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now in our 43rd year

jazz
& blues report



Jazz Cruises 2018

jazz & blues report

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"Buffaloniou"

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

Jazz Cruises 2018



Sails January 27

Sails February 3

**Both Cruises Depart from Fort Lauderdale
Aboard the Celebrity Summit**

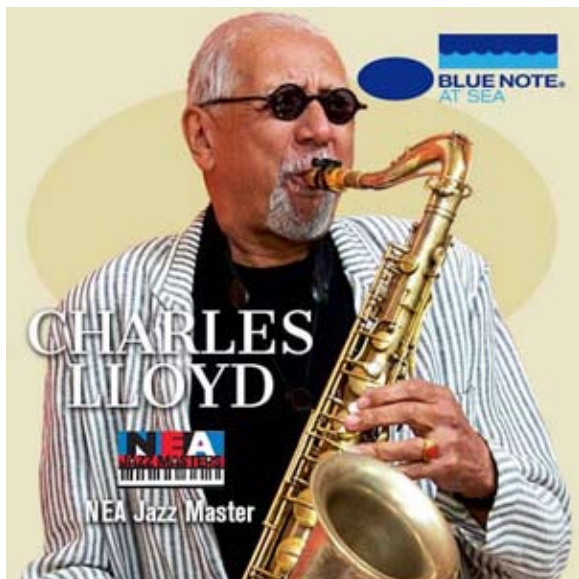


Chick Corea and Charles Lloyd Lead Award-Winning Line-Up For 2018 Sailing of Blue Note At Sea

2017 marked the initial sailing of Blue Note at Sea, a nautical musical collaboration between Blue Note Records, Blue Note Jazz Clubs and Entertainment Cruise Productions. Don Was, president of Blue Note Records and a three time Grammy winning producer has called this three-way production team "the dream team of jazz at sea." With his expertise and direction, the production and programming savvy offered by Steven Bensusan and his team at Blue Note Jazz Clubs and the 17 years of jazz cruises produced by Entertainment Cruise Productions, Was' description seems apt.

The 2018 cruise roster is nearly finalized and includes winners of 48 Grammys and 2 Tony Awards. The cruise also features 4 NEA Jazz Masters (the highest award in jazz), all of

whom are sailing on Blue Note at Sea for the first time. These four illustrious performers are among the most celebrated jazz artists of our time: 22-time Grammy winner and NEA Jazz Master Chick Corea, NEA Jazz Master Charles Lloyd, triple Grammy-winner and Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Dr. Lonnie Smith. Legendary saxophonist (and Blue Note recording artist) Charles Lloyd will join the cruise in St. Thomas with his band The Marvels - Bill Frisell, Greg Leisz, Reuben Rogers and Eric Harland. Bridgewater, who, in addition to her three Grammys, has earned a Tony award, will be backed by her own band as well. Smith, a Hammond B-3 guru, has been featured on over seventy albums, and has recorded and performed with a virtual "Who's Who" of the greatest jazz, blues and



R&B giants in the industry. Both Bridgewater and Smith joined the ranks of NEA Jazz Masters in 2017.

Bridgewater is not the only Tony Award-winner who will be performing for audiences on the Celebrity Summit next February. Leslie Odom, Jr., best known for his role as Aaron Burr in the Broadway smash hit *Hamilton*, for which he took home both a Tony (for Best Actor in a Musical) and a Grammy (for Best Musical Theater Album), is set to bring his jazz chops to the forefront when he performs with his band on the cruise. The *New York Times* describes Odom's style as "tender jazz vocals with flashes of adult-contemporary R&B."

Blue Note at Sea '18 will again be hosted by multi-Grammy winning bassist Marcus Miller. Other Grammy-winning artists who will be returning are Robert Glasper, Lalah Hathaway and David Sanborn. While Glasper and Sanborn will perform in the same configurations as they did on Blue Note at Sea's inaugural sailing, five time Grammy winner Hathaway will bring her own band on board this time out. The three bands feature 11 top jazz musicians, all of whom will be performing in

other configurations and groups during the cruise. The multi-Grammy winning pianist Robert Glasper will also be appearing with the Blue Note All Stars, an incredible sextet of young visionaries who first formed in 2014 to celebrate Blue Note's 75th Anniversary. The band features Glasper along with his label-mates Ambrose Akinmusire, Lionel Loueke, Marcus Strickland, Derrick Hodge and Kendrick Scott. Both Don Was and Steven Bensusan will also participate on the cruise. Was will emcee several events and will interview many of the performers, as he did on the 2017 sailing. Bensusan will host the Blue Note Jazz Club at Sea, a gorgeous late night venue that offers cabaret style seating in the tradition of his many Blue Note Jazz Clubs.

Featuring the most highly respected and renowned contemporary jazz performers in the world, Blue Note At Sea is a collaboration among Blue Note Jazz Clubs, Blue Note Records, and Entertainment Cruise Productions. From stunning main shows to their signature Night Music events to Late, Late Night shows and jam sessions, Blue Note at Sea defines what is new and hip





in the world of jazz while also retaining and respecting those aspects of the genre that have made jazz one of the true enduring musical styles around the world.

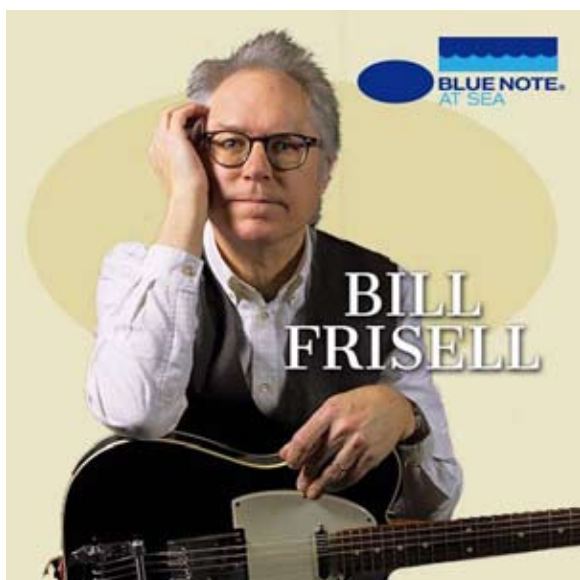
Blue Note at Sea will sail on Celebrity Summit from January 27 through February 3, 2018, departing from Ft. Lauderdale, with ports of call in San Juan, St. Thomas, Coco Cay (Bahamas) and Labadee (Haiti). **For more information about the cruise program, go to www.bluenoteatsea.com.**

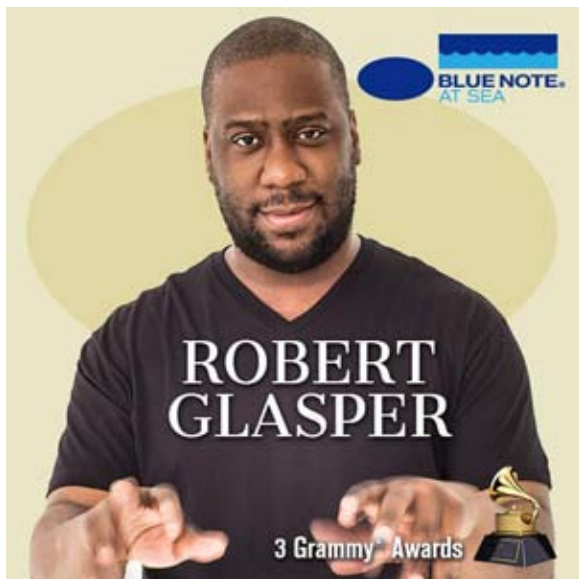
Entertainment Cruise Productions is the world leader in live entertainment at sea. Since 2001, Entertainment Cruise Productions, through its various programs, has produced more than 70 full ship charters, such as Playboy Jazz Cruise, The Elvis Cruise, North Sea Jazz Cruise, Celtic Thunder Cruise, NASCAR The Cruise, and The Gospel Music Cruise. Sailing in 2018 along with The Jazz Cruise are The Smooth Jazz Cruise, Blue Note at Sea, The 80s Cruise and Star Trek: The Cruise. Entertainment Cruise Productions is dedicated to providing the finest music and entertainment cruise experience in the world.

Itinerary & Ports of Call

- Departure from Ft. Lauderdale, FL - Saturday, Jan. 27 at 4 pm
- At Sea - Sunday Jan 28
- Labadee, Haiti - Monday, Jan 29 - Arrive 7 am, Depart 3 pm
- St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. - Tuesday, Jan 30 - Arrive 3:00 pm, Depart Midnight
- San Juan, Puerto Rico - Wednesday, Jan 31 - Arrive 8 am, Depart 4 pm
- At Sea - Thursday, Feb 1
- CocoCay, Bahamas - Friday, Feb 2 - Arrive 10:30 am, Depart 5 pm
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL - Saturday, Feb 3 - Arrive 7 am

Fort Lauderdale, Florida - Either before or after you have the time of your life on your cruise, you can discover all that Fort Lauderdale has to offer. Capture the sights of the Everglades, an expanse of swamp-land known for natural beauty and abundant wildlife,





on a unique airboat; and witness the exotic wildlife of birds, fish and the infamous alligators. Experience the highlights of the newly designed beaches and cafes, including the Arts & Sciences District; stroll the historic Riverwalk; and shop the luxurious stores and boutiques on Las Olas Boulevard. Board a double-decker yacht or paddlewheeler-style boat and journey down the New River, out into the Intracoastal Waterway to Port Everglades, checking out the luxury houses and more.

Labadee, Haiti - It's impossible to choose just one thing that's special about Labadee. Christopher Columbus was the first European to set foot on this spectacular peninsula of Hispaniola in 1492, when the Santa Maria ran aground off the coast on Christmas Day. Five centuries later, it was transformed into Labadee, a tropical retreat and playground, created exclusively for its guests. The inviting beach, coral reefs and exciting amenities provide a perfect place to relax and have fun. Labadee's seven neighborhoods each offer distinct ambience from total relaxation to high-energy thrills. Labadee is the ultimate private destination for cruise vacationers – and our guests will have it all to themselves for the day.

St. Thomas U.S.V.I. - St. Thomas is the gateway isle of the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Caribbean, known for its pristine beaches and snorkeling spots. It is home to its territorial capital, Charlotte Amalie, which has been the heart of St. Thomas' activities from its Danish colonial times in the 1600's, when it was a bustling port of trade. Historic buildings like the 1679 Watchtower Blackbeard's Castle remind visitors of the area's rich pirate history, and on the harbor, 17th-century Fort Christian is now a fascinating museum. Get out of bustling downtown and you can find a picture-perfect beach for relaxing or snorkeling, enjoy the island's world-renowned golf course, or take the Skyride 700 feet above the city for an incomparable view of the island and its turquoise Caribbean waters.

San Juan, Puerto Rico - There is no place quite like a tropical volcanic island, and no island in the Caribbean quite like Puerto Rico. It's known as the Caribbean capital of nightlife and entertainment, where you can bar hop, enjoy fine dining, Vegas-style gaming or anything in between. From museums to monuments, historic forts to flamenco shows, there are sightseeing tours and adventures that will entice you ashore the moment the ship docks. Exciting adventures await you, from exploring El Yunque Rain Forest (with what was once believed to be the Fountain of Youth), to exploring Old San Juan, the second-oldest European settlement in the New World. It is an island teeming with beauty and vitality, Spanish, Indian, and African elements all blending together into a culture that is like nowhere else.

CocoCay, Bahamas - Surrounded by the gentle, translucent waters of the Bahamas chain lies the secluded island of CocoCay®, an eco-certified private destination. Reserved exclusively for cruise ship guests, this 140-acre tropical paradise was awarded a Gold-Level Eco-Certification by Sustainable Travel International™ for its environmentally friendly activities and tours. With its white-sand beaches and spectacular surroundings, CocoCay is a wonderland of adventures. Explore new aquatic facilities, nature trails and a ton of great places to just sit back, relax and enjoy a tropical drink.

From the Producers - The Origins of Blue Note At Sea

Since 2001, Entertainment Cruise Productions has been the world leader in live jazz entertainment at sea, having produced 50 or more full ship charter jazz cruises all over the world, including The Jazz Cruise, The Smooth Jazz Cruise, North Sea Jazz Cruise, Playboy Jazz Cruise, The Signature Jazz Cruise and Dave Koz at Sea Cruise.

The Jazz Cruise has been sailing continuously since 2001 and The Smooth Jazz Cruise since 2004. Both continue today to be very successful and popular cruise programs.

We have always desired to create a cruise program that addressed the tastes of those who enjoy jazz that is neither "smooth" nor "straight ahead". There is a huge world of jazz that occupies that sector, and we have wanted to capture the hippest, most exciting and current performers in that world for a cruise.

Over the years, we have had the opportunity to meet and work with two titans of the jazz world; Don Was, President of Blue Note Records, and Steven Bensusan, President of Blue Note Jazz Clubs. Though their companies are unrelated, they do share a common name and mission and will work with each other on special projects.

When we started this cruise, originally named The Contemporary Jazz Cruise, we began discussions with them and, after the expiration of another project, we moved forward together and rebooted that cruise as Blue Note at Sea!

Working together, we have been able to create an amazing cruise program featuring the top names in jazz, together with amazing events, great programs, luxurious dining and amenities and more. Clearly, we have been able to produce "The Jazz Event of the SEASon!"

Selection of Musicians

The selection of the performers on Blue Note at Sea is an arduous task. We wanted "hip", but not inaccessible; "cool", but not too introverted; and stylish without being overly indulgent. We are very proud and excited to present the lineup that we have for Blue Note At Sea, which includes 10 separate Grammy® Award Winners (a total of 48 Grammy® Awards), 2 Tony Awards, and 4 performers who have been named NEA Jazz Masters, the highest award in jazz. From Chick Corea, someone who has defined jazz for decades, to Leslie Odom, Jr., one of the hottest new vocalists on the scene today, the lineup reflects our mission to present the "hippest and coolest" music in the world.

Main Shows each Evening

Music on Blue Note at Sea is presented "show style," meaning that each night there will be two main shows in the largest venue on the ship. Half of our guests will attend the first show and then will proceed to the Main Dining seating for dinner, and the other half of our guests will go to 1st Dining for dinner and then attend the 2nd Show. Of course, guests may dine at any of the specialty restaurants on the ship as they wish and at any times that they wish. Nonetheless, they will be assigned a time for the shows, one being at 6 pm (1st Show) and one being at 9 pm (2nd Show). The nightly Main Shows are not necessarily the same show. If not, then the show that is performed at the 1st Show one night is performed at the 2nd Show another night, insuring that every guest has the ability to see all of the Main Shows.

Cruising After Dark

One of Entertainment Cruise Production's most recognized programs and skills is our ability to create unique and fun programming during the late-night portion of the evening. Around 10:30 pm or so each night, all guests have had dinner and have seen the main show. On all Entertainment Cruise Production cruises, that signals the commencement of Cruising After Dark, where we present various forms of entertainment in multiple venues.

Rendezvous Lounge – This intimate lounge will feature small group performances, solo piano players and exciting new acts that we will be presenting as part of the cruise program

Revelations Lounge – Sitting on the top deck of the ship, this lounge can feature to™p comedy, larger groups, dancing, and is the home of our late-night jam sessions.

Celebrity Theater – The main theater on the ship is often used for shows that will attract a broad audience or need the full stage for their presentation. The Celebrity Theater is lovely, comfortable and provides us with the ultimate in great sound.

Blue Note Jazz Club at The Cosmopolitan Dining Room – The Cosmopolitan Dining Room is so lovely as a

main dining room that we knew we had to convert this space into an amazing late-night jazz club. With a stage that we build and a cabaret style seating plan, we converted the room into a Blue Note Jazz Club at sea where you can sit back, have a drink or dessert and enjoy the music.

Night Music with David Sanborn

One of our programs as part of Cruising After Dark is Night Music with David Sanborn. Last year, we were very excited to be able to recreate the iconic Night Music show on Blue Note at Sea. "Michelob Presents Night Music", initially named Sunday Night, was a late-night television show which aired for two seasons between 1988 and 1990 as a showcase for jazz and eclectic musical artists. It was hosted by Jools Holland and our very own David Sanborn, and featured Marcus Miller as musical director. Guests included acts such as Sonny Rollins, Shinehead, Sister Carol, Sonic Youth, Richard Thompson, Jo-Ei Sonnier, Joe Sample, Slim Gaillard, Elliott Sharp, Pere Ubu, Pharoah Sanders, and many others. In addition, vintage clips of jazz legends like Thelonious Monk, Dave Brubeck, and Billie Holiday were also featured. The show also featured a house band of Omar Hakim (drums), Marcus Miller (bass), Philippe Saisse (keys), David Sanborn (sax), Hiram Bullock (guitar), and Jools Holland (piano). The show often allowed its guests ample time to explain the origins of their sound, meaning of songs, etc. It also provided a national audience for lesser known acts (like Arto Lindsay's band The Ambitious Lovers). Hal Willner was the music coordinator, responsible for the interesting musical mix-and-matching that took place on the show. Lorne Michaels was the producer of the show and, as such, Night Music became a predecessor of Saturday Night Live. On the cruise, David will lead the Blue Note At Sea House Band, comprised of Billy Kilson (drums), Geoffrey Keezer (piano), Ben Williams (bass) and Wycliffe Gordon (trombone) for four nights of amazing music featuring them as well as pop-in performances by the stars of the cruise on the ship at that time. There will be a lot of set tunes, but there will be a lot of jamming as well. David will also take some time to speak with our special guests, share insights and provide our guests with a behind the scenes view into the world of jazz from the days of Night Music through today.

The Comedy of Alonzo Bodden. Alonzo Bodden, winner of Season Three of Last Comic Standing and the Comedian-in-Chief of Entertainment Cruise Productions, will perform his hilarious show for an additional two nights of Cruising After Dark in the Main Lounge. Besides Alonzo's humorous and pointed comments and observations about today's events and the various humorous ways of the public, Alonzo is always able to comment (a polite word for roast) upon the ups and downs of the cruise itself. Famous for taking the performers to task, some of the very best people watching can be found during an Alonzo Bodden comedy show.

Non-Music Events

In addition to the abundance of music presentations during the week, Blue Note at Sea takes the opportunity of having so many amazing and interesting jazz musicians onboard to feature interview and Q & A sessions

throughout the week. There are three sessions of Marcus Miller's Conversations with the Stars, where Marcus interviews groups of performers who share a common thread; there are other folks who host and participate in one on one conversation, typically delving into both interesting jazz topics and the careers of our prominent players.

The events are not always serious, as Name That Tune games and other events highlighting the lighter side of jazz demonstrate. Musicians frequently interact with guests in informal settings during the cruise as well. In fact, virtually all of the musicians freely spend time with the guests in the dining rooms, pool side and at events like Cigars Under The Stars.



The Jazz Cruise '18 Line-Up Features Returning Favorites and Exciting New Additions

New Port of Call in New Orleans Will Capture the Spirit of NOLA On Board and On Shore

Although it has just been several weeks since The Jazz Cruise, Entertainment Cruise Productions' flagship offering, completed its 16th sailing, the line-up of artists who have signed on for 2018 has been finalized. Since 2001, The Jazz Cruise has presented the very best straight-ahead jazz in the world, and with nearly 100 jazz musicians set to perform when the ship sets sail on February 3, 2018 is no exception.

In addition to the stellar array of performers on The Jazz Cruise, the 2018 sailing has been enhanced with the addition of an iconic new port of call to its itinerary: a full day's stop in New Orleans that will include special events, concerts, restaurant offerings and tours. The Preservation Hall Jazz Band, the New Orleans musical institution that defies genre limitations, will board the ship for two amazing shows while on shore in NOLA, drummer Herlin Riley will perform two shows at the George and

Joyce Wein Jazz & Heritage Center. Restaurant offerings include Brennan's, Commander's Palace, Arnaud's and more.

ECP President and Executive Director Michael Lazaroff admits that the challenge of booking The Jazz Cruise is a unique one. "There are so many amazing musicians for us to consider," he says. "Some guests want all the faces to be familiar, and some want as much new blood as possible. To accommodate everyone's taste, we've adopted a one-third to one-third to one-third concept, with a third of the artists being 'regulars,' another third having performed with us in some capacity previously, and the final third featuring fresh names – artists who are joining us for the first time."

Even when tapping the talents of The Jazz Cruise 'regulars,' however, ECP consistently strives to present these classic musicians in innovative settings. For





example, in 2018, Grammy winner (and 8-time Grammy nominee) John Clayton will step up to lead the house All-Star Big Band for the first time, while multi-Grammy nominee, Shelly Berg, continues to serve as Music Director for the cruise.

Cruise mainstays, such as Houston Person, Jeff Clayton, Marcus Miller, John Pizzarelli, Jeff Hamilton, Ken Peplowski, Wycliffe Gordon, Gary Smulyan, Randy Brecker and Lewis Nash will once again grace audiences with their stellar performances, while performers returning to The Jazz Cruise fold include such critically acclaimed artists as Arturo Sandoval, Monty Alexander, Joey DeFrancesco, Anat Cohen, Benny Green, Trio da Paz, Kurt Elling, Ann Hampton Callaway and Byron Stripling.

Among the new additions to the cruise are The Cookers, a virtual super-band lauded by the New York Times as "a dream team of forward-leaning hard-bop," pianist Renee Rosnes, Brecker Brothers Band Reunion, featuring not only Randy Brecker, but Will Lee among others, trumpeter Sean Jones, vocal group The New York Voices and vocalist and upright bassist Nicki Parrott.

Also returning to the cruise this year are noted jazz historian Dick Golden and comedian Alonzo Bolden.

"The entertainment on The Jazz Cruise continues to be one of the world's finest array of 'straight ahead' jazz performers in the world", offers Mr. Lazaroff, "but for this sailing, rather than stopping at an island, we are spending 25 hours in New Orleans, enjoying a 'taste' of all that city has to offer.

The Jazz Cruise will sail from Fort Lauderdale on February 3, 2018 on board the Celebrity Summit, part of the highest rated fleet of premium ships delivering extraordinary service, exceptional dining featuring menus

crafted by a James Beard award-winning chef, elegant rooms and the Canyon Ranch SpaClub, the most luxurious spa club at sea. **Visit www.thejazzcruise.com**

Entertainment Cruise Productions is the world leader in live entertainment at sea. Beginning more than a decade ago, Entertainment Cruise Productions, through its various programs, has produced more than 60 full ship charters, such as Playboy Jazz Cruise, The Elvis Cruise, North Sea Jazz Cruise, Celtic Thunder Cruise, NASCAR The Cruise, and The Gospel Music Cruise. Sailing in 2018 along with The Jazz Cruise are The Smooth Jazz Cruise, Blue Note at Sea, The 80s Cruise and Star Trek: The Cruise. Entertainment Cruise Productions is dedicated to providing the finest music and entertainment cruise experience in the world.

Itinerary & Ports of Call

- Ft. Lauderdale, FL - Depart Saturday, February 3 - 4:00 pm
- At Sea - Sunday, February 4
- New Orleans, LA - Monday, February 5 - Arrive 4:00 pm
- New Orleans, LA - Depart Tuesday, February 6 - 5:00 pm
- At Sea - Wednesday, February 7
- Cozumel, MX - Arrive Thursday, February 8 - 8:00 am - Depart 6:00 pm
- At Sea - Friday, February 9
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL - Arrive Saturday, February 10 - 7:00 am

Fort Lauderdale, Florida - Either before or after you have the time of your life on your cruise, you can discover all that Fort Lauderdale has to offer. Capture the sights of





the Everglades, an expanse of swampland known for natural beauty and abundant wildlife, on a unique airboat; and witness the exotic wildlife of birds, fish and the infamous alligators. Experience the highlights of the newly designed beaches and cafes, including the Arts & Sciences District; stroll the historic Riverwalk; and shop the luxurious stores and boutiques on Las Olas Boulevard.

New Orleans, Louisiana - Welcome to New Orleans, the birthplace of jazz, home to exotic Creole cuisine, century-old Spanish oaks and clacking streetcars— where music is everywhere, people live to eat and every day is a party. From the moment you arrive this timeless city will beckon your ears, allure your eyes and enchant your heart. Steeped in European traditions and Caribbean influences, the Big Easy calls curious minds to sounds and aromas fueled by three hundred years of history. Follow the scent of gumbo floating through streets of the best food town in America, home to internationally known culinary heroes and restaurants. Foster a path immersed in the sounds of Jazz, Zydeco, R&B, Soul and Dixieland in this true music lover's paradise.

Create a route through the Old World Spirit and faded elegance of the historic French Quarter, that welcomes you to a historic mansion or a hidden courtyard, and leads you ultimately to Jackson Square, a meeting place for street musicians, voodoo queens, fortune tellers, artists, and historians. When you come to New Orleans, you *laissez les bons temps rouler* – let the good times roll.

Cozumel, Mexico - Just off the coast of the Mexican mainland, the porous mass of limestone that arches out of the water has over time become one of the world's great ocean playgrounds. But Cozumel is about more than ethe-

real beaches: the island is ranked among the world's premier dive and fishing spots. And a mere ferry ride away you can explore centuries of human splendor in the Mayan ruins at Tulum, spectacularly sited on the sea cliffs.

History of The Jazz Cruise

The origins of The Jazz Cruise started more than 30 years ago, when Norwegian Cruise Line (“NCL”) sponsored an annual jazz cruise on the old SS Norway. This program was a “group” cruise, meaning that the jazz program shared the ship with other passengers. Though this form of jazz cruise had its limitations, it was very successful for more than a decade and provided the foundation for the growth of The Jazz Cruise and, eventually, Entertainment Cruise Productions.

During those early years of NCL's Jazz Cruise, Anita E. Berry quickly became the largest group leader in terms of the number of guests she produced for the cruise. Eventually her group was so large that NCL asked her to become involved in the production of the cruise, the selection of the artists, the ports-of-call and other aspects of the cruise's development.

But all of this came to a stop in 2000, when NCL decided to terminate its theme cruises. This setback did not stop Anita, who, though just turning 70 years old, decided that she had the resources (guest list, cruise expertise, relationships with musicians and finances) to go it on her own. More than that, she had always wanted the “holy grail” of theme cruises, a full ship charter. What ensued, her creation of The Jazz Cruise, the first and still only full ship charter in the world dedicated to “straight ahead” jazz, just completed its Crystal Anniversary (15th) Sailing, all sell outs.





The Jazz Cruise has formed the basis of all of the cruise programs of Entertainment Cruise Productions.

Selection of Musicians

The Jazz Cruise prides itself on the selection of the finest jazz musicians in the world. Musicians are selected as either part of a Performing Group or as an All Star/Big Band Musician. The Performing Groups are comprised of set players who regularly tour together and perform sets on the ship from their repertoire of tunes. The All Star/Big Band Musicians are assigned places in our own Big Band or in various All Star sessions which typically include a rhythm section (piano, bass, drums) and some variation of horns, reeds and vocals. Some musicians perform in both the Big Band and as an All Star and some perform just in one of the two categories. The total number of musicians and vocalists on any given cruise ranges from 90 – 100.

Festival Style Presentation

Music on The Jazz Cruise is presented “festival style”, meaning we use multiple venues of the ship at the same time and overlapping times so that 3 – 5 shows are going on at any one time, allowing the guests to freely flow between venues as they wish without the need for tickets or queueing up, though securing a seat in some of the smaller venues may require arriving early.

Types of Shows Presented

As indicated in the Selection of Musicians section, the shows (typically 90 minute sets without an intermission) include performances by Performing Groups, All Stars, Big Band and Special Shows (see below). Each Performing Group presents 4 sets during the

week, allowing guests to sample each of the performers at various times. All Stars and Big Band musicians usually perform 6 sets, distributed between those two configurations.

The Special Shows are usually performed just once during the cruise and include our Opening Show, The Jazz Cruise Hall of Fame Show, Keyboard Capers and various fascinating combinations created by our Music Director (currently Shelly Berg).

All totaled The Jazz Cruise offers around 225 hours of music in a week.

Non-Music Events

In addition to the abundance of music presentations during the week, The Jazz Cruise takes the opportunity of having so many amazing and interesting jazz musicians onboard to feature interview and Q & A sessions throughout the week. There are three sessions of Marcus Miller’s Conversations with the Stars, where Marcus interviews groups of performers who share a common thread (i.e., The Legends, The Vocalists, etc.) and there are other folks who host and participate in one on one conversation, typically delving into both interesting jazz topics and the careers of our prominent players.

The events are not always serious, as Name That Tune games and other events highlighting the less serious side of jazz are also presented. Musicians frequently interact with guests in informal settings during the cruise as well. In fact, virtually all of the musicians freely spend time with the guests in the dining rooms, pool side and at events like Cigars Under The Stars.

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5TH ANNUAL

PINETOP BOOGIE AND CRAWFISH BOIL

SATURDAY MAY 13, 2017 • 3-8 PM
GROUND ZERO BLUES CLUB • CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

Benefit for the Pinetop Foundation Workshop Scholarship Program

The 5th Annual Pinetop Boogie and Crawfish Boil Takes May 13

The Fifth Annual Pinetop Boogie and Crawfish Boil will take place on May 13 at Ground Zero Blues Club; adjacent to the Delta Blues Museum; in downtown Clarksdale. All money raised at the event will benefit the Pinetop Perkins Foundation Scholarship Fund. The foundation's mission is to provide support and encouragement to young musicians at the beginning of their career as well as comfort and safety to older musicians in the twilight of their career.

At last year's event \$6,676.00 was raised for young musicians to attend the Pinetop Perkins Foundation master class workshop held every June at the Hopson Plantation. At the workshop young musicians learn from award winning musicians and master bluesmen like Bob Margolin, the workshop's headmaster, Victor Wainwright, and John Del Torro Richardson just to name a few. Thanks in large part to the people who donate to the event; every young musician who wanted or needed a scholarship received one. We hope to accomplish the same this year.

This year's event and other related events will feature over 9 hours of music from the event's strongest line up of entertainers yet. The schedule is heavy on award winning musicians and includes performances from John Primer, Anthony Geraci, Monster Mike Welch, Diunna Greenleaf, Michael Ledbetter, Clarksdale favorites Heather Crosse and Lee Williams, Bob Corritore, Bob Stroger, Billy Flynn, Steve Kolbus and the Clarksdale Blues Revue, Lala Craig and more. Most of the scheduled entertainment and the Crawfish boil will take place between 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM with a youth Showcase at 8:00. Steve Kolbus and the Clarksdale Blues Revue will kick off the pro jam at 9:00 PM till Midnight. Those who attend will get to see all 9 plus hours of entertainment for a single donation at the door.

There will also be 50/50 drawings, a silent auction, and a scholarship cash box. Artist CDs will also be for sale. For information on how to sponsor the event, any

of the entertainment, or make donations to the silent auction and the scholarship fund call Steve Kolbus at 317-373-8918.

A Note From the Organizers

We are proud to announce that the Blues Festival Guide has agreed to be a media sponsor. Meredith Nowell Funeral Home is also sponsoring the event by providing hundreds of fliers. We also intend to get a sponsor for the scholarship cash box this year.



Celebrate 30 Years of Waterfront Blues During the July 4th Holiday Weekend in Portland, Oregon

Portland, Ore. - Join blues legends, up-and-comers and local acts to mark the 30th Anniversary of the Safeway Waterfront Blues Festival, presented by First Tech Federal Credit Union, June 30 – July 4, 2017 at Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Passes are on-sale now at early bird prices. This year's festival will run five days and feature 120 blues acts on four stages. Festival proceeds help Oregon Food Bank fight hunger in Oregon and Clark County, Washington.

Headliners include:

Big Head Todd Blues Club | Chris Isaak | Joss Stone | Galactic | Elvin Bishop | Fantastic Negrito | Canned Heat | JD McPherson | Bokanté | Pine Leaf Boys | MarchFourth | Pimps of Joytime | Booker T Stax Revue | Cedric Burnside Project | Sonny Landreth

Additional acts include:

Chubby Carrier | Southern Avenue | Greyhounds | The Revelers | Blynd | Jontavious Willis | Brother Yusef | Dirty Bourbon River Show | Donna Angelle | Dustbowl Revival | Christone "Kingfish" Ingram | Eric Gales | The Suffers | Chris Cain | Monkey Junk | Sons of the Soul Revivers

"Five days, four stages and more than 150 eclectic performances. For just \$10 a day Waterfront Blues Festival is the concert deal of the summer," said Artistic Director Peter Dammann. "But it's much more than that. For three decades this event has supported Oregon Food Bank while reaffirming and strengthening the threads that bind us as a community. This has become one of the great community music festivals and it could only happen in Portland."

"We are truly humbled to mark 30 years of support from

the blues community to feed the human spirit of the 1 in 5 people facing hunger in our state. Since 1988, this iconic festival has raised more than \$10 million and 1,000 tons of food for hunger relief. This is an achievement we are extremely proud of – and an achievement that is unprecedented in the concert festival business, said Oregon Food Bank CEO Susannah Morgan.

The following five-day passes are offered this year:

Basic 5-Day Pass (\$40 early bird) – Five-day pass, priority re-entry.

Blues Buddy Pass (\$89 early bird) – Five-day pass, EARLY entry, priority re-entry, commemorative Blues Buddy button and discount admission to Waterfront After Hours All-Stars Concerts in the Marriott Ballroom (first-come, first-served).

Benefactor Pass (\$350) – Five-day EARLY entry & priority re-entry, access to Brewery Stage shaded seating, access to central stage shaded seating, admission to After-Hours concerts, omelette and mimosa Sunday brunch, four meal and drink vendor coupons, festival T-shirt and poster, parking pass & more. *Sold out the last few years!*

Patron Pass (\$1,250) – Five-day EARLY entry & priority re-entry, priority access to on-stage seating at Brewery Stage and First Tech Stage, access to central stage shaded seating, access to VIP Hospitality Pavilion with catered buffets and VIP restrooms, invitation to July 4th BBQ with river's edge viewing of fireworks, admission to After-Hours concerts, parking pass and many other VIP perks. *Sold out the last few years!*

Also on sale are tickets for DME Blues Cruises for \$29 (day cruises) and \$39 (evening cruises), as well as \$15 tickets for After Hours All-Stars Concerts on Saturday, July 1 and Sunday, July 2 in the Marriott Grand Ballroom.

For complete artist bios, tentative schedule, videos and music samples, visit waterfrontbluesfest.com.

Major sponsors: Safeway, First Tech Federal Credit Union, Buick GMC of Beaverton, FedEx, KINK.fm, KOIN-TV, The Oregonian, Coors Light, Deschutes Brewery

About Waterfront Blues Festival

Since 1988, Oregon Food Bank has produced the Waterfront Blues Fest to raise funds and awareness to fight hunger in Oregon and Clark County, Washington. As Oregon Food Bank's largest annual fundraising event, this Portland flagship festival has become a treasured tradition for locals and visitors alike; it is the largest blues festival west of the Mississippi and the second-largest blues festival in the nation. Since its inception, the festival has raised \$10 million and 1,000 tons of food to fight hunger in the region. More information: waterfrontbluesfest.com | oregonfoodbank.org



38th Annual Blues Music Awards

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2017 Detroit Jazz Festival Artist Lineup Delivers Iconic Musicians, Special Collaborations

The Detroit Jazz Festival, the world's largest free jazz festival, has announced its full artist lineup for the 38th annual Labor Day weekend event. The lineup, which is filled with rich and diverse jazz talents, is anchored by 2017 Artist-in-Residence Wayne Shorter, a revolutionary saxophonist and composer globally recognized for his immense contributions to jazz music. Ranging from genre-defining icons to up-and-coming artists, this collection of world-class musicians continues the Festival's proud tradition of delivering a distinct performance schedule that cannot be found anywhere else. Live sets will take place September 1-4, 2017, on four stages in downtown Detroit.

"Every year during Labor Day weekend, the Detroit Jazz Festival creates a scene downtown that bursts at the seams with culture, vibrancy and wonderful music," said Gretchen Valade, Chair of the Detroit Jazz Festival Foundation Board of Directors. "We are proud to deliver a Festival, for free, that Detroiters and jazz fans from around the world continually mark on their calendars as a can't-miss event. Our remarkable lineup of musicians and joyous atmosphere will deliver attendees a jazz experience that not only highlights great artists, but also our dynamic community."

Shorter will help set the tone for the Festival by jump-starting performances on opening night with a quartet featuring Danilo Pérez, John Patitucci and Brian Blade. Additionally, Shorter also will participate in other special artist collaborations, a hallmark of the Detroit Jazz Festival, throughout the holiday weekend. One of these rare performances is a Wayne Shorter Quintet, featuring Geri Allen, Leo Genovese, Esperanza Spalding and Terri Lyne Carrington, and will take place on Sunday night. Shorter will be featured in an additional collaboration on Monday, making its North American debut: Wayne Shorter Quartet with the Detroit Jazz Festival Orchestra performs Emanon.

Day-by-day Festival highlights include:

Friday

- Wayne Shorter Quartet featuring Danilo Pérez, John Patitucci and Brian Blade
- Miles Mosley
- Herbie Hancock
- George "Sax" Benson Detroit Jam Session

Saturday

- HUDSON: Jack DeJohnette | Larry Grenadier | John Medeski | John Scofield
- Dee Dee Bridgewater
- Theo Croker Quintet
- Chucho Valdés Joe Lovano Quintet
- Donny McCaslin
- Spanish Harlem Orchestra
- Miles Mosley + The West Coast Get Down
- Billy Childs Quartet: Rebirth
- Danilo Pérez: PanaMonk

- John Patitucci: The Electric Guitar Quartet

Sunday

- Henry Butler & the Jambalaya Band
- Cameron Graves
- Benny Golson
- Sean Jones Quintet
- John Beasley presents MONK'estra
- Kyle Eastwood Quintet
- Akihiro Nishiguchi Trio
- Kamasi Washington
- Mark Guiliana Jazz Quartet
- Kat Edmonson
- Quintet: Wayne Shorter, Geri Allen, Leo Genovese, Esperanza Spalding and Terri Lyne Carrington

- Wide Angles: The Music of Michael Brecker

Under the Direction of Gil Goldstein Featuring: Joe Lovano, Donny McCaslin, Rick Margitza, John Patitucci, Brian Blade and members of the DJF Orchestra

Monday

- Vijay Iyer
- Regina Carter: Simply Ella
- Stanley Clarke
- New Light: The Music of Elvin Jones: Live @ The Lighthouse, featuring Dave Liebman, Gene Perla, Adam Niewood, Adam Nussbaum
- Jason Marsalis Vibes Quartet
- Johnny O'Neal Trio
- Wayne Shorter Quartet with the Detroit Jazz Festival Symphony Orchestra perform Emanon

The full Festival schedule will be available online at www.detroitjazzfest.com as the event nears.



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Photo © Robyn Churchill

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.*

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

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 squaresville.
They have no rhythm
And they wear crowns.*



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**ANAT COHEN
& MARCELLO GONÇALVES**
Outra Coisa: The Music of Moacir Santos
ANZIC RECORDS



ANAT COHEN & TRIO BRASILEIRO
Rosa Dos Ventos
Anzic Records

One of the most prominent clarinetists in jazz today, the Israeli born Anat Cohen has been delving into the richness of Brazilian music for some time. Now she has two new releases of Brazilian music, recorded in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia as close collaborations with native musicians.

Since Anat first visited the country in 2000, Brazil has become a home away from home for her, a frequent destination for her to explore in depth music that has captured her heart. Her previous seven albums as a leader have included Brazilian classics and original pieces she composed under the influence of Brazilian music. Marcello Gonçalves, the 7-string guitarist who collaborated with Cohen on "Outra Coisa: The Music of Moacir Santos," says about her, "Anat has such a great passion for Brazil. She speaks Portuguese far better

than I speak English. More than that, Anat can play Brazilian music better than many Brazilian musicians. Her accent is perfect."

As indicated by its title "Outra Coisa: The Music of Moacir Santos" is devoted to the music of the innovative composer, arranger and educator who influenced countless Brazilian musicians including Baden Powell and Sergio Mendes. For this recording, Gonçalves arranged a dozen Santos pieces from their large-ensemble scores into intimate, lyrical duets, with Anat often employing the clarinet's rich lower register and Gonçalves channeling the orchestral textures of the originals into his 7-string guitar (which has an extra bass string). The two recorded beside each other and without headphones to allow the music sound as natural as possible.

There is playfulness during the opening "Amphibious," with the two musically dancing with each other whether playing in unison or interweaving their lines and the warmth and sportive quality of Cohen's clarinet and the spirited solo from Gonçalves with Cohen comping is delightful. In contrast, "Coisa No. 1" is a beautifully played ballad with the two exchanging leads and one appreciates the tone of Gonçalves' guitar as well as his playing on this gorgeous sounding duet.

"Naná (Coisa No. 5)" is perhaps Santos' most famous composition having been recorded over 100 times, and after some almost hard guitar chords emulating the horns on the original, turns into a light-hearted duet full of lyricism warmth, and wit with Cohen's soaring phrases complimented by the nimble mix of chords and single note runs. It is followed by the lovely, wistful "Coisa No. 9," and then the two have some fascinating interplay on "Mae Iracema." The joy and camaraderie the two have for each other, Santos' music and Gonçalves' arrangements is evident throughout this stunning recording. I suspect some, like I already have, will start to explore Santos' own recordings after hearing this.

Cohen's musical encounter with Trio Brasileiro is similarly delightful. The trio was formed in 2011, and is dedicated to performing traditional choro music (a music contemporaneous with ragtime) as well as their own compositions that put a contemporary spin on choro. The group comprises percussionist Alexandre Lora (whose array includes the pitched "hand pan"), guitarist Douglas Lora and Dudu Maia, one of Brazil's finest mandolinists (who plays a special 10-string bandolim mandolin on "Rosa Dos Ventos"). Cohen expresses part of the allure of choro, "As with the style of early New Orleans jazz, choro functions on group polyphony where everyone has a role yet it's open and free-spirited, with simultaneous melodies happening. It can be groove-oriented like a party, or it can be full of saudade, of longing. It was actually choro that brought me back to the clarinet after years of concentrating on the saxophone."

There are differences of course between Cohen's duets with Gonçalves and the interaction she has play-

ing with this trio, but the results are very similar in the lively recorded performances.

The playful and lively sounds here opens with “Baão Da Esperança,” which is the first sample of the interplay between the Trio and Cohen with Alexandre Lora’s percussion accenting her and the stringed instruments. Maia and Cohen are the focus as Douglas Lora’s percussive guitar here serves as a foundation for Cohen’s clarinet flourishes and Maia’s dazzling mandolin runs. “Pra Você, Uma Flor,” is a more pensive performance with its lyrical quality a result of the intricate interplay of the musicians. Douglas Lora composed the first two, and Maia wrote the lively “Das Nieves,” while Cohen’s “Valsa Do Sul” opens with the warmth of Cohen’s clarinet followed by nimble guitar and mandolin runs. Alexandre Lora’s “Flamenco” evokes images of Flamenco dancers and guitars with the composer’s hand percussion and the guitar of his brother, while the title track is a delightful duet by Cohen (with swoops and swirls in her playing) and Alexandre Lora.

There are also the fascinating evocation of Indian classical music with its characteristic drone on “O Ocidente Que Se Oriente,” while Maia’s appealing, “Lulubia,” has Cohen embellishing the simple guitar accompaniment and Maia’s spare mandolin lead. Like Cohen’s duets with Marcello Gonçalves, the collaboration of Cohen and Trio Brasileiro is not simply marvelously played, but also makes for captivating listening.

Ron Weinstock



GINA SICILIA
Sunset Avenue
BLUE ÉLAN RECORDS

Rooted in the blues and classic soul, Gina Sicilia is a striking vocalist and songwriter originally from Philadelphia who I believe moved to the Nashville area. Her latest recording is a 5 song CD that was recorded near Philadelphia and in contains four rootsy originals and one cover backed by a studio band that includes Glenn Barrett (who produced this) and Ron Jennings on guitar, Ken Pendergast on bass, Scott Key on drums, Gary Oleyar on fiddle, Joel Bryant or Walter Runge on organ, and Runge on piano.

The opening “Abandoned” has a swampy feel with a vigorous vocal about love having abandoned her followed by the country-soul ballad “Never Gonna End,”

PAGE SIXTEEN

with her heart needing to mend but the division between her and her lover is never gonna end. Barrett contributes a nice acoustic guitar solo here. Worry about love and things being tough for her now underlies another lament “I Cried,” followed by a spirited cover of The Exciters’ 1962–1963 hit, “Tell Him.” Sicilia certainly puts plenty into her insistent singing on this number. This short CD closes on “They Don’t Pay Me,” as she sings about how hard she works but they never pay her, nor give her the respect she deserves for what she has given.

It has been several years since I first heard Gina Sicilia and remain struck how good a songwriter she is, and how impressive a singer she is.

Ron Weinstock



DIANA KRALL
Turn Up The Quiet
VERVE RECORDS

The latest recording by the acclaimed and honored pianist and singer Diana Krall presents her on a program of mostly standards (and love songs) from the American Songbook. Co-produced by her with the legendary producer Tommy LiPuma (this may be the last album LiPuma was involved with), she also chose the repertoire, conceived the ensemble arrangements and gathered three distinct bands for these sessions.

First there is the trio of Diana, bassist, Christian McBride and guitarist, Russell Malone. Then there is a quintet of Krall, Karriem Riggins on drums, Tony Garnier on bass, the fiddle of Stuart Duncan and the guitar of Marc Ribot. The final ensemble is guitarist Anthony Wilson, bassist John Clayton Jr. and drummer Jeff Hamilton (with Stefon Harris on one selection). Several tracks also have a full string section whose orchestrations are by Alan Broadbent who also conducted them.

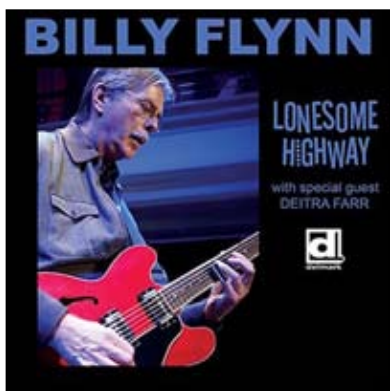
With the marvelous personnel, Krall plays and sings with her usual elegance. The title is quite apt with her soft, almost whispered singing on “Like Someone In Love” that opens with just McBride’s melodic bass before her piano and Malone’s guitar joins in, with Krall, Malone and then McBride taking solos. It is followed by an interpretation of “Isn’t It Romantic,” taken almost at a crawl’s pace with lovely guitar from Anthony Wilson with Stefon Harris’ vibes and Jeff Hamilton’s brushwork

accenting her own piano with strings coloring Wilson's precious single-note guitar on a performance imbued with romance. Without Harris, this group returns for "L-O-V-E," gently supporting her solo here, as well as on the immortal Cole Porter "Night and Day," with strings and perhaps a slight Brazilian tinge from Wilson's chorded guitar accompaniment.

"I'm Confessin' (That I Love You)," features the quintet with Karriem Riggins, Tony Garnier, Stuart Duncan and Marc Ribot, with Duncan's fiddle lending a gypsy quality while Ribot has a neat single note solo after his chorded accompaniment. Ribot's use of tremolo helps set the atmosphere for the exquisite rendition of "Moonglow," with Riggins' deft brushes matching Krall's own soft-spoken vocal, and followed by Ribot's lyrical phasing and tone in his solo. There is a delicate quality to Krall's vocal on "Blue Skies," with Malone and McBride. The Clayton quartet adds light latin backing to "Sway," with the strings adding to the performance's romantic quality. "No Moon at All" is a duet with Clayton who is sublime in his accompaniment here.

The Krall-Malone-McBride trio with sting session provides the setting for the alluring rendition of "Dream," with some special playing from Malone, before the easy swing, and delightful vocal and piano, of "I'll See You In My Dreams," with a gypsy jazz flavor imbued by Ribot's guitar and Duncan's fiddle that closes a marvelous album that may turn up the quiet but also turns up the romance in good measure.

Ron Weinstock



BILLY FLYNN
Lonesome Highway
DELMARK RECORDS

As Tom Hyslop observes, for all the recordings Billy Flynn has played on for Delmark over several decades "it is hard to believe" that this release is first his for the label as a leader which places him in the spotlight, not simply as the fluid, straight no chaser, blues guitarist (and harmonica player and percussionist), but as a songwriter and an able vocalist. With a core backing band of Roosevelt Purifoy on keyboards, E.G. McDaniel on bass and Andrew 'Blaze' Thomas on drums, Flynn contributes sixteen idiomatic originals along with a cover of "The In Crowd." Several tracks employ horns

and Deitra Farr duets with him on two selections.

Flynn has provided a nice variety of songs which provides him a chance to display his versatility as a guitarist with a dash of harmonica as well. There is a rock and roll flavor to his guitar (evocative of Chuck Berry who just passed away as I write this) on the opening "Good Navigator," which is a delightful duet with Farr. "Small Town" is a nice, low-key performance with a sober vocal and guitar suggestive of Earl Hooker with a dash of harmonica for good measure. The title track is a strong Otis Rush styled West Side Chicago blues with a strong vocal and some superb Rush-like guitar soloing, while the instrumental take of The 'In Crowd' is a driving instrumental (shades of Jimmy Dawkins) with some strong organ under Flynn's funky mix of chords and single note runs. Another solid West Side Styled blues is "The Lucky Kind."

"Hold On," with more harmonica, is another duet with Farr set to a Jimmy Reed groove with crisply played guitar (echoes of Eddie Taylor) and harmonica breaks. "Jackson Street" sounds inspired by Robert Nighthawk's "Jackson Town Gal" and Flynn adds some solid Nighthawk influenced slide guitar, while the rollicking "Long Long Time" is akin to J. B. Lenoir's "How Much More." The funky "I Feel 'Um" opens with Christopher Neal's booting tenor sax with some jazz-inflected playing akin to Fenton Robinson. The instrumental "Blues Express" finds Flynn's string-bending suggesting Freddie King, while his guitar playing and deliberate vocal on "Sufferin' With the Blues" is modeled after Albert King, and his playing emulates B.B. King on the closing "Christmas Blues."

In addition to his chameleon like ability to suggest a number of legendary blues guitarists, Flynn's idiomatic originals, His choice harmonica playing and his natural, heartfelt singing, make this a gem of a recording. It does not hurt to have such crisp backing throughout on this gem of a new blues album. **Ron Weinstock**



DAYNA STEPHENS
Gratitude
CONTAGIOUS MUSIC

The title of saxophonist Dayna Stephens latest album (his eighth as a leader) refers to the warmth, love, peace and strong connections he has shared with friends, family and fellow musicians as he climbed

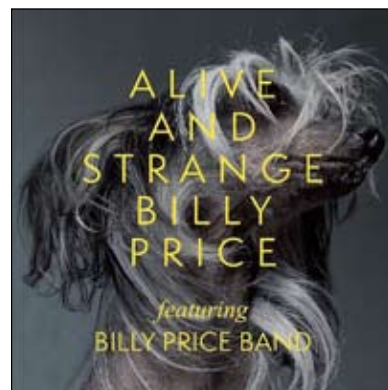
his way back to health after fighting Focal Segmental Glomerulosclerosis (FSG), a rare kidney disease. As he states “after receiving so much love and support from so many people in my life, I am saturated with immense gratitude, perhaps completing a circle that started with those ingredients. This collection of songs serves as an expression of that deep-seated gratitude.” He is heard on tenor & baritone saxophones, EWI, synthesizer, and bass on one track, and is joined by a stellar band of Brad Mehldau (piano, tack piano-trk 4), Julian Lage (guitar), Larry Grenadier (bass) and Eric Harland (drums & cymbals).

Among the uniting factors of the music on this album is “that they all have, to my ear, enchanting, beautiful singable melodies,” and starts with the lovely “Emilie” by Olivier Manchon and it introduces us to the warmth of sensuous tone of Stephens on a gem of a performance that also features Mehldau’s piano and a long section when they are playfully trading fours. Aaron Parks’ ballad “In a Garden,” has Lage guitar providing harmony under Stephens with Grenadier as takes a solo before Stephens’ wonderfully constructed solo that builds up with Lage’s assistance and electronics adding to the atmosphere. Lage’s “Woodside Waltz” has a playful figure at its core and Lage’s guitar, as well as Stephens own playing, has a rootsy appeal (similar to some of John Scofield’s recent recordings).

Stephens contributed “The Timbre of Gratitude,” with Lage taking the first solo before Stephens enters. Then there is a sublime rendition of Billy Strayhorn’s ballad “Isfahan,” with just Lage backing him.

While not a perfect analogy, as his musical approach is rooted more in today’s contemporary approach, but Stephens reminds me of the great Ben Webster in his attention to his tone and every note he plays seems thoughtfully considered, even when he is playing horn lines on an electronic instrument as on Rebecca Martin’s “Don’t Mean a Thing at All,” with a pleasing Mehldau solo as well. Besides the wonderful playing of Stephens, Mehldau and Lage, one cannot forget the significant contributions of Grenadier’s bass and Harland’s drums, along with the leader’s judicious employment of electronics, that contribute significantly to the beauty, warmth and lyrical qualities that infuse the performances of this wonderful recording.

Ron Weinstock



BILLY PRICE

Alive and Strange
NOLA BLUES/VIZZTONE

Veteran blue-eyed soul singer Billy Price follows his acclaimed collaboration with the late Otis Clay that won a Blues Music Award. It has been some three decades since the late Jerry ‘The Bama’ Washington played Price’s covers of O.V. Wright and others over WPFW in Washington, DC. Price is still at it with a mix of southern soul and city blues covers and idiomatic originals that he recently documented on this live recording with the Billy Price Band. The members of the Billy Price Band are Steve Delach (guitar), Tom Valentine (bass), Dave Dodd (drums), Jimmy Britton (keyboards), and Eric DeFate (tenor sax). There are guest horn players and background vocalists on this.

Price is in good form although his the tone of voice seems to be a tad flat as if perhaps showing a bit of the years of performing. Still, it doesn’t detract from these straight-forward and heartfelt performances. The tone is set with a rendition of Carl Sims’ “It Ain’t A Juke Joint Without The Blues,” with Delach’s guitar complementing Price’s vocal of a place full, wall to wall, and everyone having a ball, followed by a nice delivery of William Bell’s lament as since she has been gone, Bill is living the “Lifestyles Of The Poor And Unknown.”



Price's own "Something Strange" is a driving funky blues with punchy horns. Price does a solid cover of a lesser known Bobby Bland recording, "This Time I'm Gone For Good." It is followed by a nice version of Earl Thomas' soul ballad about holding on for "One More Day," with nice jazzy guitar and tenor sax solos. After a sober treatment of a Percy Mayfield gem, "Nothing Stays The Same Forever," Price and Band get into a James Brown cover "Never Get Enough," and then a brassy rendition of Magic Sam's "What Have I Done Wrong," which also showcases solos from Delach (particularly outstanding here) and DeFade.

One of Price's strengths is his incorporation in his repertoire of lesser known gems such as George Torrence's 1968 recording "Lickin' Stick," before closing the live set from the Club Cafe in 2016 with a wonderfully paced Roy Milton classic, "R.M. Blues," with Joe Herndon blasting the trumpet solo. A bonus track, "Making Plans," was recorded at the Carnegie Mellon School of Music in 2012, that also showcases Price's ability at putting together a lyric. This bonus track adds a nice close to a real good recording by the veteran singer.

Ron Weinstock



JAZZMEIA HORN
Social Call
PRESTIGE

The first time I saw the remarkable vocalist, Jazzmeia Horn, was as a member of drummer Winard Harper's group at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. I have had the pleasure of seeing her several times subsequent to that time and have been impressed every time. She was the winner of the 2015 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Competition that was devoted to jazz vocals. One of the prizes was a recording contract with Concord Records which is issuing her debut album on the reactivated Prestige label. On this recording she is supported by Victor Gould on piano, Stacy Dillard on saxophone, trumpeter Josh Evans, trombonist Frank Lacy, bassist Ben Williams (himself a previous Monk Competition winner) and drummer Jerome Jennings.

Originally inspired by Sarah Vaughan, and mentored by Rachelle Farrell, she also was guided by Bobby McFerrin, Abbey Lincoln and Betty Carter. She possesses a remarkable vocal range, and with her perfect pitch and her horn-like scatting and phrasing,

one is struck by the clarity, vitality and expressiveness of Jazzmeia's singing. She has an exceptional vocal instrument that is displayed on the performances with a terrific backing band and a well-conceived program of standards, hard bop classics and adaptations of contemporary material. This opens with a compelling rendition of Betty Carter's "Tight," with terrific backing. Dillard takes a terrific short solo, before she scats and trade fours with him. Her rendition of the standard "East of the Sun (and West of the Moon)" has a wonderful solo from Gould along with more scatting. It is followed by the full band lending a little big band feel on the Sister Rosetta Tharpe classic "Up Above My Head," with a lovely delivery of the lyric with light scatting before Frank Lacy takes a gruff solo.

Gigi Gryce's "Social Call" opens with her singing Jon Hendricks' lyrics only accompanied by Williams' bass before the full rhythm enters with wonderful playing from Gould and Jennings' light touch driving this gem. Her spoken social commentary set against Williams' bass and Jennings' cymbal work begins a stunning reworking of The Stylistics "People Make The World Go Round." This is taken at a brisker tempo than the original. In addition to the precise enunciation, she adds emphasis by speeding up and then extending her phrasing with the horns adding to the atmosphere with quasi-frenzied interplay.

When I first saw her with Winard Harper, I recall her performing the classic "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Here she sings it accompanied by Gould's accompaniment which segues into a full band rendition of Bobby Timmons' "Moanin'," with her scatting followed by a brief segment from Lacy and a blistering chorus from Evans and a walking bass solo before she closes this taking her voice to the stratosphere. The lovely rendition of "The Peacocks" has a fine accompaniment from Young to which Evans adds some nice brass, and is followed by a whirlwind paced "I Remember You," with a brief drum break.

On this superb recording, a highlight might be the medley of "Medley: Afro Blues/ Eye See You / Wade in the Water." It begins with an imaginative, tour de force reworking of the Mongo Santamaria classic, initially performed as a duet with Jennings before the rhythm enters and has some operatic vocalizing at the upper reaches of her extensive range. This segues into a spoken social commentary rap before transitioning into the spiritual with gutbucket trombone also heard. The album closes with a lively and uplifting cover of Mary J. Blige's "I'm Going Down." Again, her vocal soars while she delivers a message for brothers and sisters to hold on and stay strong in trying times.

Jazzmeia Horn is a most gifted singer whose originality, horn-like phrasing, timbre and timing will enthrall the listener on this auspicious debut.

Ron Weinstock

jazz-blues.com



JOHN PRIMER & BOB CORRITORE

Ain't Nothing You Can Do!

DELTA GROOVE MUSIC

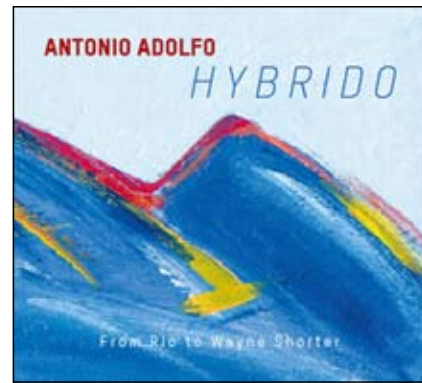
Delta Groove just issued a new recording by the Chicago veteran John Primer and harmonica player Bob Corritore, who is one of the co-producers of this as well. Bring in the likes of Henry Gray or the late Barrelhouse Chuck on piano, Big John Atkinson or Chris James on guitar, Troy Sandow or Patrick Rynn on bass and Brian Fahey on drums and one has a terrific band for the traditional Chicago Blues follow-up to the acclaimed 2013 "Knockin' Around These Blues."

The material is a mix of strong originals and choice covers with the music evoking the late Muddy Waters (Primer was guitarist in Waters' final band) with a touch of Magic Slim, with whom Primer played with for many years with the driving, insistent groove. The instrumentation here also lends this the sound of a Muddy Waters recording (with Corritore's harp lending the feel of the Waters Band when James Cotton was in it), although I believe Waters only recorded John Lee 'Sonny Boy' Williamson's "Elevate Me Mama," with terrific piano from Barrelhouse Chuck in addition to harp.

Originals like the topical, opening "Poor Man Blues," who is living the best way he can, and the closing slow, Muddy Waters-styled "When I Leave Home," bookend terrific renditions of Johnny Temple's "Big Legged Woman," with Muddy Waters' styled slide; Snooky Pryor's Vee-Jay classic, "Hold Me In Your Arms," has Henry Gray on piano; Magic Slim's chugging "Gambling Blues"; and a Corritore feature, "Harmonica Boogaloo." The Chuck Brooks-penned title track was originally recorded by Albert King. It is a slow blues where Primer authoritatively tells his woman to know that no matter what she does, nothing will stop John from loving her or drive him away. With solos from Henry Gray, Corritore Jon Atkinson and Primer himself, Primer and band conjures up the Mississippi King Bee (Muddy Waters) himself here (and elsewhere here).

A rendition of Don Nix's "For a Love of a Woman" and "May I Have Talk With You," where Primer plays some Elmore James' style slide on a rollicking shuffle adaptation of a Howlin' Wolf number, round out this terrific recording that is as a good an evocation of classic Chicago blues (particularly the great Muddy Waters band of the late fifties through early seventies) as has been heard in the past few years.

Ron Weinstock



ANTONIO ADOLFO

Hybrido - from Rio to Wayne Shorter

AAM MUSIC

Brazilian composer-pianist-arranger Antonio Adolfo explains about his latest project which focuses on the music of Wayne Shorter, "The mixing of races and different cultures is irreversible in today's world. In music, this trend has been happening for a long time and has resulted in a very healthy hybridism of different musical genres. ...The music of the great Wayne Shorter is predominant in this recording. It has especially inspired me through his melodies and harmonies, which have continued to influence musicians of several generations and continents."

Adolfo also notes that Shorter himself has been influenced by the music of different cultures. Focusing primarily on Shorter's repertoire from the 60s, he is joined on this project by Lula Galvão - (electric guitar); Jorge Helder - (double bass); Rafael Barata - (drums and percussion); André Siqueira - (percussion); Jessé Sadoc - (trumpet); Marcelo Martins - (tenor/soprano saxes, flute); Serginho Trombone - (trombone); Claudio Spiewak - (acoustic guitar on #3) and Zé Renato - (vocals on #2).

There is plenty of superb musicianship starting with "Deluge," the only performance on which the leader plays Fender Rhodes piano. It is followed by nicely reimagined "Footprints," with Renato's vocalization joining the horns on the breezy tempoed adaptation with a nice, cleanly articulated solo from Galvão followed by some gruff trombone, piano and a short bass break. "Beauty and the Beast" derives from one of Shorter's mid-seventies collaborations with legendary Brazilian composer, musician and singer Milton Nascimento and the bossa nova flavored rendition here sports not simply a typically sonorous arrangement, but a feathery flute solo from Martins along with Adolfo's lyrical solo with Spiewak chording on acoustic guitar with Martins switching to soprano.

"Prince of Darkness" from Miles Davis "ESP" album is nicely reworked with colorful rhythmic accents and soaring, lyrical soprano sax, dancing piano, lithe and scintillating guitar with a sparkling rhythm section. A heated "Black Nile" has an energetic horn ensemble along with Martins' brawny tenor sax, and nicely developed solos from Adolfo and Galvão. Brazilian rhythms are incorporated into the rendition of "Speak No Evil" with

some rousing trombone, focused, vigorous tenor sax, along with the leader's imaginative free-flowing playing and followed by Adolfo's deconstruction of "ESP" with Martins spotlighted with his graceful soprano along with some thoughtful, nimble chordal playing from Galvão and Adolfo's choice playing. "Ana Maria," from the collaboration with Nascimento is a lovely Bossa performance with exquisite piano, Martins' soaring, twisting soprano and Galvão's shimmering guitar.

Adolfo's original "Afosamba" provides a lively conclusion with Sadoc's fiery, brash trumpet featured along with dynamic percussive interplay leading to more delightful piano on a composition that displays the influence Shorter has had on Adolfo himself. It concludes a well conceived and performed tribute to one of music's most significant figures for over half a century. With Adolfo's arrangements, the marvelous ensemble playing and the thoughtful, as well as imaginative solos make for a fascinating, superb recording.

Ron Weinstock



THE BOB LANZA BLUES BAND

Time To Let Go CONNOR RAY

Out of the wilds of northern New Jersey (if you've ever been there, then you know what I'm talking about) comes Bob Lanza and his entourage with eleven tales of woe and tribulations. Once you get past the tricked out cover photos (he's not hanging off a wall, boys and girls, he's laying on a sidewalk), Lanza pretty much keeps the pedal to the metal throughout "Time To Let Go."

Kicking off with the boogie woogie of an old Hank Williams work horse "Mind your Own Business," Lanza picks his way through the title cut with the support of the Cranberry Lake Horns (not credited or I'd name them individually).

Steve Krase guests on harp via the Lanza original "When The Sun Comes Up" as Randy Wall pushes the B-3 during "Rushin' The Blues." Two cover tunes of note are Willie Dixon's "Go No Further" and Muddy Waters' "Walkin' Thru The Park." Krase returns for "Johnny Smith" and Wall gets a major piano work-out on the 88's in the course of "You're Not In Texas."

New Jersey has its own swamps, much like the bayou, so it is only logical they would have their own blues music, too. If you get this Bob Lanza disc in your player, trust me, you won't want to let it go. *Peanuts*



MARQUIS HILL

The Way We Play CONCORD JAZZ

This is first the Concord Jazz release for the winner of the 2014 Thelonious Monk Institute Trumpet Competition, and the recording contract was one of the prizes. This features his Blacktet, that then included alto saxophonist Christopher McBride, vibraphonist Justin Thomas, drummer Makaya McCraven and bassist Joshua Ramos. This writer just saw Hill and the Blacktet at the Kennedy Center and only Hill's long-time collaborator remained, but the sleek sound of his group, with its incorporation of hip hop rhythms was very much akin to this marvelous recording.

On this disc, Hill also incorporates a bit of poetry as on his previous album (although that was not present in his superb live performance), and the music here is comprised of his own reworkings of a number of standards. As on his prior recordings, the brief opening track (The Chicago Bulls opening theme) has the group introduced by vocalist Meagan McNeal before they launch into the title track, backing some hiphop poetry commentary by poet Harold Green III that segues into a very appealing rendition of Gigi Gryce's "Minority," with the leader's own trumpet, full of controlled, smoldering intensity, as well as Thomas's scintillating vibes, and the rhythm section's very distinct feel (McCraven is central here). Hill's trumpet on Horace Silver's "Moon Rays" certainly justifies comparisons made of him to Clifford Brown (with dashes of Woody Shaw and Freddie Hubbard), and he's followed by McBride, himself a distinctive young voice, to shine.

On this recording, Washington DC vocalist Christine Dashiell sings "My Foolish Heart" with the rhythm trio adding its own flavor with Thomas's shimmering vibes before the horns enter on this imaginative, exquisite vocal performance with a concise short, skittering muted trumpet break. A beautiful "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" is taken unaccompanied until the closing bar is followed by the Afro-Cuban take on Donald Byrd's "Fly Little Bird Fly," which here also incorporates Green's poetry. Herbie Hancock's "Maiden Voyage," which live was a feature for the rhythm section, here has the clean distinctive horn lines taken at a relaxed pace and enhanced along with Dashiell's tuneful vocalizing, followed by an imaginative "Straight No Chaser,"

that opens with some gritty saxophone, followed by the leader's own incisive, fiery playing.

The album closes with the Charlie Chaplin ballad "Smile" that opens as a duet with Hill's muted trumpet, McCraven (using his hands) before Ramos provides an anchor before getting the spotlight with vibes and sax joining for the closing passages. Hill has updated the jazz ensemble in a manner that one evokes the Clifford Brown-Max Roach Quintet while incorporating the hip-hop laced grooves of today. "The Way We Play" is an auspicious recording full of the distinctive sound of Marquis Hill and the Blacktet. **Ron Weinstock**



ADRIANNA MARIE AND HER ROOMFUL OF ALL-STARS Kingdom of Swing VIZZTONE

West Coast chanteuse Adrianna Marie has a second recording of jump blues and swing backed by a fine band including underrated guitarist L.A. Jones, pianist Al Copley, bassist Kedar Roy, drummer Brian Fahey and the Roomful Horns (Doug James, Rich Lataille, Doug Wooverton, Mark Early and Carl Querrfuth). Duke Robillard, who did the studio production, and Junior Watson guest on selected tracks while Bob Corritore is on harmonica for one tune.

There is a mix of originals by Adrianna along with covers of classic blues and swing numbers. The originals are pretty good songs, and like everything are well played in the vein of the early jump blues style of Roomful of Blues with plenty of brass as on the opening title track, her tribute to the swing era although the real king of swing was King Carter and not Goodman. Some nice growling trumpet from Wooverton on this selection. A similar thrust is "Gimme a Roomful," a salute to swing and Roomful of Blues."

A straight cover of an Esther Phillips' classic "Better Beware" is followed by a rollicking original "Sidecar Mama" that sounds like a cover of an unissued Camille Howard or Wyonna Carr recording with a superb solo. "Memphis Boogie" is another noteworthy original in the jump blues tradition. These are fun sides with plenty of solo space, although when she attempts renditions from Ellington, "Mood Indigo," Billie Holiday, "The Blues Are Brewin'," her vocals are enjoyable but hardly distinctive. And if not in the league as a singer

on Helen Humes' level, her rendition of Humes' "Drive Me Daddy" displays her good taste in material. The terrific Muddy Waters' styled slide guitar has Bob Corritore's harmonica lend it a Chicago blues meets jump blues feel.

"Jump With You Baby" gives several of the players a chance to solo while L.A. Jones duets with her on the boisterous "T-Bone Boogie," a thinly disguised reworking of Big Joe Turner-Pete Johnson classic "Roll 'Em Pete," with a terrific Doug James baritone sax solo and Copley laying down the boogie woogie piano. Jones takes a T-Bone Walker styled solo here followed by his wonderful playing on the closing instrumental "Blues After Hours." It is the close on an enjoyable and well-performed, if not outstanding, swing and blues recording. **Ron Weinstock**



JOHN HART Exit From Brooklyn ZOHOMUSIC

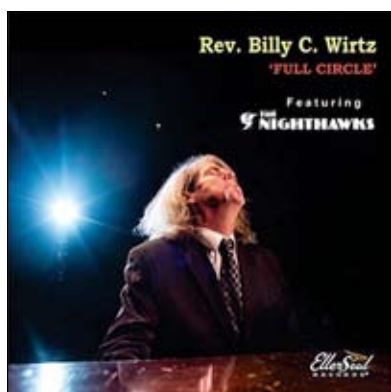
Moving to New York in 1984, fresh out of college, guitarist and composer John Hart initially landed in Brooklyn, although he eventually moved to the suburbs. In his notes to his new Zoho Music release, "Exit From Brooklyn," he mentions the vibrant jazz scene in that Borough which was part of his thirty years in the City experiencing virtually every facet of New York's jazz scene, including spending 16 years with organist Brother Jack McDuff. He met his partners in his trio, bassist Bill Moring and drummer Tim Horner, shortly after moving to New York, and while running into each other at apartment jam sessions and whatever, they formed a trio around 2000 and "Exit from Brooklyn" is their fourth CD together. Currently Hart is director of Jazz Guitar Studies at the University of Miami Frost School of Music and spends more time there, but this does not that affect his status as a performing jazz musician.

"Exit From Brooklyn" has the trio performing three originals and seven standards and from the opening rendition of "Here's That Rainy Day" to the closing "Where or When" there is much to enjoy from the leader's fleet fretwork and the support and solos from Moring and Horner. There are plenty of nice touches, such as the 6/8 rhythm for "Here's That Rainy Day," along with the twists and turns of his improvisation. In contrast, Hart's

title track evolves and expands out of a riff Hart introduces at the beginning and on which Moring also solos is and then followed by a lovely rendition of Billy Strayhorn's "Star Crossed Lovers," with Horner on brushes. Another highlight is when Hart and trio interpret "April in Paris" that he performed with Jack McDuff. The performance here is based on the Wild Bill Davis arrangement of the famous Count Basie recording, and in addition to some of Hart's choicest playing, Moring (a Basie alumni) solos and then Hart and Horner trade fours. Again on "Just Friends," one is impressed by the fresh twist Hart gives this familiar standard.

More twists and turns are heard on a brisk original blues "I Mean It!," followed by two Thelonious Monk compositions including an exquisite rendition of "Ask Me Now." These are among the pleasures of "Exit From Brooklyn," that make it so appealing.

Ron Weinstock



REV. BILLY C. WIRTZ

Full Circle

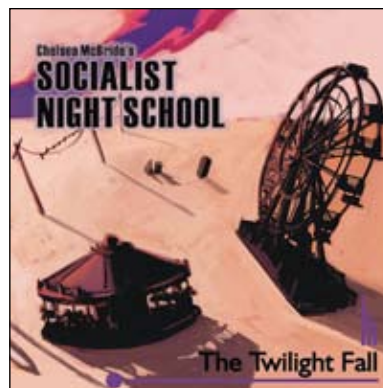
ELLERSOUL RECORDS

The Rev. Billy C. Wirtz is part court jester, part philosopher and full time talented. Taking the lead on piano and vocals and fronting none other than East Coast blues mainstays, The Nighthawks, he delivers not only top notch musicianship as revealed on instrumental tracks such as "Smokie Part 2" and "Your Last Goodbye" but also takes the listener through being too old to rock but just right for the blues when he finally discovers what a mojo is, "Too Old;" laments losing his spot as his woman's number one but not liking the sound of being her number two, "One Point Five;" reflects on growing up with a Deadhead mother, "Mama Was A Deadhead;" imagines the fun at an unlikely "Mennonite Surf Party;" imagines the rock party in Heaven, "Rockin' Up to Gloryland;" details the indignities of getting old, "I'm a Senior;" and reveals the joy of getting song inspiration from stories that find their way to him such as when a deceased dad's ex-wife starts dating his girlfriend, "Daddy Passed Away."

Most of these cuts are delivered with tongue firmly in cheek and with witty lyrics laden with double entendre wordplay. While the upbeat nature of the tunes and comedic tone play against the stereotypical blues it would be a mistake to cast this off as a mere novelty

disc. The Rev. throws down some serious chops as he channels Jerry Lee Lewis on "Breakup," "Mennonite Surf Party" and "Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee" and I'll bet you that you'll be humming most of these tunes long after you've forgotten the latest recycled boogie or shuffle released as the next new thing in modern blues.

Mark Smith



CHELSEA MCBRIDE'S SOCIALIST NIGHT SCHOOL

The Twilight Fall

BROWNTASOURAS RECORDS

24-year old award-winning composer, orchestrator and multi-instrumentalist Chelsea McBride leads the Toronto based big band, The Socialist Night School, which is heard here on its first full length recording. This big band is a unique cross-generational collection of some of Toronto finest musicians, where award-winning veterans like William Carn, Colleen Allen & Brownman Ali find themselves standing next to some of Toronto's hottest jazz 20-somethings that provides a platform for McBride to tell her musical stories. Her approach is in a manner similar to that of Bob Brookmeyer, Maria Schneider and Darcy James Argue, but here she displays her own fascinating approach. About the music here, each tune has it's own narrative direction accompanying it, and outlining a life-cycle that starts you at birth, and then – one tune at a time – moves you forward through a life-time of experiences.

Musically, she provides a varying canvas of textures, and approaches employed here ranging from the opening ballad, "Ambleside," with a vocal from Alex Samaras about waking up on a beach. Besides her own punchy tenor sax, her scoring of the reeds accompanying the vocals along with drummer Geoff Bruce's subtle cymbal play that evokes waves crashing on the beach make a picturesque performance. In contrast to the pastoral "Ambleside," there is the nervous energy "Intransitory," with its rock-tinged rhythmic feel, Chris Bruder's staccato piano, searching alto sax and David Riddel's fuzz-toned electric guitar which builds in intensity.

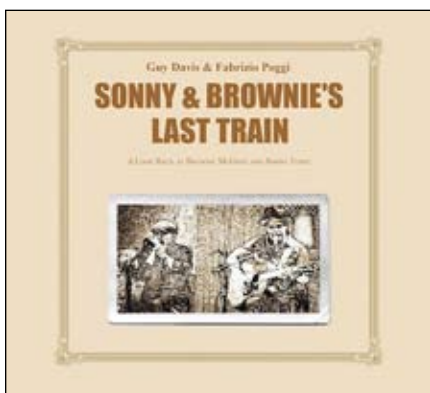
Of the title track she asks the listener: "Close your eyes and picture your six-year old self in onesie pajamas falling through a purple sky with orange

clouds... until you land in a carnival – broken, tilted Ferris wheel on one side, dusty abandoned carousel, chipped paint, fading, on the other. ...” The swirling musical colors along with biting guitar as the horns are adding coloring and contrast until the horns explode before some blistering trumpet as the tempo transitions into a march-like cadence before the musical storytelling of the bluesy “Smooth (or What I Should Have Said Instead),” with Samaras singing to a person one did not want to see but needs to make amends to, “If I had something to say, and something to prove, would you just be confused?” This is another number with the leader’s distinctive tenor sax playing.

Other tracks take us further through the transit of our lives as McBride herself suggests in her own compositional narrative, with The Socialist Night School’s performances of these imaginative compositions, wonderfully scored and played with considerable spirit, whether a trombone solo on “Arrival of Pegasus,” or fiery tenor saxophone in the perky “Foot in Mouth.”

“The Twilight Fail” is a multi-faceted musical journey that will delight listeners, and makes one hope to hear more from this Canadian composer and her big band.

Ron Weinstock



GUY DAVIS & FABRIZIO POGGI

Sonny & Brownie's Last Train M.C. RECORDS

Guy Davis’ latest release, with his partner harmonica player Fabrizio Poggi is a tribute to the legendary duo of Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. While Terry & McGhee were among the leading exponents of the Piedmont blues style, Davis’ approach is most assuredly his own. For example, on “Shortnin’ Bread” his guitar style employing a repeated riff is more akin to the Mississippi Delta and Memphis artists than heard in Carolina tobacco towns.

Similarly, Davis’ guitar accompaniment of “Baby Please Don’t Go Back To New Orleans” evokes Mississippi Fred McDowell and Leadbelly. This is not a criticism but an observation. There are times they do play in the easy flowing Piedmont style as in the cover of Elizabeth Cotten’s “Freight Train,” although Davis modeled his playing here on Cotten’s original (as he observes in his liner notes). This is not a criticism as Davis and Poggi deliver this performance in their own

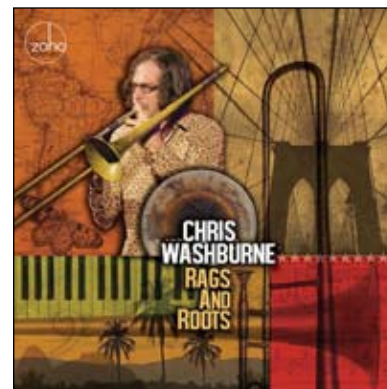
manner, and not as simple revivalists.

The album opens with Davis’ title track, an affectionate tribute to the pair. The remainder are songs to some extent associated with Terry & McGhee, even if from other sources and several are probably more associated with Leadbelly such as “Shortnin’ Bread,” “Take This Hammer” and “The Midnight Special.” “Take This Hammer” is an interesting performance with the accompaniment suggesting the gospel tune, “Glory, Glory, Hallelujah.”

Among the performances rendered in the Piedmont style are the afore-mentioned “Freight Train,” the superb “Hooray, Hooray These Women Is Killing Me,” and “Step It Up and Go,” associated with Josh White and Blind Boy Fuller, which Davis has recorded before. There is a strong rendition of “Walk On,” one of the songs most associated with Terry & McGhee. If the rendition of St. Louis Jimmy’s “Going Down Slow” is similar to the somewhat generic treatment Terry & McGhee gave it, Davis and Poggi are more in a Delta Blues style for Johnny Temple’s “Louise, Louise” as opposed to the Broonzy cover that influenced Terry and McGhee.

Regardless of the manner specific songs are performed, there is plenty to enjoy on “Sonny & Brownie’s Last Train.” If Davis’ somewhat gruff singing lacks some of the easy flowing quality of particularly Brownie McGhee, the interplay between him and Poggi is in its own manner as marvelous and Terry and McGhee. In his liner notes, Davis provides a written appreciation of Terry and McGhee and in an insert which provides notes on the songs (although the notes on “Louise, Louise” fail to mention JohnnyB Temple’s original) along with lyrics. This is an intriguing and welcome release, and one I suspect Terry and McGhee would appreciate if they still were with us.

Ron Weinstock



CHRIS WASHBURNE

Rags and Roots Zoho Music

From the opening moments of Joplin’s “Maple Leaf Rag,” trombonist Chris Washburne’s new recording provides a fresh take on some ragtime and the roots of jazz. His co-producer, Kabir Sehgal, observes that this album “is a bi-hemispheric ragtime revival that marks the centenary of both Joplin’s passing and

the first noted jazz recording. By reimagining ragtime and the roots of jazz, Chris Washburne has created a path for new audiences to discover this quintessentially American music. His *Rags and Roots* is both a tribute to and triumph of ragtime and a sounding out of the truly global roots of jazz.” And he does so with this reinvention of Joplin’s classic that shifts from traditional jazz to a more modern take only hinting at the melody as well as having Sarah Elizabeth Charles sing the rarely heard lyrics. It is a performance full of surprise and joy.

This performance opens a wondrous and fresh take on other songs from Joplin, Brazil, Haiti, Cuba and Mexico. The leader has brought together a terrific band that includes his trombone and vocals; Alphonso Horne trumpet, vocals; Evan Christopher clarinet, vocals; Andre Mehmari piano, vocals; Hans Glawischnig bass, vocals and Vince Cherico drums, vocals. In addition to Charles, other featured vocalists on this include Thelonious Monk Competition finalist, Vuyo Sotashe and Gabriela Anders.

“Maple Leaf Rag” sets the tone for this outstanding recording. It is followed by a mashup of W.C. Handy’s “St. Louis Blues” and Moises Simons “El Manicero (The Peanut Vendor),” that was initially joined together by the Cuban big band, Los Hermanos Castro. This performance fascinates with the interweaving of the two numbers, including the vocals from Charles (of St. Louis Blues”) and Anders (of “El Manicero”), along with solos from the leader and pianist Mehmari. There is the lively Caribbean-Crescent City rhythmic mashup for Louis Moreau Gottschalk’s “Bamboula,” with Evan Christopher’s joyful, serpentine clarinet initiating this with more marvelous piano and some marvelous brass before Christopher offers a pensive, woody solo, and playful brass and woodwind riffs.

“Here’s One,” originally pioneering Harlem Renaissance giant William Grant Still’s arrangement of a spiritual, is wonderfully sung by Sotashe followed by a lovely rendition of Joplin’s “Solace (A Mexican Serenade)” and then Ernesto Nazareth’s buoyant “Odeon,” with choice solos from bassist Glawischnig and trumpeter Horne. Charles’ lovely vocal on Joplin’s “Picture on Her Face” is followed by the exuberance and invention of “Mildly Entertained,” a transformation of “The Entertainer” into a fresh composition. “Ala Cote Gen Fanm” was composed by Haitian composer Gerard Dupervil but the original misogynistic lyrics were adapted by Candice Hoyes and Sarah Elizabeth Charles transforming this into a Haitian feminist anthem with Charles singing in Haitian Creole against a spirited backing. “Lisete” evolved into a popular Haitian folk ballad which Washburne interprets as a charming piano, clarinet, and trombone trio.

Danish-American ragtime composer, Jens Bode-walt Lampe, penned “Creole Belles,” that some may know from Mississippi John Hurt’s lilting recording. Christopher’s ebullient arrangement provides a contemporary take on traditional New Orleans Jazz with

a fine vocal from Sotashe. The album closes with a somber “Strange Fruit,” with Charles delivering the first verse backed solely by Glawischnig’s bowed bass before the full band enters with sober horns set against a funeral march tempo on Charles’ compelling rendition of the anti-lynching song made famous by Billie Holiday.

“Rags and Roots” has fresh takes on ragtime and early jazz classics that is wonderfully arranged, as well as superbly played and sung. It is a superb recording.

Ron Weinstock



HURRICANE RUTH

Ain't Ready For The Grave

HURRICANE RUTH RECORDS

Ruth LeMaster earned her name because of her huge voice in a small package and her publicity characterizes her as rooted in traditional blues but someone who can rock the house. This is her fourth album and was produced by Tom Hambridge who plays drums on this, and who with LeMaster contributed most of the 12 songs here. Others playing on this include Reese Wynans on keyboards, Michael Rhodes on bass and guitarists Pat Buchanan and Rob McNelly.

The album opens with a bluesy salute to a Friday Night at a juke, “Barrelhouse Joe’s,” followed by the hard rock-blues of “Hard Rockin’ Woman,” with a bit of shouting set against a southern rock setting. “Far From the Cradle” features atmospheric slide guitar at the opening backing her vocal before Wynans adds some piano as she notes “we are from the cradle but we ain’t ready for the grave,” as the rest of the band joins in for understated backing of her vocal and the Muddy Waters’ influenced slide playing.

She is a good singer with solid phrasing, tone and pitch, although occasionally takes things a bit too rock-ish for these ears. But on the driving “Estilene,” about a woman who should leave that married man alone, or the amusing double entendre of “Beekeeper,” as she delivers the lyrics with a sense of warning or humor. She stands out on the straight slow blues “My Heart Aches For You,” followed by the funky groove of “Cheating Blues,” as she recalls making love and had a good thing going, rocking this man all night until she found out about him blinding her with lies.

There is a (forgettable to these ears) hard rock cov-

er of AC/DC's "Whole Lot of Rosie," the atmospheric "For a Change" with Ruth singing about his midnight mover and crawling king snake, but if he wants Ruth, she asks (in a most sultry manner) if he wants to be treated right for a change. A cover of Hambridge's "Let Me Be The One" (written for Susan Tedeschi) is a fine shuffle performance with a heartfelt, relaxed vocal. The McCrary singers add backing vocal for the soul-rocker "Good Stuff" and the closing gospel song of praise, "Yes I Know." This ends a tightly produced, solidly performed collection of blues and rock that displays Hurricane Ruth as a powerful and expressive vocalist.

Ron Weinstock



SARAH PARTRIDGE
Bright Lights & Promises:
Redefining Janis Ian
ORIGIN RECORDS

Jazz singer Sarah Partridge actually started out as an actress, first becoming known as Kessler the babysitter in *Risky Business*, a 1983 movie with another relatively new actor, Tom Cruise. She went on to appear in several movies and TV shows throughout the 80s and early 90s. But her father loved jazz singers, and she had grown up listening to some of the best. On a dare she sang a knockout version of "Summertime" at Karaoke night at the Improv in L.A., and the right person just happened to be in the audience and the next thing she knew she was singing at a concert with some L.A.'s top shelf jazz musicians. A career change was on the horizon, as she started playing the L.A. clubs, and later moved to New York City in '94, where she would meet trumpeter Doc Cheatham and began working in the NY jazz scene. She released her first album in 1998, titled "I'll Be Easy To Find," followed by more new albums in 2004, 2006, 2010 and 2015; and in 2017 she released this tribute to the legendary folk singer from the 60s and 70s, Janis Ian.

Janis Ian was only 14 years old when she released a song about an interracial relationship, titled "Society's Child." It was certainly not a popular subject at the time, and many radio stations initially refused to play it. But Janis is probably best known to many via her number 1 hit "At Seventeen," released in the mid 70s. Although Janis Ian was a folk singer, much of her music was influenced by jazz and blues. When I first saw this CD, and noted that it is a straight jazz take on Janis Ian's music, I must admit

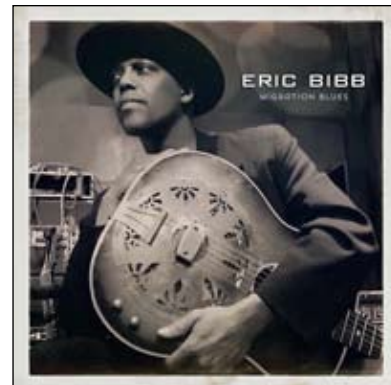
that I had some thoughts as to how Sarah Partridge was going to pull this off, perhaps especially "Society's Child" and "At Seventeen." But not only did she do it, but she did it extremely well.

In addition to the two songs mentioned above, Sarah covers some of Janis' other early songs such as "Orphan Of The Wind," "Tattoo," "Belle Of The Blues," "Bright Lights & Promises," and a couple of Ian's more recent songs — "Matthew," from her 2004 "Billies Bones" album, and a song she recorded in 2014, "I'm Still Standing." Sarah also covered a new song that Janis had never released — "Forever & A Day." Sarah and Janis also wrote two songs together for this project, the opening "A Quarter Past Heartache," which also features some guest vocals by Janis, and "Somebody's Child."

Sarah Partridge is a fantastic jazz singer and she's in the company of a likewise fantastic band. The excellent arrangements, 10 by pianist Allen Farnham and 2 by drummer Tim Horner, certainly add to the musical success of this set. Rounding out the band are Bill Moring/bass, Scott Robinson/saxes, flute & clarinet, Ben Williams/trombone, Paul Meyers/acoustic guitar and Ben Stein/electric guitar.

All in all, to my ears Sarah Partridge and her band have come up with an undoubtably very fine way to redefine the music of Janis Ian. You can check out samples of each of these songs at Amazon.

Bill Wahl



ERIC BIBB
Migration Blues
STONY PLAIN RECORDS

"Whether you're looking at a former sharecropper, hitchhiking from Clarksdale to Chicago in 1923, or an orphan from Aleppo in a boat full of refugees in 2016 – it's migration blues," Eric Bibb says about his timely and insightful new release. "With this album, I want to encourage us all to keep our minds and hearts wide open to the ongoing plight of music on refugees everywhere. As history shows, we all come from people who, at some time or another, had to move." On this program of mostly originals, it has covers of Bob Dylan's "Masters of War," and "Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land," along with an arrangement of the traditional "Mornin' Train." Bibb sings as well as plays guitars, six-string banjo and contrabass guitar and is supported by Michael Jerome Browne (guitars,

vocals, banjos, mandolin and triangle) and JJ Milteau (harmonica) who produced this with Bibb.

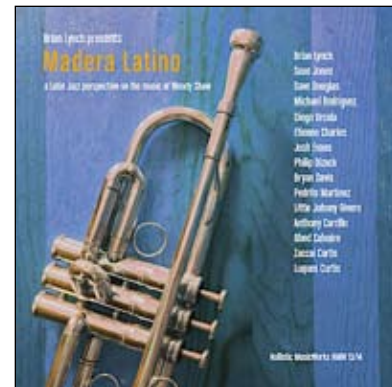
Opening with "Refugee Moan," Bibb sings about his hope that those who are homeless because of war, famine or whatever can find a peaceful refuge and caring folks. The lyrics, which reflect the present refugee crisis, are wonderfully sung and supported. "Delta Getaway" has a compelling riff behind lyrics of Jim Crow south, watching a lynching and seeing them coming after him so leaving the South, with a touch of percussion at the end adding to the burning coals heat of this performance. This is followed by "Diego Blues," about a Mexican immigrant in the twenties delta with a tamales stand set against a solid Delta blues accompaniment that evokes Charlie Patton's "Moon Going Down" riff.

"Prayin' For Shore" tries to imagine the refugee fleeing in a boat, while the title track is a mesmerizing instrumental with understated, intricate playing. "Four Years, No Rain" is stark with its allusions about war and drought in Syria, while banjo and dobro accompaniment is on "We Had To Move," where folks had to move because the government said so. Electric guitar adds to the atmosphere on the slowed down cover of "Masters of War," with Milteau's harmonica adding to the haunting backing here. "Brotherly Love" is a lovely folk ballad with his plea that we can live in peace, followed by the jaunty small acoustic group on "With A

Dolla' In My Pocket" as with nothing but the clothes on his back and a dollar in his pocket to hit Highway 61 and heading to Chicago.

After an appealing cover of Woody Guthrie's classic song, "Postcard From Booker," is a very brief instrumental tribute to Booker White (played on Booker's guitar) followed by Browne's "Blacktop," set to Browne's understated Delta blues backing as well as his lead vocal with Bibb providing vocal support that "everyday day seems like murder here," as blacktop is steaming while he is dry as dirt as the cars pass him. The album closes with a heartfelt rendition of a traditional spiritual. Included are the lyrics to the original songs and the spiritual along with Bibb's commentary. The singing is heartfelt and very moving without being preachy or overwrought, while the understated accompaniment adds to the poignant performances. "Migration Blues" is a marvelous recording that will hopefully open hearts and minds to horrifying plight of refugees in today's world.

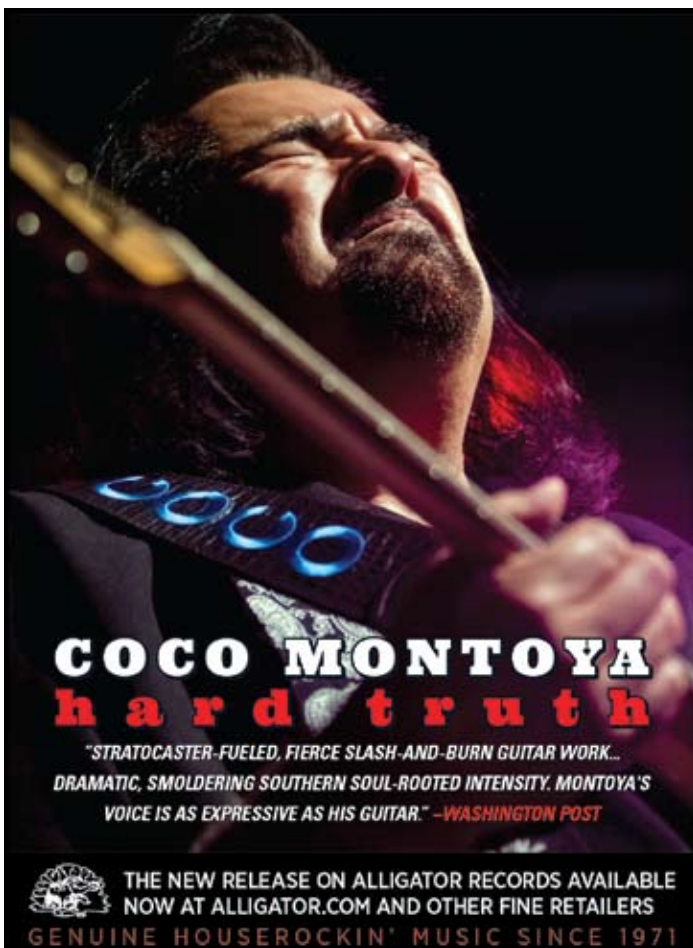
Ron Weinstock



BRIAN LYNCH PRESENTS
Madera Latino: A Jazz Perspective
on Woody Shaw
HOLISTIC MUSICWORKS

The late Woody Shaw may have passed in relative obscurity and tragic circumstances, but increasingly his legacy as a trumpeter and composer have become recognized. Trumpeter Brian Lynch may be best known for his playing with the great Eddie Palmieri and the late Phil Woods, but has a reputation on his own and one of those who have championed Shaw's legacy. With the cooperation of Woody Shaw's son, he has produced this project which brings a number of today's top trumpet players together to play Woody's numbers in a Latin jazz setting. As Lynch writes, "The combination of Woody's music and the Afro-Caribbean clave concept was always a natural to me."

There are eight Shaw compositions, another associated with him, and two Lynch originals. Lynch is joined by the following trumpeters: Sean Jones, Dave Douglas, Michael Rodriguez, Etienne Charles, Diego Urcola, Josh Evans, Philip Dizack, and Bryan Davis. They are supported by a fabulous rhythm section of Zaccai Curtis, piano; Luques Curtis, bass; Obed Calvaire, drums; Pedrito Martinez, timbales, congas; Little



Johnny Rivero, congas, percussion and Anthony Carrillo, bongo, campana. The performances have varying combinations of trumpeters and trumpet soloists with solos from the rhythm section members also interspersed.

The music lives up to one's expectations opening with the fiery "Zoltan," with plenty of heat from soloists Lynch, Charles, Douglas and Urcola, in their contrasting styles along with pianist Curtis and conga player Rivera.

I am familiar with the Curtis Brothers and Rivera from a number of recent latin jazz recordings and their playing along with rhythm section is excellent throughout. Shaw's ballads are as joyful to hear on this such as the lovely "Sweet Love of Mine," with Lynch and Rodriguez presenting their lyrical side along with pianist Curtis and followed by Judi Singh's "Time is Right," from Shaw's "For Sure" album, with loving voices for the trumpet trio of Lynch, Jones and Dizack along with bassist Luques Curtis and conga player Martinez sharing the spotlight.

There is a full contingent of percussion on one of Shaw's more celebrated compositions, "In A Capricornian Way," with Lynch and Douglas each handling the composition in their distinctive, imaginative styles. Hot percussion kicks off Lynch's mid tempo "Blues For Woody and Khalid," dedicated to Shaw and the great Larry Young, while "Joshua C" is a tight salsa meets hard bop performance with Calvaire and Rivero providing the rhythmic spice behind the featured playing of Lynch, Rodriguez and Evans.

The same lineup is present on the high-spirited adaptation of "Song of Songs," with more heated lyricism from the trumpets, and more brilliance on piano from Zaccai Curtis followed by his ostinato accompanying an interlude of percussion fireworks accented by riffs from the interweaving trumpets.

Lynch's four-part "Madera Latino Suite" closes a remarkable recording, spotlighting Urcola and percussionist Carrillo on the opening section after the floating time feel of the introduction. The second section has a more stated tempo with Charles' lyricism against the relaxed samba-like feel from the Curtis Brothers. The third section is brisker with the spotlight on Rivero before some of Lynch's most inspired playing leading to the closing section featuring Martinez's effervescent timbales that concludes a terrific recording.

This was at least in part a crowd-funded recording and I was one of those who backed this on Kickstarter, as I have other of Lynch's projects. I have found him to be not simply a superb trumpeter, composer and arranger, but the thoughtfulness of the various projects he has recently engaged in contribute to the sheer pleasure one receives listening to the finished product. This received a 2017 Grammy Nomination for Best Latin Jazz Album, but it was also one of the best 'jazz' releases of 2016 as well.

Ron Weinstock



JON ZEEMAN

Blue Room
MEMBRANE RECORDS

Singer-guitarist Jon Zeeman has been playing music for quite some time, currently mostly in Florida. His deep influences include Jimi Hendrix and The Rolling Stones, and he played a bit with the late Allman Brothers drummer Butch Trucks. Trucks in fact is on drums on two tracks, probably his final recordings. Others in the band include Phil McArthur on bass (who also engineered, mastered and mixed this), Bob Taylor and/or Tom Regis on keyboards, George Lilly on drums (expect for the tracks with Trucks), Bob Taylor on congas and Tom Regis on keyboards.

Zeeman's blues-rock approach has a definite appeal as on the opening "All I Want is you," a nice blues shuffle and one of the tracks with Trucks on drums. His sandpaper tinged vocals certainly has appeal as does his crisply played guitar as well as the accompanying organ solo set against a crisp rhythm section that swings its groove.

"Hold On" is perhaps a bit more in a blues-rock vein, but he displays a nice sense of dynamics here. "Love in Vain" is a credible, if unremarkable rendition of the Rolling Stones recording followed by the chugging shuffle "Next To You," the last of the tracks with Trucks on drums. Certainly it is worth noting how the strength of Zeeman's vocals and unforced delivery and the backing here again is strong.

There is nice playing in Zeeman's Jimi Hendrix cover, "Still Rainin' Still Dreamin'," with the organist adding to the flavor here. A slow blues, "If I Could Make You Love Me," is a standout, nicely paced, performance with nice vocal and some very hot guitar set against a solid rhythm. "All Alone," is a solid rocking blues whose main section evokes hints of Wolf's "Who's Been Talking?", while another musical section has a different melodic core with neat guitar and piano solos. After funkifying things up on "Talkin' About My Baby," it is followed by a short instrumental title track.

The album closes with some more nicely played blues-rock, "Nothin' in the World." Like the rest of his recording it is nicely paced and the backing is crisp but never overplays and one can appreciate his focused guitar and his nicely delivered singing. The result is a very solid recording in this vein.

Ron Weinstock

jazz-blues.com



PRESERVATION HALL JAZZ BAND

So It Is SONY LEGACY

Far from a museum piece, this venerable NOLA institution appears to be focused on preserving the spirit of jazz fraternity as well as the legacy of their hometown. The energized ensemble work present here is a constant through a varied and tasty original set.

A Mingus-esque bass vamp on the title track sets up a bluesy prowling that seamlessly shifts into a horn-powered Afro-Cuban romp that is the second track, "Santiago". And while a high profile would be expected for the horns in this outfit, pianist Kyle Roussel periodically snatches the spotlight with his work on both acoustic and electric axes; stretching out on the latter on "Innocence".

Other tracks of note include a second Afro-Cuban cooker, "La Malanga", and a rock-solid second-line strutter, "Convergence". Good stuff! **Duane Verh**



VANESSA COLLIER Meeting My Shadow RUF RECORDS

Young saxophonist, vocalist, and songwriter Vanessa Collier is a graduate of world-renowned Berklee College and later toured with Joe Louis Walker. She recorded a self-produced album, participated at the Blues Foundation's 2016 International Blues Challenge and has been playing at festivals and clubs. Now she has signed with Ruf Records who have issued her newest release. She is backed by TK Jackson on drums, Daniel McKee on bass and Laura Chavez on guitar with many tracks having the legendary Charlie Hodges of

the Hi Rhythm Section on keyboards. She has eight originals and three covers here as well.

Collier has an attractive voice and impresses as a vocalist over a variety of material including the opening "Poisoned the Well," one of the more notable originals, along with her ode to James Brown styled funk, "Dig a Little Deeper." She covers U2's B.B. King collaboration, "When Love Comes To Town," with a fervent vocal with Josh Roberts' slide guitar soloing while she takes the performance to a close with some robust saxophone. Her cover of the O.V. Wright deep soul classic "You Gonna Make Me Cry" is sweetened up in her treatment making it more a lament than Wright's gut-wrenching original.

"Whisky and Women" is a rocking blues shuffle about folk complaining about whisky and women while she notes she wants to live without complaining. The tempo might be a bit slower, and her vocal could have been tempered a tad, but both she and Laura Chavez are outstanding. "Meet Me Where I'm At" has a New Orleans-flavored feel with some nice interplay by Vanessa with trumpeter Marc Franklin. There is a spirited cover of Sister Rosetta Tharpe's "Up Around My Head, I Hear Music In The Air," and if her vocal lacks the weight of Tharpe, it is still enjoyable, and Chavez again tosses in a crisply, spirited guitar solo followed by Collier's short solo. "Devil's on the Downside" is an impressively sung original with Charles Hodges taking us to church on organ and a standout lyric about life's temptations sung wonderfully with Collier providing a marvelous arrangement as well for the horns to frame her vocal.

There is plenty to like about Vanessa Collier on "Meeting My Shadow." She is multi-talented as a singer, songwriter, saxophonist and arranger who also co-produced this most engaging set of performances. She is certainly establishing herself on the blues and more general music circles, and this recording will further that process.

Ron Weinstock



NATALIA M. KING Bluezzin' T'il Dawn CHALLENGE RECORDS

Brooklyn born, but based in Europe, Natalia M. King has a fascinating recording of what is described as jazzy takes on the blues. The singer and guitarist has a

band of bassist Anders Ulrich, pianist Anthony Honnet, drummer Davu Honnet, trumpeter Ronald Baker, and reed player Xavier Sibre on the seven originals and two interpretations found here.

Billie Holiday's influence is evident in the opening "Traces in the Sand," a slow blues with tight backing with Sibre's clarinet setting the mood as well as soloing, as Natalia sings about her regrets about a love that is no more. Holiday is not the only influence, as she can belt a song out in a manner Holiday never did as on Holiday's "Don't Explain." This starts off almost as a hot jump blues with Sibre on tenor sax, with a middle section done as a lament before the groove picks up for the closing vocal chorus. Bassist Ulrich and her own rhythm guitar add much to this performance as well. Her original, "Insatiable," has an ambience similar to the Etta James recording of "At Last," and has her strong vocal complimented by strong tenor sax and pianist Honnet's sterling accompaniment.

Baker's muted trumpet and Honnet's piano establish the tone for the lament "This Time Around," as she sings about being lied to, cheated before and had her clothes on the pavement. There are times her conscious phrasing, as on "Baby Brand New," comes off as mannered, but it is a minor point with Sibre's wooly sounding tenor sax providing a responsive voice to the vocal with an added treat of the incorporation of "Take Five" in Sibre's solo. Baker's growls, slurs and

blasts add to the flavor of "Paint It Black & Blue," as she sings about stumbling in her sorrow about unreturned love with the backing suggestive of the late Charles Brown's latter recordings. "You Came and Go" is a folksy lament set against a sparse backing and effective use of flute in the performance. The final number matches her evocative vocal take on Fred Neil's "Little Bit of Rain," against some wonderful muted trumpet.

She is a fascinating singer, with a strong jazz leaning, and supported here by a terrific backing band with some well structured solos. The result is one of the more fascinating recent recordings straddling the blues and jazz worlds and hopefully does not get overlooked because of this.

Ron Weinstock

BLUES WATCH

BY MARK SMITH

Sorry, there is no Blues Watch for this month. The column will return in the next issue. Happy beginning of summer!

- Mark

