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Pharoah Sanders at Portland Jazz Festival



jazz & blues report

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On The Cover

Pharoah Sanders



Photo: Quentin LeBoucher

CD Reviews Begin on Page 9

Pharoah Sanders, Mingus Big Band, Dave Holland To Headline 2010 Portland Jazz Festival February 22-28

PORTLAND, Oregon – The 2010 *Alaska Airlines/Horizon Air Portland Jazz Festival presented by US Bank* will be held February 22-28 with jazz outreach programming in area schools and community centers on Monday through Friday, February 22-26, leading up to a series of headline concerts Thursday through Sunday, February 25-28 throughout downtown and inner Eastside Portland venues.†

Lauded as one of the top North American jazz events, the 7th annual Portland Jazz Festival features jazz masters and emerging new artists including 3-time Grammy Award-winning bassist, bandleader and composer Dave Holland Quintet, legendary saxophonist and John Coltrane collaborator Pharoah Sanders, the Mingus Big Band devoted since 1993 to the musical legacy of Charles Mingus, Brazilian vocalist Luciana Souza, and contemporary trumpeter Dave Douglas Brass Ecstasy.

Additionally, Portland Jazz Festival's annual thematic programming asks the provocative question *Is Jazz Dead (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)? - New Music from Norway*, featuring North American premieres of leaders in Norway's new and burgeoning jazz scene. This "festival-within-a-festival" includes the avant-garde chamber jazz of the Christian Wallumrod Ensemble, the saxophone/ accordion duo of Trygve Seim & Frode Haltli, and the jazz/rock fusion of In The Country featuring Morten Qvenild (keyboards), Roger Arntzen (bass) and Pal Hausken (percussion).

Complete headline concert schedule:

- Thursday, February 25, 7:30pm, Hilton Pavilion Ballroom, Luciana Souza
- Friday, February 26, 7:30pm, Newmark Theater, Mingus Big Band
- Friday, February 26, 9:30 pm, Norse Hall, In The Country
- Saturday, February 27, 3:00pm, Norse Hall, Trygve Seim & Frode Haltli
- Saturday, February 27, 7:30pm, Newmark Theater, Dave Holland Quintet
- Saturday, February 27, 9:30 pm, Norse Hall, Christian Wallumrod Ensemble
- Sunday, February 28, 3:00pm, Newmark Theater, Pharoah Sanders

The Story behind the Theme...

This year's festival theme, *Is Jazz Dead (Or Has It Moved to a New Address)?*, shares the title of British jazz writer Stuart Nicholson's critically acclaimed book on the contemporary state of jazz. Nicholson confronts traditional jazz musicians and audiences who insist on narrowly defining what jazz should be, while maintaining the importance of this music as being indigenously American. Nicholson claims that such rigidly defined art alienates younger audiences from jazz, and points to the exploding scene in Europe, specifically Norway, that has developed both a new culture and audience for jazz.

The inspiration for artistic director Bill Royston's selection of these three Norwegian groups stems from his direct exposure to Norway's jazz scene while traveling as part of an international delegation invited by the Norwegian government in 2008 to experience the major Scandinavian summer festivals.†

"I found a rich and vibrant scene, featuring unconventional performers re-interpreting the American musical legacy and building a whole new jazz lexicon. I'm thrilled to share this discovery with our Jazz Festival audience," says Royston. "The featured American jazz artists are intended as a counterpoint to the work of these exciting Norwegian musicians."

Each of the Norwegian artists represents the vast diversity of Nordic music that has risen from an improvisational gumbo derived from jazz, classical, rock, folk, and even country music styles - pianist Christian Wallumrod, classically trained, performs haunting improvisations in a chamber music setting with an ensemble of cello, violin, Baroque harp, trumpet, percussion and piano; Trygve Seim, who performed with his large ensemble at the 2007 Portland Jazz Festival, has an impressive ability to combine unusual instrumentation like the

present saxophone and accordion duo with Frode Haltli; the trio of In The Country comes from a more pop music base that blends jazz improvisation with driving rock rhythms and electronic experimentation. The diverse artists and their music hold a common bond that writer Nicholson refers to as the "Nordic Tone", recognized by deep elongated notes at the center driven by pulsating rhythms and adventurous improvisations around the edge.

"Mingus and Coltrane always superseded traditional forms to create their own sound. They were above the fray, and the Mingus Big Band and Pharoah Sanders continue this legacy. Contemporary innovators like Dave Douglas, Luciana Souza and Dave Holland constantly strive to go beyond the limits of traditional jazz," states Royston. "Similarly, the Norwegian artists have carefully studied American jazz, and developed a distinctive sound. They are the new visionaries, and this festival will affirm for Americans that a new jazz is very much alive!"

Jazz Education and Outreach...

Jazz education and outreach events include performances of *The Incredible Journey of Jazz*, a Black History Month celebration staged in Portland area middle schools each February. The 60-minute musical/theater piece was originally developed by Portland State University professor and pianist Darrell Grant and the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute. The performance features seven actors and musicians who each play multiple roles in depicting the experiences of African-Americans through the history of jazz. Early scenes have students communicating through African rhythms, and then follow the evolution from gospel, blues, ragtime, Dixieland and New Orleans. Eventually, we witness the migration of Black Americans up the Mississippi River to Chicago and other industrial centers with the big band sounds of Ellington and Basie, to the bebop of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, contemporary experimentation of Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman, and ultimately to rap and hip hop.

Another key outreach component is the popular *Jazz Conversations*, one-on-one interviews with jazz headliners and members of the Jazz Journalists Association (JJA). These interviews are presented before a live audience in the intimate PCPA ArtBar throughout the festival. The sessions are recorded by KMHD-FM, Portland's jazz radio station, for later broadcast and subsequently are available on the Portland Jazz Festival website, pdxjazz.com, for general listeners.

PDX Jazz Members have the advantage of reserving the best seats during the exclusive pre-sale period through October 26. New and renewing members can join any time.

Starting Tuesday, October 27 at 10:00 AM PST Portland Jazz Festival tickets will be available to the general public at all TicketMaster locations, by calling 503-228-JAZZ (5299), or online at pdxjazz.com. Those who sign up for the PDX Jazz mailing list will receive the first notification when tickets go on sale to the public.

Founded in 2003, PDX Jazz, Portland's jazz membership organization, presents both regional and international jazz artists throughout the year. Dedicated to nurturing jazz musicians and audiences, PDX Jazz is best known for its critically acclaimed Portland Jazz Festival. PDX Jazz also presents nearly 200 performances annually showcasing Portland jazz artists with the ongoing series *PDX Jazz @*

RiverPlace (RiverPlace Hotel) and *PDX Jazz @ the ArtBar* (Portland Center for the Performing Arts), as well as the annual *PDX Jazz @ RiverFest* each August along Portland's South Waterfront. The PDX Jazz office is located at 133 SW 2nd Ave in Portland. For more information visit www.pdxjazz.com or call 503-338-5299.

Barcelona International Jazz Festival

BARCELONA, Spain – The 41st Voll-Damm Barcelona International Jazz Festival, featuring over 60 concerts at 13 venues, set for October 18-December 6, is pleased to announce its 2009 lineup including headline performances by Wayne Shorter Quartet, Chick Corea & Gary Burton, Joe Lovano Nonet, Béla Fleck & The Flecktones, Brad Mehldau Trio, Bill Evans Soulgrass Band, The Blind Boys of Alabama, Allen Toussaint, and Cassandra Wilson.

"Barcelona is definitely one of the places around the world where jazz lives today" opined Joan Anton Cararach, artistic director of the

Voll-Damm Barcelona International Jazz Festival, during a recent interview session with Larry Blumenfeld for *Jazziz*. With over 60 concerts and lectures scheduled over a month-and-a-half, including newly commissioned works and a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue*, it is easily discerned that Cararach speaks the truth - jazz lives in Barcelona and is reaching new and existing audiences alike.

The festival opens with a performance by Big Band de l'Esmuc in tribute to 70 years of Blue Note Records. Among the heavyweight champions of jazz headlining the festival are the best and brightest contemporary performers, including Aaron Parks Trio, Magos Herrera, and Maria Schneider (appearing in her own sets with Big Band de l'Esmuc). Of special interest is the festival's *Finestres* series - *Windows* into new deviations of modern music that do not always conform to traditional definitions of jazz. Among the performers in this series are Norwegian indie folk-pop duo, Kings of Convenience, Brazilian electro-samba chanteuse CeU, post-rock Chicagoans Tortoise, and Israeli pop superstar Noa.

This year's festival also includes a dedication to Miles Davis and the 50th anniversary of *Kind of Blue* featuring commissioned works from Omar Sosa with Jerry Gonzalez (performing their "Afro-Cuban side of Kind of Blue"), and Chano Dominguez Flamenco Quintet performing *El duende de 'Kind of Blue'*, (while there is no English translation for *el duende*, it is best described as the unique groove-like sensation of Flamenco music). Marcus Miller, with *Tutu Revisited* Featuring Christian Scott, will be also at the Palau de la Musica celebrating the music of Miles Davis. The premier performance of these dedications is *Kind of Blue @ 50* - Jimmy Cobb's So What Band (Cobb was the drummer on the original Davis recording).

The Voll-Damm Barcelona International Jazz Festival not only connects with fans on stage, but at the podium as well. Guest speakers for this year's lecture series include Blue Note Records President Bruce Lundvall, jazz author and former Boston Globe columnist Bob Blumenthal, the New Yorker's Alex Ross, Michael Jackson biographer J.

Randy Taraborrelli, director of Programming at Jazz at Lincoln Center Antonio Ciacca, producer and Sunnyside Records founder Francois Zalacain, and Billboard/Downbeat columnist Dan Ouellette who will administer his famous "Blindfold Test" live on Chano Dominguez. A featured panel titled "Jazz is Dead? Long Live Jazz!" will take place on November 6, featuring some of the aforementioned speakers alongside industry colleagues. Past guests on the lecture series have included authors Ashley Kahn, Ben Ratliff, Bill Milkowski, Nate Chinen and All About Jazz.com founder Michael Ricci, among others.

For the first time, the Voll-Damm Barcelona International Jazz Festival crosses the Atlantic to New York's Jazz Standard, where Chano Dominguez Flamenco Quintet reprises their *El duende de 'Kind of Blue'* commission. This celebratory 4-night stand from December 3-6 will also mark the occasion of the English version of the festival's book, which chronicles its 40+ year history, including articles penned by Newport Jazz Festival founder George Wein, among others.

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the festival in 2008, the festival initiated its Gold Medal Award. The first recipient was Bebo Valdes. This year's recipient will be Wayne Shorter in honor of the outstanding impact that he has had in jazz history, and still has with his quartet today. Shorter first played the Barcelona festival during the second edition of the festival in 1967. Miles Davis was slated to play with his quintet but left the city before the concert, leaving Ron Carter, Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams to play as the Wayne Shorter Quartet. The award will be presented immediately preceding Shorter's performance.

Spain saw its first professional jazz festival in 1966. It started with a concert at the amazing Palau de la Musica in Barcelona, featuring pianist Dave Brubeck with his classical quartet. Despite surviving the hostile times of the Franco dictatorship, the festival ceased operations between the years of 1977 and 1980, which were surprisingly in the first years of democracy. Since the late '80s, the festival has been organized by

The Project, event organizers whose projects reach upwards of 500,000 people annually. In 2009, the festival celebrates its 41st anniversary with a diverse program that, once again, places it among the pre-eminent fall European jazz festivals.

For more information, visit the festival's website at www.barcelonajazzfestival.com.

Alan Lomax Haiti recordings – ACE Repatriation Project Selected by Clinton Global Initiative

ACE's Haiti Repatriation and Cultural Preservation Project was selected as an outstanding project of the Clinton Global initiative in Haiti, sponsored by the Green Family Foundation, a humanitarian agency based in Miami and operating in Haiti, and a partner of the CGI. The Haiti project is part of ACE's ongoing program of repatriation and dissemination in the Caribbean.

The project brings to light the recordings Alan Lomax made in Haiti for The Library of Congress in 1936-37. Over the last ten years ACE, in collaboration with the Magic Shop

in New York City and staff at the American Folklife Center, has had the recordings digitally transferred, restored, and denoised in order to return them to the Haitian people.

Harte Recordings of San Francisco is publishing a box set of ten CDs with sound and video drawn from the collection, with extensive song notes and lyrics by Haitian music specialists, Gage Averill and Louis Carl St. Jean. It will include a book, compiled by Ellen Harold, of Lomax's fascinating Haitian diaries and his correspondence with his friend, Zora Neale Hurston; anthropologist, Melville Herskovits; and his mentor, Charles Seeger, as well as with the Library of Congress. Produced by Anna Wood, Jeffrey Greenberg, and David Katznelson, Alan Lomax in Haiti will be released in October/November 2009. To learn more visit thehaitibox.blogspot.com and www.culturalequity.com.

Together with Kimberly Green and advisors from the Open Society Institute, we are exploring options for appropriate recipient institutions for the full collection. ACE's major concern is that the materials will be widely accessible to the public, to educational institutions, and other outlets, and we have outlined a possible program of dissemination and cultural feedback based on models in public folklore. We expect a formal repatriation ceremony to take place in Haiti next spring.

Over the next few months, we will have the entire collection mastered before it is repatriated, and Gage Averill and his students will compile a digital catalog of the recordings. In its original form, the collection comprised 1,500 aluminum discs-over fifty hours-of recorded folk and popular music. It includes 350 ft. of 8mm film of music, dance, and ritual and over 250 pages of Alan Lomax's diaries, notes, and correspondence about his fieldwork in Haiti.

Copies of the restored collection will be also be "repatriated" to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and deposited at the Schomburg Center for Research Center in Black Culture.

Other key partners in this initiative include Harte Recordings, the Rock Foundation, the Concordia Foundation, the Lake Ray Foundation, and Beldock Levine & Hoffman LLP.

Sony Music's ICON Collectibles

ICON Collectibles brings rare images of music's most iconic artists to the world as fine art photographs. In addition, ICON Collectibles offers a variety of other products and one of a kind memorabilia.

CON Collectibles sells a product line created from Sony Music Entertainment's vast archive of never-before-seen artist images and album cover artwork:

Limited & Open Edition Fine Art Photographs – includes iconic artists such as Miles Davis, Tony Bennett, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Jaco Pastorius and Benny Goodman. With more iconic images to come!

Using only the highest quality archival inks and paper, these exceptional museum-quality photographs are available in a variety of sizes, with or without a black wood archival frame. And best of all, most of these prized images will be offered as Limited Editions, numbered and signed by the photographer.

Canvas Album Art Covers – A series featuring some of the most recognizable covers in the world from your favorite artists – Miles Davis and Billie Holiday, . With more iconic album art images to come!

Gold Record Series – A collection from some ICONIC artists features some of the most influential and biggest selling records in the history of recorded music. – Billie Holiday, Nina Simone, Thelonious Monk, with more iconic images to come!

Limited Edition Fine Art Print Collection – Ten Limited Edition Silver Gelatin Miles Davis Fine Art Prints

The Genius of Miles Davis. The Columbia Years Fine Art Print Box Set is a unique and celebratory event chronicling one of the 20th century's most profoundly influential musicians. These fine art prints have been meticulously hand selected and represent a unique piece of musical history.

Features:

- Special Leather Bound Clam Shell Box with Brass Mounted Medallion and fully lined Blue Velvet Interior
- Ten 11" x 14" Museum Quality Silver Gelatin Fine Art Prints
- Each print is printed from its original negative and is individually presented in a white archival matte
- Includes Certificate of Authenticity and embossed by ICON Collectibles
- This special series is a Limited Edition of 25 and each print is hand signed by the photographer and numbered.

Limited Edition Music Box Sets

"Lady Day: The Complete Billie Holiday on Columbia (1933-1944)"

"The Miles Davis and Gil Evans: Complete Columbia Studio Recordings"

"Miles Davis - Kind of Blue Deluxe 50th Anniversary Collector's Edition (Vinyl)"

For more...visit icon-collectibles.com

Riviera Maya Jazz Festival Delivers Sweet Tunes & Free Nights at Royal Hideaway Playacar this November

RIVIERA MAYA, Mexico – The seventh annual Riviera Maya Jazz Festival returns to Mamita's Beach November 25-28, and music lovers, foodies, and pampered travelers alike can take advantage of a fourth night free at the award-winning Royal Hideaway Playacar during the event. The festival features four nights of complimentary musical performances by a variety of local and international acts including Al Jarreau, Sergio Mendes, and, on opening night, Royal Hideaway Playacar's managing director Jean Agarrista with his ensemble, *The Royal Band*.

Attentive villa concierges can arrange for transportation to and from the musical festivities each night, in addition to providing area information, booking excursions, dinner reservations, spa treatments and more. Festival-goers will enjoy posh accommodations at the all-inclusive Royal Hideaway Playacar, and gourmet meals at six a la carte restaurants. In addition, the hotel features a piano lounge, high tea with live music each afternoon, a full service spa,

and an unparalleled level of service, which made this the first all-inclusive resort to earn the AAA Five-Diamond Award, from check-in to check-out.

The Royal Band, which opens the festival on Wednesday night, November 25, was started by Agarrista and Rose Elena Valdez in 2005. In 2009, while preparing to record their first album, the band added a tenor sax, trombone and trumpet to the mix, creating a unique Latin sound that resembles the smooth jazz of the 1980s.

Agarrista has also been known to perform impromptu at the resort, so guests may see him, or hear the jazzy sounds of his saxophone, during their stay. "The Riviera Maya Jazz Festival is a fantastic showcase of music under the stars on one of Mexico's most beautiful beaches," said Agarrista. "I'm thrilled to be part of the festival's opening night with *The Royal Band*, and always enjoy playing at the hotel – especially when we have such a large number of jazz fans in town!"

The seventh annual Riviera Maya Jazz Festival takes place nightly Wednesday, November 25 through Sunday, November 28 on Mamita's Beach, in the heart of Mexico's Riviera Maya region. The event combines a variety of musical styles and backgrounds, and features musical acts including Al Jarreau, Jim Beard, Sergio Mendes, Spyro Gyra, Aguamala, and more. For more information, visit www.rivieramayajazzfestival.com.

For those who can't make the event, the fourth night free offer is available through December 24, 2009. For reservations at Royal Hideaway Playacar, call 1-800-999-9182 or visit www.royalhideaway.com.

Royal Hideaway Playacar vacations start from \$300 per person (based on availability and dates), per night, based on double occupancy and includes unlimited meals and snacks, with six a la carte specialty restaurants and 24-hour room service, unlimited drinks featuring premium alcoholic beverages, a selection of house wines, juices and soft drinks, daily resort activities, evening entertainment, DVD library, non-motorized water sports, and all taxes and gratuities.

Royal Hideaway Playacar opened in Playa del Carmen, on one of Mexico's most stunning stretches of beachfront, in 1998. 10 years later the award-winning property boasts a 36 percent repeat guest rate and an attentive staff of more than 400 (meaning 2.2 staff to every guest room!), under the leadership of Managing Director Jean Agarrista. Located just 45 minutes south of the Cancun International Airport, the resort effortlessly blends world-class service with impeccable style. It is the first adults-only (13 and older), all-inclusive resort to receive the American Automobile Association (AAA) Five-Diamond Award and recent recognition on Conde Nast Traveler's 2009 Gold List, in the magazine's January issue, joins extensive accolades from industry leaders. Accommodations at the Royal Hideaway Playacar are in two-story colonial Mexican-style villas, each with a private concierge, housing 200 guestrooms including six duplex suites, 170 luxury rooms, 22 Royal View rooms and two Presidential Suites with private Jacuzzis.

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BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

New Release blues...Ah, behold the colors of the fall including everyone's favorite: blue! Here's a few new releases to keep that color tour hopping: **Samuel James-** *for Rosa, Maeve and Noreen*; **Deb Callahan-Grace & Grit**; **Dave Riley & Bob Corritore-** *Lucky to be Living*; **Gov't Mule-** *By a Thread*; **Chris Smither-** *Time Stands Still*; **Al Basile-** *Soul Blue*; **George Thorogood & the Destroyers-** *The Dirty Dozen*; **Big Chief Boudreaux featuring Reverend Goat Carson-** *Rising Sun*; **Johnny Rawls-** *Ace of Spades*; **Tamara & Lucky Peterson-** *Darling Forever*; **Charlie Musselwhite-** *Rough Dried: Live at the Triple Door*; **Corey Harris-** *blu.black*; **The Dynamites featuring Charles Walker-** *Burn it Down*; **Paul Lamb and Johnny Dickinson-** *Playin' With the Blues*; **Marc Benno-** *I Got it Bad!*; **Ben Prestage-** *Live at Pineapple Willy's*; **Jack Bruce & Robin Trower-** *Seven Moons Live*; **Mike Zito-** *Pearl River*; **Jeff Healey-** *Songs from the Road*; **Geoff Muldaur-** *Texas Sheiks*; **Rory Gallagher-** *Crest of a Wave: The Best of Rory Gallagher*; **Various Artists-** *The Roots of Led Zeppelin*; **Bryan Sutton-** *Almost Live*; **Roomful of Blues-** *Jump Blues Classics: Essential Recordings*; **Tommy McCoy-** *Live Blues in Britain*; **Tinsley Ellis-** *Speak No Evil*; **Dani Wilde-** *Heal My Blues*; **Roy Buchanan-** *Live: Amazing Grace*; **Phil Guy-** *It's a Real Mutha*; **Bob Brozman-** *A Truckload of Blues*; **Maria Muldaur-** *Garden of Joy*; **Seasick Steve-** *Dog House Music*; **Shaun Murphy-** *Livin' The Blues*. That's it for this month. See ya!

ECM at 40 Accolades for both Classical and Jazz

LONDON, England – On October 2, ECM's founder and producer Manfred Eicher accepted The Classic FM Gramophone Award 2009 at a presentation ceremony in London.

Writing in the special Awards Issue of Gramophone, editor James Jolly says, "In an age of increasing standardisation, it's good to salute genuine individuality. Each year we pay tribute to a record label that demonstrates a winning blend of creativity, imagination, business acumen, style – all adding up to that word again: individuality. This year we turn the spotlight on a label that has been ploughing its particular furrow with notable success for 40 years, ECM, and more particularly for "classical music" fans, its New Series... While many companies shy away from contemporary music, Manfred Eicher seeks it out – and again it's a tribute to his taste and extraordinary judgement that many of the

composers he's championed have gone on to become familiar names: Arvo Part, Giya Kancheli, Valentin Silvestrov and Erkki-Sven Tüür, to name just four. And ECM, once it has found a musician to champion, does it properly, not merely with a single disc but often exploring different genres of that musician's art. And of course that is one incentive to stay with the label and follow the lead it so obviously offers. Add to the provocative A&R, first-class musicianship, invariably demonstration-worthy recording quality and the label's trademark design – usually black and white, always slipcased, and adorned not with a going-through-the-motions programme note but something altogether more challenging – and you have all the ingredients that have convinced us that this, of all years, belongs to Manfred Eicher and his wonderful ECM label."

On this side of the Atlantic, in the 2009 DownBeat's Annual Critics Poll ECM was voted Label of the Year and founder Manfred Eicher Producer of the Year for the second consecutive year.

Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival Revives DC Area Tradition

For years Jazz was prominent in the Washington DC area during the middle of February. The East Coast Jazz Festival became an important event in the DC area musical calendar. With the passing of Ronnie Wells, The East Coast Jazz Festival's founder, the festival, which benefited jazz education, unfortunately ended. Now friends of the late jazz diva are reigniting the tradition with the First Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. The festival will take place the weekend of February 19-21, 2010, at the Hilton Executive Meeting Center in Rockville, MD (formerly the Doubletree Hotel), for three days of good vibes, great socializing, and opportunities to hear the music.

The Mid Atlantic Jazz Festival will be the flavor and style of that ECJF, and in honor of ECJF founder Ronnie Wells. It will share the strong commitment to jazz education and the exceptional artistry of DC metro region musicians and build upon the legacy of ECJF in presenting jazz to the region by perpetuating, nurturing and sustaining the jazz art form, engaging and teaching young musicians, and presenting top flight musicians.

There will be 8 programs over the course of the weekend and performers including the Jazz Academy Orchestra, The Paul Carr Quintet (with Terrell Stafford, Mulgrew Miller, Michael Bowie, and Lewis Nash); a tribute to Ronnie Wells with Janine Carter, Bonnie Harris, Felicia Carter, and Delores King-Williams; The Andersen Twins; a saxophone summit with Bobby Watson, Bruce Williams, and Fred Foss; jazz video screenings by Bret Primack; and more.

The Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival is presented by the Jazz Academy of Music. For more information check out the Festival website, <http://www.midatlanticjazzfestival.org/>.

Ron Weinstock

jazz-blues.com

Turner Classic Movies to Celebrate Legendary Singer-Songwriter Johnny Mercer

In-Depth, Music-Filled Portrait of Mercer to Premiere in November, Commemorating 100th Anniversary of His Birth

"Hooray for Hollywood"; "Jeepers Creepers"; "That Old Black Magic"; "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe"; "Skylark"; "Blues in the Night"; "Moon River"; "The Days of Wine and Roses." Some of the most beloved songs of the 20th century came from the pen of a gap-toothed, Georgia-born lyricist, singer and composer named Johnny Mercer, whose solo and collaborative efforts have kept the world singing for more than eight decades.

This November, commemorating the 100th anniversary of his birth, Turner Classic Movies (TCM) will celebrate the extraordinary music of this legendary personality with **JOHNNY MERCER: THE DREAM'S ON ME**, executive-produced by Oscar-winning filmmaker Clint Eastwood. The 100-minute special, which premieres Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 8 p.m. (ET), features countless performances of Mercer's work and an abundance of new and archival interviews detailing his life and career. Produced by Rhapsody Productions in association with TCM, Arena/BBC and Warner Home Video and commissioned by the Johnny Mercer Foundation, the special is produced and directed by Bruce Ricker (*Tony Bennett: The Music Never Ends*).

TCM will complement the premiere of **JOHNNY MERCER: THE DREAM'S ON ME** with presentations of several classic films on which he worked every Wednesday night in November. Titles include *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954), *Blues in the Night* (1941), *Hollywood Hotel* (1937), *The Harvey Girls* (1946), *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *The Days of Wine and Roses* (1962), *The Americanization of Emily* (1964), *Li'l Abner* (1959) and *The Belle of New York* (1952). On Nov. 18, the anniversary of Mercer's birth, TCM will devote the entire day's schedule to his work.

JOHNNY MERCER: THE DREAM'S ON ME opens with Eastwood and award-winning film composer John Williams sitting at a piano reminiscing about what makes Mercer's songs so memorable. That touchstone begins a loving portrait of the immensely talented songwriter, told by the many collaborators and performers who have helped bring his songs to life. New and archival interviews join with memorable clips of Mercer's songs by such legendary performers as Ella Fitzgerald, Pearl Bailey, Fred Astaire, Andy Williams, Duke Ellington, Dinah Shore, Barbra Streisand, Rosemary Clooney, Lena Horne, Tony Bennett, Nat King Cole, Audrey Hepburn and the Mills Brothers. In addition, new renditions of Mercer's work are created by singers Audra McDonald (with Williams accompanying on piano), Dr. John, Michael Feinstein, Maude Maggart, Jamie Cullum and Morgan Eastwood.

Among the many interviewees included in the special are singers Julie Andrews, Tony Bennett, Margaret Whiting and Dame Cleo Laine; songwriters Alan Bergman, Rod McKuen and Gene Lees; composers Richard Sherman and

Johnny Mandel; filmmaker Blake Edwards; *New York Times* critic Stephen Holden; playwright Ronald Harwood; historians Robert Kimball, Mark Heimback-Nielsen and Miles Krueger; musicologist Jonathan Schwartz; Ginny Mancini, widow of composer Henry Mancini; Broadway producer Joe Harris; Mercer's daughter, Mandy Mercer; and niece Nancy Gerard. Archival interviews include Bing Crosby, Jack Lemmon, Henry Mancini, Harold Arlen (interviewed by Walter Cronkite) and Mercer's wife, Ginger.

The special also features rare interviews and performances by Mercer himself, including television appearances on *The Merv Griffin Show* and the BBC's *Parkinson*.

Admired and praised by the likes of Irving Berlin and Cole Porter, Johnny Mercer has been described as one of this country's greatest folk poets. Born and raised in Savannah, Ga., he grew up surrounded by the beauty of marshes, rivers and seacoast, and his lyrics often reflect the imagery of the natural world. They also echo the cadence and expressions of the African-American culture, the witty wordplay of William Gilbert and Noel Coward and the populism of Tin Pan Alley.

Mercer began his rise to fame as a singer/songwriter for legendary jazz conductor Paul Whiting. In 1935, he began working in Hollywood writing songs and occasionally appearing in small musical roles. Throughout his extraordinary career, he wrote songs for nearly 100 films, picking up four Oscars and 16 nominations. His more than 170 collaborators include Richard Whiting ("Hooray for Hollywood") Harry Warren ("Jeepers Creepers" and "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe"); Hoagy Carmichael ("Lazybones" and "Skylark"); Jerome Kern ("I'm Old Fashioned"); Harold Arlen ("Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive," "Blues in the Night," "That Old Black Magic" and "One For My Baby"); Henry Mancini (the Academy Award-winning songs "Moon River" and "The Days of Wine and Roses"); Johnny Mandel ("Emily"); and John Williams ("The Long Goodbye").

In addition to his musical creativity, Mercer co-founded Capitol Records in 1942. He persuaded a number of stars to record on the Capitol label, among them Jo Stafford, Peggy Lee, Nat King Cole, Stan Kenton and his former boss, Paul Whiteman.

For all his success as a writer, performer and record producer, Mercer had one great ambition left unfulfilled: a successful Broadway production. In 1946, he partnered with Arlen on *St. Louis Woman*. The show produced several hit songs, including "Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home" and "Come Rain or Come Shine," but it was plagued with production problems and harsh criticism for its inadequate book. It would be 1956 before Mercer finally realized his dream of a hit Broadway show with *Li'l Abner*.

Mercer passed away in 1976 in Los Angeles after suffering complications from surgery to remove a brain tumor. He is buried in his hometown of Savannah in the Bonaventure Cemetery, overlooking the Wilmington River, which served as the inspiration for his lyrics to the song "Moon River." He earned a posthumous Tony nomination in 1983, when *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* became a Broadway musical. The Mercer House, which was built by his grandfather, later became the setting for the bestselling novel and subsequent Clint Eastwood-directed film *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.

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.

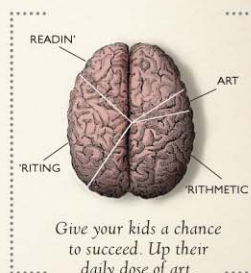


*Royal dukes are squaresville.
They have no rhythm.
And they wear crowns.*

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.

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We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!



ZORA YOUNG
The French Connection
DELMARK

Zora Young is one of a number of notable blues women to emerge out of Chicago in the past few decades. Since touring Europe with fellow singers Big Time Sara and Bonnie Lee in 1981, she has become a frequent visitor to the Continent with over 20 tours in France where she has become a favorite. This latter fact is revealed by the title of her latest Delmark release, "The French Connection."

Recorded in France in 2007 and 2008, she is heard from three sessions, the common thread of which is pianist and keyboardist Bobby Dirninger, who met and started playing with her in 1991 during one of her European tours, and later moved to Chicago where he recorded with Zora on her 2004 album, "Tore Up from the Floor Up."

The album was recorded over three sessions, one a live session, one an acoustic session and the final one with a special studio band. The backing musicians, in whatever setting, provide strong backing for Young, whose has a somewhat morose tone to her vocals.

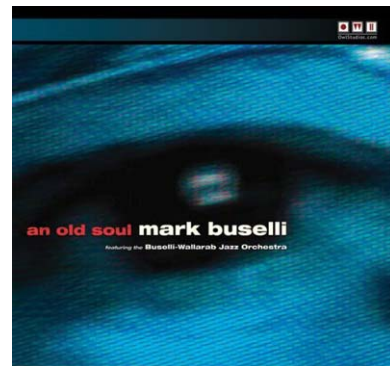
Zora moans the blues more than she belts them out. Her sensitivity in phrasing and working with her backing musicians stands out here, showing why she is one of the better singers around today. There is a fair amount of covers here, but Young and the backing musicians do more than simply copy arrangements of these blues classics, such as her slowed down rendition of "Wang Dang Doodle," or the nice live version of Muddy Waters' "King Bee," with some sharp slide guitar from Dirninger. Who also does a vocal duet with her on Bob Dylan's country flavored classic "Tonight I'll Be Staying Home With You," with some nice pedal steel guitar from Emmanuel Bertrand followed by "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," with a sparse backing accompaniment with Catherine Girand's ukulele, some upright bass and stinging guitar from Dirninger.

"See See Rider" also has spare backing with more

sparse and biting guitar and light percussion. A spoken monologue opens "In the Ghetto." The Mac Davis number made famous by Elvis Presley is delivered in a moving, understated performance. The rendition of "Mystery Train" hints at the classic Elvis and Junior Parker renditions, but again displays a more deliberate approach. There are two completely different versions of "Goin' Back to Memphis," one with the tempo slowed down and the other acoustically performed with some excellent slide and more clearly indicating how Sunnyland Slim's original was indebted to the "Rollin' and Tumblin'" theme.

Zora Young has come a long way from the Young Zora who toured Europe with "Blues With The Gals." This CD shows that she has become one of Chicago blues most impressive vocalists.

Ron Weinstock



**MARK BUSELLI, FEATURING THE BUSELLI-
WALLARAB JAZZ ORCHESTRA**
An Old Soul
OWL STUDIOS

The Buselli-Wallarab Jazz Orchestra has been co-led by trumpeter Buselli and trombonist Brent Wallarab since 1994. This new 11-track album is all Buselli's, the first full album of his arrangements and the band's third recording following *Happenstance* (1999) and *Heart and Soul* (2004). The title refers to Buselli's tribute to his deceased golden retriever and not to the warhorse standards the band refreshes (or to Buselli himself, born in 1958).

Featuring an array of eight standards and three Buselli originals, the disc focuses on the co-leader's arranging skills and draws upon the band's fine instrumental soloists. The deftly arranged charts pack a punch, especially on the swinging Buselli original "135 B. Chiswick." Rearranged standards include: "My Shining Hour," "Chelsea Bridge," "If I Should Lose You," and others. But it's what Buselli and the orchestra do with Charles Mingus' "Fables of Faubus" that truly sets them apart from their peer orchestras. The swirling, smart arrangement shifts tempo, injects soloists and features wonderful horn-section work, totally refreshing Mingus' original dirge-like composition into an upbeat read.

The band debuts the talented young vocalist Kelleen Strutz on five selections, including Antonio Carlos Jobim's "If You Never Come To Me," which she sings in English and Portuguese. She gives the well-arranged gem "Angel Eyes" a sultry read, enhanced by exchanges with trumpeter Mike Hackett and alto saxman Mike Stricklin.

Buselli serves as director of Jazz Studies at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. Prior to that, he taught at Butler University in Indianapolis. He began trumpet studies at age eight, graduated from Boston's Berklee School of Music and received his Masters of Music in Jazz studies from Indiana University.

Buselli's fresh arrangements, well-chosen material and superior musicianship make this a pleasurable listen from start to finish.

Nancy Ann Lee



QUINTUS MCCORMICK

Hey Jodie
DELMARK

It has been an interesting musical journey for Chicago blues man Quintus McCormick. Born in Detroit, he grew up enamored with progressive rock with early inspirations coming from Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Santana, Humble Pie and Steve Howe of Yes. After moving to Chicago, and getting a musical degree he was playing pop music until he started with J.W. Williams and the Chicago Hustlers where he got his musical inspiration and then later worked sideman gigs with Lefty Dizz and James Cotton, as well as getting personal insights from various events in his life such as going down south to help his parents bury his granddad.

As he has musically grown he has definitely developed into a contemporary urban blues voice with a strong soul-blues tinge. He brings a vocal style that captures elements of Charles Wilson, Little Milton, and others with an intense guitar style that Delmark has just captured in "Hey Jodie!," the debut album by the Quintus McCormick Blues Band.

It opens with the title track, which is subtitled "Take Good Care of My Baby," as he adds to the body of songs involving the back door lover, telling him to take care of Quintus' baby since he can't leave her alone. It's a soulful performance with nice horns and synthesized strings from keyboard wiz Roosevelt Purifoy. Its followed by the small group with "Get You Some Business," instead of taking care of Quintus' business, with an insistent backing suggestive of some of the late Andrew Brown. McCormick is generally quite a solid guitarist but his heavily distorted tone adds little to the beginning of what is an otherwise intense performance, "What Goes Around Comes Around," with some nice harp from Ted Reynolds. Not any complaints can be had for the driving shuffle "You Should Learn From This," with its punchy horns.

"Fifty/Fifty," with the horns and harmonica has a funky groove as he sings about how he and his partner have to share equally for their special love they have. "I'm Alright Now," is a lazy Jimmy Reed-styled shuffle as McCormick takes a more low-key vocal with Reynolds adding some tasty harmonica.

It is followed by a rocker, "Get That Money," which does not completely jell together because of its frantic tempo and accompaniment. Much better are the soul ballad "Hot Lovin' Woman," and the pleading "Plano Texas Blues," while "I'm a Good Man Baby" is another fine performance that gets to display his fine guitar playing.

Standing out among the many fine performances is the soulful singing on "There Ain't No Right Way To Do Wrong," and a nice terse solo. Obviously selections like this suggest that McCormick should be a significant presence on the southern blues and soul music scenes, his music being as equally appealing to fans of such recent contemporary blues legends as Little Milton, Otis Rush, Andrew Brown, and Jimmy Johnson. There may be one or two disappointing tracks among the 15 here, but overall this is a marvelous debut album by a blues voice I want to hear more from.

Ron Weinstock



ELDAD TARMU

Songs for the Queen of Bohemia
QUEEN OF BOHEMIA PRODUCTIONS

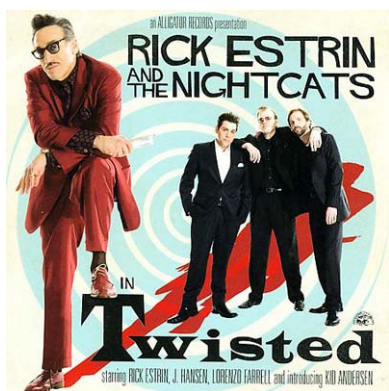
American vibraphonist and composer Eldad Tarmu has played with a variety of significant artists including Poncho Sanchez, Ernie Watts, Taj Mahal, Freddie Hubbard, Billie Higgins, and Frank Morgan. Currently he is professor of jazz studies in Tibiscus University in Timisoara, Romania. He has previously issued seven CDs under his name and has just issued a new CD under the name Eldad Tarmu Chamber Jazz Ensemble, "Songs for the Queen of Bohemia" with bassist Johnny Bota, Isreali drummer, Yoni Halevy and the Tabac String Quartet for a fascinating fusion of jazz and Middle Eastern music with chamber music.

The liner notes for the recording have a fable of a gentleman with a machine producing the most melodious sounds who was looking for the Queen of Bohemia, and people directed him to different individuals before he comes to the one he feels is the true queen and asking why folk sent him to the wrong place, she replied, "People in Bohemia are not ruled by a queen. Every man with a song must seek and pursue his own queen."

Tarmu's ten original compositions provide plenty of opportunity for his own considerable mallet skills to be displayed while listening to the intriguing scoring of the string quartet, serving sometimes as a backdrop for his driving vibes lines and other times more at the forefront. The music is evocative, sensual and swings as on "Seducing the Queen of Bohemia," opening with Halevy's percussion that evokes a procession with the quartet then stating the theme with Tarmu's sparse playing underneath before Tarmu and his trio take fore and then the quartet joins in towards its climax. The string quartet imbues a Romany flavor to "Headed East," with Tarmu's insistent vibes engaged in a lively dialogue at times with the quartet. The quartet helps engender the melancholic spirit of "The Polish Gentleman," while this mood carries forward in "Dionysus," (whose title celebrates the Greek god of wine, fertility and drama), before Tarmu speeds the tempo with some insistent playing. "Dancing For The Queen of Bohemia," has a livelier opening with a brisk tempo with the strings complementing the leader's vibes and Halevy's spirited drum breaks.

After several more collaborations with the quartet, the disc closes with the pensive "Song For The Queen of Bohemia," a strong pensive solo performance that is marvelously recorded with its melodic sounds lingering as it ends. "Songs For The Queen of Bohemia," is available from cdbaby, amazon, and various download sites including Tarmu's own website, <http://www.eldadtarmu.com>, and you might explore his myspace page for some musical samples, <http://www.myspace.com/eldadtarmu>.

Ron Weinstock



RICK ESTRIN AND THE NIGHTCATS

Twisted

ALLIGATOR RECORDS

With the departure of namesake Little Charlie Baty, this well seasoned West Coast blues band has morphed from Little Charlie and the Nightcats to Rick Estrin and the Nightcats. For occasional listeners, this isn't much of a change since Estrin has been the band's lead singer, harmonica ace and primary lyricist throughout the band's history.

Estrin's top notch harmonica skills remain intact as evidenced on the rocking *Big Time* and *P.A. Slim Is Back*, the aptly titled instrumental, *Cool Breeze* and the simmering *Take It Slow*. His trademark wit and sly vocals have made the transition as well with *Back from the Dead* leading the charge with its tale of surviving all manner of debauchery.

Those with more than a casual acquaintance with the band will notice a major change by virtue of the switch in guitarists. While Baty was an inventive, jazzy player in the vein of B'nois King, replacement Kid Andersen is more of a roots rocker with a taste for Rockabilly. The guitar fueled *Back From the Dead* could easily find a home on a Southern Culture on the Skids disc while the chicken scratch riffing on *UBU* is more Elvin Bishop than B.B. King. Andersen also proves to be comfortable in the spotlight: the instrumental *Earthquake* features dense slabs surf guitar worthy of Los Straitjackets while *Bigfoot* sounds like an homage to Link Wray. That's not to say that Andersen is all rough and tumble. The slow grinding *Catchin' Hell* and *Cool Breeze* both feature some restrained, yet tasty, string stretching.

While Baty will surely be missed, this revamped version of the band stands tall against his legacy.

Mark Smith



PONCHO SANCHEZ

Psychedelic Blues

CONCORD

For his 24th recording, percussionist Poncho Sanchez returns to the Latin roots, launching the new 10-tune set with an appealing David Torres arrangement of Herbie Hancock's "Cantaloupe Island."

Interpreting tunes by an array of jazz and Latin composers, Sanchez and team deliver a mix of tight, horns-led Latin-jazz tunes. Sanchez's band includes David Torres (piano, Hammond B-3 organ), Javier Vergara (tenor, alto saxes), Ron Blake (trumpet, flugelhorn), Francisco A. Torres (trombone), Tony Banda (bass), George Ortiz (timbales), and Joey De Leon, Jr. (bongos, percussion). Arturo Sandoval guests on one track and additional musicians include Scott C. Martin on baritone sax, Andrew Synowiec on guitar and Alfredo Ortiz on bongos, percussion.

The centerpiece of the album is a 6:39-minute "Willie Bobo Medley" featuring Sanchez and background vocals on the tunes "I Don't Know," "Fried Neckbones and Some Homefries," and "Spanish Grease." Other tunes include Latinize takes on John Coltrane's "Grand Central" (arranged by Blake), John Hicks' "Slowly But Surely," and Horace Silver's "Silver's Serenade," both arranged by Torres.

Excellent musicianship, well-chosen material and tidy arrangements make this a totally enjoyable listen, adding nicely to Sanchez's existing discography.

Nancy Ann Lee

VARIOUS ARTISTS

A Tribute to The Mississippi Sheiks - Things About Comin' My Way BLACK HEN MUSIC

One of the most celebrated African-American recording acts of the thirties was The Mississippi Sheiks. Comprised mostly of members of the Chatmon family (Lonnie, Sam, Bo and others) along with Walter Vinson, they had a very wide repertoire and considerable influence on both black and white performers. They introduced the standard "Sittin' on Top of the World," (which has been performed by Howlin' Wolf, the Grateful Dead, Western Swing and bluegrass bands), "Stop and Listen Blues," and several songs like "Yodeling, Fiddling Blues," suggestive of Jimmie Rodgers, the Father of Country Music.

The Sheiks recorded 70 odd recordings ranging from blues, waltzes, topical songs and hokum. Some members of the Chatmon family recorded outside the Sheiks extensively. Bo Chatmon was better known as Bo Carter and had a remarkable recording career that included more than a few risqué lyrics while Sam Chatmon had a productive recording career after the sixties blues revival before he passed in 1983. The Sheiks music has been in recent years been revived by artists as diverse as Alvin Youngblood Hart and Bob Dylan.

"Things About Comin' My Way: A Tribute to the Music of The Mississippi Sheiks" (Black Hen Music) came as a surprise when it arrived. Put together by Steve Dawson, much of this was recorded over two days in Seattle and/or Vancouver, but some was recorded in other locations. They brought together a variety of performers, some who perform closer to the Sheiks' recordings such as the lively North Mississippi Allstars rendition of "Its Backfirin' Now," John Hammond's "Stop and Listen," and the Carolina Chocolate Drops rendition of "Sittin' on Top of the World." Others are not as tied to the originals. Vancouver singer-songwriter Ndidi Onukwili is supported by the project's house band on the title track which employs the same melody as "Sittin' on Top of the World," but has a different flavor due to some blues-rock accents in the accompaniment.

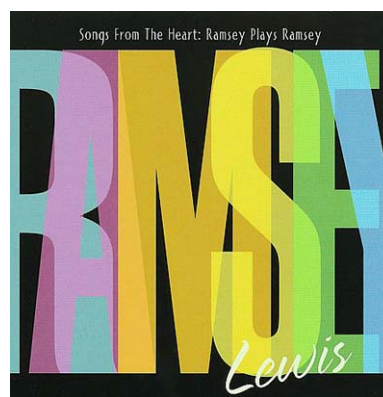
Bruce Cockburn's vocal on "Honey Babe Let the Deal Go Round" vocally evokes the late Piedmont master, John Jackson, although the performance has a bit of country flavor. I do find it hard to agree with the sometimes pretentious liner notes that this is an essential track, no matter how much of a Canadian treasure Cockburn is. Pretentious is how I might describe the artsy Van Dyke Parks arrangement used on Oh Susanna's rendition of "Bootlegger's Blues." This is a shame as she does a real nice job on the vocal.

Danny Barnes (an Austin legend who I never heard of before), is too country sounding for "Too Long," and probably should have been given the more country flavored "Jailbird Love Song," to record. Guitarist Bill Frisell is heard on a duet with trombone of the instrumental "That's It," while on "Please Baby," Madeleine Peyroux sounds like a Billie Holiday wannabe. Producer Dawson himself sings in a neutral manner on a blues-rock adaptation of "Lonely One In This Town." The stronger tracks include Geoff Muldaur & the Texas Sheiks (with Stephen

Bruton on guitar and Johnny Nicholas on mandolin) on "The World Is Going Wrong," with a highlight being his robust vocal and a great fiddle solo from Suzi Thompson. Del Ray, who was mentored by Sam Chatmon does a lovely "We Are Both Feeling Good Right Now," supported by her adept guitar and a pair of clarinets. Bob Brozman may be a marvelous guitarist, but on "Somebody's Gotta Help You" shows he is not a very good singer

As suggested, this is a mixed bag. There is nothing poor here, and the tracks make for enjoyable listening with several tracks being exceptional. I agree with the decision to not simply give us an album of straight covers, but I do find some the relatively few performers of color here odd. I have no idea how performers were selected, and who had been asked and unavailable. But one cannot say that such contemporary African-American performers such as Corey Harris, Youngblood Hart, Guy Davis, or Taj Mahal would not have made significant contributions here.

Ron Weinstock



RAMSEY LEWIS

Songs From the Heart: Ramsey Plays Ramsey CONCORD JAZZ

At age 74, pianist Ramsey Lewis makes a dramatic Concord Jazz recording debut with a mixed set of 12 originals performed solo and with his trio. The tunes premiered in 2006, 2007 and 2008 at the Ravinia Festival in Highland Park, Illinois.

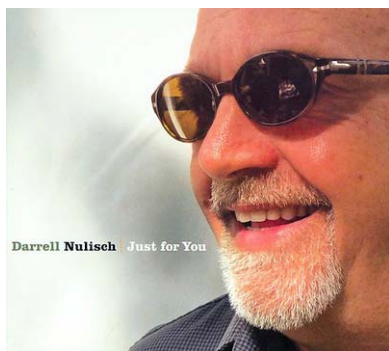
The trio numbers, performed with bassist Larry Gray and drummer Leon Joyce, sparkle with excitement. "Touching, Feeling, Knowing" is a tenderly romantic number (one of eight tunes written for a Joffrey Ballet Company performance) that's injected with some classic Lewis riffs, buoyancy and shifting beats. One of my favorite trio numbers is the catchy melody and tempo of "The Way She Smiles," a tune that cries out for a lyricist. Four of the tunes are originally from *Muses and Amusements* performed with the Turtle Island String Quartet at Ravinia in 2008.

Lewis also delivers lovely, lyrical solo performances of "Clouds in Reverie," "The Glow of Her Charm," and "Long Before She Knew Him," from the Joffrey Ballet Company performance.

Lewis has racked up many recordings in his career and, while many folks likely will remember him for his crossover jazz-funk recordings of the 1960s and 1970s, this standout CD represents another side of the renowned pianist-composer. It's a keeper.

Nancy Ann Lee

**jazz
& blues**



DARRELL NULISCH

Just For You SEVERN

Severn Records has just issued Darrell Nulisch's "Just For You," providing more strong blue-eyed soul and blues by the Dallas native. The disc is his fifth for Severn and finds him backed by the strong studio band of guitarist Johnny Moeller, keyboardist Benjie Porecki, bassist Steve Gomes and drummer Robb Stupka with a full horn section adding to the urbane feel here.

With brassy backing and Moeller's explosive fills and solos, Nulisch opens with one of the six originals penned with bassist Gomes, "You Don't Know Me," a fine bluesy performance. It's followed by a soulful blues "The Woman Don't Live Here No More," where he admits he treated her wrong with Moeller's guitar in a dialogue with Nulisch's vocal. One really nice performance is of a Slim Harpo number that gives the album its title with a bit of deep soul feel in its backing and its almost swamp pop feel to Darrell's vocal with a harp break that is a nice nod to the blues legend.

"Work For Love," is a tasty bit of deep Memphis soul and J.J. Malone's "It's a Shame" has a solid funk groove. Moeller's sharp guitar and some muted brass open the morose "Just a Little Blues," as Nulisch sings about moving on while Porecki gets greasy on the organ, and "Far Too Lonely," is another southern soul original.

Nulisch has become such a strong singer, and with the superb backing band, this is another excellent Severn release about which the only complain might be the relatively short (under 38 minutes) playing time.

Ron Weinstock

CURTIS STIGERS

Lost In Dreams CONCORD

Saxophonist-vocalist-songwriter Curtis Stigers successfully delivers an array of jazz/pop standards and three originals on his latest Concord recording.

Stigers' sultry vocals and smoky tenor saxophone musings sometimes have a pop-edge sound and that's no surprise, considering that his first (self-titled) album in 1991 was a pop album that sold 1.5 million copies worldwide. Nine more albums followed, including his first jazz recording for Concord in 2000, *Baby Plays Around*.

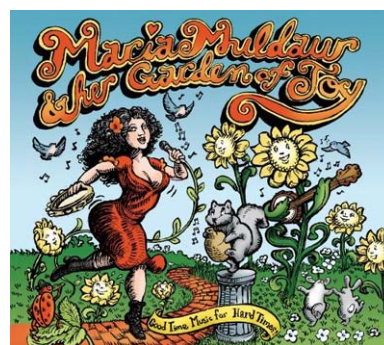
Over the past eight years, Stigers has worked regularly with keyboardist Matthew Fries and drummer Keith Hall. Newcomer Cliff Schmitt (bass) and co-producer John "Scraper" Sneider (trumpet, glockenspiel, vibes)

complete his first-rate band.

What makes Stigers' music so appealing is its diversity. Stiger is equally comfortable in the pop, jazz and soul genres and there's not a dull tune on the menu. Among my favorites are his version of John Lennon's "Jealous Guy," his Latinate original, "You've Got the Fever," and his perky, blues-infused "Daddy's Coming Home." Stigers' soulful vocals on the Julie Miller/Buddy Miller blues, "Dirty Water," are enhanced with his raspy sax riffs and Sneider's muted trumpet improvs. Stigers also does justice to jazz standards such as his touching take on "My Funny Valentine," a swinging read on "Bye Bye Blackbird," and a lush take on "In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning," the closing number.

Stigers' album, his first to cross my desk, is an enjoyable listen that includes up-tempo numbers and ballads aimed to satisfy the listener. Makes me want to own all of his Concord albums!

Nancy Ann Lee



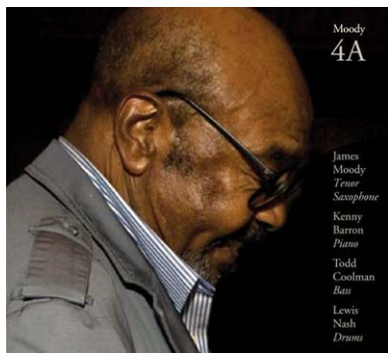
MARIA MULDAUR GOOD TIME MUSIC FOR HARD TIMES STONY PLAIN

Fourth in a series of roots music discs that Maria Muldaur is doing for the Stony Plain label of Canada, GOOD TIME MUSIC FOR HARD TIMES takes Muldaur back to her origins with the Even Dozen Jug Band and she brings some famous names of the 1960's along for the ride. Using the theme of hard economic times, it wasn't that hard for Muldaur to dig up material using traditional 20th century tunes, along with a couple fresh ones via the pen of Dan Hicks.

Things also get jazzy here, thanks to Alex Anagnostopoulos' banjo on "Ghost Of The St. Louis Blues," as brass work from Bob Schwartz' trumpet and Kevin Porter's trombone mix with Jim Rothermel's clarinet. Besides adding his "The Diplomat" and "Let It Simmer," Hicks also duets with Muldaur on the medley "Life's Too Short/When Elephants Roost In Bamboo Trees." The double header starts out with some subtle wooing that shifts gears upwards as promises start being made to each other. "Bank Failure Blues" lives up to its moniker as the title cut has an easy flow to it. Best of the garden may be "He Calls That Religion," due to the appearance of John Sebastian on harmonica.

So it's not quite blues and not quite jazz, yet GOOD TIME MUSIC FOR HARD TIMES is filled with another historical facet of American music brought back with a vengeance by Maria Muldaur and her famous friends. It's a fun project that even those with hay fever will enjoy.

Peanuts



JAMES MOODY

Moody 4A

IPO RECORDINGS

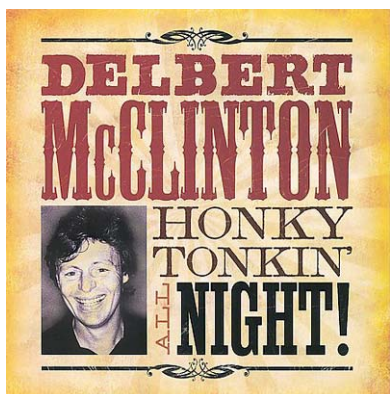
Saxophonist James Moody delivers a 2008 studio set of eight standards performed with pianist Kenny Barron, bassist Todd Coolman, and drummer Lewis Nash.

This sterling quartet injects the opener, "Secret Love," with quotes from other tunes and even a blues-march drumbeat. Other tunes they embellish are "Round Midnight," "Without A Song," "Stella By Starlight," "East of the Sun," "Stablemates," "Bye Bye Blackbird" and Barron's bopper "Voyager."

While these veteran players have undoubtedly performed these tunes many times in their careers, their interpretations here are ripe with energy and freshness. Moody achieves warm rich tones, Barron's lyrical playing excels, and Nash and Coolman tidily tick off time without intrusion.

To have Moody and Barron (two of my favorite jazz players) collaborating on the same album is a bonus. Producer Bill Sorin let Moody and team do their thing and the results are satisfying. Liner notes by Ira Gitler briefly trace Moody's early career and the roots of this quartet recording. I'm eagerly awaiting the planned sequel (4B).

Nancy Ann Lee



DELBERT McCLINTON

Acquired Taste

NEW WEST

With a career that spans fifty years, a top 40 hit, *Giving It Up for Your Love*, and a Grammy to his credit for his 2005 release *Cost of Living*, Texas native Delbert McClinton has not only had a successful career; he's covered a wide swath of the musical landscape with rock, country, blues and even a little gospel thrown into the mix. McClinton's twangy, roughed up voice, adds a lived

PAGE FOURTEEN

in feel that makes everything he does sound stone cold authentic.

This release finds him raw and bruised by love gone sour with a number of ballads serving as the emotional touchstones. On *Never Saw It Comin'* he's befuddled at missing the signs of a romance on the rocks. On *Until Then* he's crushed by the reality of "lying alone in bed like butter without any bread" while on *Out Of My Mind* he's haunted about not being able to get over a lost lover and on *Wouldn't You Think (Should've Been Here By Now)* he's stunned to find he's the lover being dumped. *Starting a Rumor* is also a ballad but this time around his soulful croon is used plant the seeds of a new romance.

While there's also a Country weeper, *Can't Nobody Say I Didn't Try*, there's plenty of upbeat material here as well. *Willie* is rollicking tale of a hen-pecked buddy who's just glad to have a woman after a long drought. *When She Cries at Night* is a soulful rocker with sweet background vocals that hide the sorrow of a woman who can't get out the door. *Mama's Little Baby* uses the old plantation tune *Shortnin' Bread* as a musical backdrop to a tale about a woman so hot "she could pop corn just hold it in her hand."

I Need to Know has a tough John Lee Hooker beat while *People Just Love to Talk* is a jazzy tale about speculation run wild and *Do It* is a funky Muscle Shoals style soul work out. *She's Not There Anymore* is a mid-tempo number with a cha-cha beat and the rocking *Cherry Street* finds McClinton regretting getting lured by alcohol and women into a set up that leaves him in the emergency room.

While the musical backdrop covers much the same ground as prior releases, McClinton's sharp eye for emotional detail and ability to make each tune a first person account make this worth adding to your collection.

Mark Smith

SPENCER DAY

Vagabond

CONCORD

A rising star, vocalist-songwriter-pianist Spencer Day debuts on Concord Jazz with a 14-track album that forges a new American songbook, blending influences from jazz, soul, folk, traditional and contemporary pop, musical theater and cabaret. This is his third recording and a more-focused departure from his first two.

Accompanied on some tunes by a strings group, smaller combos, and/or background vocals, Day proves he has the voice, style and songwriting talent to dazzle crossover audiences. One of the catchiest tunes on the album is the swinging "Better Way," with a toe-tapping beat and meaningful lyrics that call for a "time of evolution."

Born in Utah, raised in rural Arizona by his mother (a music teacher and soprano), Day is mostly self-taught and has called many places home, including stays in New York and San Francisco. He currently resides in Los Angeles. Day grew up listening to a wide array of music so his musical repertoire is broad-based.

Day's appealing tunes follow the vagabond theme and are harmonically and melodically diverse, with lyrics that keep the listener engaged.

Nancy Ann Lee

LAURIE MORVAN BAND

Fire It Up SCREAMING LIZARD

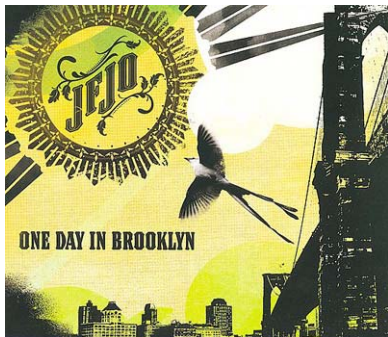
The Fourth release by the Illinois-born guitarist Morvan, FIRE IT UP pretty much covers all the bases of modern blues rock and then some.

While "Good Girls Bad Girls" goes the funky route, "Lay Your Hands" wanders into the more spiritual side and "Nothin' But The Blues" takes the boogie woogie trail home with help from sideman David Matthews on the piano. "You Don't Know About Me" is southern rock re-fried as guest Sammy Avila helps seal the deal on B-3 organ. Morvan lets her guitar do the talking during "I Speak The Blues," while "Testify" shakes it up via gospel on an exposed 220 line.

Pretty much the whole project rocks out, in one way or another, all the way to the double time last call of "Cafe Boogaloo," yet my favorite has to be Morvan's plea to pay more attention to the "Skinny Chicks" of the world over the full-figured mamas. Between her and me, it's the ultimate case of great minds thinking alike on a subject.

It would be easy to compare Laurie Morvan to a male blues rocker who came before her in the time line (insert the name of your favorite one here), though Morvan stands up pretty well on her own two legs and multi-frets during FIRE IT UP.

Peanuts



JACOB FRED JAZZ ODYSSEY

One Day In Brooklyn KINARA

While the working philosophy of the JFJO may be implicit, as opposed to that of, say, the Modern Jazz Quartet, it seems no less a definition of their mission and it underscores the distinctive musical figure they cut as much that of any jazz aggregation one can name. Melding their formidable chops and improvisational instincts with a flair for mercurial morphing, the JFJO are an ideal jazz force for the Blackberry generation.

If anything, *One Day In Brooklyn* is something of a respite from the hypertext of earlier albums. Pianist Brian Haas continues to construct creative on-the-spot structures drawing from a broad jazz lexicon. He seems here to be settling in more often prior to executing one of his signature right-angle turns or mood shifts. Bassist Matt Hayes and drummer Josh Raymer prove ideal travel mates, providing textbook rhythm throughout.

With regard to the addition of lap steel guitarist Chris Combs to classic jazz piano format, it's as though the band takes on any tongue-in-cheek notions a listener may

bring, getting humorous right off with Rahsaan Roland Kirk's "The Black & Crazy Blues". As the set progresses, Combs's function as Haas's foil diminishes by degrees. By the fourth track, Abdullah Ibrahim's "Imam", the steel holds its own.

If JFJO releases are typically a shot of jazz espresso, *One Day In Brooklyn* might make for their first cocktail. If so, it's a tasty one.

Duane Verh

ELLEN WHYTE

Four Way Stop AMALLEGORY PRODUCTIONS

On her fourth disc, Portland, Oregon based multi-instrumentalist (guitar, accordion, percussion) and vocalist Ellen Whyte unleashes 11 original cuts that explore remorse, fear, love and strength.

Joined by the ESP Horns (Renato Caranto, Pete Petersen, Greg Garrett and Mike Kelly) and a large band including Garry Meziere and Dave Mullany on guitars, Gene Houck on bass, Jean-Pierre Garau on organ, clavinet and piano and Reinhardt Melz on drums, Whyte delivers insightful, thought-provoking lyrics against a broad musical palette.

There's everything from dark rootsy rockers reminiscent of Eagle Glenn Frey's solo work, *No One Knows Better Than Me*, to upbeat soul on the title cut to spare ballads, *Last to Know*, Tower of Power style funky horn grooves, *Thanks for the Ride*, and straight up rock, *Fall-*

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ing. Whyte matches the band's ample hooks with lyrical hooks that dig deep. While she mines the normal blues vein of heartache, despair and working under the thumb of the man, she does so without resorting to the tired clichés we've heard way too many times.

On *Over My Shoulder* an errant lover is admonished that "you're doing too much thinking/you ain't got enough time to feel" as she relegates him to the scrap heap. *Jack & Jokers* not only rocks, but is a timely call to action against the havoc wrecked by "Men in fine suits/suiting just themselves."

When You Walk Away From Love is a tender ballad about making the right choices in love and making sure – "when you walk away from love/Just remember... move slow/Take a look around you/you will miss it when you go."

These pointed lyrics get delivered by Whyte with a voice of incredible depth ranging from the sophisticated jazz stylings of Nina Simone on *Last to Know* to the husky swagger of rockabilly queen Rosie Flores on the upbeat number about finding love, *Lucky in Love*, to the sly sexiness of Maria Muldaur on the seductive, *Wide Awake Woman*.

Overall, a fine release that deserves plenty of attention.

Mark Smith

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MIKE HOLOBER & THE GOTHAM JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Quake

SUNNYSIDE RECORDS

Pianist Mike Holober & The Gotham Jazz Orchestra make their Sunnyside debut with this recording of five originals and two standards.

The album is not quite what one would expect from the title. These are not hard-driving, swinging big-band arrangements, but headier, blended stuff that shows off Holober's arranging skills and provides space for some fine instrumental solos and harmonious section work.

Recorded in December 2006, Brooklyn-born Holober's compositions were mostly written between 2003 and 2006 when Holober was a fellow at the MacDowell Colony in Petersborough, New Hampshire and in residence at Yaddo, an artist community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Holober learned flute, saxophone and piano at an early age. He received a Master's degree in classical piano at Binghamton University and was an instructor there before moving back to New York City where he pursued jazz full-time. He's presently associate director of the BMI Composers' Workshop.

Holober has crafted pleasing arrangements to the familiar "Here Comes the Sun" and "Ruby Tuesday," that breathes fresh life into these familiar tunes. Overall, memorable melodies seem to be sacrificed for the sake of well-crafted, dense arrangements that could be used as soundtracks for a television series.

Nancy Ann Lee

LEFT LANE CRUISER

All You Can Eat

ALIVE NATURALSOUND

For those of the "punk-blues" or "indie-blues" school, it's not about mastering B.B.'s or Little Walter's licks. Much like many of the 60's British Invasion, this irreverent generation fixates mostly on the blues' raw emotional potential.

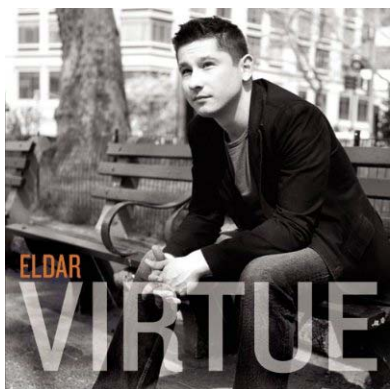
They've found it an ideal launch pad for their own ground-level commentary, the content of which doesn't seem so attitudinally removed from the early blues these upstarts typically draw from.

Beating out rants and raves one riff at a time, the Fort Wayne duet Left Lane Cruiser (Freddie J Evans IV-guitar and vocals, Brenn Beck- drums) deliver a surprisingly varied set, considering the primitive structure and full-go energy level never truly abandoned on this sessions. Evans knows how to pull the very last, long twinge of hurt out his electric slide; a feat he repeats regularly on

All You Can Eat. He also throws a nice acoustic curve on the third track, "Old Fashioned". Beck is a basher in the very best sense of the word. Together they cook up an ear-grabbing sound that jumps two or three generations from the Great Depression to this one.

Duane Verh

jazz-blues.com



ELDAR

Virtue

SONY MASTERWORKS

Eldar Djangirov, a one-time child prodigy, has been making his mark in the American scene for over half his life. At the age of ten, Eldar came to the United States from his native Kyrgyzstan (of the former Soviet Union) and when he was twelve, he appeared on Marian McPartland's "Piano Jazz" on NPR. After some self-produced recordings he was signed to Sonny Classical at the age of 17, and has issued three albums including "Live at the Blue Note" featuring Roy Hargrove and Chris Botti in 2006 and 2007's "re-Imagination," which received a Grammy nomination and growing critical acclaim.

Sony Masterworks has just issued his fourth album for the label, "Virtue," where is partnered by bassist Armando Gola and drummer Ludwig Afonso, the members of his trio, along with guest appearances by trumpeter Nicholas Payton and saxophonists Joshua Redman and Felipe Lamoglia.

What is refreshing is his integration of electronic keyboards with his acoustic playing and his trio is a startling revelation to this listener. There is such a natural flow and transitions from frenzied arpeggios to more reflective and romantic sections, with evocations of so many players, but all coming out as Eldar.

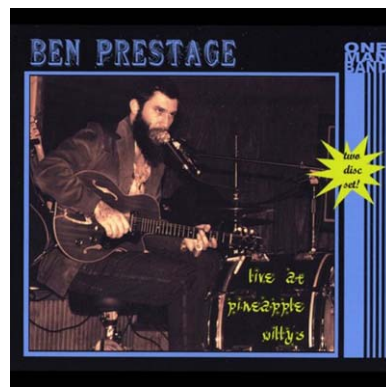
Some funk chords open up "Exposition" with Joshua Redman joining for the statement of the theme with Eldar's piano dancing around the funky bass groove before trading fours with Redman and a keen keyboard solo. "Insensitive," has a nice Latin flavor with some fine cymbal work from Afonso embellishing his more reflective playing. "Blues Sketch in Clave," with Lamoglia's tenor, is another tune with a stirring melody that is hard to sit still to as the mix of acoustic and electric is mesmerizing.

With Gola's electric bass and Afonso's crisp funkting rhythms, Nicholas Payton adds his trumpet to Lamoglia's tenor on "Black Jack."

Its exhilarating mood contrasts with the lovely ballad playing on "Estate," one of the few pieces here that was not composed by Eldar. His playing is lighter and sparer here with Gola on acoustic bass and Afonso using brushes adding to the flavor of the performance that is as magical.

He has gone far beyond the promise of his youth and in his early twenties has become one off the most exciting talents to emerge in jazz recently. "Virtue" is one of the best albums of this year.

Ron Weinstock



BEN PRESTAGE

Live at Pineapple Willy's

SELF-PRODUCED

Ben Prestage comes from a family rooted in music. His great-grandmother toured with Al Jolson and while growing up he was exposed to the blues. He has busked in Memphis, honed his skills as a one-man band and was a finalist in the International Blues Challenge. He has a self-produced two-cd recording, "Live at Pineapple Willy's," which is in Panama City, Florida, that showcases his one-man band style, adding a small drum kit to his facile guitar.

Listening to this CD, one can appreciate the diversity of his repertoire that ranges from originals that are folk-styled, some acoustic rambles that are suggestive of the Grateful Dead and covers of Robert Johnson, Blind Boy Fuller, John Hurt, Furry Lewis, Bob Dylan, Grateful Dead, Muddy Waters and others. Prestage is capable of a hard driving rhythmic, finger-picking style as on the impressive folk original "Confusion," although on his rendition of "Step It Up and Go," he does race through the song too rapidly. John Hurt's "Candyman" is a lovely rendition followed up by a nice take of Furry Lewis' "Casey Jones," titled here "Natural-Born Easeman."

His take on John Estes "Someday Baby," has some nice slide guitar in the manner of Fred McDowell punctuated by his own foot drumming, while "Stuggart, Arkansas," has a driving rhythm suggestive of Bukka White and "Memphis," the last song on the first CD is a nice North Mississippi Hills styled performance, with another performance in this vein being his rendition of "Goin' Down South."

The Dead's "Friend of the Devil," is a nicely done number that showcases his adept fingerstyle guitar playing. Another showcase for his playing is the folk instrumental "Alleghany County," followed by a country gospel number (sounds like a classic Roy Acuff song), "Lost Highway." Its quirky to hear his twangy guitar revive The Meters' "They All Asked For You," titled here "Audobon Blues." He does a nice take on Muddy Waters' "Can't Be Satisfied," which shows his restrained slide being very effective.

I would not call him a great blues singer, but he does a credible job on the material here, perhaps being more effective on the folk and country numbers and he is a fine guitarist. Even if a few numbers are clinkers, there is much to be enjoyed on this. One can sample tracks on Amazon and www.cdbaby.com.

Ron Weinstock

DVDs

YELLOWJACKETS **The Paris Concert** **MIKE STERN BAND** **The Paris Concert** **INAKUSTIK BLU-RAY**

The German label Inakustik has issued blu-ray versions of recent concert releases and the technical upgrade undeniably enhances the “live” performance ambience of these two solid club-date performances.

The fusion superstar Yellowjackets seem more about “straight” jazz on their disc with tasty moments delivered by all four. While keyboardist and founding member Russell Ferrante melds swing with sophistication throughout the set, drummer Marcus Baylor takes his swing in an old-school direction far beyond his years on several feature spots. When not working on a solid straight-ahead foundation, electric bassist (and also a founder) Jimmy Haslip functions almost as a pseudo-guitar on his six-string axe. Sax man Bob Mintzer eventually gets around to his electronic horn, the EWI, but the crossover fare follows a goodly stretch of the “pure” stuff.

Guitarist Stern’s set is also a mix, in this case his high-energy fusion encases a set of high-quality crossover fare. His frequent fire is matched by that of his rhythm cast- Tom Kennedy, bass and Dave Weckl, drums- and saxophonist Bob Franceschini provides complementary calm.

The step-up to blu-ray (and, ideally, a large flat-screen), matched with the understated visual direction employed, makes for a surprisingly intimate atmosphere and enjoyable partaking of two fine outfits. *Duane Verh*

books

KING OF THE QUEEN CITY: THE STORY OF KING RECORDS **Jon Hartley Fox** **UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS** **(280 PAGES, 23 PHOTOGRAPHS)**

This writer has long been a fan of many of rhythm’n’blues artists that recorded for the King family of labels. These include Roy Brown, Wyonnie Harris, Ivory Joe Hunter, Hank Ballard & the Midnighters, Johnny ‘Guitar’ Watson, Freddie King, Little Willie John, Esther Phillips, The Five Royales, Billy Ward & the Dominoes and James Brown, to name a small part of the musical legacy of Syd Nathan’s Cincinnati based group of labels that included Queen and Federal. King was a pioneering label in more ways than one as this very welcome history of the label and overview of the extensive recordings that were made for it makes clear.

“King of the Queen City” expands upon a public ra-

dio series of the same title that Fox did in 1986 and is a history of the label that Syd Nathan launched in 1943, which became a company that Fox observes was “one of the most, important successful and influential record companies in history. During the almost twenty-five years Nathan was at the helm, King recorded — and introduced to the American public — a stunning array of musical giants, from country stars Merle Travis and Grandpa Jones and bluegrass greats Don Reno and Red Smiley to blues guitarist Freddie King and R&B and soul stars Hank Ballard and James Brown.” Furthermore, while one of hundreds of independent labels to emerge during the forties, none of these matched “King for variety, innovation, depth of catalog and sheer moxie.” It changed not only how music was recorded but also the music itself and whereas almost all other independent labels concentrated on one type of music, King was active in virtually all genres of American vernacular music and did not simply dabble in these styles but had many top stars and some of the biggest records in these styles. It was music and records for “the little man,” as Nathan often put it.

King did more than simply pioneer in the music it recorded and issued. King Records under Syd Nathan pioneered in other ways. It was a record company that had an integrated staff, in what really was a southern city at the time. Nathan started the record company during the middle of World War II when there was a shellac shortage and during the first Petrillo recording ban, may not have been what one might have been instructed in business school. Despite these circumstances, Syd Nathan developed King into pioneering record company. He recorded his artists in his studios, manufactured his records (which entailed learning how to master and manufacture records) and used a national promotion force under his control. Other companies may have had their own studio, or perhaps manufacturing plant, but they would not also have their own promotion staff, rather relying on regionally based independent promotion people. And one cannot emphasize enough his pioneering in hiring individuals on merit, not on the basis of race or other matters.

King also pioneered in having his R&B acts record songs penned by his country stars and vice versa (such as Wyonnie Harris “Bloodshot Eyes”), therefore enabling the exploitation of the songs in the music catalog the label cultivated and owned in addition to the recordings. Overseeing many of the sessions (whether country or R&B) was Henry Glover, Nathan’s first Artist & Repertoire Director. Glover was probably only the second black man to hold an executive position with a United States record label and helped produce some of the label’s early hits like those by Bull Moose Jackson and Harris. Fox, in telling the story of King Records, notes the unheralded and pioneering role that Glover, and also Ralph Bass played in the development of American music of the past 65 years, and notes how few of these have received the recognition they deserve.

Nathan had a strong personality and could get into intense arguments with his staff. The book recounts the legendary story of Nathan’s reaction to James Brown & the Famous Flames’ “Please, Please, Please,” that Ralph Bass recorded, spewing “This is the worse piece of shit I’ve ever heard in my life. ...” The earliest acts on King

were country acts like Grandpa Jones, the Delmore Brothers and Merle Travis and King would build a distinguished country catalog that included Hawksaw Hawkins, Hank Penny and the great rocking honky tonk piano pioneer, Moon Mullican and then rockabilly sessions with such pioneers as Charlie Feathers. And there would be the countless blues and vocal groups as well as gospel sessions held under the eyes of Glover, Bass and others. Let's not forget such important popular instrumental performers as Earl Bostic and Bill Doggett. Is there anyone reading this who has never heard "Honky Tonk?" The recordings story along with that of Doggett, saxophonist Clifford Scott and guitarist Billy Butler is among those recounted here. This is just to give a small flavor of what the King Catalog represented. King Records passed along with Syd Nathan when he died. The label's catalog was purchased as was the music publishing, and Fox discusses the various reissues of King recordings and other matters that have happened over the four decades since Syd Nathan passed away.

Fox weaves the label's history around a discussion of the many performers and musical styles the label touched on and even one familiar with a number of the artists will discover much new. This is not to say there are not omissions in discussing artists, especially after they left King. For example, the discussion of Esther Phillips sort of dismisses her post-King years and ignores the fact that the Beatles invited her to England because of her recording "And I Love Him," and one year Aretha

handed Esther Phillips a Grammy when Aretha won over Esther's classic album "From a Whisper to a Scream." It's his superficial summary discussion of her and Johnny "Guitar" Watson, that have me wondering what has he missed on performers who I am less familiar with. This is a minor point as his achievement is compiling so much information on the King Records story and its artists and recordings. The label's story is perhaps not as integrated with the narrative of the performers, but that is a function of what he has attempted here.


If not a perfect book, this is a remarkable achievement and Fox makes the case for the recognition to folks like Henry Glover, Ralph Bass and Syd Nathan himself by popular music historians. Their place in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame should have been secured years ago, and hopefully this volume will lead to that belated recognition. To the extent these folks are not in The Blues Foundation's hall of Fame, that oversight should be immediately addressed.

Jon Hartley Fox is to be thanked for his impressive addition to the popular music literature. "King of the Queen City" is highly recommended for anyone seriously interested in American vernacular music.


Ron Weinstock

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ELLIS ISLAND. WHERE THE WORLD CAME TOGETHER AND AMERICAN STYLE BEGAN



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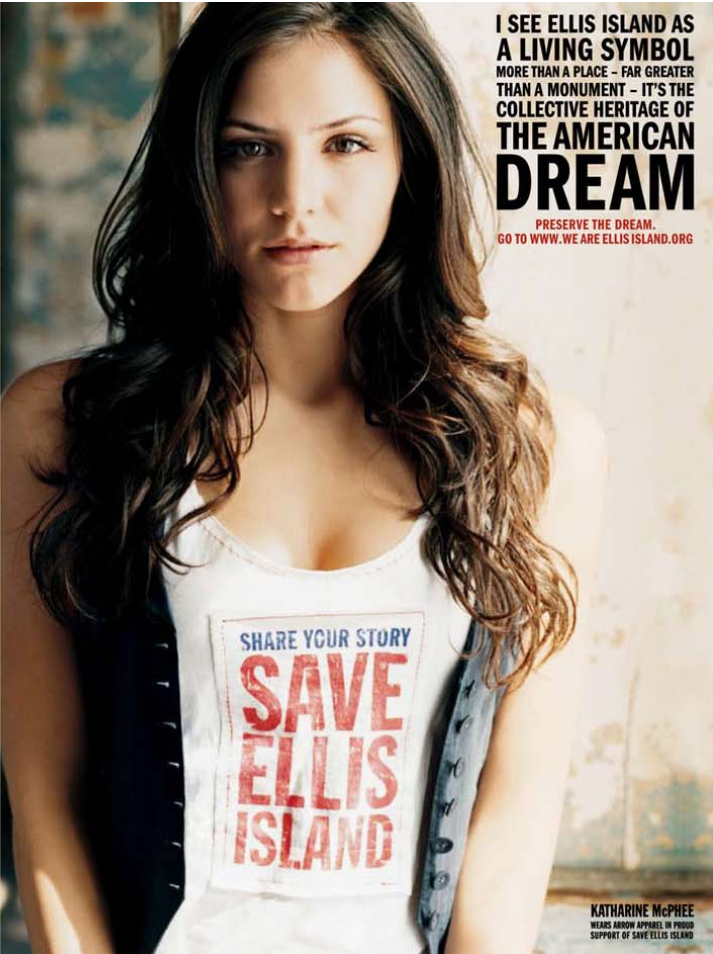


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