel Carini, 15 (NY); Grace Kelly, 15 (MA); Noah Kellman, 16 (NY); David Lantz, 16 (PA); and Elijah Shiffer, 16 (NY).

Composers receiving Honorable Mention are: Patrick Cornelius, 29 (Astoria, NY); Shaul Einav, 25,

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(Rochester, NY); Eric Hirsh, 23 (Durham, NC); James Hirschfeld, 26, (New York, NY); Jimmy Macbride, 16 (CT); Adam Ratner, 20 (Encino, CA); Matt Savage, 15, (NH); and Ted Taforo, 18, (CA).

Commenting on the awards, Marilyn Bergman said, "The young jazz creators recognized through this program represent the future of this uniquely American art form. We congratulate the recipients and extend thanks to the dedicated panel of ASCAP composers who selected the honorees."

The ASCAP composer/judges for the 2007/2008 competition were: Jay Leonhart, John Fedchock and Rufus Reid.

Founded in 1975, the ASCAP Foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to supporting American music creators and encouraging their development through music education and talent development programs. Included in these are songwriting workshops, grants, scholarships, awards, recognition and community outreach programs, and public service projects for senior composers and lyricists. The ASCAP Foundation is supported by contributors from ASCAP members and from music lovers throughout the United States. www.ascapfoundation.org

Established in 1914, ASCAP is the first and leading U.S. Performing Rights Organization (PRO) representing the world's largest repertory totaling over 8.5 million copyrighted musical works of every style and genre from more than 320,000 songwriter, composer and music publisher members. ASCAP has representation arrangements with over 90 similar foreign organizations such that the ASCAP repertory is represented in nearly every country around the world. ASCAP protects the rights of its members and foreign affiliates by licensing the public performances of their copyrighted works and distributing royalties based upon surveyed performances. ASCAP is the only American PRO owned and governed by its writer and publisher members.

For more information, visit www.ascap.com.

Extraterrestrial Sounds in New York City

NEW YORK – On Tuesday July 8 at 7 p.m. Brazilian composer Emanuel Dimas de Melo Pimenta will perform SETI - a new concert at the celebrated Bjorn Ressle Contemporary Art Gallery in New York City.

Emanuel Pimenta, who lives in Switzerland, composed SETI in 2002 exclusively using extraterrestrial sounds. The music score was totally created inside virtual environments. The performance will include the projection of a film by Pimenta based on images captured by NASA from the frontiers of the known Universe. SETI's world premiere happened in 2003, in Lausanne, Switzerland at the local Experimental Art and Film Festival. The film at Bjorn Ressle's Art Gallery will be a world premiere. Mark Wiener and Marcia Grostein, both recognized artists living in New York will be responsible for the environment design. This concert is part of a five-year project by Emanuel Pimenta at Bjorn Ressle's Contemporary Art Gallery.

With several cds and books published in diverse countries, Pimenta collaborated with John Cage between 1986 and 1992 and remains a commissioned composer for Merce Cunningham since 1986. Admittance will be free, more information is available at www.asa-art.com/seti2008.html

Bjorn Ressle Gallery is located at 16 East 79th Street, New York, NY between Madison and Fifth Avenue on the second floor. Phone: (212) 744-2266.

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release blues.... When you're not hanging around the stage at the various blues festivals this summer, make sure to pick up some of these discs to keep your collection up to date: **Dr. John- *City That Care Forgot***; **Willie Nelson/Wynton Marsalis- *Two Men With the Blues***; **Janiva Magness- *What Love Will Do***; **Pinetop Perkins- *Pinetop Perkins & Friends***; **Walter Trout- *The Outsider***; **Johnny Winter- *Raised on the Blues***; **Clarence Spady- *Just Between Us***; **Bonnie Bramlett- *Beautiful***; **Karen Dalton- *Green Rocky Road***; **The Homemade Jamz Blues Band- *Pay Me No Mind***; **Buddy Guy- *Breaking Out***; **Eric Gales- *Story of My Life***; **Don "Sugarcane" Harris- *Sugarcane's Got the Blues***; **Maria Muldaur- *Live in Concert***; **Tomcat Courtney- *Downsville Blues***; **Lee "Shot" Williams- *Shot from the Soul***; **David Jacob Strain- *Liar's Day***; **George Mitchell- *The George Mitchell Collection, Vols. 1-45***; **Kelly Richey- *Carry the Light***; **John Mayall- *Running with the Blues***; **Walter "Wolfman" Washington- *Doin' The Funky Thing***; **Papa John Creach- *Papa Blues***; **Pete Molinari- *A Virtual Landslide***; **Watermelon Slim & the Workers- *No Paid Holidays***; **Doug MacLeod- *The Utrecht Sessions***; **New Guitar Summit (Jay Geils, Duke Robillard, Gerry Beaudoin)- *Shivers***; **Robin Rogers- *Treat Me Right***; **Danny Brooks- *No Easy Way Out***; **Carla Olson & the Textones- *Detroit '85- Live and Unreleased...*** **Festival Blues.....** When you're not spinning your new discs, make sure to reserve **July 10-12** for the Annual **Kalamazoo Valley Blues Festival**. (www.kvba.org) and **August 8-9** for the **Cowpie Blues Festival**, Alaska, MI (www.cowpiebluesfestival.com). That's it for this month. See ya!



Why Some People Think Duke Ellington Is a Member of the Royal Family.

KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH

ART THESE DAYS. So you can see why some of them might accidentally confuse a jazz legend named Duke with royalty named duke. But it's finally time to set the record straight.

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington didn't rule over a small English estate. Instead he reigned supreme over jazz institutions like The Cotton Club. He riffed



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

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

Jazz is art, you dig? Art can

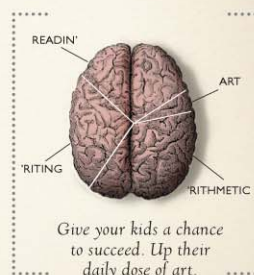
powerfully on the piano, but it was the full orchestra that he considered his most compelling instrument. He introduced improvisation to his compositions — a process unheard of using a 15-piece orchestra. The result was a different approach to jazz that sparked a revolution and an evolution. His music spread across the world with songs like "Sophisticated Lady," "In a

really transform lives.

In fact, the more art kids get, the smarter they become in subjects like math and science. And the more likely they'll become well-rounded, cool members of society. For *Ten Simple Ways* to get more art in kids' lives, visit AmericansForTheArts.org.



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



Art. Ask for More.

AMERICANSFORTHEARTS.ORG



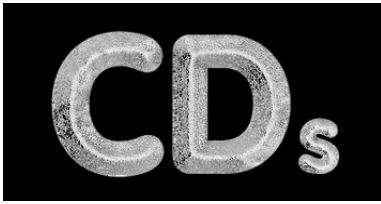
NAMM
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**jazz
& blues**

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Image donated by Corbis-Bettmann. TM 2006 Estate of Mercer K. Ellington by CHG Worldwide



We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!



JANIVA MAGNESS
What Love Will Do
ALLIGATOR

"You sound pretty good, but you're just too old", advises the music biz honcho in an irony-laced song from Janiva Magness's new release. But if the classic r&b genre can stand the voltage at its advanced age, Ms. Magness is possessed of the power to yank it from its easy chair and get it shakin' its butt once more.

In addition to power the lady brings to R&B is a whole lot of self-confident sounding style. The Midwest-bred, LA-based Magness makes the very most of her somewhat limited range, sculpting a smooth, soulful and sensual persona with a discernable dash of grit underneath. And it's a persona that stands up well to well-chosen cover material identified with the likes of Al Green, Little Milton or Annie Lennox.

Ms. Magness's backup pays appropriate homage to Memphis roots with frequent touches of frothy organ straight from the Willie Mitchell production playbook. Classic horn sections at times give way or mingle with a semi-acoustic front that keeps this set from sounding "too" vintage. *What Love Will Do* is a great example of artist and genre doing a whole lot of right by each other and is rates among the tastiest of recent releases. **Duane Verh**

Editor's Note: I was fortunate to be able to catch Janiva Magness with her band at in outdoor Concert as part of Carlsbad CA's fabulous TGIF Jazz in the Parks series in late June, and I have to tell you...if you get a chance to see her live, by all means capitalize on it. Magness has a first rate sextet backing her consisting of keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, trumpet and saxes (tenor and baritone.) This lady puts on a phenomenal show with her powerful vocals and just the right delivery to get to the souls of the people in the audience and bring them to their feet. Her band is exceptional, with a particular standout being her guitar player from Argentina. But no question, everyone on the stage was a standout. Check them out for sure if you can. - Bill Wahl



JAMES CARTER
Present Tense
EMARCY

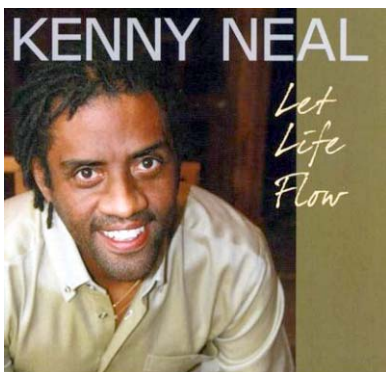
One is almost tempted to use the word audacious to describe the music of James Carter. The virtuosity he exhibits on a range of saxophones, flute and bass clarinet goes beyond the simple label of novelty while at the same time playing with passion and thoughtfulness. He caresses a ballad as well as can get down in the alley with a gutbucket blues solo.

"Present Tense" on Emarcy is his most recent recording and has him supported by his terrific band of Dwight Adams on brass, D.D. Jackson on piano, James Genus on bass and Victor Lewis on drums with appearances on guitar by Rodney Jones and congas and percussion by Eli Fountain. I was familiar with the opening 'Rapid Shave,' from a Shirley Scott recording with Stanley Turrentine on tenor. Carter and his group burn on this one with Adams taking the first solo followed by Jackson's piano before Carter storms in on Baritone. 'Bro. Dolphy' is Carter's tribute to the legendary multi-instrumentalist and has Carter taking a serpentine bass clarinet solo.

Carter has exhibited a great appreciation for the music of Django Reinhardt, and uses the soprano for his interpretation of Reinhardt's ballad 'Pour Que Ma Vie Demeure,' which also has a nice bass solo. 'Song of Delilah,' is best known from the classic Clifford Brown-Max Roach recording, and opens here with Carter on soprano evoking a snake charmer before Carter introduces the theme on baritone followed by Adams bright, pungent tone for a fresh and vibrant interpretation.

Carter displays his virtuosity on flute on Dodo Marmarosa's 'Dodo Bounce,' with Adams using a mute on his solo. Gigi Gyre's 'Hymn of the Orient' is another brisk tempoed number showcasing Carter on baritone, while he takes up the tenor for his original 'Bossa J.C.' on which Jones adds a nice acoustic guitar break. He stays on tenor for some fine ballad playing on the closing 'Tenderly,' exploiting the tenor's full range and Adams' excellent muted work complements his playing.

Having been following Carter since his presence on the late Lester Bowie's Organ Ensemble, it is satisfying to watch him continue to develop as a musician, composer and group leader. Backed by a superb band and mixing in strong originals with interpretations of terrific material that, with the exception of 'Tenderly,' has not been interpreted very often nor as well. "Present Tense," is another brilliant addition to James Carter's significant body of recordings. **Ron Weinstock**



KENNY NEAL
Let Life Flow
BLIND PIG

After having been through some serious health issues, the blues world has to be delighted that Kenny Neal is back and performing, touring and recording. Blind Pig has just issued his latest recording, "Let Life Flow," and there is a reflective quality perhaps reflects his appreciation of the little things, as on the opening title track.

Not a shouter, Neal's country-soul tinged vocals along with his fleet, fretwork are as appealing as ever. Certainly his singing is enhanced by the terrific band that includes his son, Kenny Jr., brothers Darnell and Frederick, the late Little Milton's nephew, trumpeter Joe Campbell among others. In addition to other striking originals like 'Blues Leave Me Alone,' Neal also puts his own stamp on Larry Addison's 'You Got to Hurt before You Heal' (best known from Bobby Bland's classic recording), Ivory Joe Hunter's ballad, "Since I Met You Baby," and Willie Dixon's still very pertinent, 'It Don't Make Sense You Can't Make Peace.'

Kenny Neal's music has always been thoughtful and well paced. He shows that singing naturally and honestly will come off very convincingly. Let's hope he remains in good health and continues to produce such marvelous music as here. Kenny's website is www.kennyneal.net.

Ron Weinstock

TAYLOR EIGSTI
Let It Come To You
CONCORD JAZZ

On his second release for Concord, pianist Taylor Eigsti assembles various musicians for the 11-tune mix that includes four originals.

Eigsti seems to work best in smaller settings as evidenced by the lovely ballad rendering of the Jon Brion-Mark Everett tune, "Not Ready Yet," performed with bassist Reuben Rogers, drummer Eric Harland and guitarist Julian Lage. The latter also performs nicely in a duo with Eigsti on the gentle Antonio Carlos Jobim gem, "Portrait In Black and White." A swinging take on Wayne Shorter's "Deluge" delivered in a trio setting with bassist Harish Raghavan and drummer Aaron McLendon gets fresh treatment. Saxophonist Joshua Redman is featured on an energetic reading (8:27 minutes) of Pat Metheny's "Timeline." In addition to composing four tunes (three of which are part of his "Fallback Plan Suite"), Eigsti arranged or co-arranged all of the remaining tunes by others.

Diverse tunes, varied musician settings, inspired arrangements, and exceptional musicianship contribute to the success of Eigsti's sophomore release. Eigsti demonstrates his burgeoning multi-faceted musical talents. His performances sparkle with broad creativity and his arrangements and original compositions are full of innovation and surprise that leave the listener eagerly awaiting his next project.

Nancy Ann Lee

STEVE GUYGER
Radio Blues
SEVERN RECORDS

Steve Guyger is an old school harmonica player who has played with everyone from blues icon Jimmy Rogers to rock legend Levon Helm. Backed on this disc by Johnny Moeller on guitar, Steve Gomes on bass, Robb Stupka on drums and Bill Heid on piano and organ, Guyger reveals his deep roots and varied influences.

The disc kicks off with *Lookie Here* where Guyger dips back into another era where men didn't waste time on proposals but simply announced to their chosen mate that they were getting hitched the next day. Fortunately, the adept interplay between Guyger's harmonica and Moeller's guitar make the Fred Flintstone approach to courtship seem almost incidental to the fun being had. The tables get turned on the soulful, *I Can See by Your Eyes*, where Guyger catches the "goodbye look" from his partner. On *Blues Won't Let Me Be* Guyger channels Jr. Wells on vocals and any number of Chicago harmonica players with some hot wired runs up and down the scale. *Won't You Come on Out Tonight* is equally charged with Moeller's guitar adding considerable heat to the mix.

Changing things up considerably, the slow, loping beat of *Cool in the Evening* is accompanied by an equally low key vocal from Guyger that brings Charlie Musselwhite to mind. *Little Rita*, on the other hand, substitutes Guyger's rocking harmonica for the accordion that could have easily taken the lead on this upbeat rocking number that would fit right in on a Jumpin' Johnny Sansone disc. *Afghan Rumble* is a big instrumental showcasing Guyger's har-

LIVE BLUES
ON THE HIGH SEAS

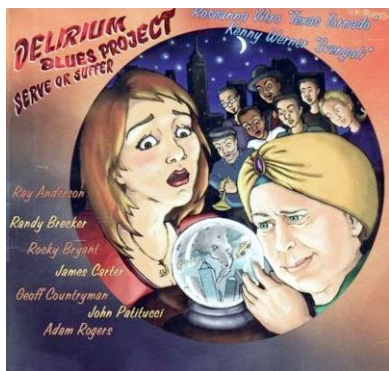


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www.jazz-blues.com
 click the 'Notable' button

monica chops while Rudy Toomb's classic *I'm Shakin'* gets a pretty straight forward rock and roll treatment. The stuttering, dance floor beat of *Hey Little Baby* sounds like Buddy Holly should get a cut of the royalties but does feature some pretty fine harmonica work. Rounding things out are a reverential take on Muddy Waters' *Let Me Hang Around* and a quick instrumental blast through the Big Joe Liggins classic *Honeydripper*.

If radios still played blues like this, people would still listen to the radio!

Mark Smith



DELIRIUM BLUES PROJECT

Serve Or Suffer

HALF NOTE

A project conjured by vocalist Roseanna Vitro and pianist/arranger Kenny Werner, the Delirium Blues Project is succinctly described by producer Jeff Levenson as "a celebration of the blues as the basis of much popular music." Anyway, they spent a week in August, 2007 at New York's Blue Note and this living recording was the result.

In addition to Vitro and Werner, the Delirium Blues Project features a genuine all-star horn line-up of Randy Brecker, trumpet; James Carter, tenor sax; Ray Anderson, trombone; Geoff Countryman, baritone sax; Adam Rogers, guitar; John Patitucci, acoustic and electric bass; and Rocky Bryant, drums. Bringing together the marvelous Werner arrangements with Vitro's singing and the terrific musicians, one has an intriguing recording that provides a different take on some blues and bluesy material.

While horn dominated one should not short-change the fine playing of guitarist Rogers, yet Brecker, Carter and Anderson provide the real musical fireworks. The material is fresh from the opening piece of jive, 'What Is Hip,' followed by a Tracy Nelson number, 'Goodnight Nelda Grebe, The Telephone Company Has Cut Us Off,' with a fine vocal (Nelson was an influence on Vitro) and a choice Brecker solo. 'Blue' is an indigo ballad with a marvelous solo from Carter while he apparently is on soprano with some serpentine playing behind the vocal on Joni Mitchell's 'Be Cool,' with Rogers employing a bluesy tone on his solo. Lil Green's 'In the Night,' may be the most familiar number here but Patitucci's bass is the sole accompaniment for Vitro's intimate vocal.

A funk groove underlies the rendition of Dan Penn and Spooner Oldham's 'Cheater Man,' on which Vitro takes a wordless solo, while on Mose Allison's 'Everybody's Cryin' Mercy,' Ray Anderson's growling

plunger mute work would make Tricky Sam Nanton proud. Most of the players get to stretch out on the closing, 'Don't Ever Let Nobody Drag Your Spirit Down,' a tune by Eric Bibb, C. Hoglund and Maria Muldaur, whose bass line is a cousin to 'Green Onion'/'Help Me.'

This is the type of band that Al Kooper wishes he could have had thirty odd years ago with the original Blood Sweat & Tears while the sophistication of the music also suggests Steely Dan. One hopes that this aggregation was more than a one-shot deal, as this resulting recording whets the appetite for more delirium.

Ron Weinstock

THE HOMEMADE JAMZ BLUES BAND

Pay Me No Mind

NORTHERN BLUES

If there's one thing blues music can't be accused of these days it's a youth movement. With a demographic growing greyer by the hour, it's refreshing to find a trio of young African Americans jumping into the music with all six feet. While the Homemade Jamz crew are aged 16, 13 and (yes) 9, one can dispense with any notion of a novelty-act or "prodigy" atmosphere. The Perry kids- Ryan (lead guitar), Kyle (bass) & Taya (drums) mash it up with an energy and verve that sounds decidedly *un-self* conscious or studied on a set, - save John Lee Hooker's "Boom Boom"- of originals that are, for the most part, very listenable lyric-wise.

Ryan Perry's work unsurprisingly shows it's post-SRV foundation but influences of a more vintage nature appear as well. The rhythm section shows great instincts and more skill than many might expect. What may be missing in veteran execution is more than made up for in drive and apparent boiling-over enthusiasm. Don't play these young folks cheap- they might provide blues a shot at the next generation.

Duane Verh

STEVE ALLEE TRIO

Dragonfly

OWL STUDIOS

Indianapolis-born pianist/composer Steve Allee follows up his 2007 release, *Colors*, with the same musicians—bassist Bill Moring and drummer Tim Horner. Guest appearances by Rich Perry (tenor sax), and Rob Dixon (alto sax) nicely augment some tunes.

This 10-tune set is Allee's sixth national jazz release as leader and all but three tunes are his originals. Allee's energetic "Bus to Belmopan," inspired by a bus ride in Belize, launches the set with Cuban-style beats. The melodic, upbeat title tune draws inspiration from the small pond on Allee's countryside property and you can almost hear the flitting dragonfly skimming the water. Included is a three-tune "Dedication Suite," to Bill Evans ("Conversation with Bill"), Thad Jones ("Thaddeus") and Oscar Peterson (a swinging take on Frank Loesser's "If I Were a Bell"). "X & Y" (from the English rock band Coldplay) gets lilting jazz treatment and a bouncy "Hip Factor" featuring Dixon closes out the set.

A 35-year veteran of the music scene, Allee has written soundtracks for TV and film, taught and lectured at colleges and universities, co-produced more than 50 al-

bums, and his recent jazz gigs include appearances with bands led by Randy Brecker, John Clayton, David "Fathead" Newman, Rich Perry and Rufus Reid.

This threesome works very well together. Allee shows lots of imagination in his solos, with Horner spurring him to new heights with his traps artistry. Rewarding the listener, the diverse tunes provide for plenty of creative interplay and fine solo work.

Nancy Ann Lee

CHRIS BARBER PRESENTS THE BLUES LEGACY: LOST AND FOUND SERIES

MVD AUDIO

Trombonist Chris Barber has been a mainstay of the British trad jazz scene for over five decades. With Lonnie Donegan, he helped launch the skittle music scene with 'Rock Island Line,' while his own band backed numerous legends including some from the world of blues and gospel. Not long ago he came across some old magnetic tapes of some of the legendary blues artists he brought over to England in the '50 and '60s. The result are three volumes, "Chris Barber Presents The Blues Legacy: Lost and Found Series" (MVD Audio).

Volume 1 opens with Barber introducing **Sister Rosetta Tharpe**, the legendary gospel singer and guitarist. When she arrived in England with her arrangements from her days with Lucky Millender's Big Band, Barber and his combo were flustered, but were able to back her on a variety of her classic sacred repertoire including 'Every Time I Feel the Spirit,' 'Didn't It Rain,' 'Up Above My Head I Hear Music In The Air,' and 'Old Time Religion,' with the backing provided by Barber and his band matching the exuberance of her performance, even if the overall sound of the performances occasionally sounds messy and chaotic. 'This Train,' is performed solo with some fine guitar featured and her effectively dramatic vocal. Vocalist Otilie Patterson joins her for one of two renditions of 'Old Time Religion,' and 'When the Saints Go Marching In.' The rest of this volume is devoted to performances by **Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee** who mostly perform without a band and are in typical form for the two, opening with 'Midnight Special,' 'Climbin' on Top of the Hill' (a reworking of 'Sitting on top of the World'), the remarkable harmonica feature 'Fox Chase,' 'How Long How Long Blues,' another harp solo 'Callin' Mama Blues,' and 'Betty and Dupree.' While the repertoire will be familiar, these concert performances are strong ones. Also included is a joyous duo version of 'When the Saints Go Marching In,' followed by 'Little Light of Mine,' on which Barber and band and accompaniment are playing somewhat more restrained here. Chris Barber and Band close with another gospel number with Otilie Patterson taking the front stage.

Volume 2 opens with Chris Barber's contemporary recollections of the 1958 recordings by **Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee** that open this volume. There is a nice duo of 'Poor Man Blues,' while Otilie Patterson takes lead on the vocal backed by Barber and the duo on "When Things Go Wrong," and 'How Long Blues.' Barber provides another spoken introduction to the performances

by **Muddy Waters** with **Otis Spann** presented here, which he noted was an amazing experience. Muddy and Spann were terrific and Barber's band does a credible job in support although the drummer on several tracks is a bit stiff and tad heavy handed. Repertoire played included 'Hootchie Kootchie Man,' 'Blow Wind Blow,' 'Baby Please Don't Call,' 'Long Distance Call,' 'I Can't Be Satisfied,' 'Blues Before Sunrise' (interesting to hear Muddy refer to this as originally made by a friend of his before he died), and 'Walking Through the Park.' Muddy goes solo on 'Rolling Stone,' and revisits 'Feel Like Going Home.' Spann is exceptional here, and the band tries to be unobtrusive in supporting Muddy, who certainly sounds fine. Perhaps not indispensable, but these tracks are a nice addition to Muddy's discography in any event. Next up are fine three tracks by **Champion Jack Dupree** including a nice Christmas blues, a humorous lament about his mother-in-law, and his own very distinctive rendition of Tampa Red's 'When Things Go Wrong.' The disc closes with a 1962 performance by the great **Louis Jordan** with whom Barber's traditional jazz band provides nice support for a nice duet between the saxophonist-vocalist Jordan and Otilie Patterson on 'T'aint Nobody's Business. There is a nice mix of performers and some genuinely good performances on this volume.

Sonny Boy Williamson opens the final volume, **Volume 3**, with some performances from 1964. Barber mentions the great shows presented by Lippman and Rau which led to his performance that opens with 'United Blues/ Help Me' as the band plays the melody before Williamson enters with his harp and launches into the song. Then Barber recalls some of the performances of his including some jazz songs like 'C-Jam Blues,' as well as staples of his repertoire as 'So Sad to Be Lonesome,' his reworking of Robert Lockwood's 'Take a Little Walk With Me,' 'Bye Bye Bird,' 'Your Funeral, My Trial,' and 'Pontiac Blues.' Like Brownie and Sonny, he closes his set with some gospel songs, 'Saints,' and 'This Little Light of Mine,' with Otilie Patterson sharing the vocal. The music does get a bit chaotic but still remains fun with the joyful sound and Sonny Boy's harp blends well with the trad jazz backing. **Jimmy Witherspoon** came over in 1964 and played at a festival Barber helped organize, and Spoon sounds terrific on his first trio of tunes, although the backing remains a bit rough on 'Times Getting Tougher Than Tough,' and 'Roll 'Em Pete.' The backing behind **Howlin' Wolf** with **Hubert Sumlin** seems a bit tighter as Wolf howls through 'Howlin' For My Darling,' 'Dust My Broom,' and 'May I have a Talk With You.' Sumlin sounds really good, if a bit underamplified, while Wolf's vocals are ferocious, and the backing band almost sounds like a urban blues band as opposed to a Dixieland group. Jimmy Witherspoon has five more vocals to close this set, and the backing is a bit more together here as he reprised 'Everyday I Have the Blues,' and 'When I've Been Drinkin'.

There are some very good performances on all three volumes although I give the nod to those on the latter two discs. One would be hard-pressed to call any of these essential but fans of Muddy, Sonny Boy, Wolf and Spoon will especially find performances that may merit their consideration.

Ron Weinstock

ANTONIO CIACCA QUINTET

Rush Life

MOTEMA MUSIC LLC

Featuring his quintet on his first recording since relocating to New York City, pianist Antonio Ciacca delivers a nine-tune mix of six originals and three standards. Together, Ciacca's NYC team featuring Kengo Nakamura (bass), Rodney Green (drums), Stacy Dillard (tenor sax), and Joe Magnarelli (trumpet) delivers a tidy set of swingers and ballads that listeners will find most enjoyable.

Their set launches with Ciacca's original, "Squazin," a frisky number dedicated to Wynton Marsalis. Ciacca's "Chipewha," based on the chords to "Cherokee," begins slowly and builds to a fierce boppish tempo. His other originals—"Flat 5 Flat 9," "Riverdale," "Price of Newark," and the splendid ballad rendering of the title tune are innovative, well-written numbers that highlight the talents of his band mates. Standards given fresh treatments include "I Remember Clifford," "Green Dolphin Street," and "Without A Song," but it's Ciacca's originals that sparkle with imagination brought to life by his stellar sidemen.

Ciacca's performances prove his mastery of the keyboard as well as a passionate sense of expression, which his musicians match in their solos.

Ciacca was born in Germany (March 14, 1969) and raised in Italy where he studied European classical music before switching to jazz at age 20. After performing with some American jazz greats in Bologna, Ciacca came to the USA, briefly settling in Detroit before returning to Italy. Afterwards, he would make annual visits to New York before finally settling there in 2007 and taking on the position of Director of Programming at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

This superb recording demonstrates Ciacca's immersion in the language of jazz, as well as his talents in performing, composing and putting together a first-rate band.

Nancy Ann Lee

JOHN MAYALL

The Masters

EAGLE RECORDS

Live At The Marquee 1969

EAGLE RECORDS

Back in 1969 John Mayall formed a new band after guitarist Mick Taylor left his band to join the Rolling Stones. Mayall enlisted two very well versed musicians for the new project with acoustic guitarist Jon Mark and Johnny Almond, who played tenor and alto saxes, flute and offered some mouth percussion as well. Keeping his bassist, Steve Thompson, and going completely without a drummer, Mayall more or less forged on in an "unplugged" fashion before the term became popular. Their sound blended blues with jazz and rock, and the resulting album, 'The Turning Point' was among my favorite LPs back in my hippie days, with songs such "California," "Thoughts About Roxanne" and one that got quite a bit of airplay, "Room To Move." Although I do not have a copy on CD, I do remember the album, although recorded live, to have very good sound.

These two just-released CDs bring that music back, in different live settings.

The **Masters** is a 2-CD set with the first disc being a collection of live performances at three different venues in England in 1969. For the most, the sound is quite decent, though not as good as the original 'Turning Point' album. The nine songs bring you all the cuts from the original album except that album's opener – "The Law Must Change." But you do get two versions of "I'm Gonna Fight For You JB," recorded at two different locations. The longest cut is the almost 13-minute version of "California," which I believe was also the longest track on the '69 LP.

The second disc is a collection of music segments and interviews with people such as Eric Clapton, Chris Welch, Peter Green and John McVie. This release is subtitled "Music From The Original Film Soundtrack The Turning Point," which was a documentary on Mayall which I have never seen.

Live At The Marquee 1969 is a single disc with the same band playing 6 of the 9 tunes from the 'Turning Point' album, with two versions of "California." This one does include "The Law Must Change." It was recorded live at the Marquee club in London and has some good jams, although the recording quality is not as good as the **Masters** CD above.

Longtime Mayall fans and especially those who enjoyed 'The Turning Point' album should look into these. Don't expect it to have as good a sound as that album though, and between the two here most may want to spend the few extra dollars for the **Masters** 2-disc set due to better sound and more songs. Died-in-the-wool Mayall fans and collectors will need to have both. It is nice to hear these tunes again.

Bill Wahl

CHARLIE PARKER

Charlie Parker & Arne Domnerus in Sweden

OKTAV RECORDS

The availability of some live Swedish performances by Charlie Parker on CD, 'Charlie Parker & Arne Domnerus in Sweden - November 22, 1950, will be welcome.

Parker is heard with a fine Swedish Band that does not sound intimidated playing with him. Trumpeter Rolf Erickson is especially noteworthy with his brash, fat-toned solo on 'Cheers.' Parker is also heard on 'Anthropology,' 'Lover Man,' and a nice arrangement of Cool Blues.' He is in fine form and the band acquits itself well.

Three other tracks feature the same band with a Swedish Parker disciple, Arne Domnerus. Opening with 'Fine and Dandy,' which some will remember as the theme of 'The Bugs Bunny Show.' Domnerus shows quite a bit of Parker's influence although perhaps a little bit of Lester Young's style mixed in as well.

'Out of Nowhere' was a staple of Parker's repertoire and is nicely done by the Swedes here, and I imagine Parker enjoyed hearing these musicians who obviously not only idolized him but also displayed their musical indebtedness to him.

It should be noted that this November 22, 1950 recording from Malmö, Sweden clocks in at under 40 minutes, but that is the only negative one can raise about it.

Ron Weinstock

SOLOMON BURKE

Like A Fire SHOUT FACTORY

The king of rock and soul returns with a star-studded collection that gives his "A" list guests a chance to use his storied voice to propel their tunes.

While the songs bear the lyrical and rhythmic sense of their authors, Burke's voice adds a visceral punch. Clapton's easy, loping, *Like a Fire* and *Thank You* probably wouldn't get much attention on his own discs but get enough extra heat from Burke to pull the listener into the lyrics. On the other hand, Burke's read on the Keb' Mo' penned *We Don't Need It* isn't enough different from the author's own style to elevate it to new heights. That's more a tribute to Keb' Mo's terrific delivery on his own discs than a criticism of Burke's take on the cut.

Elsewhere, Burke tears through Ben Harper's funky *A Minute to Rest and A Second to Pray* and Steve Jordan's soul gem, *Ain't That Something* with a relish that reveals a hunger to dip into classic R & B. Jesse Harris' *What Makes Me Think I Was Right* flirts with Country while the courtship is consummated on *The Fall*, a country style weeper with pedal steel guitar leading Burke through the heartache.

Mark Smith

TIM HAGANS

Alone Together PIROUET RECORDS

Recorded in Pirouet's Munich studio after a 2006 European tour, this seven-tune disc by trumpeter Tim Hagans (b. 1954, Dayton, Ohio) features his quartet with pianist Marc Copland, bassist Drew Gress and drummer Jochen Ruckert (replacing Bill Stewart).

Copland's four compositions provide for edgy, angular improvisations and evoke a distinctive "New York City sound," which is the primary working locale for these musicians. Throughout, Hagans excels in solos, taking his lines in unexpected directions. The reinvented ballad standard, "You Don't Know What Love Is," finds Hagans blowing warm and melancholy with sensitive contributions from his band mates. The title tune gets a slight uptempo, swinging beat, with Hagans playing open. He plays muted trumpet for the gem "Stella By Starlight," while Copland neatly comps and brilliantly solos over Ruckert's soft brushes.

This album opens with energy and finishes calmly, leaving the listener with a pleasant after effect. The selections exhibit the expansive talents of Hagan and his musicians, especially Copland, who is also a solo recording artist.

Nancy Ann Lee

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ALBERT CASTIGLIA

These Are The Days BLUES LEAF RECORDS

Albert Castiglia is a Florida-based guitarist/vocalist who uses the 11 cuts collected here to alternate between early to mid 70's blues rock, straight out Chicago blues, R & B and simmering soul. With a voice that recalls Ronnie Van Zandt of Lynyrd Skynyrd, but is comfortable irrespective of the musical backdrop, Castiglia charges through this diverse collection with an assurance that belies his relative youth.

Joined throughout by Steve Gaskell (bass), Susan Lusher (keyboards) and Bob Amsel (drums), Castiglia applies his craft to both originals and some well known covers. His energetic take on the Ray Charles standard *Night Time is the Right Time* substitutes his searing guitar for a portion of Charles' piano work with Lusher doing the heavy lifting on the break. Adding to the urgency of the number is a trio of guest vocalists who wail in the background like a doo wop version of the Raeletts.

Slowing things down considerably, Castiglia takes on Little Willie John's *Need Your Love So Bad* and Fenton Robinson's *Loan Me a Dime* with the former getting a deep, churchy treatment by virtue of Lusher's organ grooves and the later being saved from being just another cover version by Castiglia's smooth vocals and scorching guitar work. The 70's era rock makes its appearance on the self-penned *Another Bloody Day* and on *He's Got all the Whiskey* with energetic guitar coming straight off a Foghat or later day Deep Purple disc. Castiglia's affinity for the blues shows through most clearly on his homage to Jr. Wells, *Godfather of the Blues* and on the instrumental *Blues for Evan* with each featuring some tasty harmonica/guitar interplay between Castiglia and special guest Ken "Stringbean" Sorensen.

The biggest change ups in the mix are the acoustic *Celebration*, where Castiglia paints a rich story that would fit comfortably alongside any number of Michael Franti's earnest ballads, and the quiet, steamy Bob Dylan penned *Catfish*. While his primary skills are on guitar and vocals, Castiglia also shows some skill with the pen as evidenced by his proclamation on *Bad Year Blues* of the nightmare everyone has lived at one point in their life: "It's been a real long year/only 12 months to go." While too many discs seem to drag on for a year, the wide diversity found here makes this an enjoyable listen.

Mark Smith

WALLY ROSE

Whippin' The Keys DELMARK

The late pianist Wally Rose was an influential pianist who was part of the West Coast traditional jazz revival of the forties and fifties, and also brought classic ragtime back into popularity. He was a member of Lu Watters Yerba Buena Jazz band as well as two groups that evolved from Watters Band, Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band and Turk Murphy's Jazz Band.

Delmark has just issued this marvelous CD, which reissues two LPs from the Blackbird label. This disc is

comprised of a number of classic, if lesser known, rags from the pens of James Scott, Scott Joplin and Joseph Lamb and others. From the stately introduction of the opening title track through the closing 'St. Louis Tickle,' Rose places with grace and charm.

Its refreshing to hear such a lively, but never rushed sounding, set of performances with their lovely melodies and so tasteful rhythmic embellishments. Selections of particular merit include Raymond Bird's 'Blue Goose Rag,' James Scott's 'Ragtime Oriole,' Joseph Lamb's lively 'Cleopatra Rag,' Tom Turpin's 'St. Louis Rag,' Joplin's 'Elite Syncopations,' which evokes some of the music of Jelly Roll Morton, and Barney & Seymore's 'St. Louis Tickle.'

This is a gem that should not get overlooked.

Ron Weinstock

THE MYSTIX

Blue Morning

MYSTIX EYES RECORDS

The Mystix are an East Coast based outfit that combines the funkiness of Little Feat with roots rock, jazz and the blues.

Leading the charge through a cornucopia of musical delights on this disc is vocalist Jo Lily who has a gravelly, yet elastic, voice that is reminiscent of Omar Dykes (Omar & The Howlers). This disc hits high gear right away with the slide guitar drenched *Yolanda* and then wanders comfortably through Country style weepers, *Which Side of Heartache*, J.J. Cale style mid-tempo rockers, *Rattled*, unhurried, jazzy tales of heartache, *Without You*, big Springsteen/ Seger style story pieces, *Blue Morning*, tough, sinewy, funky rock, *New Orleans* and the slinky, mysterious, *Another Kind of Love*.

The cover of Jimmy Reed's *I'm a Love You* adds nothing to that oft covered number but the next number, *Change in Jane*, quickly redeems things with piano and a fluid guitar solo creating a cut that could have fallen off a Cat Stevens disc

Mark Smith

ESPERANZA SPAULDING

Esperanza

Heads Up

I have been noticing more and more extremely talented and very strong young female bass players on the scene recently. One was the Australian electric bassist Tal Wilkenfeld, playing with Jeff Beck, who floored everyone at the Crossroads Music Festival. Another was upright bassist Jennifer Vincent, who was with the Latin jazz group La Familia Sextet, led by drummer Willie Martinez, who I caught at the Bonaire Jazz Festival (watch for the review next issue.) And there have been many more. And here comes another, acoustic bassist and vocalist Esperanza Spaulding. The young Oregon native finished high school early and went on to graduate from Berklee College of Music. She has worked or recorded with such notable musicians as Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Joe Lovano and Patti Austin.

This is actually her second album, the first, titled 'Junjo,' was released by the Spanish label Ayva Music in 2006. The album opens with a sweet version of Milton Nascimento's

"Ponta De Areia," which many may remember from Wayne Shorter's 1974 'Native Dancer' album. Spaulding wrote 9 of the 12 songs on the disc and proves she is a very fine composer as well bassist and vocalist. Her rather angelic vocals are delivered in three different languages, English, Portuguese and Spanish and the entire album has a sound blending acoustic jazz with Latin and world music. She does one jazz standard, 'Body and Soul,' which she sings in Spanish and she and the band play in 5/4 time. In this case it is a trio with Spaulding joined by pianist Leo Gendovese and drummer Otis Brown. She has picked some fine musicians, and some of the songs feature guests such as alto saxophonist Donald Harrison and percussionist Jamey Haddad; but Genovese, who was born in Argentina, is heard on most of the tracks and is an outstanding pianist. The closer is an airy rendition of Baden Powell's "Samba Em Preludio," and features Spaulding in a duo with flamenco guitarist Nino Josele.

You may have seen Spaulding perform live on one of the late night shows, (I believe it was Jimmy Kimmel Live) playing and singing one of her originals from the disc, "I Know You Know." If so, you know she is not about studio magic, but sings while playing the bass very well...and makes it look quite easy at that. If you enjoy jazz in a Latin/world music direction, she is definitely one to check out.

Bill Wahl

CHELSEA PALERMO

All About Love

A Major Record Company

Vocalist Chelsea Palermo makes an impressive debut on her own label with this recording of American Songbook tunes backed by a first-rate team.

Accompanied by pianist Vance Villastrigo, bassist Melissa Slocum, drummer Andy Watson and enhanced by Andy Farber (tenor sax), James Chirillo (guitar) and Luisito Quintero (percussion on a Latinate "Love For Sale"), Palermo delivers 12 gems. Among the best is Palermo's sweet interpretation of the Ray Charles classic "If I Give You My Love" with the quartet spotlighting Farber in sensitive fills and a lush solo. On the uptempo "Lemon Drop" (based on the chord changes to "I've Got Rhythm"), she trades Ella-like scatting solos with Villastrigo and fine solos from Chirillo, Farber and special guest Warren Vache (cornet) make this track an album highlight. She also delivers a lovely rendition (sung in French) of "La Vie En Rose" with intimate backing from Chirillo and Vache; a speedball, bouncing "Mean to Me," an uptempo, Latinate "My Funny Valentine" and more.

Palermo showed enough talent at age 12 to encourage her parents to move from Bergen County to Red Bank in order to enroll her in the Red Bank Regional High School Visual and Performing Arts Academy. Later training included a stint at New Jersey Performing Arts Center's Jazz for Teens program and membership in New Jersey Honors Jazz Choir and All-State Opera Company. She currently studies with Gwen Moten who has trained popular singers. Listeners will hear her devotion to Ella Fitzgerald.

There are moments when 22-year old Palermo sounds a bit shrill, but overall she remains in her comfortable vocal range, whether swinging with verve or expressively

delivering a ballad. The diverse chosen material (skillfully arranged by Joe Muccioli), expert accompaniment from topnotch pros, and Palermo's perfect phrasing, dramatic expression and sense of swing, put her at the top of the list of talented young singers deserving of wider notice. I'm anxiously awaiting her follow up album—hopefully with the same musicians.

Nancy Ann Lee

DVDs

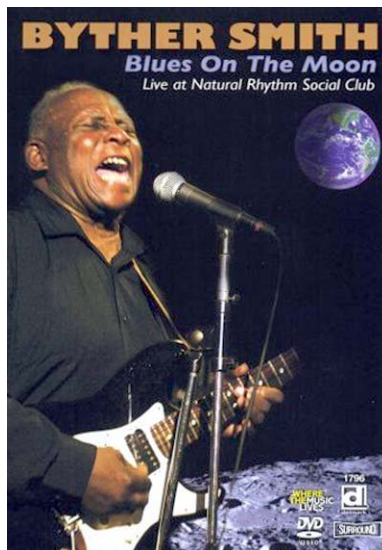
BYTHER SMITH

Blues on the Moon:

Live at the Natural Rhythm Social Club

DELMARK CD OR DVD

Chicago blues guitarist-vocalist Byther Smith has not had an easy life, but he certainly has overcome a lot and produced plenty of solid West Side Chicago blues. This writer first became aware of him from some tough 45-rpm singles, including a strong, insistent rendition of Detroit Junior's 'Money Tree.' He had albums for small labels like Grits and Razor, and the latter was picked up by Bullseye Blues, with whom he also recorded a new disc. In more recent years he has recorded for Delmark and the European Black and Tan and his music has remained pretty constant. Impassioned vocals, stinging, driving guitar and tight bands that kick the groove along. Delmark's latest live recording is Smith's "Blues on the



Moon: Live at the Natural Rhythm Social Club." It is available on CD and DVD, with the DVD including one track not on the CD. Over an hour of straight blues with no filler.

Smith's propulsive attack and soulful vocals are ably supported by the band of Anthony Palmer, guitar; Daryl Coutts, keyboards; Greg McDaniel, bass; and James Carter on drums. Coutts' piano is especially noteworthy, backing Smith who

tackles a variety of material including the driving title track, 'Your Mama's Crazy,' inspired by 'Mama Talk To Your Daughter' by his cousin, J.B. Lenoir, with a different lyrical cast and some stinging guitar instead of Lenoir's boogie riffing. Smith's staccato single note playing has a drive to it and enhances his pleading vocals. And he has a few distinctive riffs that enliven his rendition of the well-worn 'Rock Me Baby.' A highlight is the autobiographical 'Monticello,' set to the melody of Let's Straighten It Out., and the performance closes with an marvelous original recasting "Don't Start Me Talkin'."

The sound on the recording is excellent and the DVD

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Photo © Robyn Churchill

continues Delmark's straight-forward approach in its video production. Focus is on Byther and musicians with some crowd shots added, but not to any distraction. The performances, and Byther's intense focus in his performances commands our attention. As a bonus, there is a fascinating interview and commentary by Steve Wagner and Byther Smith discussing his career and the performances, along with Wagner discussing the actual production of the CD/DVD.

It is another excellent addition to Delmark's CD/DVD pairs and I would be hard-pressed to name another blues label that is producing such new live blues CDs with such a high level of artists that frankly should be documented. Jimmy Johnson next please, Delmark. **Ron Weinstock**

ZZ TOP Live From Texas EAGLE VISION DVD

ZZ Top is one of many bands that have recruited people to the blues over the years. Their brand of rock mixed with blues has been reaching a lot of people since their beginnings in the '70s with songs such as the boogie "La Grange" and others. The band's popularity increased during the '80s with their songs of that era such as "Sharp Dressed Man" and "Cheap Sunglasses."

The Texas trio with the long-bearded frontmen were filmed in their home state, presumably in 2007 (I can't

find the date of the show in the booklet) with great sound, clean video (often with a blue wash) and in front of a crowd of people who were not afraid to sing along here and there. Guitarist Billy Gibbons and bassist Dusty Hill do their thing with little movement onstage, backed by drummer Frank Beard (interestingly, the only one in the band without a beard). They have been together for almost 40 years – that's right, the same three guys.

This close to 2-hour straight concert video (except for the disc's extras, it is all music without annoying spoken interruptions or interview clips) will be a real treat for their fans, as well as those who were big fans years ago and moved on to straight blues. They deliver 17 songs spanning their career and play some pretty cool looking guitars as well, such as the fur guitars on "Legs." The two-hour concert comes to a close with "Tush."

The bonus features include the three reminiscing about the history of the band while playing a game of poker, behind the scene clips on the day of the show and a photo shoot. Also included is the band playing their version of Jimi Hendrix' "Foxy Lady."

This may also be a good item to give a kid to give him or her an introduction to blues that they can relate to...via rock. And they are fun to watch! **Michael Braxton**

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