

July / August 2018  
Issue 379  
now in our 44th year

jazz  
& blues report



Aya Takazawa



Monterey Jazz Festival

# jazz & blues report

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Founded in Buffalo New York in March of 1974; began our Cleveland edition in April of 1978. Now based in San Diego, this global e-zine edition is posted online bimonthly at [www.jazz-blues.com](http://www.jazz-blues.com)

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"Buffalonious"

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



## 61st Annual Monterey Jazz Festival

**Headliners Include Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, Norah Jones with Brian Blade & Chris Thomas, Jon Batiste with the Dap-Kings, Dianne Reeves, Charles Lloyd & the Marvels with Lucinda Williams, and Many Others**

**MJF Presents Tributes to Geri Allen, Ray Brown, and Michael Brecker**

Monterey, CA Three-day Arena and Grounds Ticket Packages for the 61st Annual Monterey Jazz Festival, September 21-23 went on sale May 1. Remaining tickets can be purchased online at [montereyjazzfestival.org](http://montereyjazzfestival.org) or by calling 888.248.6499.

The Festival will feature over 120 performances from iconic and emerging jazz artists, educational events, conversations, films, and exhibits on eight stages, for 30 hours of live music spanning two days and three nights, accompanied by an array of 75 vendors selling international cuisine and merchandise on the oak-studded 20 acres of the Monterey County Fair & Event Center.

The Artists-in-Residence for MJF61 will be Tia Fuller and Ingrid Jensen. Oscar Hernández & the Spanish Harlem Orchestra will debut the 2018 commission piece, and NEA Jazz Master recipient Dianne Reeves will be the Showcase Artist, performing four times over the weekend, including the premiere of a new Brazilian project with Reeves' guitarist, Romero Lubambo will be assembling with special guests for the Monterey appearance.

"I am so pleased that in a year when there is so much attention being paid to the inclusion of women, the 61st Monterey Jazz Festival will celebrate the talents of exceptional women jazz artists," said Colleen Bailey, MJF Executive Director.

"As we enter our seventh decade as the world's longest continuously-running jazz festival, I remain inspired and committed to producing and presenting the world's finest jazz artists, while making sure that we represent the music and the musicians in an inclusive, exciting and fun manner," said Tim Jackson, MJF Artistic Director.

A six-time JazzTimes Readers Poll winner, 2018's GRAMMY Award-winning Arena lineup on Friday night, September 21 includes Jazz at Lin-





Tia Fuller (© Jerris Madison)

coln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, presenting Spaces with “Lil Buck” and Jared Grimes; Dianne Reeves; and a Tribute to Geri Allen, presented by Tia Fuller and Ingrid Jensen featuring Terri Lyne Carrington, Kris Davis, Shamie Royston, Maurice Chestnut, DJ Val, and Robert Hurst.

The Saturday afternoon September 22 Arena lineup includes Oscar Hernández & the Spanish Harlem Orchestra debuting the 2018 commission piece; José James singing the songs of Bill Withers, and Thornetta



Diane Reeves (© Jerris Madison)

Davis.

Saturday night includes the 60th edition of Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour with Cécile McLorin Salvant, Bria Skonberg, Melissa Aldana, Christian Sands, Yasushi Nakamura, and Jamison Ross; Remembering Ray Brown featuring Christian McBride, Benny Green, and Greg Hutchinson with special guests John Clayton, John Patitucci and Dianne Reeves; and Jon Batiste with the Dap-Kings.

The Arena lineup on Sunday afternoon September 23 includes Charles Lloyd & the Marvels with special guest Lucinda Williams, Bokanté; and the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra with Tia Fuller and Ingrid Jensen.

Sunday night in the Arena will feature Norah Jones with Brian Blade & Chris Thomas; a special tribute celebrating Michael Brecker with Randy Brecker, Donny McCaslin, Gil Goldstein, Adam Rogers, John Patitucci,

## LIKE JAZZ & BLUES PHOTOS?



This photo of Gary Bartz captured by Ron Weinstock at the 2008 Duke Ellington Jazz Festival is just one of hundreds of Ron's photos you can view online at [www.flickr.com/photos/novaron](http://www.flickr.com/photos/novaron)



Joey DeFrancesco (© Tracy Ketcher)



Charles Lloyd & The Marvels  
with Lucinda Williams (© Dorothy Darr)

and the Anat Cohen Tentet.

Full Weekend Arena Ticket Packages offer a reserved seat to each of the five concerts on the Jimmy Lyons Stage in the Arena (renewable annually) plus, access to the seven additional Grounds Stages, and all Festival activities. Full Weekend Arena Ticket Packages begin at \$340.

Full Weekend Grounds Packages offer access to seven Grounds stages and activities. Full Weekend Grounds Packages are \$155.

Grounds activities include over 100 events, conversations, films, and musical performances, with weekend highlights from Jane Bunnett & Maqueque; Jane Ira Bloom; Joey DeFrancesco & the People; Tia Fuller Quartet; Dave Grusin; Fred Hersch (solo, duo with Jane Ira Bloom, and trio); José James; Ingrid & Christine Jensen Infinitude; Harold Lopez-Nussa Trio; Wadada Leo Smith; Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio; Christian McBride Trio; Donny McCaslin Group; Dianne Reeves; Mwenso & the Shakes; Thumbscrew with Mary Halvorson, Michael Formanek and Tomas Fujiwara; DownBeat Blindfold Test with John Clayton; Julian Lage Trio; Bill Frisell Trio; MJF on Tour; Lisa Mezzacappa AvantNOIR; Jamie Baum Septet+; No BS! Brass Band; Thornetta



Cecile McLorin Salvant (© Mark Fitton)

Davis; Bobby Floyd Trio; Cameron Graves; Tammy L. Hall Peace-tet with Kim Nalley; Adam Rogers & Dice; Gabriel Royal; Kristen Strom; John Santos Unusual Standards with Kenny Washington & Destani Wolf; Veronica Swift; Katie Thiroux Trio; Knowler; Ladama; top student bands from the 2018 Next Generation Jazz Festival — Northgate High School Jazz Band I; Valencia High School Two N' Four; Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts Jazz Combo I; SFJAZZ High School All-Stars Big Band; Colburn Jazz Workshop Thursday Night Band; University of Central Oklahoma Jazz Ensemble I; University of Denver Lamont Jazz Orchestra; Western Michigan University Gold Company; University of Nevada, Las Vegas Honors Trio; William Brandt, and others. All weekend long, the exhibit The Color of Jazz: Album cover photographs by Pete Turner will be in the Pacific Jazz Café Gallery; plus the films Dave Grusin: Not Enough Time, and Two Trains Runnin' in the Jazz Theater; and much more.

In addition, a free MJF scheduling app for iPhone and Android will be available through the Monterey Jazz Festival's website.

Also on sale May 1 are Full Weekend Premier Club hospitality passes, priced at \$340. Benefits include a furnished setting offering closed-circuit Arena simulcasts, wines from Monterey County and gourmet cuisine, private restrooms, indoor and outdoor patio seating, a hosted bar, and more. Arena or Grounds Ticket purchase is required.

The 12th Annual Jazz Legends Gala, held at the



Jane Ira Bloom (© Brigitte Lacombe)





Norah Jones

Inn at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, will honor Dianne Reeves on Thursday, September 20, 2018. Hosted by Christian McBride, special performances at this beautiful location will feature the Christian McBride Trio with special guest Benny Green, and the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra. Cost is \$325 per person. Proceeds from this event benefit Monterey Jazz Festival's jazz education programs. Contact 831.233.3711 for more information.

For more information, and the full lineup for the 61st Monterey Jazz Festival visit online at : [www.montereyjazzfestival.org](http://www.montereyjazzfestival.org)



Aya Takazawa

## Telluride Jazz Festival Set For August 3-5 in Telluride, CO

Telluride, Colorado - As the summer season in the world-famous mountain town of Telluride, Colorado begins to approach, the Telluride Jazz Festival reveals its 2018 artist lineup. Set on August 3-5, 2018, the festival presents a well-rounded, diverse mix of live jazz, funk, soul, and gospel performances featuring Bruce Hornsby & The Noisemakers, Irma Thomas, Soul Queen of New Orleans, Karl Denson's Tiny Universe, Jaimoe's Jasssz Band, BADBADNOTGOOD, Turkuaz and many more.

Steve Gumble, Festival Director said "Without a doubt,

having legendary artists like Irma Thomas and Bruce Hornsby on the lineup is phenomenal but what really excites me for the 2018 festival are the new kids on the block. Artists like BADNADNOTGOOD, Turkuaz and Cory Henry and the Funk Apostles are changing the face of Jazz. There has been a resurgence in Jazz in the last few years, especially with younger folks, and many of the bands on this year's lineup are leading that charge" He went on to say "For me, 2018 is special because it is our second year of producing this 42-year-old festival. We learned a lot last year and are excited to be able to improve on the experience after having a year under our belt. The whole festival experience is just amazing - yoga classes, historical tours, student jazz programs, and our very eclectic, yet jazz-centric, lineup. There is something here for everyone".

Telluride Town Park is renowned as one of America's most scenic and spectacular live music venues. Nestled among the aspen trees and surrounded by 13,000 foot mountain peaks, festival artists will perform on the state-of-the-art Main Stage. A secondary stage, "Society Stage", free of admission, will host weekend programming including interactive artist and student band performances in the center of Telluride. The intimate performances on the "Society Stage" aim to further the festival's and Telluride Society for Jazz's mission of providing student education through music.

Festival tickets are on sale now. Early Bird 3-Day Passes are \$145.00 plus fees. The following passes are limited in quantities while supplies last: Early Bird 3-Day, Early Bird All That Jazz, Patron Experience, VIP Experience, "Jazz After Dark" and 4-Day Camping passes. Single day tickets are set to go on sale May 23, 2018. For festival information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.telluridejazz.org/tickets](http://www.telluridejazz.org/tickets).

### About Telluride Jazz Festival

Located in the legendary outdoor venue in the breathtaking mountain town of Telluride, Colorado, the 42nd Telluride Jazz Festival, August 3-5, 2018, celebrates the rich tradition, modern styles and cutting edge progression of the American Jazz art form delivering an unmatched aesthetic experience. SBG Productions brings a new era to the Telluride Jazz Festival, showcasing three days and nights of world class jazz, funk, soul, folk and gospel, with a goal of community engagement and student education. A musically-charged local culture accompanied by a wide variety of special events including interactive artist performances, children's activities, cozy late night club shows, on-site camping, outdoor recreation, jazz art walk, historical walking tours, and much more will round out the weekend celebration. The historical mining town of Telluride sits nestled in a scenic box canyon at 8,750 feet, surrounded by 13,000 foot peaks, and is a prized gem of the Rocky Mountains.

A full service event and festival production company since 1994, SBG Productions specializes in the unique, multi-faceted live music experiences of the Telluride Blues & Brews Festival, Telluride Jazz Festival, and Durango Blues Train.

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# 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](http://AmericansForTheArts.org).



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



**Art. Ask for More.**

[AMERICANSFORTHEARTS.ORG](http://AMERICANSFORTHEARTS.ORG)

**NAMM**  
Foundation



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We only bring you  
the Cream of the Crop!



**WHITNEY SHAY**  
**A Woman Rules The World**  
LITTLE VILLAGE FOUNDATION

There is something about a recording that makes one take notice, especially when it is by an artist that one was previously unaware of. San Diego vocalist Whitney Shay made that impression when I first started listening to her assertive "Ain't No Weak Woman," that opens up this new release of modern urban blues and classically oriented soul. Supporting her expressive singing is the excellent support that producer and guitarist Christoffer 'Kid' Andersen has provided. On this she is backed by a studio band that includes Jim Pugh on keyboards, Kedar Roy on bass, Alex Pettersen on drums and 'Sax' Gordon Beadle on saxophones with Igor Prado and Aki Kumar among those guesting on selected tracks.

"Ain't No Weak Woman" is one of four songs Shay co-wrote with Adam Eros, and she vigorously delivers her lyric that having a weak moment does not make her a weak woman, set against a driving groove and also has a superb Sax Beadle tenor sax solo. There is more raspy sax to open a lesser known Dinah Washington number "Blues Down Home," with a terrific horn arrangement and another superb vocal that suggests she could handle a straight jazz recording with equal aplomb. This track also has Jim Pugh's greasy organ accompaniment and a nice harp break from Aki Kumar besides more booting sax that evokes Eddie Chamblee and the like. After a hint of New Orleans on another original, "Don't You Fool Me No More," Igor Prado adds his slashing guitar and adds his vocal on another original, the funky "Love's Creeping Up On You."

The title track was Denise LaSalle's answer to James Brown's "It's a Man's World," and against the firm accompaniment Shay delivers another knockout

vocal...moaning and shouting. Andersen's sitar helps open her fervent blues shouting on a reworking of Little Richard's "Freedom Blues," followed by a strong deep soul interpretation of Candi Staton's "Get It When I Want It," with Sax Beadle's baritone sax a significant part of the backing. Among the other selections is the low-key original lament, "Empty Hand," where her phrasing and dynamics stand out.

Another driving Little Richard number "Get Down With It," closes this recording. Shay is a powerful, nuanced, and convincing singer. The studio band and Andersen's production provide Shay with terrific backing on this superb recording. Street date 8-1-18

*Ron Weinstock*



**BOB MINTZER BIG BAND**  
**NEW YORK VOICES**  
**Meeting of Minds**  
MCGJAZZ

This new recording represents "the integration of voices with (Mintzer's) Big Band," and is a wonderful success as Mintzer (on various reeds) leads a big band that includes Bob Shepard on Alto Saxophone, Roger Rosenberg on baritone sax, Scott Wendholt on trumpet, Jeff Bush on trombone, Phil Markowitz on piano, Jay Anderson on bass, and John Riley on drums, with the celebrated vocal group, New York Voices who are comprised of Kim Nazarian, Lauren Kinhan, Damon Meader and Peter Eldridge. Mintzer arranged all but two of the band arrangements with Meader arranging all of the vocal arrangements and two (one with Eldridge) of the band arrangements.

The arrangements provide a freshness to the very well known standards heard here starting with "Autumn Leaves," with lovely lead vocals from Nazarian and Kinhan wonderfully supported by the band and then the Voices scatting turn them into an additional horn section during the middle break with pianist Markowitz standing out. Eldridge takes the lead vocal on "I Concentrate on You," with the Voices adding with their vocal harmony as well as vocal interplay as another fresh touch with Rosenberg adding a burly baritone sax solo. The instrumental rendition of "I Want to Be Happy" again sports a superb band arrangement before terrific solos by Wendholt and Markowitz with a crisp drum

break by Riley. Eldridge is on piano as well and takes the lead vocal on "I Get Along Without You Very Well," with the scoring of the reeds (with flutes and clarinet) providing a sober atmosphere for this performance. Again the vocal arrangement and the integration with the big band is exemplary.

I could similarly rave about the leads of Nazarian and Eldridge on "The Way You Like Tonight," or the creativity of Mintzer in his band arrangement (not to mention his tenor sax solo), or Mintzer's entrancing original "Weird Blues," another instrumental with his unusual voicings (especially of the trombones) with him and Rosenberg taking strong solos along with bassist Anderson. Then there is Mintzer's employment of muted trumpets on "Speak Low," along with the strong propulsive swing of the band. "Meeting of the Minds" is a superb meeting of a terrific big band with the wonderful New York Voices, resulting in an extraordinary recording.

**Ron Weinstock**



## BUDDY GUY

**The Blues Is Alive and Well**  
SILVERTONE/ RCA RECORDS

According to the press materials, this is Buddy Guy's 18th solo album. It is produced by Tom Hambridge who has been a recent producer and collaborator with Guy, who also had a hand in nearly every song here and plays drums. The rest of the core backing band here is Kevin McKendree on keyboards, Willie Weeks on bass and Rob McNelly on rhythm or slide guitar (although he sits out some tracks). Also heard here are guest appearances from Jeff Beck (who called Guy his favorite guitarist decades ago), Keith Richards, James Bay and Mick Jagger.

It is a solid, straight-forward recording pretty much in the vein of Guy's recent recordings. There is plenty of punch in the backing and the tone of Guy's guitar and his vocals belie his age of 81 years. There is an in-your-face quality to his fretwork on the opening "A Few Good Years," supporting his strong vocal on one of a number of strong originals here. It is followed by a rollicking shuffle "Guilty as Charged," with McKendree outstanding in his accompaniment while Guy plays more blistering guitar. Jeff Beck and Keith Richards add their guitar to "Cognac," with Beck especially

pulling out all the stops as Guy sings about the merits of "Cognac," which has "liquid gold in every sip." The Muscle Shoals Horns add punch to the backing on the title track, with Guy singing soulfully about his woman having another man. I do not know who James Bay is but he adds his guitar and vocals to "Blue No More," with its low-key manner and it may be Bay who contributes the B.B. King styled playing here.

Hambridge contributes a sledge hammer groove with a drum loop along with Guy's hammering out his guitar as he shouts about "Whiskey For Sale," with the McCrary Sisters adding vocal harmony on this minor entry here. Mick Jagger adds some nice harmonica adding to the late night feel of a slow blues, "You Did the Crime." The Muscle Shoals Horns return for "Old Fashioned" which is perhaps a bit over-the-top for these ears as Hambridge anchors the driving, pounding backing here. Rice Miller's "Nine Below Zero" is transformed into a hard hitting Muddy Waters' styled number followed by a Memphis styled rocker, Ooh Daddy."

"End of the Line" is a Jimmy Reed-styled shuffle with Guy's easy going vocal and shattering guitar along with punchy horns before the album closes with a brief "Milking Muther For Ya," where Guy sings a verse of the Dirty Red song accompanied only by his guitar. There are 15 very different performances on this album which certainly will satisfy those wanting Guy's sizzling guitar playing, but also displays his fine singing as well.

**Ron Weinstock**



## JUNGSU CHOI TINY ORKESTER

**Tschuss Jazz Era**  
CHALLENGE RECORDS

Jungsu Choi has brought together a contemporary jazz ensemble with twelve of Korea's finest jazz musicians including: Jinho Pyo (voice), Eunmi Kim (flute), Yusun Nam (alto saxophone), Hachul Song (tenor saxophone), Yejung Kim (trumpet), and Junyeon Lee (trombone) to perform his compositions and his arrangements of jazz standards. This ensemble has an unusual instrumentation of five horns, cello, male voice, a four-piece rhythm section. This is the group's first European and North American release.

Jungsu Choi's compositional and arranging skills are readily evident on the opening "Stolen Yellow"



with its tempo shifts as well as employment of Pyo's scatting as another horn voice, along with the fusion guitar styled solo by Sungyun Hong, a fiery trumpet solo by Kim and Nam's free-sounding alto sax with an interesting mix of horns to help frame the solos. Choi's arrangement of Charlie Parker's "Anthropology" similarly displays his imagination in the reconstruction of the Parker melody with the horns playing short unison phrases and pianist Lee taking a Monk-influenced approach in his solo. Bae's tenor sax solo is outstanding and then there is an interlude where Bae and flautist Kim are playing off each other unaccompanied before the band joins in on the repeated phrase they state. Even those who have heard countless versions of this tune will be impressed by this inspired and very original performance.

"What If Ellington Didn't Take The 'A' Train?" similarly reworks the Billy Strayhorn classic in a manner that again displays the originality and invention of Choi and the superb playing by the Orkester. There is also another inspired original, "Nach Wien 224," and an inspired interpretation of Chick Corea's "Spain," with Pyo's hornlike scatting to the fore. Jungsu Choi Tiny Orkester is a terrific large ensemble and with Choi's creative leadership, compositional and arranging skills has produced this exceptional recording.

*Ron Weinstock*



## ARTHUR MENEZES

**Keep Pushing**  
SELF-PRODUCED

Though based in Los Angeles, Menezes is a mainstay of the blues scene in his native Brazil. He was third place finisher in the band category at the 2018 International Blues Challenge where he was winner of the Gibson/Albert King Award for Best Guitarist. This is his fourth album with a band and it includes Carey Frank on keyboards, Daniel Aged on bass, Gary Novak on drums, Jamelle Adessa on brass and Dan Boisey on saxophones with producer Josh Smith adding rhythm guitar to several selections.

This is a strongly performed set of originals, mostly in a modern urban blues vein such as the opening "Now's the Time," although several tracks are in a rock vein including the driving "Keep On Pushing," where he plays some shattering guitar and "Come With Me," with

its too heavily distorted guitar. Much better is a nice slow "Any Day, Anytime," a tune that evokes classic Stax blues from Johnnie Taylor and Little Milton. His singing is outstanding without any hint of an accent and his guitar here is superb with its clean tone and its followed by a sharp Albert Collins styled blues, "Should Have Never Left," with guitar that evokes the late legend.

"Love'n'Roll" is a rollicking jump blues styled with his jazzy single note playing evoking the likes of Johnny Rogers on some classic Roy Milton recordings mixed with a scorching trumpet solo. Then there is the funky groove of "Pull it Through," with his fuzz-toned effective and a straight urban blues "Give My Money Back," with his string bending suggesting Albert King. "Can't Get You Out Of My Mind" is a low-key, late night blues with some nice jazzy playing with intriguing tempo changes and horn backing. "Till The Day I Die" is too rock-based for my taste and closes this recording. I was less enamored with the rock-rooted performances, although they were well played, but most of this recording impressed with the strong blues performances marked by his excellent singing, playing and terrific b and.

*Ron Weinstock*



## JACQUELINE TABOR

**The Lady in the Gown**  
BIG DADDY TABOR PRODUCTIONS

This is the third album by Seattle chanteuse Tabor who is backed by her trio of Cole Schuster on guitar, Greg Feingold on bass and Max Holmberg on drums. She penned the title track on this album that is otherwise comprised of jazz standards imaginatively backed by this guitar led trio. Guitarist Schuster's clipped guitar set against Feingold's bass riff and Holmberg's drums introduces her vocal on "Green Dolphin Street." This performance displays the clarity of her straight-forward vocals and also has an imaginative solo from Schuster. It is followed by a wonderful "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" that is strongly backed only by Feingold's bass. Then there is a brisk "Autumn Leaves," which further shows her straight approach to the songs. Her vocals reveal subtle shifts in phrasing and pitch and on this selection Schuster shines and then trades fours with Holmberg.

The title track is a strongly delivered driving blues

with the trio's backing adding to the pleasure here. She also brings her own personality to the B.B. King classic "Never Make a Move Too Soon," that was also associated with the late Etta Jones. There is a lively rendition of the Duke Ellington's "Caravan" and a beautiful, wistful interpretation of Ellington's "Mood Indigo," with Schuster providing scrumptious guitar accompaniment while Holmberg adeptly used brushes here. On the opening of "When Lights Are Low" she is backed only by Holmberg who provides a latin groove before Schuster and Feingold join in on imaginative arrangement of this Benny Carter standard. The guitar trio also provides a low-key setting for her heartfelt singing on Jobim's "Dindi."

An exquisite rendition of "Crazy He Calls Me" closes this delightful album. Tabor impresses throughout on this fine vocal jazz recording. **Ron Weinstock**



## BIG HARP GEORGE

### Uptown Cool

BLUES MOUNTAIN RECORDS

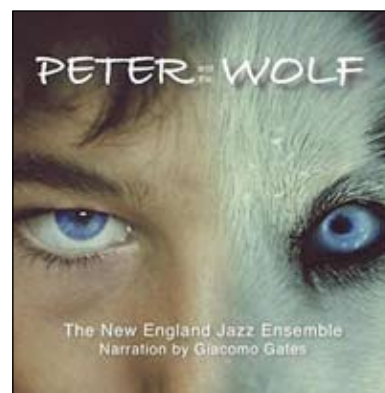
A follow-up to his outstanding debut, "Chromaticism," George Bisharat returns with a new dozen originals that reinforce the well-deserved praise the earlier release garnered. Here he is backed by an outstanding studio band that includes producer Chris Burns on keyboards, Kid Andersen on bass or guitars, Little Charlie Baty on guitar and well arranged horns throughout, he displays not only very strong harmonica with its horn like lines, but his very appealing singing, delivered honestly in a straight-forward manner.

There is plenty of wry humor, as well as perceptive social commentary such as the amusing "Internet Honey," which also has a choice trombone solo from Mike Rinta, and a sax solo from Michael Peloquin in addition to Kid Andersen's brief stinging guitar solo. Then there is more humor (as well as social commentary) in "Alternative Facts," where he notes he thought truth matters and submits his alternative fact that he taught Little Walter everything he knew. "I Wanna Know" has a crisp latin rhythm groove along with a booting sax solo and Charlie Baty's Spanish-tinged acoustic solo before Big Harp George's crisp, jazzy playing here. I can imagine Santana doing this song.

"In the First Place" is a crisp instrumental shuffle

that displays his mastery without going all out as well as the wonderful backing throughout this track with their interplay with his harp lead and the nice relaxed tempo. "Cold Snap By The Bay," is a deep, slow topical blues about living in this paradise but three died in San Jose due to a cold snap. Musically it evokes an Otis Spann recording "Look Like Twins," and Chris Burns plays well in a Spann-like fashion. It showcases how Big George updates classic Chicago blues settings while remaining true to his musical roots. The title track is a jazz-inflected instrumental, taking at a lazy, walking tempo with Burns on organ, Baty crafting a neat solo, before the leader's own solo that I am sure the late Toots Thielemans would have enjoyed.

Simply stated this is another impressive recording that has a wonderful mix of grooves, wonderful playing, strong originals and heartfelt singing that should appeal to anyone with a love of real blues. **Ron Weinstock**



## NEW ENGLAND JAZZ ENSEMBLE

### Peter and the Wolf

SELF-RELEASED

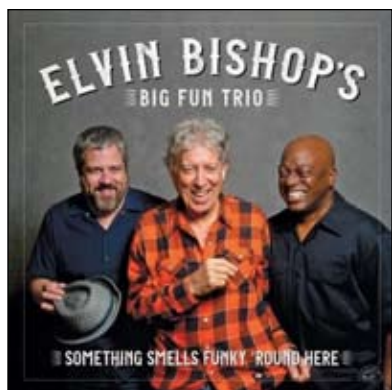
The New England Jazz Ensemble was created in 1991 as a weekly rehearsal band and a forum for new compositions. It was founded by trumpeter Mike Jones; Walt Gwardyak, pianist and composer/arranger, has been the music director from the beginning. Compositions by Gwardyak, John Mastroianni, Jeff Holmes, JP Merz, and others form the band's book. The 16-piece big band has a loyal following and sells its music through on-line CD sales and downloads far and wide. A not-for-profit organization the, NEJE commissions new work, does extensive concertizing and collaborates with music educators in public schools and universities to perpetuate the jazz art form.

What the Ensemble does here is take Sergei Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," which the composer composed to help introduce symphonic music and instruments, to young audiences, and use it to introduce folks to contemporary jazz, just like the original narrative and musical adaptation of the animal sounds served to interest young audiences in the classical music of the day. Jazz vocalist Giacomo Gates provided a fresh take of the libretto with his narration as the ensemble negotiates Walt Gwardyak's arrangement



which brings together a mix of a variety of jazz styles with specific instruments representing specific animals or the whole ensemble as Peter. It is a thoroughly captivating performance that is marvelously played by all in a gumbo of blues, salsa, cool jazz, bebop, big band jazz and more.

Jeff Holmes contributed the lively “Serge’s Birds,” based on several of Prokofiev’s melodic lines which Holmes reset and arranged and contributed the bright piccolo trumpet solo while John Mastroianni is featured on flute. John Mastroianni also adapted and reset Prokofiev’s melodic lines for “Power Serge,” with its big band grooves and his alto sax solo along with Mike Leventhal’s burly tenor sax solo. Mastroianni also contributed the lovely “Waltzin’ With Wolves” (with trombonists Tim Atherton and Peter McEachern among those featured) while Holmes’ original “Wolves” struts a bit as he growls on his trumpet on a performance that also includes an accordion solo from Gwardyak, and Lisa LaDone impresses on baritone as part of the backing. The music here isn’t simply captivating, as there is much musical substance as well. **Ron Weinstock**



### ELVIN BISHOP’S BIG FUN TRIO Something Smells Funky ‘Round Here ALLIGATOR RECORDS

This is the second time for Elvin Bishop, Willy Jones and Bob Welsh for another solid recording. Big Fun Trio is an apt description for the mix of blues, R&B classics and more. Bishop of course is on guitar, Welsh plays piano, guitar and organ and Jones plays the cajon and all three contribute vocals. Andre Thierry adds accordion to one selection.

The title track is a topical blues about the stench coming from Washington DC these days with Elvin taking the lead vocal and followed by Willy taking an outstanding vocal on the the Jackie Wilson classic, “(Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) Higher And Higher.” This stripped down trio backing provides a husky, driving backing. A Bishop original with a group vocal, “Right Now Is The Hour” evokes Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, as they shout out to have fun with a brief guitar break. It is followed by a cover of Dave Bartholomew’s “Another Mule,” that lyrically tracks Fats Domino’s reworking of it “Man That’s All,” with an

effective lazy groove and stinging guitar.

The trio gets down with a funky groove for “That’s The Way Willy Likes It,” as Jones sings about what he likes in a lady with Jones taking a cajon drum break followed by Bishop’s guitar solo. Welsh is showcased on “Bob’s Boogie,” a terrific rollicking instrumental followed by a cover of “I Can’t Stand the Rain,” with Welsh on organ providing a solid underpinning for Bishop’s guitar and Jones’ strong soulful singing. “Stomp” aptly describes the simple driving groove on an instrumental with slide and rocking rhythmic solos. After Bishop’s solid straight slow talking blues (with strong piano backing) about growing old and looking good with wrinkles, “Lookin’ Good,” Andre Thierry joins the trio (Welsh is on piano) for a driving rendition of an old Clifton Chenier recording “My Soul,” with Jones taking another strong vocal.

Another album of wonderfully played recording that is is nothing but big fun. **Ron Weinstock**



### ADREAN FARRUGIA & JOEL FRAHM Blued Dharma GBRECORDS

The well respected saxophonist Frahm and the Canadian pianist Farrugia have been musical compatriots since 2008 as part of various groups of drummer (and publicist Ernesto Cervini). As Cervini observes in his liner notes for this release, the two display a very sympathetic relationship playing off each other, almost like they are finishing off each other’s sentences, on these intimate, duet performances.

The performances of five Farrugia originals and two standards (there are two performances of “Cherokee”) display charm as well as considerable musical vision and inspiration. Farrugia’s title track is a lovely composition with Frahm on soprano saxophone as both build their solos upon Farrugia’s alluring melody. Then there are the two very different takes of “Cherokee,” with the two taking apart and reconstructing the classic Ray Noble melody in each case.

Frahm imbues his tenor sax with a sensuous tone that hints at Ben Webster on a lovely ballad “For Murray Gold,” while Farrugia’s introduction to the standard “Nobody Else But Me,” has a Monkish flavor, before his precise accompaniment to another lovely Frahm tenor

saxophone, before his own choice solo here with Farrugia's mix of arpeggios and well-placed chords. Farrugia's "Cool Beans" sounds like a contrafact to John Coltrane's "Equinox," and is a spirited blues duet with more excellent tenor sax by Frahm along with Farrugia's tasteful, inventive solo.

This piano-saxophone duet recording by Adrean Farrugia and Joel Frahm is a superb display of the musical magic that the two close musical collaborators have produced.

**Ron Weinstock**



## JOYANN PARKER

### Hard To Love

HOPELESS ROMANTIC RECORDS

Unlike most blues musicians who are self-taught and either take a direct path into the music or back into it while exploring their rock roots, Joyann Parker is a classically trained pianist with a music degree who got recruited to the blues by virtue of winning a contest with Aretha Franklin's "Chain of Fools."

Redirecting herself from the classics to the blues, Parker jumped in full-tilt and was soon representing the Minnesota Blues Society at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis. On this, her second release, she shows a broad appreciation for her new-found passion and co-wrote all 13 tracks with guitarist Mark Lamoine.

With a voice that easily negotiates everything from a low-down growl to a pristine soprano, sometimes in the course of a single verse, she works her way through funky accusations of infidelity, "Who What When Where Why," rocking kiss offs to a man who will fade from memory within the course of a single trip, "Memphis," loose New Orleans style blues that can't help but turn up the heat, "Ray," as well as sultry ballads about a relationship that can't work either because it was unobtainable in the first place, "Jigsaw Heart," or because she's just plain difficult, "Evil Hearted."

"Envy" and "Dizzy" find Parker and crew in upbeat Memphis Soul territory while "Take My Heart and Run" is a stinging blues. Chuck Berry gets an inspirational nod on the guitar driven rocker, "What Happened to Me" where Parker can't figure out the path from where she started to the party girl she sees in the mirror. That track along with "Bluer than You," "Your Mama" and

the title track all give Parker a chance to show off her piano chops. The title track sounds like a long-lost songbook classic while "Your Mama" is a fun twist on the typical "other woman" lament with her lover's mother being the subject of her scathing put-downs and demands that she be kicked to the curb as a condition of continuing the relationship.

A terrific release that reveals that while Joyann Parker is new to the blues, she has already earned a master's degree.

**Mark Smith**



## PEDRO GIRAUDO

### Vigor Tanguero

ZOHO MUSIC

## PEDRO GIRAUDO & THE WDR BIG BAND

### An Argentinian in New York

ZOHO MUSIC

Argentinian bassist-composer and bandleader Pedro Giraudo is represented by two very different new releases. One has him leading a drummer-less quartet to revisit music of his country and culture, and his first full album exploration of the classic tango universe. The other has him arranging and conducting his compositions for the renown German WDR Big Band, his third large ensemble release for Zoho.

On "Vigor Tanguero," Giraudo is joined by Nick Danielson on violin; Rodolfo Zanetti on bandoneón (a type of concertina) and Emilio Teubal on piano. Each of the ten compositions can be categorized and described according to one of three tango rhythms: milongas, vales, and tangos, although as Kabir Se-



hgal notes in his annotation, “throughout you’ll hear Giraudo tinkering and experimenting with the fundamental tango rhythmic cells – pushing, pulling, even suspending the syncopated feel as he engineers a new aesthetic or archetype for this music that he loves. ‘I tried to express many emotions on this album: happiness, joy, passion, sadness, intimacy, vulnerability, and playfulness,’ he says.”

The music the quartet played brings together the many emotions Giraudo expresses while at the same time the interplay between the musicians is fascinating with a chamber music feel as well as the instrumental improvisations and accompanying counterpoint. There is both a sense of melodrama and humor on the opening “Vorágine (Milonga),” which means “Whirlwind, but not an exact translation and on which he tried to convey the chaos and excitement of living in New York City. In contrast there is a romantic serenity on the unusual waltz, “Entre Bamaalinas (Vals),” with Danielson’s sonorous violin lead. “Con Un Nudo En La Garganta (Tango),” was written as the middle movement of his “Desconsuelo Suite,” and again Danielson is prominent as is Teubal with his stately accompaniment while Zannetti add colors as well as almost horn-like phrasing on the bandoneón.

The rest of this recording is similarly full of passion and charm such as the spirited “Chicharrita (Milonga),” and the lovely “Desavenencias (Vals),” a tango waltz that opens with the feel of a classical minuet trio, with the lovely interweaving of the bandoneón and violin of note. “La Rabiosa (Chacarena)” was written to describe an angry lady and is based on a rhythm from the countryside on a composition that employs atonality and jarring lines to convey anxiety, frenzy and rage. The remainder of these performances are similarly enthralling.

Giraudo is quite enthusiastic in recalling the performances that make up “An Argentinian in New York,” observing that unlike when he performs with his own big band in New York where he plays bass as well as conduct, here his sole role was to conduct, which gave him “the opportunity to connect in a more concentrated manner with the music that was coming out of the band without having to focus on my bass playing as well. It was an exhilarating experience and I think the resulting performance, as you will hear on this recording, reflects that.”

Giraudo notes a recurring theme that continues throughout the performance of “Menteras Piadosas,” which might be translated as “White Lies,” with the performance starting with a swirling feel and building in excitement throughout, with a superb solo from Mattis Cedarburg on bass trombone and nifty piano from Pablo Held. “Chicharrita” is a vibrant homage to Osvaldo Pugliese who was for decades one of the most important figures in the history of tango, with an effervescent rhythm along with flighty flute (Karolina Strassmeyer?) and sour mash whiskey sounding alto

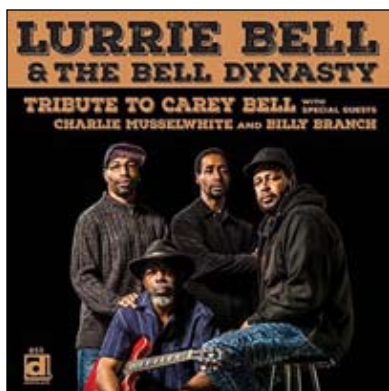
sax solos set against Giraudo’s thoughtful and well constructed orchestrations. “La Ley Primera” is inspired by a famous Argentinian poem and mainly features some wonder ballad-styled playing by Johan Hörlén on alto sax with a brief break from Jens Neufang on baritone sax. “Lapidario,” another composition heard on “Vigor Tanguero,” employs two contrasting themes, one very assertive and the other more melodic while showcasing a driving, brawny tenor sax followed by reflective, gruff baritone sax and bass trombone. “Eir” named after the medieval Norwegian Valkyrie of peace and clemency, was inspired by the struggles of women against the strictures of patriarchy. A statement by Shannon Barnett about her struggles as a woman trombonist in the predominantly male dominated arena also served as inspiration and she is also featured her with a moody, expressive solo.

The album concludes with the three part (and introduction) “Desconsuelo Suite,” one of Giraudo’s personal favorite compositions. He writes in the liner notes “I went through moments in life where no consolation can be found and the only solution is acknowledging the pain and dealing with it. The suite is comprised of three movements and an introduction, following the classical concerto fast-slow-fast structure. ...” The introduction “Preludio de Bombo Legüero” has Bodek Janke playing an ad libitum introduction to the suite on the iconic Argentine drum, the bombo legüero to set the mood followed by “Mate Amargo (“Bitter mate tea”)” named after a tea typically drunk out of a dried gourd with a metal straw (bombilla) in the southern part of South America and there is a burly baritone sax solo followed by a soaring trumpet solo with an exhilarating close that leads into the relaxed “Con Un Nudo En La Garganta,” with clarinet from Johan Hörlén and a haunting trumpet solo set against the superb playing of this terrific big band. The Suite closes with “La Bronca,” written in 11/8 and having challenging lines for the saxophones, with the excellent trombone solo being in a blues form with Giraudo’s arrangement adding to the overall joyfulness of the performance. It is a marvelous conclusion to a superb big band jazz recording.

**Ron Weinstock**

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## LURRIE BELL & THE BELL DYNASTY

Tribute to Carey Bell  
DELMARK RECORDS

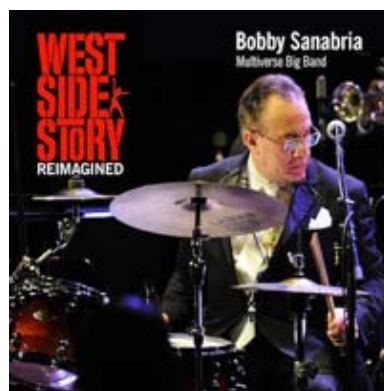
Guitarist and vocalist Lurrie Bell is joined by his siblings Steve on harmonica, Tyson on bass and James on drums and vocals on a tribute recording to their late father, legendary harmonica wizard, Carey Bell. Also present on most of this is Eddie Taylor Jr., whose father had a long association with the elderly Bell. Guests on several tracks are Charlie Musselwhite on harmonica, Billy Branch on harmonica and vocals and Sumito 'Ariyo' Ariyoshi on piano. Included are a number of songs associated with Carey, one original from James Bell and one from Billy Branch.

This is one of the better recent blues tribute recordings I have heard as the Bell Dynasty is a real fine band and the sharing of vocals between Lurrie (7), James (3) and Billy Branch (2), adds variety along with the solid vocals. One has to be impressed by Lurrie who opens on a rocking shuffle, Muddy Waters "Gone on Main Street" with Steve displaying his strong harmonica chops while Lurrie tosses in a neat solo. A rollicking take on Little Walter's "I Got To Go" has Musselwhite and Steve Bell both playing with their interplay energizing but also Lurrie and Taylor both play to great effect.

James Bell shows himself to be a singer of considerable merit on a fine slow original "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize." It is followed by a hot shuffle performance of "Tomorrow Night," while it is Billy Branch I believe who is heard on chromatic harp (with Steve Bell also playing) as well as taking the vocal on another fine slow blues, "So Hard To Be Alone." Branch's own "Carey Bell Was A Friend Of Mine," set to a John Lee Hooker boogie groove, showcases the interplay between the two harpists along with Branch's heartfelt singing and lyrics.

James Bell's singing also stands out on terrific performances of "What my Momma Told Me" and "Break It Up," which is given a fresh arrangement from the more familiar versions by Bell and the late Bobby Parker who had this as a staple of his performances for decades. Among the remaining songs is another superb slow blues "Heartaches and Pain," but the level of these performances is consistently high. In summary, a tribute to Carey Bell full of first-rate Chicago blues.

*Ron Weinstock*



## BOBBY SANABRIA

West Side Story Reimagined  
JAZZHEADS

Drummer and bandleader Sanabria leads his 21 piece big band in a joyous celebration of Leonard Bernstein's classic musical. Recorded in performance at Jazz at Lincoln Center in 2017, a little more than 60 years after "West Side Story" premiered and during of centennial of Bernstein. The musical also has a personal connection to Sanabria given his growing up in a gang-filled Bronx.

This backdrop would be of little importance if the big band rearrangement of Bernstein's marvelous music. There are plenty of superb soloists present including Christopher Washburne's trombone and Andrew Gould's alto sax on "America," but the real stars are the arrangers including Jeff Lederer on this as well as Niko Siebold on "Jet Song." The writing often has the sections playing against each other as well as restating the musical themes and tempo shifts whether having a segment evoking a rollicking jump blues followed by one sounding like a marching band. This recording is like listening to a jubilant musical carousel.

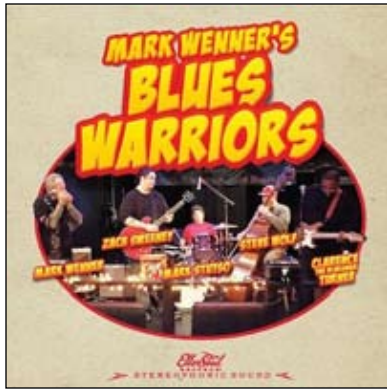
The delight of the rendition of "Gee, Officer Krupke," the lyricism of Matt Wong's arrangement of "Tonight," and the kaleidoscope of moods provided the arrangement by Takao Heisho for "The Rumble/Rumba" are some further examples of the enthralling performances here. This is a terrific release, and Sanabria and the Multiverse Big Band are performing this music on tour, including a performance at the Kennedy Center next season.

The addition of Latin rhythmic grooves, the sheer exuberance of the stellar performance and Sanabria's brief narrations introducing certain numbers incorporating lyrics or with respect to "America," where he notes the realities of discrimination facing Puerto Ricans and other immigrant/migrant communities. This includes the lack of adequate assistance to Puerto Rico after the devastation of Hurricane Maria. If the magnificent music was not sufficient reason to purchase this, part of the proceeds will be used to help in the Puerto Rican recovery.

*Ron Weinstock*

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## MARK WENNER'S BLUES WARRIORS

### ELLERSOUL RECORDS

Talking about the Blues Warriors, Mark Wenner observes, "This band is actually a blues band," says Wenner, addressing comparisons to the 'Hawks. "The Nighthawks are a blues and roots-rock band. This band, with upright bass, is more authentic, old school and swinging. It's closer to the Cash Box Kings than J. Geils; a whole different animal." Having seen some of the Blues Warriors early performances at JV's, the Falls Church, Virginia local roadhouse, I am pleased to see this eponymously titled recording document the band.

Joining Wenner on harmonica and vocals are fellow Nighthawks mate Mark Stutso (drums, vocals), Clarence "The Bluesman" Turner (guitar, vocals), Zach Sweeney (guitar) and Steve Wolf (upright bass). Turner is a popular performer on the DC blues and music scene (He won the DC Blues Society's Battle of Bands several years ago), while Wolf has played with so many blues and roots performers including Danny Gatton, Tom Principato and most recently with Memphis Gold, and like Wenner, I remember Zach Sweeney when he was too young to play blues jams without his parents and recently returned to the area after some serious road experience with Wayne Hancock.

Musically there will be little to surprise the listener with the 12 performances, only one of which is an original. These are solid performances starting off with Turner's revival of Muddy Waters' "Diamonds at Your Feet." This is one of several fine vocals by Turner which also include a lesser known Big Joe Turner recording "Rock a While," Muddy Waters' "Just to Be with You" and Elmore James' "Dust My Broom." Wenner's harp and the piano-less quintet provide a different feel to these especially on the Joe Turner and Elmore James numbers (with Wenner's harmonica dominating the backing on the latter number).

Wenner is strong in reviving Elvis' "(Let Me Be Your) Teddy Bear," as a blues as well as his rendition of "Checkin' On My Baby" which owes more to Junior Wells than Sonny Boy Williamson. Among Wenner's other vocals is a straight reading of Slim Harpo's "King Bee," a stomping swamp blues rendition of the Fats Domino tune "Hello Josephine," and an instrumental Jimmy Reed tribute, "Just For Jimmy." Mark Stutso,

who is highly underrated as a singer does a superb take on B.B. King's "It's My Own Fault." There is a fine take of "The Hucklebuck" that showcases Sweeney's impressive, jazz-laced single note runs along with a fine Steve Wolf bass solo. Sweeney also impresses on his solo on "Rock A While."

While several of these performances are modeled after the source recordings, Wenner's harp and the lack of piano provide a fresh take on several numbers including "Teddy Bear," "Rock A While," and "Dust My Broom." As previously stated, these are solid performances, played with much conviction and result in a very entertaining recording. **Ron Weinstock**



## HENDRIK MEURKENS - BILL CUNILIFFE

### Cabin in the Sky

#### HEIGHT ADVANTAGE

A new album of duets between the harmonica wizard Meurkens and pianist Cuniliffe mixes some originals with some Broadway and pop standards and will delight as the two engage in these duets. The elegance of Cuniliffe's piano along with Meurkens harmonica mastery is evident with the title track which opens this set.

Meurkens certainly displays the skills that have led some to label him as the successor to Toots Thielemans, but Cuniliffe's accompaniment and solo dances along in its own way as well. Cuniliffe provided a string arrangement for the wistful original from Meurkens, "Afternoon," followed by the duo's lovely rendition of Wayne Shorter's "Miyako," and a lively rendition of Joe Zawinul's "Young and Fine."

Cuniliffe's "You Don't Know," is a lightly swinging blues-inflected number, while "Invitation" is warmly interpreted and the Cuniliffe/McConnell number "Time to Say Goodbye" has a reflective quality. There is a surprise in a performance of "Ode to Billie Joe," with Meurkens harmonica singing the Bobby gentry lyrics, while Cuniliffe's piano provides some bounce to "Speak Low." An imaginative take of Jobim's "Wave," with references to "Smoke on the Water," is a performance that closes a recording by two kindred souls that is full of marvelous playing that displays their virtuosity, imagination and wit. **Ron Weinstock**

**jazz-blues.com**



## BILLY PRICE

**Reckoning**  
VIZZTONE

This latest recording by the blue-eyed soul blues singer had him team with guitarist and producer, Kid Andersen. It was recorded at Andersen's Greaseland Studio with Anderson on guitar (and organ on two tracks), Alex Pettersen on drums, Jerry Jemmott on bass, Jim Pugh on keyboards, Johnny Bones on sax, and Konstantins Jemeljanovs on trumpet with Nancy Wright taking a tenor sax solo on one selection among others guesting here. There are originals from Price, Jim Britton, and French guitarist Fred Chapellier, along with songs previously recorded by the likes of Bobby Bland, Otis Redding, Swamp Dogg, and Johnny Rawls.

Price has been singing this music for decades. This writer remembers hearing his strong renditions of songs associated with O.V. Wight on the Bama Hour over WPFW hosted by the late Jerry Washington. One can't have a stronger endorsement than this of how strong a singer Price was, and is, in this musician vein. This latest recording shows he still brings everything into the fervent, soulful music here.

There are so many gems here starting with the bluesy and driving "39 Steps" that opens the program, followed by his straight reworking of "Dreamer," the title track of a 1974 Bobby Bland album, with a nice arrangement, strings and vocal chorus. The title track is composed by William Troiani and Hakon Høy and opens with a brief excerpt of old-time preaching. It is a funky soul performance with punchy horns while Andersen adds punchy guitar. There is a driving take on J.J. Cale's "No Time" followed by a nice rendition of an Otis Redding soul ballad, "I Love You More Than Words Can Say," with one of his finest vocals here, and then an uptempo rendition of Johnny Rawls' "I Keep Holding On." Other strong performances include his insistent vocal on Denise Lasalle's "Get Your Lie Straight," the original "Expert Witness," with a riff evocative of the Five Royales' classic "Think," and Swamp Dogg's topical "Synthetic World," with its call for a more natural world.

With Kid Andersen's crisp production and strong studio support for the stalwart blue-eyed singer, "Reckoning" makes another welcome addition to Billy Price's body of recordings.

**Ron Weinstock**



## JOHN COLTRANE

**Both Directions At Once:**  
**The Lost Album (Standard Edition)**  
IMPULSE

Recorded one day before his legendary collaboration with singer Johnny Hartman, the tapes of these sessions remained unreleased and in John Coltrane's family's possession until now. Seemingly a reference session for the leader, with several performances generically titled, they display music certainly of release-worthy caliber by one of the most notable ensembles in jazz. These tracks further hint at the master saxophonist's explorations to come.

The classic quartet: Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones is in top-notch form. The leadoff track, "Untitled Original 11383," features soprano sax, Trane maintaining a barely-bridled energy through theme and solo and followed up by the first of a number of delightful choruses from McCoy Tyner. The pianist's play throughout makes this set worth the trip on its own. That said, Jimmy Garrison's ostinato bass grounds a piano-less run through of "Nature Boy"; the first of three border-stretching tenor statements, peaking on the first half of "Slow Blues" (Tyner joining in mid-flight).

Drummer Elvin Jones' signature fire and fury is on full display in dialogue with the leader on the set closer, "One Up, One Down." The degree to which this release is critical to filling out Mr. Coltrane's creative portrait will quite likely ignite animated conversation. What's more assured is that this is a captivating, well-timed snapshot of a giant of the genre- and of a jazz quartet that stands with the finest ever assembled.

This release is available in both single-disc and deluxe two-disc versions, the second disc offering alternate takes of the fare featured on Disc One.

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## BOB CORRITORE AND FRIENDS

**Don't Let the Devil Ride**  
SWMAF/VIZZTONE

This collection of choice Chicago blues covers and idiomatic originals is the latest from harmonica player Bob Corritore. From a variety of sessions, and with a variety of vocalists and musicians he has put together another choice dozen blues performances. Amongst those present here are vocalists Willie Buck, Oscar Willis, Bill 'Howl-N-Madd' Perry, George Bowman, Alabama Mike, Tail Dragger, and Sugaray Rayford. Among the supporting musicians are such guitarists as Big Jon Atkinson, Junior Watson, Jimi "Primetime" Smith, Chris James and Rockin' Johnny; pianists Henry Gray, Bob Welch and Fred Kaplan; bassists Troy Sandow, Kedar Roy, Patrick Rynn and Bob Stroger; and drummers Marty Dotson and Brian Fahey. This is not a complete listing of supporting musicians.

Just a few notes on the performances here. Willie Buck contributed the opening Jimmy Reed styled blues, "Woke Up This Morning," with his slightly mush-mouth singing and Corritore's Reed-styled harp playing making for an enjoyable performance. Oscar Wilson handles the singing on a straight cover of Little Walter's recording, "Tell Me Baby," with some real fine harp and Henry Gray pounding away on the piano. Wilson's other vocal is a solid, lazy Corritore original, "Fork in the Road," with Gray present again. It is followed by a lazy, amusing Sugaray Rayford original "The Glide," with a terrific vocal and a clever double entendre lyric.

Behind Alabama Mike's moody vocal on a cover of "Laundromat Blues," Corritore plays some blistering chromatic harp. 'Howl-N-Madd' Perry provides a swamp blues feel on his "Willie Mae," with a Gulf Coast rumba groove. On "I Was a Fool," George Bowman's gritty singing is backed by Corritore's big-toned chromatic along with austere backing from Atkinson, Sandow and Fahey, while on Alabama Mike's "Blues Why You Worry Me?," the backing suggests "Scratch My Back."

Tail Dragger closes out this set for a Muddy Waters' styled blues, "Thundering and Raining," where he sings about a tornado coming and his baby not on the ground. It's not a fancy performance, but sung with heart and ably backed. That pretty much characterizes all the music on this latest album from Corritore. Fans of classic Chicago blues will find much to enjoy here. Recommended.

**Ron Weinstock**



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**Tribute: Delmark's 65th Anniversary**  
DELMARK RECORDS

As Delmark celebrates 65 years since its founding in St. Louis by Bob Koester, news has come out that the label has been sold which hopefully will keep this historic and visionary blues and jazz label healthy for years to come. This "Tribute" recording has eleven newly recorded blues to help in the celebration. It should be noted that these are new recordings of prior recordings by various blues artists on Delmark. There is a house band with either Mike Wheeler and/or Billy Flynn on guitar on several tracks, Roosevelt Purify on keyboards, Melvin Smith on bass and Willie Hayes on drums.

Omar Coleman sings strongly and plays nice harp on his tribute to Junior Wells, "Train I Ride," with guitar from Wheeler and booting sax by Hank Ford. Lurrie Bell & the Bell Dynasty with Eddie Taylor Jr do Carey Bell's "One Day You're Gonna Get Lucky," likely recorded at the same session that produced their Tribute to Carey Bell album. Steve Bell's harmonica shines on this. Billy Flynn emulates the late Jimmy Dawkins' distinctive guitar style behind Linsey Alexander's fervent vocal on Dawkins' "All For Business." Demetria Taylor effectively growls on Big Time Sarah's "Riverboat." Jimmy Burns performs his amiable take on Big Joe Williams' "She Left Me A Mule To Ride," without band accompaniment. His performance is not as percussive as that of Williams but he sings quite ably.

Lil Ed Williams and Dave Weld cover "Speak My Mind," by his uncle J.B. Hutto and it is a solid rendition even if Ed does not quite match J.B.'s vocal here. Jimmy Johnson with Dave Spector do a strong version of Magic Sam's "Out of Bad Luck," with Sumito 'Ariyo' Ariyoshi adding some fine piano behind Johnson's marvelous vocal and fine guitar from him and Spector. Corey Dennison and Gerry Hundt provide a lively acoustic duet on Sleepy John Estes' "Broke and Hungry" with tight mandolin runs against rhythmic guitar, with a strong crying vocal. Mike Wheeler evokes Jimmy Johnson on a fine cover of an Otis Rush's classic, "So Many Roads," which is followed by Shirley Johnson's fine singing on the Little Willie John classic "Need Your Love So Bad" that Bonnie Lee previously waxed for Delmark.

Ken Saydak's solo piano and vocal barrelhouse Roosevelt Sykes' rollicking "Boot That Thang" closes this most entertaining collection of fresh blues cover recordings.

**Ron Weinstock**



**MAURICE FRANK**  
**Mad Romance and Love**  
 JUMO MUSIC

Born in Yonkers but growing up in New York, Maurice Frank has been singing for most of his life, but he put it on the side track this as a career as he provided for his family. With his children grown, he finally gets to do his own thing on this debut recording. On a program of twelve songs from the likes of Cole Porter, Henry Mancini, Billy Strayhorn, Buddy Johnson, Jerome Kern, Lennon and McCartney, and Lerner and Loewe, there are some familiar classics and lesser known gems. Even the better known standards here receive a fresh veneer thanks to pianist John di Martino's imaginative arrangements. Di Martino leads a fine studio band that includes guitarist Paul Meyers, bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Obed Calviere along with tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander, multi-reed player Aaron Heck and percussionist Samuel Torres.

There is plenty to charm a listener with Frank's vocals, starting with the opening of a lesser known Cole Porter song, "Day Dream" that opens with just Meyers' guitar backing him. His control, phrasing, timing, sense of vocal dynamics and the directness of his vocals is enhanced by the wonderful backing throughout such as di Martino's piano and solos and the light support from Curtis and Calviere. Henry Mancini's "Slow Hot Wind" is a spicy performance with a wonderful alto flute solo by Heck and Torres' percussion along with Calviere's drumming providing a hot Latin groove. "Don't Worry 'Bout Me," with a wondrous Eric Alexander tenor sax solo, provides another romantic high note.

Billy Strayhorn's "Day Dream" is another track that showcases Alexander's tenor sax while it is also taken at a quicker tempo than usual. Then there is another beautiful ballad performance on Buddy Johnson's "Save Your Love For Me," which provides another opportunity for Meyers' chording to stand out. Other tracks of note include a swinging "Yesterdays" (with more strong sax from Alexander), a wistful bossa nova "Yellow Days," the reflective "She's Funny That Way" (backed only by di Martino), and a beautiful, thoughtful interpretation of Lennon & McCartney's "In My Life" (with Heck's clarinet adding to the warmth of the vocal).

Curtis' bass helps open the ebullient, hard swing-

ing rendition of "On The Street Where You Live" that closes "Mad Romance and Love." Maurice Frank is a fine, straight-forward sophisticated singer in the vein of a Sinatra, Bennett, Greco, Hartman and the likes. He does not scat, but the clarity of his singing and his delivery are matched with some sublime jazz backing for this exquisite recording. **Ron Weinstock**



**KEESHEA PRATT BAND**  
**Believe**  
 SELF-PRODUCED

Based in Houston, the Keeshea Pratt Band was the winner of the Blues Foundation's 2018 International Blues Challenge. In addition to the ear-grabbing vocals of Ms. Pratt, a Mississippi native, this band consists of Shawn Allen/Music Director, Bassist and Vocals, Brian Sowell (Lead Guitar & Vocals), Dan Carpenter (Saxophone), Misaki Nishidate (Trumpet), James Williams III (Trumpet), and Nick Fishman (Drums), while Kid Andersen, Bob Welsh and Little Terry Rogers are also among those present.

Pratt really is a terrific singer with a big voice but also her phrasing and her sense of dynamics sets her apart from many singers today. "Make It Good" opens this marvelous album and the horns help lend her pleading vocal a classic soul vibe, while "Have a Good Time Y'al" is a joyous reworking of "Let the Good Times Roll," followed by Shawn Allen's "I'm in the Mood," where she is in the mood to sing the blues as she works so hard during the day and now it is the time to play.

The music here employs the arrangement B.B. King employed for "The Thrill Is Gone." Again she sings sensationally with the band providing first-rate support and there is a nice guitar solo.

"Its Too Late" is a terrific slow blues again with the horns adding brassy punctuation before her emphatic singing about wanting a real man but getting herself a boy. There is a nice understated piano solo on this. After the New Orleans second line groove of "Shake Off These Blues," with some shattering trumpet, as well as some hot sax and piano solos.

There is a rollicking shuffle "Home To Mississippi," with acoustic slide guitar and down home harmonica as Pratt sings about going to the place she first calls home and where folks sing the blues from the king of

the blues to the king of rock and roll.

"Monkey See, Monkey Do" is a superb slow blues with the horns adding emphasis and she tells her lover, every time you go creeping, Keeshea goes (and) sees a friend and while her lover hangs with Jane she is with Tarzan. She delivers another powerful vocal on this strong original song with guitarist Sowell adding his instrumental voice along with the horns. The title track opens with electric slide and then the horns before she sings the lyric about believing in one's dreams and if one is going to believe in anything, believe in oneself. It is simply a commanding performance on a recording full of them.

Other songs include a soulfully sung blues ballad, "Can't Stop Now," before another superb slow blues "So Bad Blues," that was recorded live, concludes this outstanding debut recording. Keeshea Pratt is a superb singer, with an excellent band, and they have produced an exceptional recording that is as good as any recent contemporary blues recording this writer has recently heard.

*Ron Weinstock*



## DETROIT BOP QUINTET

**Two Birds**  
**TQM RECORDING CO**

This digital single is a tribute to the great Charlie Parker and his quintet made up of Miles Davis, Max Roach, Tommy Potter and Duke Jordan and the legendary recording they made at United Sound Systems in Detroit on December 21st 1947. United Sound Systems was one of the world's first independent recording studios, and has a wonderfully rich history, serving artists from John Lee Hooker to Jackie Wilson, Bob Seger to MC5, The Rolling Stones to Aretha Franklin, Issac Hayes to Parliament-Funkadelic to Red Hot Chili Peppers.

It was founded by Jimmy Siracuse in the 1930s and has been at its current location, 5840 Second Avenue since the early 1940s. It still exists and is acoustically identical to the way it was when it was first built. The goal of this session was to "recreate the acoustic stamp that is heard on a historic 1947 Charlie Parker session, which was recorded in the very same space back in 1947."

The Detroit Bop Quintet was assembled specifically for this session and made up of four of Detroit's

best Jazz musicians and Saxophonist Pete Mills from Columbus, Ohio. Others on this date include trumpeter Dwight Adams, pianist Rick Roe, bassist Paul Keller and drummer Nathaniel Winn. There is nothing surprising about this cover recording of "Bluebird" and "Another Hair Do." These are solid players who show their respect to the Parker Quintet original recordings, although Mills doesn't quite have the bluesy intonation of Parker's alto. Adams acquits himself well as do the rhythm section with Roe being impressive.

This is an interesting tribute to a historic record session. For more information visit [www.tqmrecordingco.com](http://www.tqmrecordingco.com). The website includes a technical description of the session as well as the music including another Parker composition "Klaunstance." This is available as a digital album that includes "Klaunstance," and all three tunes are in mono and stereo versions.

*Ron Weinstock*



## STEVE KRASE BAND

**Just Waitin'**  
**CONNOR RAY**

A Houston, Texas, outfit, the Steve Krase Band gives a whole new meaning to the word eclectic as their latest JUST WAITIN' is all over the musical map. Starting out with an old Hank Williams number "Settin' The Woods On Fire," the band tears through it and adds more rockabilly via "I Don't Mind."

The one tune that might get the most airplay, though, is a zydeco drenched take on the old "Beverly Hillbillies" theme song, "The Ballad Of Jed Clampett," with help from guests Brian Jack on accordion and Mike Vee on rubboard. Krase's harmonica opens "Just Waitin' On My Brand New Baby," one of the three contributions from bassist Rock Romano. The song is one of joy that the psycho bitch from Hell is gone (been there, done that) and now it is time to move on to a better woman. "All In The Mood" is a stab at updated 1950's rock as "Blame It On Love" has some zydeco features without the extra percussion added. "Nobody Loves Me" is a straight blues workout, led by Krase's harp as he also leads "My Baby Walked Off," which I think is an old Howlin' Wolf tune.

All in all good stuff. I don't know if Steve Krase is waiting for recognition, but as more people discover this disc, it will come.

*Peanuts*





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