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"Buffalonious"

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

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The Ultimate Miles Box Set has Arrived

The Genius of Miles Davis 43 CD, 21-pound box set
Eight original box sets packaged in an individually-numbered full-size trumpet case (21½" x 11" x 8"), with extras: replica of Miles' trumpet mouthpiece, previously unseen lithograph by Miles, exclusive t-shirt, and more - available exclusively at GeniusOfMilesDavis.com

If you have someone who is a huge Miles fan to buy a gift for at the holidays, or at some point in the new year - the massive Miles box simply can't be topped. Of course, there is one catch - you have to be one of the few of us who has the bucks. Of course we did not get one of these to review, but we'll run Legacy's press sheet to give you everything you'll need to know before deciding to purchase the set. So, here we go...

The consummate artistry of Miles Davis and the scope of his musical vision at Columbia Records is paid the ultimate tribute on *THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS*. For the first time, this new collection brings together the eight deluxe multi-CD box sets that were known as *The Miles Davis Series*. Each volume – seven of which have collectible "metal spines" – explored a major phase of the artist's development from 1955 (*Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961*) through 1975 (*The Complete On The Corner Sessions*). Each volume presented the music from various LPs, plus a wealth of previously unissued session material. The eight box sets, totaling 43 CDs of music, were originally released on Columbia/Legacy between 1996 and 2007, and won a total of eight Grammy Awards.

Several of the original box sets have sold out over the years, and have now been re-manufactured especially for this strictly limited-edition run of 2,000 copies of *THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS*. Presented in a replica of Miles' own trumpet case, a collectible *objet d'art* in and of itself, each package will include a number of extras: an exact replica of Miles' custom-made 'Gustat' Heim model 2

trumpet mouthpiece, a previously unseen and unavailable fine art lithograph by Miles, and a boutique quality t-shirt designed and manufactured exclusively by Trunk Ltd. for this package.

Weighing in at 21 pounds and individually numbered, *THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS* is destined to be a treasure in the hands of true Miles Davis aficionados. A D2C (Direct to Consumer) exclusive via GeniusOfMilesDavis.com, it was \$1199.00 in advance of its September 14 release through Columbia/Legacy, a division of Sony Music Entertainment. But I just checked and it is currently, as of this writing, \$749.

[Note: *THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS* includes the eight studio session box sets that encompass the bulk of his original studio albums from the '50s to the '70s. It does not include the various Columbia/Legacy live performance multi-CD box sets, for example *The Complete Live at the Plugged Nickel 1965*, released in 1995; or *The Cellar Door Sessions 1970*, released in 2005.]

The signing of Miles Davis to Columbia Records made musical history in 1955. He continued to make musical history for decades to come, changing the course of jazz (and in the process, popular and *avant garde* music) "four or five times," as he himself once quipped. There were important albums under his name in the late-1940s and '50s before his arrival at Columbia, and there were also notable albums after his years at Columbia, from 1986 until his death in 1991.

But Columbia Records became the repository of the overwhelming majority of the signature albums recorded by Miles in his lifetime, many of them with long-time producer and collaborator Teo Macero. These individual albums were gathered together in their entirety for the first time last year as *The Complete Miles Davis Columbia Album Collection*. A functional chest with removable lid housed the 52 single and double album titles (70 CDs of music in total), each packaged in a mini-LP CD cardboard replica of the original jacket, with original artwork and spine.

THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS is also the result of a unique collaborative partnership effort between the Miles Davis Estate and Sony Music, which includes the redesign of the MilesDavis.com website. It is now the first unified and regularly updated site highlighting all aspects of his life. The dynamic web environment is not specific to Columbia/Legacy and Sony Music, in that it will cover product releases by other companies as well. The website, featuring news and vital information, video content, merchandise, and exclusive photography, will also offer special daily and weekly deals.

THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS draws together more than a decade of studio archival research by jazz scholars, annotators, and reissue producers. Each of the box sets in *The Miles Davis Series* was anxiously greeted with raves by the critical establishment upon their release, and more than half of the box sets received at least one Grammy Award, some winning multiple Grammys. They are summarized as follows (in chronological order of the original music, not the Columbia/Legacy release dates):

• *Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Colum-*

bia Recordings 1955-1961: This 6-CD box set (released in 2000) won two Grammy Awards, Best Boxed Recording Package and Best Album Notes. Focus is on the evolution of Miles' so-called "first great quintet," comprising John Coltrane (tenor saxophone), Red Garland (piano), Paul Chambers (bass), and Philly Joe Jones (drums), with important contributions by Cannonball Adderley (alto saxophone), Bill Evans (piano), Wynton Kelly (piano), and Jimmy Cobb (drums) – these sessions encompass the music for the LPs *'Round About Midnight*, *Milestones*, *Jazz Track*, *Kind Of Blue*, *Someday My Prince Will Come*, *Miles & Monk At Newport*, *Jazz At the Plaza*, and much more.

• *Miles Davis & Gil Evans: The Complete Columbia Studio Recordings*: The inaugural entry in *The Miles Davis Series*, this 6-CD box set (released in 1996) won three Grammy Awards, Best Historical Album, Best Album Notes, and Best Recording Package (Boxed), only the second time in Grammy history that was ever achieved. The partnership with Gil Evans spanned 1957 to 1968, and encompassed the music for the LPs *Miles Ahead*, *Porgy And Bess*, *Sketches Of Spain*, and *Quiet Nights*, but there is much more to be heard here.

• *Seven Steps: The Complete Columbia Recordings Of Miles Davis (1963-1964)*: This 7-CD box set (released in 2004) explores Miles' slow and careful development of his so-called "second great quintet," whose rhythm section comprised Herbie Hancock (piano), Ron Carter (bass), and Tony Williams (drums). Saxophonist George Coleman is heard on most of the music for the LPs *Seven Steps To Heaven*, *Quiet Nights*, *Miles Davis In Europe*, *My Funny Valentine*, and *Four & More*; and Sam Rivers joined for *Miles In Tokyo*. But it is not until the final CD's *Miles In Berlin* that Wayne Shorter enters the picture and the classic quintet's lineup was finalized.

• *Miles Davis Quintet 1965-'68: The Complete Columbia Studio Recordings*: Actually the second entry in *The Miles Davis Series*, this 6-CD box set (released in 1998) won the Grammy Award for Best Album Notes. The "second great quintet" of Shorter, Hancock, Carter, and Williams remains an all-time jazz standard, as heard on the music for the LPs *E.S.P.*, *Miles Smiles*, *Sorcerer*, *Nefertiti*, and *Miles in the Sky*, plus about half of *Filles De Kilimanjaro* and *Water Babies*.

• *The Complete In A Silent Way Sessions*: This 3-CD box set (released in 2001) covers less than six months from September 1968 to February 1969. But it is one of the most critical periods in Miles' career, as he transitions away from the "second great quintet" of Shorter, Hancock, Carter, and Williams. They are all here, to be sure, on the rest of the music from *Filles De Kilimanjaro* and *Water Babies* recorded in September and November. But by the time the *In A Silent Way* LP came into being, the picture had changed to include Chick Corea (electric piano), Joe Zawinul (organ and electric piano), Dave Holland (bass), and most significantly, John McLaughlin (electric guitar).

• *The Complete Bitches Brew Sessions*: The third entry in *The Miles Davis Series*, this 4-CD box set (released in 1998) won the Grammy Award for Best Boxed Recording Package, as it reprised the memorable cover art of the late

Mati Klarwein. Again covering less than six months time – from August 1969 (the week after Woodstock) through February 1970 – this is when the influence of Jimi Hendrix, Sly Stone, James Brown, Santana, and Marvin Gaye, as well as the Beatles' post-production editing pyrotechnics all came together for Miles. To his new quintet lineup of Shorter, Corea, Holland and Jack DeJohnette (drums), Miles often augmented the sessions with a dozen other players, among them: McLaughlin, Zawinul, Bennie Maupin (bass clarinet), Harvey Brooks (electric bass), Lenny White (drums), Don Alias (congas), and so on. The result was one of the greatest albums of Miles' career, and one of the most influential records in post-modern jazz and rock.

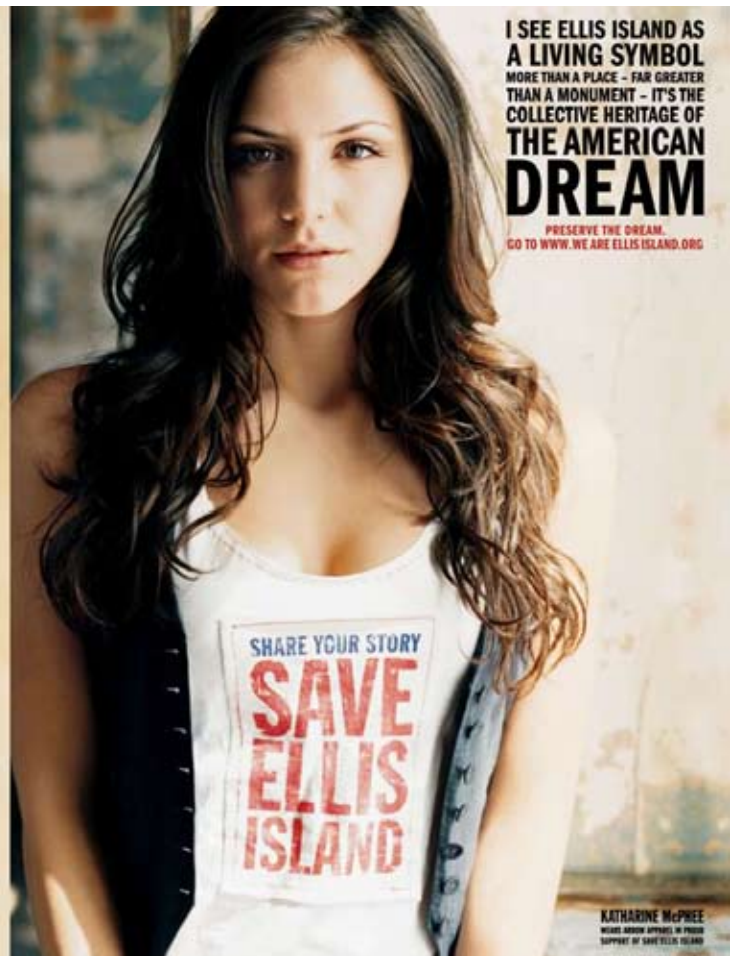
- *The Complete Jack Johnson Sessions*: This 5-CD box set (released in 2003) won the Grammy Award for Best Boxed Or Special Limited Edition Package. The *Bitches Brew* dates ended on February 6, 1970; these dates continue 12 days later and span less than four months through June. The difference is the greater role of McLaughlin (joined by 'free jazz' guitarist Sonny Sharrock), and the fiercer edginess of the music. The back-story was the contention for Muhammad Ali's heavyweight boxing title, and actor James Earl Jones' portrayal of turn-of-the-century black boxing champ Jack Jefferson in *The Great White Hope* (on Broadway and on film). All this was on Miles' mind in 1970, a year before *Shaft* ushered in a new breed of African-American hero.

- *The Complete On The Corner Sessions*: This 6-CD

box set (released in 2007) is the final entry in *The Miles Davis Series* and is also the latest chronologically. It jumps ahead two years to 1972, by which time the quintet lineups were a thing of the past, and Miles had transitioned into the funk-rock-influenced large-group that would define his style for the next two decades. The sessions are chronicled through mid-1975, and encompass the music of the LPs *On The Corner* (1972), *Big Fun* (1974), and *Get Up With It* (1974), although more than half the music on the box set was previously unissued at the time of its release three years ago.

- Printed on the t-shirt included inside *THE GENIUS OF MILES DAVIS* is this quotation: "I can't play like anyone else, I can't fight like anyone else, I can't do ANYTHING like anyone else. I'm just myself." – MILES DAVIS. Over the course of these eight box sets and 43 remarkable CDs, his music is, indeed, like nothing else – but its haunting, turbulent, fearless, visionary, multi-faceted self.

So there you have it! We have reviewed every one of the box sets included in this mega-set over the years. You can find the reviews in our archive database. When we launch our new site very soon, we'll be running a lot more news items, including important music release announcements such as this. And for the holiday gift givers, we've got another for Elvis coming up next. And in our CD reviews section, we'll have two to cover - Dave Brubeck and Jimi Hendrix. Unlike previous years, we have only these four sets as the record companies are laying low on the boxes until the economy straightens out. So I guess we just have to wait...





The Complete Elvis Presley Masters

At last, the ultimate tribute to the ultimate artist. For Elvis Presley's 75th birthday, the definitive collection of all his master recordings is being made available in stunning fashion.

THE COMPLETE ELVIS PRESLEY MASTERS is the crown jewel in RCA/Legacy's 2010 *Elvis 75* campaign. This limited edition, individually-numbered deluxe set contains 30 CDs with all 711 master recordings released during Elvis' lifetime, sequenced in strict chronological order. Also included are 103 rarities: additional masters, alternate takes, session outtakes, demos, rehearsal jams, home recordings, live performances and radio recordings. This triumph of musicology is the definitive document – a magnificent audio chronicle of the inspiration, pain and genius that make Elvis the world's most enduring musical and cultural icon.

THE COMPLETE ELVIS PRESLEY MASTERS is available exclusively at CompleteElvis.com. Only 1,000 numbered sets were available for sale worldwide in this limited edition first run. That run has sold out, so Sony is offering a second run which will not be numbered for a cost of \$749. It will be shipping on or before January 17.

Complementing the music is a beautifully designed 240-page hardbound reference book produced exclusively for this collection. A magnificent volume in its own right, this silk-screened, silver-gilded edition printed on archival paper is the ultimate reference work on the music of Elvis Presley. The discography was painstakingly researched by compilation producer Ernst Mikael Jørgensen, the respected director of RCA's Elvis catalog for over two decades and author of *Elvis Presley: A Life In Music* (St. Martin's Press, 1998), and co-written by him with award-winning author Peter Guralnick.

Jørgensen and Guralnick's extensive historical en-

tries cover every song selection from the perspective of a scholar and a fan, with enlightening background stories and historical context, along with release dates, chart positions and other info. The discography includes recording dates and locations, full musician credits, technical notes and a song index. In addition, the book reproduces the artwork for every 45 rpm single, EP and LP release. The book is full of rare and classic photographs from throughout Elvis' life and recording career, beginning with the cover photo by legendary Williams 'Popsie' Randolph from Elvis' first official RCA photo session at RCA Studios in New York, on December 1, 1955.

Anchoring the book is a brand-new 6,000-word essay by Guralnick, noted biographer of Elvis Presley. Guralnick's two volumes – *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley* (Little, Brown, 1994) and *Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis Presley* (Little, Brown, 1999) – are widely acknowledged as the definitive biographical studies of Elvis' life. In addition to writing the foreword to Jørgensen's *Elvis Presley: A Life In Music*, Guralnick also collaborated with him on another great reference work, *Elvis Day by Day: The Definitive Record of His Life and Music* (Random House, 1999).

Years in the making, *THE COMPLETE ELVIS PRESLEY MASTERS* has been compiled from the original analog master tapes where available, using 24-bit technology for greater sonic resolution and dynamics. Each track has been carefully restored to achieve the best sound reproduction without compromising the audio quality of the original master. The only exceptions are found on the rarities discs, which "derive from a variety of sources," as Jørgensen writes. "First priority has been given to vividness of performance, historical significance and rarity of repertoire."

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

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



*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

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 square-jawed.
 They have no rhythm
 And they wear crowns.*



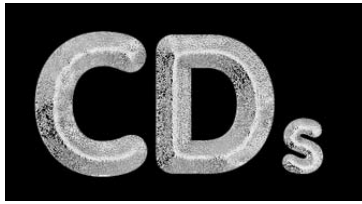
Art. Ask for More.

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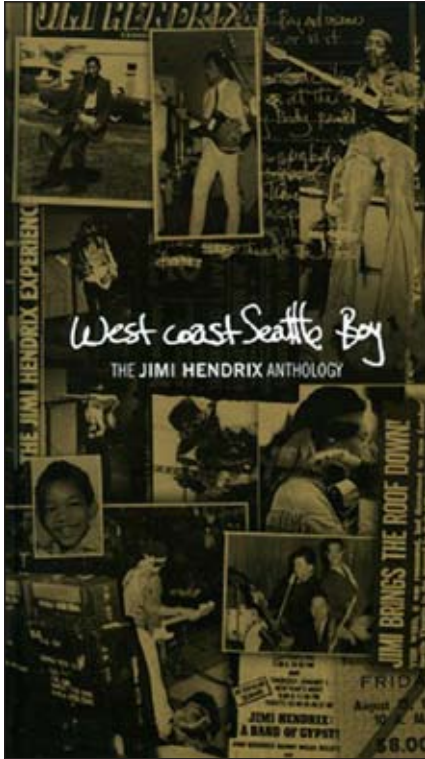


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We only bring you
the Cream of the Crop!



WEST COAST SEATTLE BOY

The Jimi Hendrix Anthology

EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/LEGACY 4-CD & 1-DVD SET

There are a handful of musicians whose influence is such that listeners crave any and every note that can be turned up. Jimi Hendrix is one of these and this four disc-plus-DVD set goes a long way towards satisfying that urge for discovery. 40-plus previously unreleased tracks trace the legendary guitarist's path from R&B journeyman to rock superstar.

While the music is the main attraction, the package also includes a 60-page booklet with rare photos and annotations on each track by John McDermott.

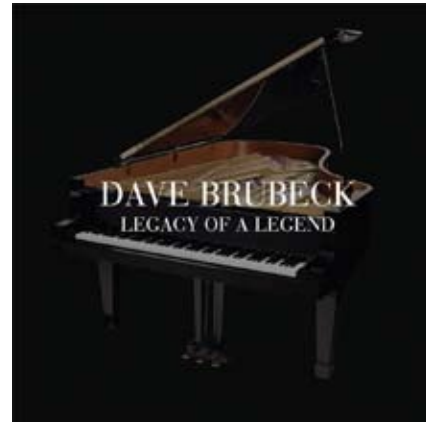
Beyond their sheer amusement value, the selections on the first disc, on which Hendrix works behind the Isley Brothers, Don Covay or Little Richard, reveal stylistic flashes that speak to his future work. It's hard not to hear his flourishes on early ballads and sense the roots of leads on "Little Wing" or "The Wind Cries Mary."

Alternate versions of several songs from *Are You Experienced* and *Axis: Bold As Love* bring interesting perspective to those pieces and mark Hendrix's "birth" as a producer. Supercharged "live" Fillmore East performances of "Fire," "Foxey Lady" and "Stone Free"

speak for themselves. The most intriguing fare in this package might be the abundant demos, impromptu takes and works-in-transition performed by the Experience and Band Of Gypsies line-ups or mixes of the two.

While several would see the light of day, completed or edited, often posthumously, the collective creative energy displayed on these versions of "Room Full Of Mirrors," "Hey Baby (New Rising Sun)" and others suggest the Seattle Boy was far from finished when he left us.

Duane Verh



DAVE BRUBECK

Legacy of a Legend

SONY / LEGACY 2CD SET

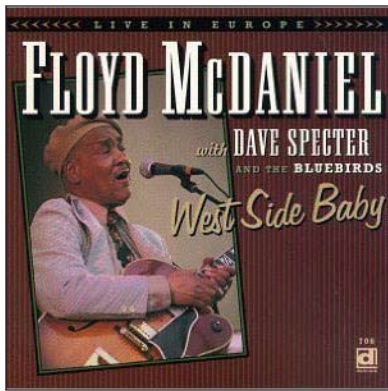
As a kick-off to a year-long 90th birthday campaign at Legacy Records, the label has just released this 2-CD set for which Brubeck hand picked the 21 tracks as he looked back the quartet's 17 years with Columbia Records.

The program opens with a track from their first studio album in 1955, "Jeepers Creepers," and closes with two tracks featuring Gerry Mulligan from 1970, "Out of Nowhere" and "St. Louis Blues." In between, Dave has picked songs culled from 19 different albums spanning the years from 1955 through 1957.

Most are the famous quartet with alto saxophone master Paul Desmond, bassist Eugene Wright and drummer Joe Morello, but there is also a track from the 1960 album Brubeck did with Jimmy Rushing, a song called "Evenin'," and two tracks from the album "The Real Ambassadors," released in 1961 showcasing several singers. Included here are "My One Bad Habit," featuring Carmen McRae, and "Summer Song," featuring Louis Armstrong.

Two songs from the album "Time Out," the first jazz album to sell a million copies, are here with the quartet's most famous song, Desmond's "Take 5," along with "Blue Rondo a la Turk." Another song from that album, "Three To Get Ready," is featured, but in a previously unreleased live version from 1967. The enclosed booklet contains liner notes and annotations written by Brubeck's son Darius. This is without a doubt a sweet treat for any Brubeck fan out there – or someone you'd like to become one.

Bill Wahl



FLOYD McDANIEL WITH DAVE SPECTER AND THE BLUEBIRDS West Side Baby (Live in Europe) DELMARK

The late guitarist and vocalist, Floyd McDaniel, was born in the south but grew up in Chicago where he attended high school with Nat Cole and Roy Nance. A performance at Chicago's 1933 World Fair led to his career in music playing jazz, blues and pop for 15 years as part of the Four Blazers and later played with one of the versions of the Ink Spots.

An appearance at the Chicago Blues Festival and some coaxing from Willie Dixon got Floyd to start playing his mix of jazz and blues leading to a well-received album on Delmark in 1994, but before he could record a follow up, he passed away August 22, 1995. Fortunately a recording was made of a 1994 German Festival appearance where he was backed by Dave Spector and the Bluebirds and Delmark issued it in 1997 and have just re-released it, titled "West Side Baby."

The album certainly illustrates what Delmark labels his "whiskey-smooth vocals and Charlie Christian/T-Bone Walker influenced guitar work." Spector's own playing is a sympathetic second and complimentary guitar voice for McDaniel.

It's an amiable collection of a number of well known tunes such as "St. Louis Blues," where he takes a fresh take instrumentally during his solo with a bit more use of chords than Spector. Not many people can introduce a song associated with Nat King Cole by noting he went to school with Cole as he does in introducing "Route 66."

One does not hear the Parish/White classic "Evenin'" performed that often these days, and this 15-odd year old performance is a fine one, followed by a nice "Red Top," where some of his playing suggests the late Robert Lockwood. The performance segues into a vocal take of "Meet Me With Your Black Drawers On." McDaniel's rendition of "Backwater Blues" gives an idea of how it would have sounded if T-Bone Walker had recorded it. More T-Bone Walker styled blues can be heard on Jesse Mae Robinson's "Every Time." Even an unrehearsed, impromptu "Sweet Home Chicago" has it charms on this delightful CD that we can thank Delmark for making available again. *Ron Weinstock*



HOUSTON PERSON Moment to Moment HIGHNOTE

"An American original," "Part of the Boss Tenor Tradition," "rich, robust tone," and "one of the great interpreters of the Great American Songbook." These are some of the phrases I have culled from Bill Milkowski's notes to the new HighNote Houston person recording, "Moment to Moment."

Recorded at the studio of the legendary Rudy Van Gelder, Person is supported on this CD by Ray Drummond on bass, Randy Johnston on guitar, John di Martino on piano and Willie Jones III on drums with Terrell Stafford's trumpet marking its debut on a Houston Person recording. This is a top-shelf swinging band with some superb solos throughout.

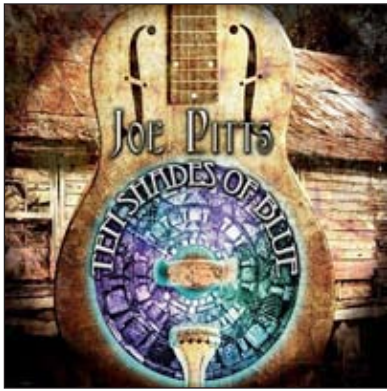
And there is plenty of wonderful playing from the leader, who throughout plays with intelligence and warmth. Person swaggers through with his driving hard bop original "Bleeker Street," which also features fiery playing from Stafford and Johnson. His playing hits hard, yet always displays a lyricism.

One would be hard-pressed to name a saxophonist today who caresses a ballad like Person does on "I Cover the Waterfront," where his tenor sings the lyric. The title track, from Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer, finds the group swinging lightly and brightly, while Person delights with his feathery tone. While there are no low-points here, one must note the lovely bossa nova "E Nada Mais," as well as the brisk, swinging treatment of the Billy Joel hit, "Just the Way You Are," with his warmth evident as he states the theme on a performance that has sizzling high note work from Stafford as well.

"Moment to Moment" adds to the strong body of work Houston has produced on HighNote these past few years. He consistently plays at a high level with such a warm and robust tone with a lyricism that makes every new recording by him a joy for the listener's ears.

Ron Weinstock

jazz-blues.com



JOE PITTS
Ten Shades of Blue
KIJAM

Singer-guitarist Joe Pitts is a name new to these ears, but this Arkansas native has put together a hard hitting self-issued release, "Ten Shades of Blue" (Kijam) that finds him covering some of his inspirations and others he just likes. With his rhythm of Jimmy Lynnon bass guitar and assorted drummers, keyboards and harp, he handles ten songs that display his gravelly, unforced songs and his fluent guitar. Initially hearing the blues-rock of the British invasion, he discovered Albert, B.B. and Freddie King, Muddy, Elmore and Robert Johnson and others on the blues highway.

Interesting opener is "Breaking Up Somebody's Home," with his guitar-centered performance derived more from Albert King's recording and he takes a solo that displays his own style. There is loose accompaniment for his take on Muddy Waters' "Cross-Eyed Cat," with some nice harp playing slide guitar and more modern-styled guitar on the coda. His vocal is pretty solid here but his vocal is a bit over the top on Walter Trout's "Clouds on the Horizon," on which he plays some screaming guitar. With an insistent groove, his vocal is more restrained in delivery and he does a nice take on Luther Allison's "Pain in the Streets." The organ playing adds a nice touch to the backing on this track.

Eric Gale's "Freedom For My Demons" brings blistering blues-rock guitar over a melodic line that evokes "Stormy Monday," as he fervently delivers the lyric about how the demons are dealing and what he's selling sure looks fine, but give Joe some freedom from his demons and some peace of mind. "Put the Shoe on the Other Foot" is a nice rendition of an Albert Collins recording with some fine playing that suggest Collins without trying to be a sound-alike, while Pitts' rendition of "I'm Worried" is a bit more in the vein of Allman Brothers than Elmore with a bit of distortion on his vocal. The jazzy, low-key "No Stranger to the Blues" features some nice atmospheric rhythm guitar and biting single note chicken scratching runs with a nice vocal.

A bit more rock flavoring is heard on the guitar on a nice shuffle take on John Mayall's "Walkin' on Sunset," with Terry Bradley adding slide guitar here. The disc

concludes with Peter Green's "The World Keeps On Turning," on which he takes to an acoustic guitar and his fingerpicking contrasts nicely with some chording as he sings about nobody sees him crying or knows how feels, while his relaxed delivery contributes to a moving vocal performance. It's a nice end to a collection of generally solid, engaging performances.

This should be available from Amazon, iTunes and other sources. Weblinks for Joe Pitts include <http://joepitts.com/> and <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Joe-Pitts-Band/54309185026>. **Ron Weinstock**



**JOEY DEFRANCESCO, ROBI BOTOS,
VITO REZZA, PHIL DWYER**

One Take, Volume 4
ALMA RECORDS

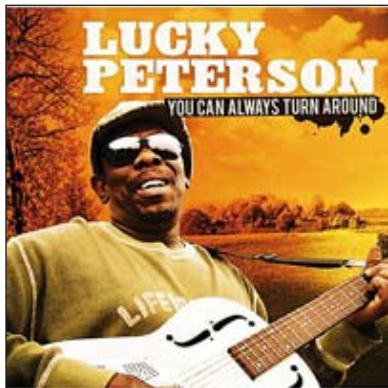
Adding to Canada's Alma label One Take series that producer Peter Cardinali conceived and launched with the 2003 Volume One release, Hammond organist Joey DeFrancesco returns to lead this six-tune set with Vito Rezza on drums, Robi Botos on piano/Fender Rhodes, and Phil Dwyer on tenor sax.

With no rehearsals, no overdubs, no edits, and just one take for each tune, this group delivers the ultimate jam, energetically stretching "There Is No Greater Love" to a 10-minute, 38-second spree where each musician gets spotlighted. Next, Dwyer plays the melody head for their smoky seven-plus minute version of the ballad "Tenderly." Stepping up the tempo, the team tackles "Village Green," a modern, bopping number that splendidly shows off everyone's skills. DeFrancesco contributes "Not That," a bluesy, grooving eight-plus minute original that showcases his robust talents and gets your toes a-tappin'. The Sammy Fain/Bob Hilliard tune, "Alice In Wonderland" slows the tempo and features Dwyer solos, a lengthy Fender Rhodes solo from Botos, and a punched-up traps solo from Rezza, punctuated with DeFrancesco's chordings. The final tune, "Broadway," rumbles to a start and maintains a blistering pace for several minutes.

Philadelphia-raised DeFrancesco signed with Columbia Records at age 17, toured in Miles Davis' band, played with a slew of top jazz musicians, recorded and toured with his own trio, and has been cited in critics and readers polls. He recorded Volume One (both CD

and DVD are available) in the One Take series with Rezza, Guido Basso, and Lorne Lofsky. Botos is an award-winning player who has recorded and performed with a diverse array of players. Composer-arranger-performer Dwyer has won multiple Juno awards and performed with top pop and jazz artists. The fiery drummer Rezza has released five albums with his band (5 after 4) and recorded with jazz and pop leaders.

This stellar team (one American, three Canadians) can play expertly at any tempo and delivers a set that merits replay!
Nancy Ann Lee



LUCKY PETERSON
You Can Always Turn Around
DREYFUS RECORDS

This writer was living in Buffalo and doing a blues show on the University of Buffalo's station WBFO, at the time I first saw and heard Lucky Peterson. He was playing keyboards behind his father, James Peterson, at a club on Main Street near downtown Buffalo.

He was a teenager then, not the pre-teen that had appeared on the Tonight Show and recorded singles and an album. His talent was evident every time I heard him as part of his father's band, including a couple of performances that were fundraisers for the station. One could not help but be impressed by his musicianship. I remember his dad telling me Lucky had perfect pitch. In the years since I left Buffalo, I would hear about James and Lucky. Lucky had a break as he played in the bands of Bobby Bland and Little Milton, touring with them overseas and playing on their recordings before recording for KingSnake, and then he had an album on Alligator that was produced by KingSnake I believe.

He continued to perform and over the years he was one of the artists that signed to Verve-Gitanes, where he produced three of the finest blues recordings of recent years mixing in funk and classic soul with straight blues. Also on Verve, he accompanied Mavis Staples on a great album devoted to the music of Mahalia Jackson. Then he had a disc on Dreyfus that continued in the same vein as his Verve albums. Since then, he has also recorded for small independent labels like JSP, and also had publicized personal issues including substance abuse. Reportedly (and thankfully) he has placed these demons behind him.

Dreyfus Records has just issued Lucky's latest album,

"You Can Always Turn Around," and the title and some of the songs have a reflective side as they deal with struggle and change. This recording was produced in the Catskills with some of the Woodstock musicians including Larry Campbell, Scott Petito and Gary Burke, and the flavor is quite different from Lucky's prior recordings. "*Dust My Broo*," opens and while Lucky, who is playing a dobro here, sings forcefully (although a little over the top at times) it is hardly an original performance.

The version of Blind Willie McTell's "*Statesboro Blues*" seems like an unplugged adaptation of the Allman Brothers recording, which itself was derived from Taj Mahal's recording on his eponymously titled disc over forty years ago. It's hard to get excited with these two covers. The cover of Reverend Gary Davis' "*Death Don't Have No Mercy*" strikes this listener as a much stronger performance.

Bill Callahan's "*I'm New Here*" has a lyric about being new around town, but musically it's far from the blues and a bit more gentle vocal, spoken at times on a folksy-sounding tune. "*Trouble*," penned by Ray LaMontagne, has some really nice piano by Peterson as he sings about trouble been bothering his soul since the day he was born, worry not leave his mind alone until he was saved by a woman. The sparse backing helps his vocal stand out here. "*Trampled Rose*," was co-written by Tom Waits and Kathleen Brennan, opens with Lucky sounding like someone calling believers to prayers and while the lyrics touch on themes of hurt and hurting others, it comes off off-kilter to these ears. Lucky picks up the electric guitar and with heavy fuzztone and a bit over-the-top singing for Lucinda Williams' "*Atonement*," that strikes this listener as pretentious.

While he switches to steel guitar (dobro), the rendition of the late Bobby Charles' "*Why Are People Like That*" also sounds too forced. "*Four Little Boys*" is a bit more low-key and this song that he wrote for his father James, with the "*Forty Four Blues*" riff incorporated in its melody, is a more appealing performance. The outstanding track here is the wonderful rendition of "*I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free*," where there is a wonderful duet with Lucky's wife, Tamara. His piano shines on this track as well and they do justice to this number that is identified with the great Nina Simone. Curtis Mayfield's "*Think*" closes this album with steel guitar and acoustic slide giving this instrumental a country flavor.

"You Can Always Turn Around" certainly represents a change from Lucky Peterson from prior recordings, and not necessarily for the better here. Not that the performances are terrible, but few of the performances are distinctive and stand out in the fashion of Peterson's earlier recordings that were more grounded in soul and funk. And while some have suggested this album showcases Lucky's singing, one might suggest these folks really haven't listened to Lucky's earlier recordings because he always has shown himself to be an excellent vocalist. Still, it is nice to have a new Lucky Peterson recording available, even if it is not among his best work.

Ron Weinstock



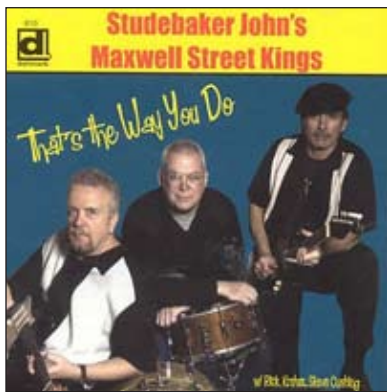
KIRSTEN THIEN

Delicious
SCREEN DOOR

It seems never to fail that one of the year's best releases surely shows up near year's end. In this case, NYC-based singer/guitarist Kirsten Thien has served up a captivating soul set that, whether smoldering or scorching, is always generating serious heat.

If Peaches Staten's work conjures up a young Koko Taylor, Thien's freshness and roots-savvy may have one flashing on an early-stage Bonnie Raitt. She masterfully projects a simultaneous vulnerability and toughness, all very seductive, on a string of well-crafted soul stirrers. Notable cuts include a first-class Memphis ballad "Nobody's Ever Loved Me Like You Do", the edgy "Taxi Love" and a splendid after-hours sizzler "Please Drive". Backup is superb. Find this one and buy it.

Duane Verh



**STUDEBAKER JOHN'S
MAXWELL STREET KINGS**

That's The Way It Is
DELMARK

Studebaker John Grimaldi has been playing straight, non-nonsense blues and roots music for years.

The latest project by the vocalist, guitarist and harp player is with the Maxwell Street Kings, a homage to the times when the open air market on Maxwell Street rang with the blues sounds of street musicians and when blues giants like Muddy waters, Howlin' Wolf, Elmore James and others could be heard in the Chicago west

and south side clubs.

His fellow Kings include guitarist Rich Kreher whose credits include playing in Muddy Waters' last band, and drummer Steve Cushing, best known for his "Blues Before Sunrise" radio show, but who has played behind, among others, Big Smokey Smothers, Magic Slim and Billy Boy Arnold. Delmark has just issued "That's The Way It Is," a 15-tune romp through traditional Chicago blues styles.

The disc opens with the title track, a tasty Jimmy Reed styled shuffle with lyrics that evoke some of Reed's hits. Two slide numbers follow, with a broom-dusting "Fine Cadillac," conjuring up Hound Dog Taylor and the Houserockers.

I would think Big John Wrencher is among those smiling on "Headin' Down to Maxwell Street," with John's gritty singing about heading to Maxwell Street and jumping and shouting to the sounds over a droning accompaniment and forceful harp. "If You Would Love Me" has a doomy bass line, conjuring up Muddy, Wolf and Eddie Taylor with John adding more potent slide, while "B-Line" is a simple Little Walter styled instrumental with Cushing pushing the shuffle groove along nicely (Fred Below must be smiling too) and nice use of echo in the recording.

"So In Love With You" is a simple shuffle with some grungy guitars before John rips off another solo. "Son of the Seventh Son" is a nice slow blues with an obvi-

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ous allusion to the Willie Mabon recording, but a lyric that references numerous Chicago blues song titles and phrases from these songs. "Low Down Woman" captures more Hound Dog Taylor flavor in the dirty guitar shuffle accompaniment that is based on the "Dust My Broom" riff with another tight slide break, followed by "When the Mule Won't Ride," with the spare backing sound like a Jay Miller backing to Slim Harpo, with a melody that suggests "Scratch My Back."

"Shake It" features more wild slide with a juggernaut groove. "Stepping Stone" is a nice Muddy Waters' styled blues that mixes the grit and sandpaper in John's voice with a passionate, yet relaxed, delivery for a vocal that rings true.

The rest of the album brings together similar elements from classic Chicago blues, but always in a fresh fashion that takes the inspirations as a launching point, and not something they try to imitate.

Studebaker John may have been inspired by Hound Dog Taylor, and Hound Dog's influence can be heard in his slide playing. However, Studebaker brings his own approach to how the solos are put together and with the terrific support he receives from Kreher and Cushing has put together a marvelously entertaining CD with over an hour of foot stomping solid blues grooves.

Ron Weinstock

jazz-blues.com

James Cotton **GIANT**

"Among the greats of all time. He blazes on harp with brilliant virtuosity." —Rolling Stone

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TAKE 6

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year HEADS UP

This pleasing holiday album is the third Christmas album for the *a cappella* jazz group that got its start at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama in 1980. Take 6 today is Claude V. McKnight III, Mark Kibble, Joel Kibble, David Thomas, Dr. Cedric Dent and Alvin Chea.

These talented singers put their indelible harmony-rich marks on holiday favorites such as "White Christmas," "Sleigh Ride," "I'll Be Home For Christmas," "Jingle Bells, and seven more tunes, including their playful take on "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch." Another highlight is their novel version of Tchaikovsky's "The Sugarplum Dance (Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy), deftly arranged by Mark Kibble.

At this time where *a cappella* singing is making a comeback, due in part to the television show, The Sing Off, this group continues to build on their award-winning history with fresh arrangements, beautifully blended vocals and roots in gospel music. Nancy Ann Lee

EDEN BRENT

Ain't Got No Troubles YELLOW DOG

Pianist Eden Brent ventured to New Orleans and recruited numerous "A" list musicians to add some Big Easy spice to this release including Colin Linden on guitars, George Porter, Jr. on bass, Jon Cleary on Hammond B3 and a swinging horn section.

The willingness of such first call musicians to lend their talent to a relative newcomer like Brent reflects the stature that she has gained since making a huge splash with her 2006 International Blues Challenge win and her 2008 release, *Mississippi No. 1*. Tutored by Abie "Boogaloo" Ames, Brent has wide range of piano skills that make her as comfortable with the Kansas City Swing of Jay McShann as with harder pounding boogie woogie that gained her the nickname "Little Boogaloo."

While this disc features plenty of her piano chops it never serves as a mere vehicle for her to show her prowess on the keys. Instead, her strong songwriting and compelling vocals are what will keep you coming back for more. With a delivery that recalls Bessie Smith

or Maria Muldaur in her jug band days, Brent pulls you into her tales of men who need to make up their mind, "Someone to Love," life without a purpose, "Ain't Got No Troubles" and gold-digging ladies with their eye on her man, "In Love With Your Wallet." Standout tracks include the rollicking "Let's Boogie Woogie," the swinging "Later Than You Think" and the road house blues of Delbert McClinton's "Right To Be Wrong."

Mark Smith



HERB MORAND AND PAUL BARBARIN 1950/1951 AMERICAN MUSIC

As regular readers of this magazine may be aware, I have a fondness for traditional New Orleans style jazz.

The George H Buck Foundation's group of labels has issued invaluable releases of 'authentic' New Orleans Jazz by many of the pioneers of the idiom with many historical releases issued on the American Music label. American Music was originally a historically important label that New Orleans jazz advocate Bill Russell founded in 1944.

The original American Music label issued recordings by Bunk Johnson and others and Mr. Buck purchased the label in 1990. One CD on American Music, "Herb Morand 1950/ Paul Barbarin 1951," brings performances by two prominent New Orleans musicians.

Trumpeter-vocalist Morand, in addition to his performances as a New Orleans trumpeter, had been a member of the celebrated Harlem Hamfats; which also included Charlie and (Kansas) Joe McCoy, and New Orleans clarinetist Odell Rand among their members.

While initially they served as accompanists for singers including Johnny Temple, Rosetta Howard and Frankie Jaxon, after their recording "Oh Red" became a hit they were signed to Decca where they recorded 50 odd titles. Wikipedia describes their sound as a mix of blues, dixieland jazz and swing jazz (I would add boogie woogie), and their recordings presage the mix of blues, swing and jive of Louis Jordan and early jump blues. They broke up around 1939 when Morand returned to New Orleans.

This CD presents one 1950 session that was recorded at J&M Studio, which was the legendary studio that Cosimo Matassa operated and from which many

classic recordings by Roy Brown, Paul Gayten, Fats Domino, Smiley Lewis, Lloyd Price and others was made. Morand is joined on a session by a solid band that included pianist Lester Santiago, clarinetist Albert Burbank, Eddie Pierson on trombone, Louis James on piano and Morris Morand on drums.

The 5 tunes (2 songs have two takes) include a lively "Down in Honky Tonk Town" displaying the hot jazz style, as well as the hipster "If You Are A Viper." Some strong playing can be heard on "Pork Chop Rag" that Morand kicks off before Burbank takes a solo exhibiting a heavy vibrato (he sometimes comes across as shrill) followed by Santiago's rag-laced piano.

Morand also takes a vocal on "None of My Jelly Roll," with a stately opening from Santiago before Burbank's clarinet glides around Morand's vocal (with some scating), before taking a lengthy clarinet solo. There are two takes of the amusing, risqué "Have You Seen My Kitty," with some nice, gruff trombone by Pierson, before the three horns come in together for the coda. The second take has a longer introduction from the horns before Morand's vocal.

Paul Barbarin was a celebrated drummer, band leader and composer ("Bourbon Street Parade" and "Second Line"). His session dates from 1951 and includes Ernie Cagnolatti on trumpet, Burbank on clarinet, Pierson on trombone and Santiago on piano. His eight selections come from two sessions and open with a terrific, swinging "Eh las Bas," sung enthusiastically in creole French with Pierson taking a short solo before Cagnolatti rips off some hot trumpet with Pierson and Burbank collectively embellishing the trumpet lead.

Cagnolatti takes the lead at the start of "Lily of the Valley," with again the other two horns embellishing things before each takes a short solo as the rhythm joyfully keeps the music going. A medium tempo "Closer Walk with Thee" has excellent collective playing, while the recording of "Panama" is terrific.

Of course one must note what a terrific drummer Barbarin was and this is demonstrated throughout his recordings here.

Having recently praised a CD devoted to Barbarin, so I am not surprised how good his recordings here are.

There is also full CD available of Herb Morand on American Music that, based on these selections on this CD, this writer will check out soon. *Ron Weinstock*

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CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE

The Well ALLIGATOR

The veteran Charlie Musselwhite has returned to Alligator Records for his new CD, "The Well." A career that on record dates back to the mid-sixties, Musselwhite continues to produce strong blues.

On this set he brings his harp (and guitar on two tracks) to a session with guitarist Dave Gonzales; bassist John Bazz; and drummer Stephen Hodges with Mavis Staples joining for one track. All the songs are self-penned by Musselwhite (one with Zoe Wood) drawing on his personal experiences in many cases.

The opening "Rambler's Blues," with its adaptation of the "Catfish Blues" melody, finds him delivering his lyric of rambling down this dark and dreary road with a nice harp break that complements the directness of his vocal. "Dig The Pain" is a nice shuffle that was generated from the days of heavy drinking and how he would dig the pain to get through it as he transfers the thought to a woman who he just can't leave.

Gonzales contributes a fine solo (playing with little distortion) with another fine solo from Musselwhite. "The Well" also takes a familiar blues melody to which Musselwhite recalls little Jessica McClure and how brave she was after falling into a Texas well and how Musselwhite said a prayer for her and gave up drinking to show some bravery himself, and just like she was rescued he came out a better man.

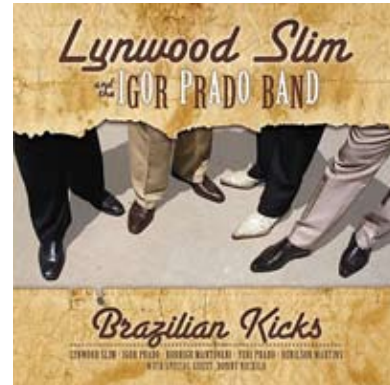
"Where Highway 61 Runs," set against a Magic Sam-based groove, finds him remembering about the delta and how blues has been his comforter. "Sad and Beautiful World," with Mavis Staples joining the vocals, is a moving song where he says some of things he wanted to when his mother was murdered, with a fine harp break.

"Sonny Payne Special" is a strong instrumental feature dedicated to the legendary King Biscuit Time radio show host. "Good Times" has Musselwhite on guitar as he recalls the days of youthful partying as he asks where did our good times go, with nice slide guitar and effective spare backing. "Cadillac Woman" has Musselwhite's thoughts about women who run over their men, while he delivers a spoken vocal with his ruminations on Marie Laveau and hoodoo Doctor John for the atmospheric "Hoodoo Queen." "Cook County

Blues" has a country flavor as Musselwhite recalls a time he was busted by a lying cop and spent time in Cook County jail. "Clarksdale Getaway" is a terrific instrumental where Musselwhite's tone and his solo evoke Big Walter.

His vocals may not be as robust as in his youth but they reflect his experiences more and his songwriting has matured. Wisdom has replaced the brashness of his earlier vocals while Charlie Musselwhite's songs reflect a life well-lived and all the pains and joys that has entailed. His harp playing remains strong and inventive. "The Well" may be Musselwhite's best recording in years.

Ron Weinstock



LYNWOOD SLIM & IGOR PRADO BAND

Brazilian Kicks DELTA GROOVE

A few months ago, I was more than pleasantly surprised by a blues release from the Brazilian Igor Prado Band, writing "Guitarist and vocalist Prado, along with brother Yuri on drums, Rodrigo Mantovani, bass and Denilson Martins on saxophones, mixes hard modern blues and Memphis Soul with some ripping guitar"

A new surprise came my way as I received an advance of a new recording by West Coast singer and harp player Lynwood Slim, who had traveled down to Sao Paulo to record the Prado Band. "Brazilian Kicks" is the new release on Delta Groove, and the combination of Slim's vocals and harp with the ripping backing by the Igor Prado Band makes for a strong recording deeply rooted in classic blues, soul and funk.

"Shake It Baby" opens this disc and is the only track on which Prado sings. This is a James Brown styled number that Junior Wells and Buddy Guy penned and recorded over forty years ago. Prado takes it more into a funk band vein with booting sax from 20-year-old Denilson Martins. Besides Igor Prado's guitar (he takes a terrific break here full of single note runs and Ike Turner styled whammy bar effects), Slim rides it out on flute as the performance fades out.

Guest pianist Donny Nicholo joins bassist Mantovani and drummer Yuri Prado to create a terrific rhythm section, evident on the Dave Bartholomew penned "Is It True," with nice piano as the song fades out.

Martins' multi-tracked horns kick off the cover of Wyonnie Harris' recording of "Bloodshot Eyes," as Slim emphatically delivers the Hank Penny lyric. Martins takes a robust tenor sax solo before Prado takes a solo break with a bit of twang added to the single note runs. "My Hat's on the Side of My Head" is a swinging blues-ballad comfortably crooned by Slim with jazzy playing (echoes of Al Casey and Tiny Grimes) before more fine tenor sax.

Duke Robillard fans should really dig this track. The hot instrumental "Blue Bop" is based on a familiar riff that Prado launches off from for some hot choruses. Martins' rips off a husky baritone sax solo displaying considerable agility in addition to his robust sound.

The band takes the temperature down a notch for Slim's cover of Little Walter's "Little Girl," as Prado evoking Louis Myers and Slim shows his debt to Little Walter. Mantovani and Yuri Prado provide their unobtrusive support here as throughout. "I Sat and Cried" is a superb rendition of an uptown blues by the late Jimmy 'T-99' Nelson, while on Slim's on ballad, "Maybe Someday," the band captures the melancholy tone of his lyrics.

Nicholo plays some nice jazz-shaded blues piano before Prado takes a short break. This track suggests some of Johnny Bassett's blues and, like those recordings, demonstrates that mellow does not mean bland or devoid of soul.

"Show Me the Way," another Slim original (co-penned with Junior Watson), is a terrific Chicago-styled blues with more terrific harp, followed by "Bill's Change," a driving Prado penned instrumental with more scintillating guitar and some fierce baritone sax. Like most of this album, it is perfect for dancing.

The rendition of Memphis Slim's "The Comeback" is more urbane, jazzy (than straight Chicago) blues with tinges of Joe Williams in Lynwood Slim's vocal and small group Basie in the backing here. Prado plays jazzy on this, while Martins raspy tenor is right on.

The most unexpected delight is the closing instrumental "Going to Mona Lisa's," penned by Slim and Prado. It sounds like a lost Little Walter instrumental with the Aces. Yuri Prado comes off like Fred Below as he drops bombs and drives the performance along. Slim in his notes states that Yuri has "the snap, attack and timing as good or better than any of the heavyweights out there today!"

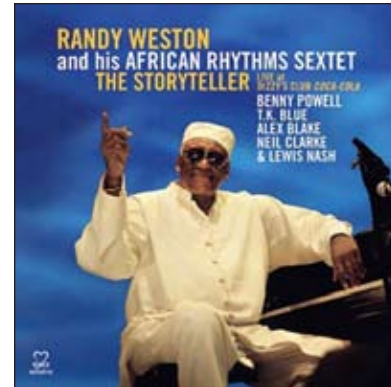
I can't recall anyone catching the tenor of Below's drumming as Yuri Prado does here. While this track may place his drumming more upfront, his playing throughout validates how Slim described him.

Listening to the collaboration between Lynwood Slim and the Igor Prado Band reinforces the enthusiasm I have shown towards Prado a few months ago. Slim's own contributions display his fine singing and terrific harp playing on an album that amazes in how good it is. This is clearly among the best blues recordings I have heard in 2010.

Delta Groove's website is www.deltagroovemusic.com.

com, while Slim can be found on myspace at www.myspace.com/lynwoodslimband and Igor Prado at www.myspace.com/igorprado. I have a feeling we will be hearing more from our Blues friends from San Paolo.

Ron Weinstock



RANDY WESTON & HIS AFRICAN RHYTHMS SEXTET

The Storyteller: Live at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola MOTEMA

On this live-recorded December 12, 2009 appearance at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City, 84-year old composer-leader-pianist Randy Weston heads a vibrant 11-tune set that includes his three-movement piece, "The African Cookbook Suite," first recorded in 1964.

This is Weston's debut recording for Motema and was released in November as a companion to his memoir, *African Rhythms: The Autobiography of Randy Weston*, a collaboration with Willard Jenkins published by Duke University Press.

Weston launches the set with a solo piano performance dedicated to Chano Pozo, the African-Cuban composer-percussionist who collaborated with Dizzy Gillespie in the late 1940s, changing the form of jazz. The band joins in on the Weston classic, "African Sunrise," before launching into "The African Cookbook Suite."

Weston's group features T.K. Blue (flute, saxophones), Alex Blake (bass), Benny Powell (trombone), Lewis Nash (drums) and Neil Clarke (percussion). Weston takes a lengthy solo on "Hi Fly," an original hit that was first recorded at the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival.

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1926, Weston was able to catch the great jazz artists, such as Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk and Coleman Hawkins, that helped to shape his sound. During the 1950s, he gigged around New York with Cecil Payne and Kenny Dorham and wrote many of his admired tunes. He made his first recording for Riverside in 1954.

Inspired in part by his father who told his son that he was "an African born in America," Weston began incorporating African elements into his compositions, as heard on *Uhuru Afrika* (1960). Weston traveled throughout the continent of Africa in the 1960's to fur-

ther absorb each nation's musical style. He spent most of his time until 1973 in Africa, opening his African Rhythms Club in Morocco. Weston returned to the USA in the early 1990s and began a recording association with Verve. Weston has built a distinguished career in music that includes over 46 CDs as a leader, mostly of African-inspired jazz, and many international awards and honors.

The Storyteller is Weston's first recording with the entire African Rhythms ensemble since his 1999 recording, *Spirit: The Power of Music*. The session is also Weston's final recording with Benny Powell, a long-time collaborator and friend, who died in June, 2010. Weston's agile keyboard prowess, the choice of material and the talents of his colleagues make this a fully enjoyable listen. Extensive fold-out liner notes by Robin D. G. Kelley describe each remarkable tune. *Nancy Ann Lee*



JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

Diamonds in the Dirt
RUF

Listening to Joanne Shaw Taylor's sultry, smokey vocals one is impressed by the passion she brings on her and how she builds her guitar solos, along with the swagger in her sometimes-furious guitar.

Her new Ruf release, "Diamonds in the Dirt," certainly rocks hard and with her attractive looks to complement, one can certainly anticipate her building a substantial following with her blues-tinged rock. Listening to the opening "Can't Keep Living Like This," we get taken along for a searing, driving solo that fades at the track's end.

While she is on the cover of *Blues Revue* for an issue devoted on "Women in the Blues," these ears do not hear much blues here, rather hard rock or blues-rock. I say this as an observation, not an evaluation of the music here. Listening to "Dead and Gone," as she bellows out "when the morning comes, I'll be dead and gone," the performance is hard rock, even if there is some blues in her musical foundation. At the same time, she is adept in building her vocals as well as her jamming solos. But then again, a second track that fades at the end.

"Same As It Never Was" has a nice catchy lyric, a very attractive vocal, a nicely shaped guitar solo and a bit of R&B inflection in the groove. "Jump That Train" opens with some heavy layered and busy guitars as she belts

out her lyric and another screaming guitar solo. The title track is an appealing song of love's hurts and lessons that benefits from the more low-key accompaniment. "Let It Burn" is a heavy Stevie Ray Vaughan inspired shuffle with an angry vocal matching her lyrics and the hard rocking accompaniment and a searing solo and more singe the earth playing for the coda of this blues.

The album closes with the wistful "The World and It's Way," which opens with her whispering her vocal as it nicely builds along with the accompaniment and a nice solo matched with some attractive wordless vocalizing to go with her sweet playing as the track and disc fades out.

For someone being marketed as a blues performer, I heard little blues in the performances here. While a British blues publication has the logo "Blues Without Blinders," that does not mean blues is now a label for what even a decade ago would be regarded as hard rock, and the fact that a singer and songwriter is a very accomplished guitarist (perhaps an understatement), does not make that person a blues artist.

That said, Joanne Shaw Taylor is an extremely talented performer and especially when she keeps the fires smoldering, produces some very fine music performed and played with plenty of intensity. *Ron Weinstock*



THE BAD PLUS

Never Stop
ENTERTAINMENT ONE MUSIC

Now in their 10th year together, The Bad Plus has just recorded the first album comprised solely of their trio's originals titled "Never Stop" (Entertainment One Music). It may sound surprising for the trio's original approach to the piano trio, in terms of repertoire, as much as musical approach has been a factor in establishing them as one of the major acts to emerge over the past decade.

Pianist Ethan Iverson, bassist Reid Anderson and drummer Dave King certainly have reconstructed some familiar pop songs and now with "Never Stop" they take their approach to all new material.

Drummer King composed the opening "The Radio Tower Has a Beating Heart" which opens with pianist Iverson stating the somewhat dramatic theme against King's free drumming before some free sounding trio playing which is followed a repetitive, structured

segment. Bassist Anderson contributed the driving title track with Iverson's somewhat romantic piano set against King's rock-influenced groove. Perhaps no track better displays the trio's appeal as they mix what might appear superficially disparate musical approaches into performances that can leave the attentive listener mesmerized.

King's "My Friend Metatron" is built upon a funky bass riff with Iverson's piano lead moving from evoking pop songs to frenzied impressionism while the rendition of Anderson's ballad "People Like You" contrasts with spare playing from all three with Iverson's piano especially attractive here. "Beryl Loves to Dance" has an exuberant sounding theme, which Iverson playfully explores against King's rigid time-keeping. It is followed by the impressionism of "Snowball" where Anderson taking a strong bass solo.

Iverson's "Bill Hickman At Home" has a theme that hints at some of Keith Jarrett's quartet recordings of thirty years ago with more fine bass from Anderson. King's "Super America" is a short, exhilarating instrumental that closes this recording on a finger-snapping mode. After ten years, Bad Plus continues to provoke, entertain and mesmerize with their very individualistic approach to the piano trio. *Ron Weinstock*



PIANO RED
The Lost Atlanta Tapes
 LANDSLIDE RECORDS

William Lee Perryman was the youngest of nine children. His oldest brother, Rufus, was renown as a barrelhouse pianist who is famous for his recording of "The Dirty Dozens," but equally well for his rough blues and barrelhouse blues piano and vocals, and recorded and toured during the blues revival in the sixties and displayed his mastery of this style.

William Lee would also engage in playing barrelhouse styled piano and made some recordings in the mid-1930s, including with Blind Willie McTell, but the wax masters seem to have been destroyed by heat and no trace of them has surfaced.

After World War II, he modified his style to work in a jump blues vein popular at the time. He was discovered by Steve Sholes who signed him to RCA where he produced the first R&B hit recording on the RCA label, "Rockin' with Red." He became a prolific hit maker for

RCA and its subsidiaries including other gems like "The Right String (But the Wrong Yo Yo)," and later also got another nickname, Dr. Feelgood. Under Dr. Feelgood & the Interns, he would record an album in 1961. His band contained some musicians that are familiar to today on their own, guitarist Beverly Watson and guitarist Roy Lee Johnson (composer of "Mr. Moonlight" and "When a Guitar Plays the Blues"). Later, he would have a regular gig at Atlanta's Underground, and then the Excelsior Mill. He toured Europe and the States to great acclaim as well prior to his passing in 1985. Author David Fulmer provides the overview of his life in the liner booklet to the just released "The Lost Atlanta Tapes" by Piano Red.

This disc presents music from a 1984 performance, less than a year prior to his death with renditions of his best-known songs along with his renditions of blues and pop classics. He was backed by bassist George Miller and drummer James Jackson, and at best they can be labeled efficient. If stylistically his music was rooted in barrelhouse piano and house rent parties, by 1984 he primarily was an entertainer and the performances run from solid to fair.

Tunes like the spirited "She's Mine" have a rollicking flavor while his rendition of "C.C. Rider" one might think a rhythm machine could have done better job as drummer. "Baby, Please Don't Go, credited to Red, is a decent rendition of Chuck Willis' "Don't Deceive Me," while "Shake, That's All Right" is a rollicking and enthusiastic, if occasionally chaotic, performance. Solid renditions of "The Right String (But Wrong Yo Yo)," "Rockin' With Red," and "Doctor Feelgood," certainly come off well, although neither of his renditions of "Corinna, Corinna" or "St. Louis Blues" are among the more compelling interpretations of these standards.

As indicated, this disc is a mixed bag. He was an entertaining performer, and his spirited way with an audience is captured here, although this is not the best Piano Red available. One might check out the Bear Family releases that include "The Doctor Is In," a 4CD box of all his RCA recordings or "Rocks," a single CD retrospective with 33 of his best known recordings to see just how good he was. Another recommended disc is the Arhoolie Records, "Atlanta Bounce," which contains 1972 solo material and some raucous live 1950s recordings from the Magnolia Ballroom. *Ron Weinstock*

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ERIC CLAPTON

Eric Clapton - The 1960s Review SEXY INTELLECTUAL

A new DVD documentary on iconic guitarist “Eric Clapton - The 1960s Review” (Sexy Intellectual) may at first blush seem like something music fans would be interested in. This DVD focuses on Clapton’s early years from his days including his time in the Yardbirds, John Mayall, Cream and Blind Faith. There is an impressive cast of folks talking about Clapton (Paul Jones, Manfred Mann and The Blues Band, Neil Innes, Chris Dreya, John Mayall, Dave Kelly) with an occasional clip of Cream himself talking (like Hendrix jamming with Cream).

Among the interesting stories are the Yardbirds playing with Sonny Boy Williamson, Mayall speaking about Clapton’s reticence in singing or the foundation of Cream and the hatred between Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker (as well Clapton directing the two of them in terms of Cream’s music, no jazz). In addition to the two-hour documentary, the DVD has extras including a small feature on the Yardbirds with Clapton, Paul Jones talking about how the “Powerhouse” sides were recorded and Bill Halverson talks about Cream’s “Badge.”

The problem for many with this DVD will be that this is an oral history of Eric Clapton, not a mix of performances and interviews that made the documentaries in Masters of American Music like the John Coltrane, Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan documentaries that are so enlightening as well as educational. The material here would have made a better read than a video. It is not compelling viewing so I suspect its appeal will be limited.

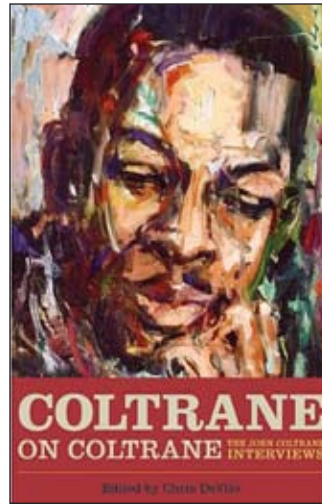
Ron Weinstock

COLTRANE ON COLTRANE: THE JOHN COLTRANE INTERVIEWS

Edited by Chris DeVito

2010: A CAPELLA BOOKS - CHICAGO REVIEW PRESS

The lead author of this John Coltrane reference, Chris DeVito, has provided an invaluable new volume that includes practically all of the published interviews about John Coltrane, although also with articles, album liner notes (including Coltrane’s notes and poem for “A Love Supreme”) and similar pieces which have material where Coltrane is talking about himself and his music. Also included are lengthy interviews with a childhood friend from Coltrane’s native High Point, NC, and a music teacher in Philadelphia. While some of the material may be familiar



to some, there are a number of pieces that most will not be aware of. That said, it should be noted that the overwhelming majority of the interviews and articles will be new to the reader. Also it does not include the full text of Ralph Gleason’s interview with Coltrane (only an excerpt is provided), as the entire interview will be published in a book of Gleason’s interviews that is coming out. Also, where the source tape is available,

DeVito makes corrections and changes based on the tape such as on Frank Kofsky’s interview, the lengthiest of the interviews with Coltrane published here.

The earliest piece here is a 1952 Baltimore Afro-American account of a 1952 performance by Coltrane and Specs Wright followed by a previously unpublished interview by August Blume in 1958 when Coltrane was in Baltimore with the then new Miles Davis Quintet. The informality of the discussion, which was recorded without Coltrane’s knowledge at the end, is fascinating as he discusses music, philosophy, religion and other performers. Coltrane’s straight-forwardness comes across here and throughout the latter interviews. His humility and the fact he was constantly striving to improve himself as a musician and searching in his music is something repeated in various latter interviews and so many of the interviews note the contrast between the apparently ‘angry’ music and his calm and thoughtful responses, whether discussing how he tries to relate to audiences, reactions to he and Eric Dolphy being called anti-jazz (an infamous DownBeat article), how playing the soprano saxophone was affecting his playing of the tenor saxophone, and thoughts on members of his band and musicians he admired.

Interestingly, many of the interviews from the sixties after the famous DownBeat article where Coltrane and Dolphy respond to their critics, come from European publications and we get a sense of audience reactions to a live performance of “A Love Supreme” from some of the introductions and questions. Then there are concerns (and restraints) about playing in clubs and the quality of PA systems as opposed to concerts. While the issues of politics as well as racial discrimination do come up, the interview with Kofsky is perhaps the one in which he discusses points at length. Also included is an invaluable remembrance of Coltrane with Babatunde Olantunji with whom Coltrane was a friend and eventually a collaborator, and Coltrane helped open the Olantunji Center of African Culture, which was the site of one of Coltrane’s last performances and notes that Coltrane was withdrawing from certain performance venues because of a desire to have more self-determination over his music. Also included is a remembrance of Hod O’Brien that remembers Coltrane as an extremely generous man, who allowed O’Brien to take

a break when he had not had a break for several hours and needed to use the facilities.

Chris DeVito has provided an invaluable service in bringing all this material together, despite some repetition of themes between some of the interviews. They do help provide a sense of this gentleman who was not simply one of the most significant musicians of the 20th Century, but a man to be admired on so many other levels.

Ron Weinstock

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

Ah, the New Year! Time for the awards for last year's work. First up, the Grammys.® Here's the list of nominees in categories of interest to most blues fans: **Best Traditional blues- James Cotton-*Giant*; Cyndi Lauper-*Memphis Blues*; Charlie Musselwhite-*The Well*; Pinetop Perkins & Willie "Big Eyes" Smith-*Joined at the Hip*; Jimmie Vaughan-*Play Blues, Ballad & Favorites*. Best Contemporary Blues- Solomon Burke-*Nothing's Impossible*; Dr. John and the Lower 911-*Tribal*; Buddy Guy-*Living Proof*; Bettye LaVette-*Interpretations: The British Rock Songbook*; Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band featuring Hubert Sumlin, Willie "Big Eyes" Smith, Bryan Lee and Buddy Flett-*Live! In Chicago*. Best Traditional Folk Album- Carolina Chocolate Drops-*Genuine Negro Jig*; Luther Dickinson & the Sons of Mudboy-*Onward and Upward*; The John Hartford String Band-*Memories of John*; Maria Muldaur-*Maria Muldaur & Her Garden of Joy*;**

Ricky Skaggs- *Ricky Skaggs Solo: Songs My Dad Loved*. Best Contemporary Folk Album- Jackson Browne & David Lindley- *Love Is Strange- En Vivo Con Tino*; Mary Chapin Carpenter- *The Age of Miracles*; Guy Clark- *Somedays the Song Writes You*; Ray LaMontagne and the Pariah Dogs- *God Willin' & The Creek Don't Rise*; Richard Thompson- *Dream Attic*. Best Americana Album- Rosanne Cash-*The List*; Los Lobos- *Tin Can Trust*; Willie Nelson- *Country Music*; Robert Plant- *Band of Joy*; Mavis Staples- *You Are Not Alone....* **New Release Blues.... Here's a few discs that will be vying for honors next year **Charlie Wilson- *Just Charlie*; Gregg Allman- *Low Country Blues*; Devon Allman's Honeytribe-*Space Age Blues*; Chris Duarte-*Infinite Energy*; Chris Cain-*So Many Miles*; Cee Cee James- *Seriously Raw: Live at Sunbanks*; Popa Chubby- *The Essential Popa Chubby*; Ray Charles/ Milt Jackson- *Soul Brothers: Soul Meeting*; Various Artists- *Baby How Can It Be*; Josh White- *Achor*; Jim Byrnes-*Everywhere West*; Various Artists (Sonny Landreth, Buddy Flett, Carol Fran, others) - *Louisiana Swamp Blues*; Django Reinhardt- *Plays the Blues*; Various Artists- *Hear Me Howling! Blues, Ballad, & Beyond: The Arhoolie 50th Anniversary Box*; John Primer- *Call Me John Primer*; Dave Specter- *Specified*; Dana Gillespie- *I Rest My Case*; Freddie King- *Texas Flyer 1974-1976*; Big Bill Broonzy- *His Story*; Chick Willis- *Mr. Blues- The Best of... So Far*; Roomful of Blues- *Hook, Line & Sinker*; Lynwood Slim & Igor Prado Band- *Brazilian Kicks*; Professor Longhair- *House of the Blues*; Harry Manx- *Isle of Manx*; Grana Louise- *Getting' Kinda Rough*; Jimmy Reed- *Sings the Best of the Blues*; Bob Brozman, John McSherry, Donal O'Connor- *Six Days in Down*; Gene Taylor with CC Jerome's Jet Setters- *Let Me Ride Your Automobile*; Studebaker John's Maxwell Street Kings- *That's the Way You Do*; Mel Brown- *Love, Lost and Found....* That's it for this month.****



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