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# jazz & blues report

now in our 38th year

**San Francisco Jazz Festival**  
Sonny Rollins



# jazz & blues report

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"Buffalorious"

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

## SFJAZZ ANNOUNCES 30TH ANNIVERSARY SAN FRANCISCO JAZZ FESTIVAL LINEUP FOR FALL 2012

San Francisco - SFJAZZ, one of the nation's leading non-profit jazz organizations, celebrates the 30th anniversary of the San Francisco Jazz Festival this fall, with a star-studded lineup of concerts kicking off on August 25th and running through December 7th. The landmark season will feature shows by Esperanza Spalding, Sonny Rollins, Ornette Coleman, Diane Reeves, Branford Marsalis, Gilberto Gil, along with countless other talented artists. This year's festival will feature the following series:

### Jazz Continuum:

- August 25: 2011 Best New Artist Grammy Winner Esperanza Spalding
- September 28: Brecker Brothers Band Reunion with Randy Brecker, Mike Stern & Dave Weckl
- September 29: '80s Miles Revisited, from Miles Smiles with Wallace Roney, Bill Evans, Robben Ford, Joey DeFrancesco, Darryl Jones & Omar Hakim
- October 5: A solo by Branford Marsalis
- October 11: Singular artist Marcus Miller
- October 28: Belgian harmonica player Grégoire Maret and his quartet Brilliance From Brazil:
- October 19: Brazilian pianist Elaine Elias
- October 25: Musical revolutionary Gilberto Gil
- November 3: A rare unplugged piano performance by Ivan Lins

### Jazz Giants:

- September 30: Jazz legend Sonny Rollins
- November 9: Jazz giant Ornette Coleman

### Música Cubana:

- October 4: Cuban masters, Septeto Nacional Ignacio Piñeiro de Cuba
  - October 18: A double bill with Jerry & Andy Gonzalez, Elio Villafranca & Arturo Stable
  - November 4: The esteemed Orquesta Aragón
  - December 1: Six-time Grammy Winner Arturo Sandoval
- ### Soulful Singers:
- October 20: Four-time Grammy Winner Dianne Reeves
  - October 26: Mary Stallings with the Bill Charlap Trio
  - November 10: Lavey Smith & Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers
  - November 16: The SFJAZZ debut of Spanish vocalist Buika
  - October 6: Don Byron New Gospel Quintet
  - October 24: 'Border Music' with Marc Ribot & David Hidalgo
  - October 27: Saxophonist Tony Malaby's Tamarindo with bassist William Parker & drummer Mark Ferber
  - November 17: Dorado Schmitt & the Django All-Stars
  - December 2: Blind Boys of Alabama's holiday gospel show Tell It on the Mountain

### Pianism:

- October 10: Three generations of pianists - Barry Harris, Jacky Terrasson & Alfredo Rodriguez
- October 14: Panamanian master Danilo Pérez Trio
- November 1: Robert Glasper Experiment
- November 18: Solo performance from John Medeski

### SFJAZZ Members-Only Events:

- September 27: The Music of Thelonious Monk - A Listening Party with Larry Goldings
  - October 27: Mary Stallings with the Bill Charlap Trio
- SFJAZZ is also celebrating the building and opening of the SFJAZZ Center, which will be one of the only stand-alone buildings devoted to jazz in the



United States. The center will be built and designed by award-winning architect Mark Cavagnero for the purpose of enhancing the growth of jazz music and its audience alike. The SFJAZZ Center will celebrate its grand opening on January 21, 2013.

For more information about SFJAZZ and the 30th Anniversary San Francisco Jazz Festival, please visit: [www.sfjazz.org](http://www.sfjazz.org)

SFJAZZ, founded in 1983, is the largest nonprofit presenter of jazz and world music in America. SFJAZZ presents more than 100 concerts a year to over 100,000 fans and is dedicated to advancing the art form of jazz and cultivating new jazz audiences through artistic and educational programming, including: The San Francisco Jazz Festival, SFJAZZ Spring Season, SFJAZZ Collective, SFJAZZ Summerfest, SFJAZZ Education, SFJAZZ Membership and SFJAZZ Hotplate, a new monthly nightclub series featuring the Bay Area's best musicians paying tribute to jazz legends.

## THE SARASOTA BLUES AND MUSIC FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES STELLAR LINEUP FOR 22nd ANNUAL EVENT

Sarasota, FL – The organizers of the Sarasota Blues and Music Festival (#SBMF) proudly announce the much-anticipated artist lineup for the 22nd annual festival on September 29, 2012. This year's festival at Ed Smith Stadium in Sarasota, FL, will feature an unprecedented gathering of blues artists including headliner and two-time Grammy® Award winner Delbert McClinton and supporting acts Royal Southern Brotherhood, Ana Popovic, Curtis Salgado, Paul Thorn and prodigy act, Pett Crow. The entire day's lineup of national acts is bigger than ever before, and strikes a chord with its blues roots while offering festival attendees a taste of country, rock and top 40. Tickets are on sale now.

Festival producer Three Zebras Entertainment will turn Ed Smith Stadium into blues central for the huge one-day music celebration. Drawing fans from across central Florida, the Sarasota Blues and Music Fest will once again establish the city as a weekend destination with this longstanding tradition of music, fun and family-friendly entertainment.

This year's festival will offer VIP ticket buyers food and beverage service, upgraded beer and wine and a separate restroom area, all of which will be in close proximity to the artists on stage. To make this year's festival more family friendly, fans with kids can try out The Family Fun Zone, a kids' area with amusement rides and games. The whole family can come out and enjoy the day (and night) with entertainment for everyone!

"Ensuring families have a great time from the moment they enter the gates is a big part of how we approached the festival this year," said Bill Haggett, General Manager of the Sarasota Blues and Music Fest. "And continuing the tradition of bringing the best of the blues to Sarasota is apparent in the all-star lineup this year. We can't wait for September 29th!"

Tickets to the 22nd Annual Sarasota Blues and Music Festival are on sale now and are available at [sarasotablues-fest.com](http://sarasotablues-fest.com). Gates open at 11 am September 29, with musical talent starting at noon and lasting until the festival's end at 10 pm. Advance sale general admission tickets are \$22 and children under the age of 14 are free with paid adult admission. A limited number of VIP tickets are available for \$75.

The festival actually started as the Sarasota Blues Fest in 1991 by the Sarasota Blues Society as a way to celebrate the blues in the Sarasota community. The festival has a rich history of finding and showcasing young talent while also bringing accomplished musicians to the community. Numerous Grammy® Award winners and Rock and Roll Hall of Famers have graced the stages over the years and the festival seeks to continue that tradition as the Sarasota Blues and Music Festival. Partial proceeds from the event have always been earmarked for charity, and the All Faiths Food Bank Backpack Program will be the 2012 recipient.

## MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL SINGLE DAY ARENA TICKETS ON SALE NOW

**Arena Artists Include Tony Bennett,  
Esperanza Spalding, Pat Metheny Unity Band,  
Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Melody  
Gardot, Robert Randolph & the  
Family Band, Jack DeJohnette, Bill Frisell,  
Eddie Palmieri Salsa Orchestra, Gordon Goodwin's  
Big Phat Band, Monterey Jazz  
Festival On Tour 55th Anniversary  
Celebration with Dee Dee Bridgewater, Chris-  
tian McBride, Ambrose Akinmusire, Chris Potter,  
Benny Green, and Lewis Nash**

Monterey, CA – Single Day Arena Tickets for the Monterey Jazz Festival are on sale now.

Friday's Single Day Arena Tickets are \$66 and include three Arena performances and 13 additional Grounds performances and activities on seven stages. Saturday or Sunday's Single Day Arena Tickets are \$132 and include five Arena performances and more than 30 additional shows and activities on seven stages each day.

Performing in the Arena on Friday, September 21 is Eddie Palmieri Salsa Orchestra, Melody Gardot, and Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band.

Performing in the Arena on Saturday, September 22 is Tony Bennett; the Jack DeJohnette Special Trio featuring Pat Metheny & Christian McBride; Bill Frisell's Beautiful Dreamers Meets the 858 Quartet; Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue; and Robert Randolph & the Family Band.

Performing in the Arena on Sunday, September 23 is Esperanza Spalding; Pat Metheny Unity Band with Chris Potter, Antonio Sanchez, and Ben Williams; the Monterey Jazz Festival On Tour 55th Anniversary Celebration with Dee Dee Bridgewater, Christian McBride, Ambrose Akinmusire, Chris Potter, Benny Green, Lewis Nash; the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, directed by Paul Contos with Ambrose

Akinmusire; and the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts Big Band.

Single Day Arena Tickets may be purchased by phone at 888.248.6499 and on the Monterey Jazz Festival's Web site, [www.montereyjazzfestival.org](http://www.montereyjazzfestival.org).

Also on sale now are Arena Package Tickets, offering a reserved seat to all 13 concerts on the Arena/Jimmy Lyons Stage (renewable annually), and access to 78 different shows and activities on seven Grounds Stages.

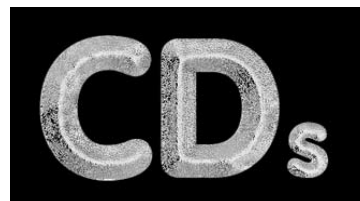
Full Weekend Grounds Tickets start at \$125. Daily Grounds Tickets are priced as low as \$40, and provide access to seven Grounds Stages. Grounds Tickets do not provide Arena access.

## BLUES WATCH

**BY MARK SMITH**

New Release blues.... Here's the soundtrack to your summer BBQ!... Glen David Andrews-Live at Three Muses; Craig Erickson- Galactic Roadhouse; The Rockin' Johnny Band- Grim Reaper; Seth Walker-Time Can Change; Billy Boy Arnold- Sings Big Bill Broonzy; Phantom Blues Band-Inside Out; Shakura S'Aida-Time; Nighthawks-Damn Good Time; Lurrie Bell-The Devil Ain't Got No Music; Joe Bonamassa-Driving Towards The Daylight; Walter Trout- Blues for the Modern Daze; Various Artists- The History of New Orleans Rhythm and Blues; The Sauce Boss- Live from the Green Parrot; Dani Wilde- Juice Me Up; R. J. Mischo- Make it Good; Various Artists-Big Robb Presents Juke Joint Music; The Blasters- Fun on a Saturday Night; Mighty Mo Rogers-Cadillac Jack; Omar & the Howlers- I'm Gone; Lloyd Jones- Doin' What it Takes; Paul Rishell- Talking Guitar; Matt Hill- Tappin That Thang; Rick Estrin & the Nightcats- One Wrong Turn; Johnny Rawls- Soul Survivor; Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials-Jump Start; Rory Block- I Belong to the Band- A Tribute to Rev. Gary Davis; Albert Castiglia-Living the Dream; Johnnie Bassett- I Can Make That Happen; Liz Mandeville-Clarksdale; Blindside Blues Band-Generator; Etta James- Live at Montreaux 1978-1993; Chuck Jackson's Big Bad Blues Band- Cup of Joe: A Tribute to Big Joe Turner; Lionel Young Band- On Our Way to Memphis; Zac Harmon- Music is Medicine and the ABC&D of Boogie Woogie- Live in Paris. That's it for this month. See Ya! Mark Smith

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### DEXTER GORDON

**Night Ballads Montreal 1977**

**UPTOWN RECORDS**

This writer remembers a weekend of performances by the great Dexter Gordon at the Tralfamadore Cafe in Buffalo in Spring 1977 with a local rhythm section. It was a weekend of music that brought together folk of all ages and ethnicity to see one of the greats of jazz. The tenor saxophonist who influenced Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane, but who had been living for several years in Europe was making what was still a rare US tour before moving back.

Gordon was a commanding presence as well as one of the greatest of the post-war musicians to come up during the bebop era. It wasn't simply his playing, but his suave and sophisticated manner when speaking with folks or the audience. Around this time, he was signed to Columbia Records and made a number of memorable recordings for them, continuing to perform and make music until his passing as well as be acclaimed for his acting in the movie "Round Midnight."

Dr. Robert E. Sunnenblick has produced for his Uptown label a new Dexter Gordon live recording, "Night Ballads Montreal 1977." This was recorded at Rising Sun during an engagement in November of 1977 (the music on this recorded between November 9 and November 12). It had Dexter with his working band of George Cables on piano, Rufus Reid on bass and Eddie Gladden on drums who wouldn't record their first studio album until half a year later.

As suggested from the title, the focus on this set is on ballads which include "Lover Man," "You've Changed," "Old Folks" and "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," along with a brief rendition of "LTD," his theme song to close the release. These are, with the exception of the closing theme, lengthy ballad performances. Gordon of course is in the spotlight with his lengthy improvisations that caress the songs with warmth, wit and soul as he would explore the themes, incorporate musical quotes and let

the magic develop.

Gordon, like Lester Young, believed in the importance of the lyrics and he introduces the songs with his recitation of the lyrics in his deep, sonorous voice that carried more than a little romanticism in his delivery. There is a hint of his idol, Ben Webster, in some of his playing here mixed in with his more lengthy bop inflected choruses. Pianist Cables also gets a fair share of solo space that allowed him to explore the melody in his distinctive style, with his playing on "Old Folks" being especially memorable.

The CD comes with a booklet with extensive annotation from Gordon's widow, Maxine, along with pianist Cables who provides astute and detailed comments on each of the performances. As wonderful as the music on "Night Ballads" is, over 70 minutes of ballads may be a bit much for some folks in one sitting, but that quibble doesn't change the view that the terrific music makes it a highly recommended addition to the body of Long Tall Dexter's recordings.

*Ron Weinstock*



## OMAR AND THE HOWLERS

**I'm Gone  
BIG GUITAR MUSIC**

Having recently had the pleasure to consider the excellent overview of the past two decades of Omar and the Howlers "Essential Collection" on Ruf, I recently received the latest Omar and the Howlers recording "I'm Gone" (Big Guitar Music). It's a session that has him joined by guitarists Casper Rawls and Derek O'Brien; bassists Ronnie James and Bruce Jones; and drummers Mike Buck and Wes Starr for a rocking collection of rockabilly and blues.

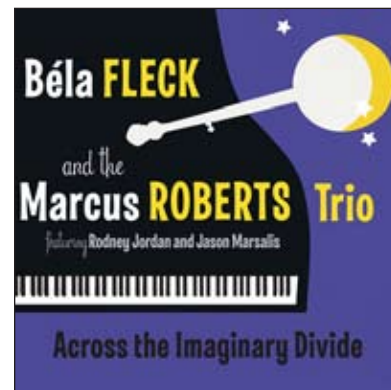
It starts with the title track, a hot rockabilly stomp that evokes the classic Sun sound and with a forceful, gravelly vocal. "All About the Money" is a lazy blues shuffle with a relaxed vocal; some nicely articulated guitar and a nice relaxed pace. "Drunkard's Paradise" is a country number about drinking in the darkness with some chicken scratching guitar and steel guitar. Bo Diddley was an inspiration for Omar and on "Wild and Free" he uses the "Bo Diddley beat" and employs judicious use of tremolo on it, followed by the driving "Dust my Broom" groove of "Down At The Station."

"Lone Star Blues" is an atmospheric, straight-ahead blues instrumental which, like this recording, benefits from the economical backing and playing that benefits as much by what is not played as what is played. The ensuing track, "Omar's Boogie" is a solid country-rockabilly instrumental with plenty of

twang and is followed by the slow "Goin' Back to Texas," which has a swamp blues flavor; a nice, gritty vocal and Casper Rawls' guitar solo which takes some unexpected twists. "Let Me Hold You" is a swamp-pop styled ballad followed by an easy rocker, "Move Up To Memphis," and then a solid cover of John Lee Hooker's brooding "I'm Mad Again." The booklet misidentifies the track penned by Hooker and it is "I'm Mad Again," the 11th track, not the 10th track as stated there.

The closing track is another rockabilly groover, "Take Me Back" which uses Scotty Moore's guitar riff from Elvis Presley's rendition of "Mystery Train." It's a lively track, solidly sung by Omar with his gravelly approach. It caps another solid and recommended recording from Omar Dykes.

*Ron Weinstock*



## BELA FLECK & THE MARCUS ROBERTS TRIO

**Across The Imaginary Divide  
ROUNDER**

Whether by design or not, banjo virtuoso Fleck and partners may be helping the further establishment one of the newest jazz "schools", connecting the music with American heartland roots. Much like the Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey's addition of pedal steel, matching the banjo up with a piano trio makes for interesting, non-"coastal" jazz sounds.

Fleck's implicit and long-standing goal to liberate his axe from genre typecasting is well served on this varied and tasty set of originals, contributed to equally by pianist Roberts and himself.

And the simpatico vibe that the two co-leaders generate contributes largely to the set's success; the players forming a convincing, if initially unlikely, front. Their rapport shows strikingly on a pair of seductive minor-keyed ballads, Fleck's "One Blue Truth" and "Kalimba".

Change-ups in mood and approach include Robert's neo-bop "Let's Go" and samba "Topaika". The Aaron Copland-esque leadoff track, Fleck's "Some Roads Lead Home" and the light-hearted collaboration "Petunia" speak directly to the notion of a "Jazz Americana" suggested previously.

Bassist Rodney Jordan and drummer Jason Marsalis sound as attuned as the leaders to the eclectic, spirited mission of this set.

*Duane Verh*



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

## KIDS DON'T GET ENOUGH

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

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

powerfully on the piano, but it was the full orchestra that he considered his most compelling instrument. He introduced improvisation to his compositions — a process unheard of using a 15-piece orchestra. The result was a different approach to jazz that sparked a revolution and an evolution.

His music spread across the world with songs like "Sophisticated Lady," "In a



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

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

Jazz is art, you dig? Art can

really transform lives.

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



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



*Give your kids a chance  
to succeed. Up their  
daily dose of art.*

**Art. Ask for More.**

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



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## ROCKIN' JOHNNY BAND

**Grim Reaper**  
**DELMARK**

Rockin' Johnny Burgin has been playing the blues for a couple of decades, having a regular residency on Monday nights at a Chicago club while also honing his skills playing with a variety of blues folks such as Pinetop Perkins, Tail Dragger, Jimmy Burns, Sam Lay and Billy Boy Arnold. Delmark has just issued "Grim Reaper," the second album by the Rockin' Johnny Band. The band is comprised of Rick Kreher on rhythm guitar; John Sefner on bass; Steve Bass on drums and Big D on harmonica with Kenny Anderson, Dudley Owens and Jerry DiMuzzio adding horns on occasion.

Comprised of several originals and interpretations of blues that have not been overly covered, Rockin' Johnny has put together a solid album of Chicago blues. One can hear a variety of influences in his approach. On guitar, the West Side styling of Magic Sam and Eddie C. Campbell can be heard while Billy Boy Arnold's low-power singing (to use Johnny's characterization) is a strong influence on his vocals.

The title track is an original, co-authored with Ken Kemawshima, is a solid West Side Chicago styled blues with plenty of nice guitar and his earnest singing. It also displays his approach which is to not overplay and let the silences speak as much as what he plays. The band provides the appropriate support without laying down things too heavy. Johnny's "Window To Your Soul" channels a bit of Magic Sam with a more low-key vocal and impressive, imaginative fretwork. On "I Was Fooled, he channels Billy Boy Arnold vocally on a Jody Williams number that Arnold recorded for Vee-Jay. A swamp blues feel marks "Lousy Dimes" as he worries about his money problems and on which Big D takes a strong solo with Johnny adding chords and jazzy fills.

The venerable "Rollin' and Tumblin'" is given an understated treatment in a performance that owes as much to Sleepy John Estes (singing about if the river was whiskey and I was a diving duck) as Muddy Waters. "Its Expensive To Be Broke" is a laid back urban blues with the horn section, while the cover of Otis Rush's "My Baby Is a Good 'Un," is taken a very leisurely tempo. He takes out the slide for some broom

dusting on "My Sweet Baby," where DiMuzzio adds his baritone sax behind Rockin' Johnny's vocal and guitar and then channels Fenton Robinson in a nice rendition of Robinson's "Somebody loan Me a Dime" with some nice guitar and a heartfelt vocal. "Shoe Leather and Tire Rubber" is about wearing out shoes and tires looking for some blues gigs as Big D contributes another solid harmonica solo.

Rockin' Johnny is an engaging, low-key singer as well as a consistently imaginative and tasty guitarist backed by a sympathetic band. With a nice varied collection of songs he has produced a very appealing album.

*Ron Weinstock*



## JIMMY RUSHING

**Four Classic Albums Plus**  
**AVID JAZZ**

Avid Jazz is one of several European Public Domain reissue labels that have compiled reissues of vintage jazz albums primarily from the 1950s and among recent reissues is "Four Classic Albums Plus" by Jimmy Rushing. Rushing is best known as a vocalist with the classic Count Basie Band of the swing era. His career of course started prior to that and his first recording was made with the legendary Blue Devils. Later he was associated with the Bennie Moten Orchestra which, after the leader's death, eventually morphed into The Count Basie Band.

While more than simply a blues singer, his vocals on such songs as "Boogie Woogie," "Good Morning Blues," "Goin' To Chicago," "Sent For You Yesterday," and "Don't You Miss Your Baby," led him to be cast as a blues singer. Of course he did sing more than just blues, as exemplified by the Hoagie Carmichael classic New Orleans, with Moten as well as such pop tunes and novelties as "Exactly Like You," "Boo Hoo," "Georgiana" and "Mama Don't Want No Peas 'N' Rice 'N' Coconut Oil." Like his blues vocals, he always swung hard with his phrasing and his full-throated and ebullient delivery.

By the 1950s he had established himself as a single artist. He had recorded for Vanguard Records under John Hammond's direction with members of the Count Basie band and boogie woogie legends like Pete Johnson and Sammy Price. Subsequently he recorded a number of albums for Columbia, of



which four are featured on this Avid Jazz compilation: “Jimmy Rushing and the Smith Gals,” “Little Jimmy and The Big Brass,” “Brubeck & Rushing” and “The Jazz Odyssey of James Rushing Esq.” In addition to the music from those albums, these reissues also include a performance from the legendary TV show “The Sound of Jazz” and a rare British EP, “The Way I Feel.”

Altogether there are 49 songs over the two CDs included here so there is plenty of music. Some of the recordings are familiar to me from a Columbia vinyl reissue of the 1970s, but many of these specific recorded performances are fresh to the ears.

On many of the recordings he is backed by some of the cream of the swing era musicians, including Basie veterans like Walter Page, Buck Clayton, Dickey Wells, Sweets Edison, Jo Jones, Vic Dickenson, and Buddy Tate, along with such other legends like Coleman Hawkins, Budd Johnson, Hank Jones, Milt Hinton, Hilton Jefferson, Doc Cheatham, Danny Barker and Zutty Singleton. And of course one of the albums included here had Rushing backed by Dave Brubeck, Paul Desmond, Eugene Wright and Joe Morello.

From the opening moments of “Arkansas Blues” to the closing “The Way I Feel,” one is treated to some wonderful renditions of blues and classic pop songs that are sung with heart and humor. He can sound world weary on the blues like “Down Hearted Blues,” and “Jimmy’s Blues,” yet wink about the fact “Somebody Stole My Gal.” He provides his own personal signature on classic blues like “T’aint Nobody’s Business If I Do,” and “I’m Gonna Move To The Outskirts of Town,” as well as interpretations of Louis Jordan’s hit, “Knock Me a Kiss,” and the classic Earl Hines tune “Rosetta.” And we should not neglect to mention the welcome reissue of the rare EP with the terrific blues “Go Get Some More.”

While most of the recording has him with big band (or little big band in some cases), the album with Brubeck has its own charm with a bit more intimacy in the setting and the somewhat lighter backing provided on a revival of “Evenin’,” one of the songs he recorded with Basie, Fats Waller’s “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” and the torch song “Am I Blue.” There is a definite appeal to Brubeck’s understated piano and Desmond’s dry martini alto sound, and if Brubeck may have been skeptical when Rushing first suggested they collaborate, the result was another stellar showcase of a vocalist who touched so many years ago and whose singing still sounds fresh today.

Like other similar reissues, the liner notes are reproduced in the accompanying booklet (although in some cases only portions are). The music also sounds good to these deafening ears.

There is not a solid overview of Rushing’s Columbia recordings available on CD. This makes this reissue even more valuable in addition to the wonderful music contained here.

**Ron Weinstock**



## PINETOP PERKINS

Heaven  
BLIND PIG

Willie “Pinetop” Perkins, who passed away in early 2011, just shy of his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday, was a living link to much of blues history, having played and recorded with Muddy Waters, Robert Nighthawk, Sonny Boy Williamson, Earl Hooker and countless others.

With three Grammy’s, eighteen Blues Foundation Awards and countless other honors paying testament to his skill on piano, Perkins set a high bar for anyone else who dares to call him or herself of blues pianist.

This set, recorded back in 1986 but never released, serves as a reminder of his command of his chosen instrument. Playing solo on 8 of the 12 tracks, Perkins gives repeated tutorials on the power of a well placed note and a delicious turn of a phrase.

Rather than assaulting your senses with a wall of sound, Perkins masterfully works to draw you into the groove and lets you go only when he’s finished with you. While this set includes such well worn warhorses as *Pinetop’s Boogie Woogie* and *Sweet Home Chicago*, other numbers such as *44 Blues*, *Pinetop’s Blues*, *Willow Weep For Me* and *Just Keep On Drinking* provide a better listen as they provide room for discovery of something new which simply isn’t possible anymore with the former numbers.

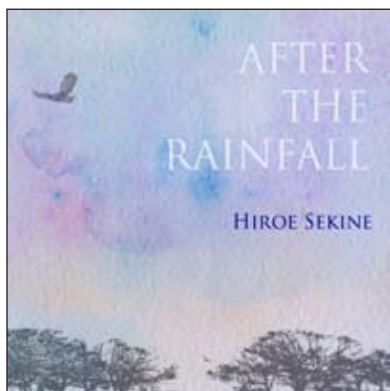
The tracks that features guests include Otis Clay on the Buddy Johnson classic, *Since I Fell For You*, and Willie “Big Eyes” Smith on *Sitting On Top of the World*. *That’s All Right* is a fitting way to close out this set with its loping beat and ample doses of Perkin’s skilled right hand and earnest, almost gleeful, vocals. Heaven, indeed.

**Mark Smith**

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**HIROE SEKINE**  
**After The Rainfall**  
 SEKAI MUSIC

I remember when reviewing pianist Hiroe Sekine's 2010 debut album that it was so good I could not even imagine how difficult it would be to do a follow-up. Well, she has followed it with an album that is completely different! Well, I guess I never thought of that approach.

She has some of the same musicians here as on the first, namely Bob Sheppard on tenor & soprano saxes and flute and Peter Erskine on drums. And, as with the debut, Russell Ferrante of Yellowjackets produced the album.

Right off the bat the mood is uplifting and bright with Hiroe's original "Song Of The Owl," which reminds me of something that would have been at home on Wayne Shorter's "Native Dancer" album of many moons ago with the voices and Sheppard's soprano sax. The same could be said about the title track, which has more of a Latin flavor. The addition of guitarist Larry Koonse for this album was a wise choice as he shines on these tunes and throughout.

One of four covers is a version of Lennon/McCartney's "In My Life," which is a vocal duet featuring Hiroe and Arnold McCuller. I must admit it is one of the best versions of the song I have heard, and Hiroe's piano is accompanied only by bass and Erskine using brushes. Hiroe's vocals are very sweet and airy. A Chick Corea tune, "Windows," follows and she and the guys more than do it justice. Another song in a Brazilian vein, "Aquil O" by Toninho Horta finds her singing the lyrics in Portuguese and another Brazilian song, "Inutil Paisagem" written by Antonio Carlos Jobim follows. It is a super slow bossa ballad, and by now I am enjoying Hiroe's vocals so much that my pre-listening fears are smashed completely as this brings Astrud Gilberto to mind.

Switching gears, her original "So, But Anyway" opens with Jimmy Johnson on electric bass replacing acoustic bassist Darek Oles and Sekine switches to electronic keyboards. This one kicks some butt with Sheppard switching to tenor with a powerful solo statement. Hiroe's solo is quite meaty as well. Another original, "Spoon Key" is a straight burner featuring the

whole band, with Sheppard on tenor again. Some fine solos are heard on this one, including Oles on acoustic bass and Erskine on drums at the very end. The album closes with a very unique version of Monk's "Evidence" played in a jazz-fusion vein. Koonse guitarwork here shows him to



be quite a diverse player. Hiroe has a real knack for rearranging standards with a very distinctively new flavor.

Hiroe Sekine is not only a fantastic pianist, but with this new album she has proven herself to be a top-flight vocalist as well.

Well, I promised myself I would not go song by song, but by golly I believe I did it anyway. Shame on me. And if you want to hear some fantastic new music that will brighten your spirit and probably make you grin as well, then shame on you if you don't scoop up this one. Now, just what will she think of the next time around?

*Bill Wahl*



**LURRIE BELL**  
**The Devil Ain't Got No Music**  
 ARIA B.G. RECORDS

A new Lurrie Bell recording, "The Devil Ain't Got No Music" (Aria B.G. Records), represents a double departure from Bell's prior recordings. First of all the album focuses on the sacred side of Lurrie's repertoire, and secondly the performances are rendered in a stripped down vein, mostly acoustically. Part of its origins was the years growing up as a child with his grandparents in the South that Lurrie spent playing and singing in church.

After moving North, where he became known for his blues guitar and vocals, Bell would sing and play many of the songs heard on this new release around his home. "The Devil Ain't Got No Music" was produced by Matthew Skoller and, in addition to Bell, has guests Joe Louis Walker, Billy Branch, Josef Ben

Israel, Kenny 'Beedy Eyes' Smith, and Bill Sims, Jr.

Its a bit more informal sounding than Lurrie's electric blues recordings with producer Skoller presenting the performances in a variety of settings starting with "Swing Low," Lurrie's personalized interpretation of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," where his guitar and vocals are backed by Smith's percussion and Sims' hand claps as he vocally riffs on "swing low."

Joe Louis Walker contributes slide guitar and backing vocal to "It's a Blessing," while Lurrie's vocals and guitar are joined by backing vocal on Thomas Dorsey's "Search Me Lord." "Don't Let the Devil Ride" is one of several songs on the theme of stay away from the devil with Lurrie's trebly guitar evocative of Magic Sam with Kenny Smith's supportive drumming.

On Muddy Waters' "Why Don't You Live So God Can Use You," Lurrie's self-accompaniment channels "Lay My Burden Down." The title track was written by producer Skoller and taken from a quote from Mavis Staples and with a small combo (with Skoller on harp) Bell notes the devil has fire, horns and a tail, but the devil has no music so that's why his home is hell.

On Thomas Dorsey's "Peace of the Valley" bell adds some string slapping while Joe Louis Walker adds whining slide accents to the fervent vocal. Smith's percussion and Cynthia Butts background vocals are the stark backing for Bell's delivery of Tom Waits' "Way Down In The Hole," which is where you want to keep the devil.

Bill Sims adds second guitar as well as provides the arrangement to "Lo and Beyond," while Joe Louis walker and Sims add their clapping and enthusiasm as Lurrie shouts "I'll Get To Heaven On My Own," which Walker wrote. Billy Branch is part of the unplugged small Chicago blues styled backing on "Trouble In My Way," with Mike Avery and James Teague adding their gospel backing voices.

"The Devil Ain't Got No Music" recording concludes with a lengthy, solo rendition of Reverend Gary Davis' "Death Have No Mercy." As noted, it presents a definite different musical side of Bell. Bell sings perhaps more emphatically here while the emphatic, percussive manner of his guitar style is evident.

The unusual twists and turns his solos often take is perhaps less prevalent, but overall it is certainly a release that especially fans of Lurrie and contemporary Chicago blues will want to check out.

*Ron Weinstock*



## JIMMY OWENS

### The Monk Project

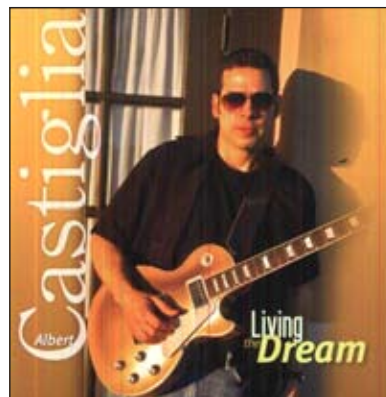
IPO

Two innovative recent releases add proof to the case for Thelonious Monk's ceaseless influence on jazz. Trumpeter/fluegelhornist Jimmy Owens' veteran septet works their way through some inspired-sounding charts, taking some fresh turns on the likes of Monk's "Bright Mississippi", "Well You Needn't", and "Blue Monk", among others.

"Needn't" particularly speaks to the chart craft-work, interspersing rhythmic shifts that move segments of the "head" in unexpected but very natural-sounding ways. On this track the leader and pianist Kenny Barron each take their first of several quality solo choruses. Also worth noting on the arrangement side is the transcription of Monk's celebrated version of Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean A Thing" worked up here.

The chart invention never gets in the way of first-class "blowing", as evidenced again by Owens and Barron, as well as trombonist Wycliffe Gordon on the ballad "Pannonica". See the Greg Lewis Organ Monk review for the second Monk tribute just released.

*Duane Verh*



## ALBERT CASTIGLIA

### Living The Dream

BLUES LEAF

Former lead guitarist for the late Junior Wells, Florida-based Albert Castiglia now has his fourth solo work arriving, LIVING THE DREAM, since striking out on his own.

A mix of originals and covers, Castiglia stars

**jazz  
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funky via the title cut blowing smoke as it opens the proceedings. “The Man” is Castiglia’s political take of the season as “Sometimes You Win” shows his more acoustic side. With help from harp man Sandy Mack, “I Want Her For Myself” is one of the stronger originals in the pack. In the instrumental category here, we have the boogie woogie “Fat Cat” and John Ginty’s B-3 mixing it up with Castiglia’s guitar during Freddie King’s “Freddie’s Boogie.”

Castiglia has an interesting mix of covers here, starting with Little Richard’s obscure “Directly From My Heart To You,” with the guitar taking over for the piano as the lead instrument all the way to Paul Butterfield’s signature “Lovin’ Cup,” with support from the aforementioned Sandy Mack. The only number that falls short is Mose Allison’s “Parchman Farm, which, while strong, can’t hold a candle to the 1970 all-out atomic version Cactus did of the same song.

Some good stuff on *LIVING THE DREAM* and, wherever he’s hanging his hat nowadays, I’m sure harp man Junior Wells is passing out cigars in celebration of his protege, Albert Castiglia. *Peanuts*



**BOBBY BROOM**  
**Upper West Side Story**  
ORIGIN RECORDS

For his tenth album in ten years, 51-year-old guitarist Bobby Broom performs with his long-time cohorts, bassist Dennis Carroll and drummer Kobie Watkins, with young drummer Makaya McCraven subbing for Watkins on three tunes. Origin Records is Broom’s label.

This band has worked together since 1997 and their familiarity is evident as they improvise their way through Broom’s nine originals honoring the Upper West Side of New York City, where Broom spent most of his childhood before relocating to Chicago in 1984.

While Broom’s melodies hold your attention, it’s Watkins’ expert traps work that adds background excitement to uptempo pieces such as the title tune. The longest piece at 8:46 minutes, “After Words,” features Broom’s chordal fashionings on the melody head and linear lines on the improvs. An appealing tempo and a riffing melody on “Minor Major Mishap”

make it a listener’s delight. All of Broom’s originals, however, are appealing for various reasons, whether it’s tempo or melody or the interactions among the players.

Broom is a veteran with lots to say. He’s a craftsman with plenty of experience who has inspired modern jazz guitarists in Chicago. Broom has performed with Sonny Rollins, Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, and other jazz luminaries. He launched his own trio in 1991 and settled into a long-lasting weekly gig in Evanston, Illinois with Carroll and Watkins in 1997. Broom also co-leads (with Chris Foreman and Greg Rockingham) the Deep Blue Organ Trio which recorded their fourth album in 2011.

Continuing Broom’s legacy, this trio studio session provides a satisfying listening experience that showcases his guitar mastery and distinctive style.

*Nancy Ann Lee*



**QUINTUS MCCORMICK**  
**Still Called the Blues**  
DELMARK

Delmark’s Steve Wagner recalls his initial reaction when first hearing Quintus McCormick while recording his 1st Delmark album, “Hey Jodie.” “Wow this cat could be the next Johnnie Taylor!” Well I might suggest a bit of Tyrone Davis and Artie ‘Blues Boy’ White as well after hearing McCormick’s new Delmark release “Still Called The Blues.” Wagner co-produced this with McCormick with either John Chorney or Roosevelt Purify on keyboards; Lovely ‘JR’ Fuller on bass; Pete Thomas on drums; Kenny Anderson on trumpet; Dudley Owens on tenor sax; Jerry DiMuzio on flute and baritone.

There is a nice mix of urgency in the vocals and crisp backing with some funk on the opening “I Gotta Go,” followed by a cover of Bobby Rush’s “What’s Good For The Goose,” which opens with a humorous spoken spot. McCormick’s “What Am I Gonna Do?” is a fresh original in the vein of some of Tyrone Davis’ recordings. On “It Won’t Work,” he reaches down to the bottom range of his voice while laying down a crisply defined solo. On his interpretation of the Johnnie Taylor recording that provides this album its title, McCormick contributes a lively solo and a

fervent vocal.

"That's My Baby" is a soulful ballad with DiMuzio adding flute. It is followed by some hard-edged, searing guitar that opens his cover of Little Johnny Taylor's "Everybody Knows About My Good Thing." This is the longest performance on this album and McCormick pulls out all the stops on guitar. "I'm In Love With You Baby" is another soulful song with the horns evoking classic sixties Chicago soul recordings such as by the Impressions. A nice rendition of the Beatles' "Oh! Darling," has raspy, uncredited tenor saxophone.

"Always" is a lament played in an understated manner opening with just vocal and his piano before the full band joins in. This closes with a credible, if not remarkable, cover of the Bob Seger hit, "Old Time Rock and Roll." "Still Called the Blues" will appeal to a very wide grouping of blues lovers and is further proof that Quintus McCormick is among today's finest blues and soul performers.

**Ron Weinstock**



## STANLEY TURRENTINE

**Don't Mess With Mister T.  
CTI MASTERWORKS**

This CTI Masterworks release of Stanley Turrentine's "Don't Mess With Mister T." is another remastered CD celebrating 40 years of CTI Records. Turrentine is backed by a Big Band Orchestra (horns and strings) arranged and conducted by Bob James. The original album has been augmented by 4 additional tracks for a full hour of music. James, along with Harold Mabern, Richard Tee and Johnny Hammond handle the keyboards, Ron Carter is on bass, Eric Gale on guitar and Irdis Muhammed and Billy Cobham can be heard on drums.

Turrentine had come a long way from the days of touring with Lowell Fulson (Ray Charles on piano), but his music never lost its blues roots and it's present in his playing on the title track, a soulful Marvin Gaye composition followed by Turrentine's mid-tempo groover, "Tow For T," that has the feel of an organ combo with Gale chording while Mabern takes a nice electric piano solo with carter and Muhammed (with a short break) laying down the steady groove. Turrentine's "Too Blue" is another medium tempo blues groover with Richard

Tee's organ and backing horns to support Mr. T's blues playing and Gale's jazzy single note solo also benefits from spare use of horn riffs. Turrentine's warm ballad playing and Gale's bluesy fretwork and Tee's churchy organ are heard on Bruce Hawes' "I Could Never Repay Your Love." James arrangement merits mention as the employment of horns and strings complement Turrentine on this and do not get syrupy.

"Pieces of Dreams" is the first of the bonus selections and the strings are a bit too prominent although Turrentine and rhythm section sounds fine when the strings lay out. The alternate take of the Marvin Gaye title track has Billy Cobham on drums and Johnny Hammond on organ and has more of blowing feel as the horn section and strings lay out. Hammond and Gale really tear into their solos while Turrentine exhibits considerable passion. Hammond, Gale and Turrentine exhibit more fire in Cobham's "Mississippi City Strut," and while James' "Harlem Dawn" is perhaps not a striking a composition, it is a nice moody performance with more robust tenor saxophone.

Certainly there is nothing wrong with the first four tracks that constituted the original album. The addition of the bonus tracks (especially the last three) makes the CTI Masterworks reissue of "Don't Mess With Mister T." an even stronger showcase for Stanley Turrentine's tender yet muscular, bluesy and soulful tenor saxophone.

**Ron Weinstock**

**"A BAZOOKA ASSAULT OF FOOT-STOMPIN' BLUES AND SLOW-BURNIN' KNEE-BUCKLERS." —Chicago Sun-Times**



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## LIL' ED AND THE BLUES IMPERIALS

**Jump Start**  
ALLIGATOR

The typical upbeat Lil' Ed album title doesn't tell the whole story here, as this may be the most song-conscious set this master of party blues has turned out. While not short on his signature high-energy good time fare, Lil' Ed's latest spends a fair amount of time on the serious side of love, both bad, "House Of Cards", "My Chains Are Gone", "You Burnt Me" and good- "Life Is A Journey", "World Of Love".

But, of course, this is *still* Lil' Ed and company and there's plenty of double entendre- "Jump Right In", "No Fast Food", and street corner savvy- Born Loser", "Weatherman". And with his slide and band in excellent working order, Ed's newest should not disappoint.

*Duane Verh*



## MELISSA ERRICO

**Legrand Affair**  
GHOSTLIGHT RECORDS

Michel Legrand is one of the grand composers for stage and film of our times and in 2005 he and Broadway actress Melissa Errico spent time together and then traveled to Belgium where they recorded a number of Legrand's songs with a full orchestra conducted and arranged by Legrand. While some touches were added later, it took until now for the recordings to be released under Errico's name, "Legrand Affair: The Songs of Michel Legrand" (Ghostlight Records).

I was not familiar with Melissa Errico until this recording. Married to tennis star Patrick McEnroe, she

has such a beautiful voice and her precise diction and delivery likely illustrates why she has become a star of many musical productions. She has starred in seven Broadway productions and had two prior albums. I also did not realize the depth of Legrand's legacy as a composer. The songs include "The Summer Knows," and "The Windmill of Your Mind." The other songs may not have been as familiar, but equally displayed melodies that lingered in one's head. The couple, Alan and Marilyn Bergman, contributed the lyrics to 10 of the 15 selections on this album.

Enrico's singing creates a sense of intimacy even with the full orchestration on these lovely songs. Legrand sings a scatted, wordless vocal to a duet between he and Errico on the Legrand-Johnny Mercer ballad, "Once Upon a Summertime." The closing selection, "Celui-La" is the only non-orchestral performance. Here, her vocal in French is accompanied by Legrand's piano. These are consistently beautiful performances. Errico has such a beautiful voice and the lush arrangements accentuate this and the romanticism of the lyrics of all the marvelous performances here. "Legrand Affair" makes for easy, but grand, listening.

*Ron Weinstock*



## NATHAN JAMES & THE RHYTHM SCRATCHERS

**What You Make Of It**  
DELTA GROOVE

Nathan James mixes homemade guitars, such as his tritar (a three string instrument made out of a washboard and axe handle), and other similar instruments (such as the baritone Washtar, a baritone guitar built over a washboard) with a deep knowledge of early blues styles as well as gospel and 50s to 60s blues and R&B.

While he has recorded in a duo format with Ben Hernandez, on his new Delta Groove CD, "What you Make Of It," he has his touring band, The Rhythm Scratchers with Troy Sandow on bass and harmonica and Marty Dodson on drums and percussion. James Harman (with whom James toured for three and a half years) plays harmonica on one track while saxophonists Johnny Viau and Archie Thompson are present on two.

It would be easy to look at James and his home-made instruments as a novelty, but he and the Rhythm Scratchers certainly get beyond that to present a distinctive style with James' natural sounding and assured vocals and thoughtful, propulsive playing up front with the rhythm section providing a solid foundation.

This is evident on the solid cover of Jimmy McCracklin's "Later on," with the crisp rhythm underlying the vocal. On the next track, the propulsive groove of "Get To The Country," Sandow wails on harp while James mixes hard chords and agile picking while Dodson adds some rhythmic accents here.

One treat is his reworking of Blind Boy Fuller's "Black Snake Jivin'" with his adept mix of finger picking and rapping the groove on the washboard with kazoo, providing a skiffle feel at times. By the way, listening to this number (I am not familiar with Fuller's original), it was clear that Fuller reworked Eddie Miller's "I'd Rather Drink Muddy Water" which has become a blues standard. Miller recorded his song in 1936 and Fuller in 1938. There is a philosophical bent to "Make It On Your Own," a soulful ballad nicely sung with more nice harp from Sandow.

James Harman wrote "Rhino Horn" (and he guests on vocal and harmonica) which is built on an emphatic beat from Dodson while James lays down a slide-based backing on the tritar. What's nice is the

space in the performance, which is characteristic of the entire recording. James and crew avoid trying the fill every aural space and allow the silences to speak as much as what is played.

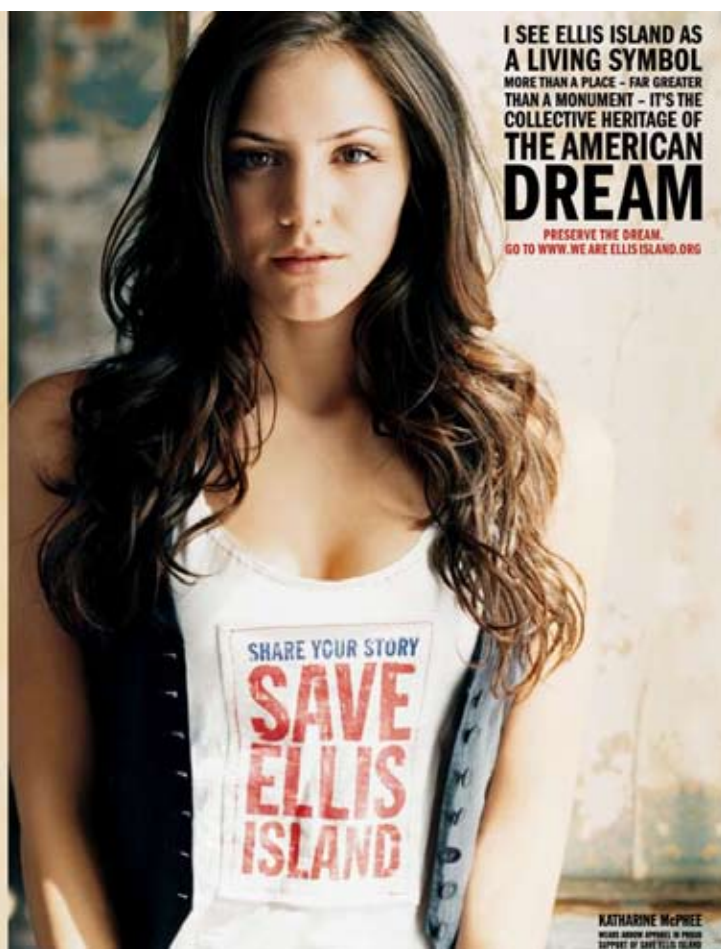
The rag-tinged "Pretty Baby Don't Be Late" has James on resonator guitar and kazoo with nice finger picking and a solid backbeat from Dodson, and it is followed by "Blues Headache," a lazy harmonica feature for Sandow with the bass-toned tritar slide providing a nice contrast. "Pain Inside Waltz" found inspiration in Cajun fiddle tunes with a poignant vocal.

The horns add to the funk groove in James' interpretation of Bobby Patterson's "I'm a Slave to You," on which James has a rollicking solo. The horns are also present for James' "First and the Most," a ballad that has a swamp pop feel to it.

After the insistent Hill Country Blues groove of "You Led Me On," this disc concludes with what James calls a Homesick James' inspired closing instrumental, "Tri-Tar Shuffle Twist," with some nice slide that is suggestive of the late Chicago blues legend's style that provides a fresh take on this style.

I was not familiar with Nathan James' music prior to "What you Make Of It," but I was impressed to already acquire one of his prior recordings. There is some seriously good, original blues by Nathan James and The Rhythm Scratchers here.

*Ron Weinstock*







## JOE LOCKE/GEOFFREY KEEZER GROUP

**Signing  
MOTEMA**

Veteran vibraphonist Joe Locke and pianist Geoffrey Keezer are joined by drummer Terreon Gully and bassist Mike Pope for Locke's debut recording for Motema.

This studio session follows the band's successful touring behind their 2006 recording *Live in Seattle* and Locke had intended to record another project with this band. This is it.

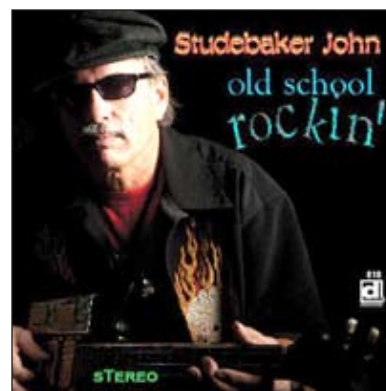
Although they hadn't played together in a long time, these musicians display tight unity and inventiveness on the disc's eight tunes, a mix of originals and standards. Locke contributes four originals to the fare and Keezer two tunes. Locke's title tune leads off the set with fusiony flavor infused by Pope's electric bass and Gully's punched-up drumming. "Darth Alexis," an intense, time-shifting tune composed by Keezer perhaps best demonstrates the synergy among the players. Inspired by a friend's hilltop retreat, Locke's original, "Her Sanctuary," is a lovely piece that features one of Locke's best solos and his ballad "This Is Just To Say," inspired by a William Carlos Williams poem, nicely caps off the session.

John Coltrane's melodious "Naima" is given refreshing treatment with this instrumentation and Gully playing acoustic bass. One of my favorites is their version of Imogen Heap's "Hide and Seek," a waltzing ballad with a lovely melody arranged by Keezer and enhanced by Keezer's soft, churchy improvisations on (I'm guessing) an omnisphere.

I love this album for its vitality, imagination and pure pleasing sounds!

*Nancy Ann Lee*

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## STUDEBAKER JOHN

**Old School Rockin'  
DELMARK**

Studebaker John Grimaldi continues his pursuit of blues and roots rock with a new release, "Old School Rockin'" on Delmark. Backed simply by his long-time bassist Bob Halaj as well as drummer Albert 'Joey' DeMarco, he lays down 14 new blues and boogie based songs that certainly will get the feet moving and the fingers poppin'. As I noted in a review of his 2006 recording "Self Made Man," "[H]e has been adept in a traditionally oriented approach to the blues, reflecting especially the driving approaches of Hutto and Hound Dog Taylor but not afraid to mix in a bit of rock and roll and bring his own voice. He has toured and recorded behind a number of blues legends as well as developed his own music."

The current release is his second for Delmark, and is more in the vein of hard blues-infused rock and roll. The music is hardly fancy. Rather it consists of driving, in your face rockers that bring his sizzling guitar work along with his gravelly vocals to the front with Halaj and DeMarco keeping the music propelled. From the driving "Rockin' the Boogie" that opens this set, John and band push the performance like Jim Brown about to break loose through the defensive line for a lengthy touchdown run. Singing about getting his mojo working against the irresistible groove sets the mood. "Disease Called The Love" has a terrific lyric breaking out in a cold sweat, and what one has the doctor don't know, and has a nice melodic hook.

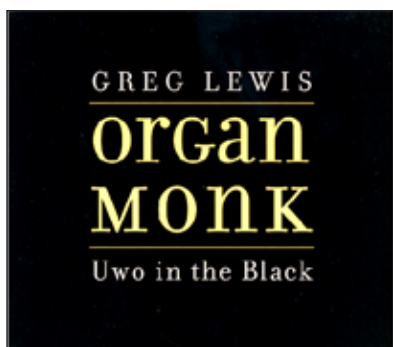
"Fire Down Below" is a hard rocker that to these ears evokes the sound of classic Rolling Stones without slavishly trying to imitate the Stones. It's more that Studebaker John and his rhythm conjure up some of the same spirit as Mick and Keith did decades ago. This flavor is also evident on "Fine Little Machine," as he sings about all you need is a driver for your little machine and John will drive you better than anyone you have seen. The title song has a driving shuffle groove going as he talks about a few years back couldn't turn on the radio, but now that voodoo groove has a hold of him and how we need some rockin', old school rockin' tonight... while he lays down his guitar rhythm with a slightly distorted, fuzzy tone. It is nice stuff and certainly he is right about his old school

rockin' driving one's blues away, especially how he performs here.

"Deal With the Devil" includes a short harmonica coloring over the droning slide guitar backing. It's followed by the insistent performance "I Stand Alone." "Mesmerized," with a Latin tinged groove and a lighter musical feel, has a nice guitar solo mixing slide with some Santana influenced guitar lines. "Dark Night" has harmonica overdubbed as well as guitar and displays how strongly he can set a mood. The closing "Tumblin' Down The Road" puts his harmonica up front and adds to the musical variety here on a solid blues number.

"Old School Rockin'" is gritty and blues infused, and performed with the same conviction and honesty that have marked Studebaker John's more traditionally rooted recordings. Whatever label one applies to Studebaker John's performances here is irrelevant to the fact there is stunning music to be heard here from Studebaker John.

**Ron Weinstock**



## GREG LEWIS

### Organ Monk: Uwo in the Black

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Monk gets a classic "B3" group treatment on *Organ Monk: Uwo in the Black*. Lewis & group find plenty of groove potential in Monk's "book", as well as opportunities for pushing things to the limit a la Larry Young's work in the Tony Williams Lifetime (further celebrated elsewhere in this issue).

Lewis' combo is ideally staffed as tenor saxophonist Reginald R. Woods and guitarist Ronald Jackson deliver solos well-tailored for the format. Strong tracks include "Little Rootie Tootie", "Skippy", "Stuffy Turkey" and Lewis' and drummer Nasheet Watts' particularly engaging duo version of "Crepuscle With Nellie".

**Duane Verh**

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## WILLIAM CLARKE AND JUNIOR WATSON

### Double Dealin' BLUEBEAT MUSIC

"Double Dealin'" (Bluebeat Music), by William Clarke and Junior Watson releases material recorded in 1983 at the same time as Clarke's Rivera label debut "Can't You Hear Me Calling." This recording came after a cross-country US and Canadian tour Clarke made with George 'Harmonica' Smith and is being issued with the cooperation of Jeanette Clarke-Lodovici. In addition to Clarke's harmonica and vocals and Watson's guitar, the band here is Fred Kaplan on piano, Willie Brinlee on bass and Jerry Monte on drums.

I have not heard "Can't You Hear Me Calling," but the reviews on the Internet talk about him not sounding as confident as he would on later recordings. I presume that those folks would probably say the same about these contemporaneous recordings. Even if these relatively early sides (his Alligator debut would be 7 years later) may not be as striking as his latter sides, they stand up fairly well to a lot of what passes for blues today. There is plenty of solid harp along with Clarke's very solid singing. Add Watson's guitar which comes across as a cross between Willie Johnson's somewhat wild Sun studio style players like Robert Lockwood and Luther Tucker, who played countless sessions with the likes of Little Walter. Kaplan was, and is, a fine two-handed piano player and the rhythm section is solid.

There is a very nice choice of material including an early version of "Musta Been Jelly," that he would win a Handy for in 1991, and a tasty cover of Mercy Dee's "One Room Country Shack." Kaplan is featured on the instrumental boogie "Groovin' With Mr. K," while "Junior's Jump," features some nice harp along with Watson ripping off a tough guitar solo in which he interpolates melodies from big band jump numbers into his solo.

While no revelations here, fans of William Clarke, post-war harmonica blues, and the contemporary West Coast blues style will find much to their liking. For more information on this, check out [www.bluebeatmusic.com](http://www.bluebeatmusic.com).

**Ron Weinstock**

## LEROY JONES

### New Orleans Brass Band Music:

### Memories of the Fairview & Hurricane Band

### LEROY JONES

One of the pleasures for this writer at this year's French Quarter Festival was to see and hear Leroy Jones and the Original Hurricane Brass Band. What was notable was that they played more of a traditional Brass Band repertoire and also notable was their clean intonation as well as the performance eschewed the funky style of most contemporary New Orleans Brass Bands. But to hear a band that handles some of the traditional repertoire in the manner of the legendary bands like the Inward, Eureka, Olympia, Excelsior and Doc Paulin's Band was a true delight, not to mention

**jazz  
& blues**



Jones own playing along with the others including trombonist Freddie Lonzo.

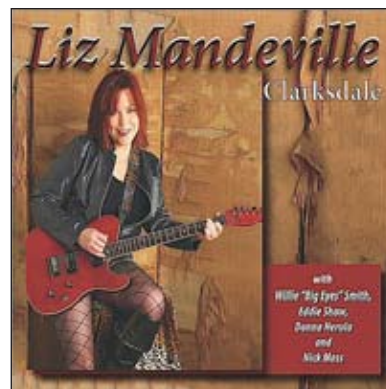
Back in 2005 Jones issued on his own label "New Orleans Brass Band Music: Memories of the Fairview & Hurricane Band." In his notes he mentions his fond memories of the Fairview and Hurricane Brass bands. The former was under the leadership of Reverend Andrew Darby, pastor of the Fairview Baptist Church as well as church member and New Orleans legend Danny Barker. Later the Hurricane Band came into existence and some of its members would form the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Anyway, Jones put together this recording to evoke the older bands with a fresh twist and flavor. He did the arrangements on familiar numbers and assembled a band that included Calvin Klein on trombone, Alonzo Bowens on tenor saxophone and clarinet; Ron Espino on sousaphone, Kerry 'Fat Man' Hunter on snare drum and Cayetano "Tanio" Hingle on bass drum. On one selection, Jones wife, Katja Toivola handles the trombone solo.

This is a delightful recording, which exhibits the same swinging grooves and clean, but spirited ensembles, and solos that were exhibited at the festival. Most of the performances will be familiar from the opening "Lily of the Valley," the slow drag tempo used for "Just a Little Walk With You," the peppy "Lord, Lord, Lord," "Muskrat Ramble," and "South Rampart Street Parade." They stand out with the relaxation in the performances

and the lack of frenzy. Dixieland favorites like "When the Saints Go Marching In and "Back Home In Indiana" also share these virtues as the two drummers set forth the rhythm and then the band kicks in. Furthermore, all three horns are excellent soloists. I was most familiar with Jones playing on a variety of sources, but Bowens' saxophone also constantly impressed while Espino also proves his capabilities on the cumbersome sousaphone on "Indiana."

This is available from the Louisiana Music factory, [www.louisianamusicfactory.com](http://www.louisianamusicfactory.com). Leroy Jones own website is <http://www.satchmo.com/leroyjones/main.html>.

**Ron Weinstock**



**LIZ MANDEVILLE  
CLARKSDALE  
BLUE KITTY MUSIC**

Kicking her career into its next phase with her own record label, Chicago based blues singer, writer and guitarist Liz Mandeville uses the occasion to launch 11 new tunes that feature her adroit mix of traditional blues, saucy double entendre gems and poignant ballads.

While she has spent a good share of her career behind the microphone, this release also finds her flexing her guitar chops on every track. Joined by Willie "Big Eyes" Smith on drums and harmonica, Eddie Shaw on sax, Donna Herula on slide guitar, Darryl Wright on bass, Nick Moss on guitar and Leandro Lopez-Varady on grand piano, Mandeville has the necessary instrumental firepower behind her to add interesting dimensions to each cut. *Clarksdale/Riverside Hotel Blues* is a loping shuffle with tinkling piano propelling Mandeville's tale of reconnecting with the roots of the blues. 4:20 is a low key, traditional acoustic blues tune lambasting the wasteful war on drugs while *Sweet Potato Pie* is a rocking double entendre number with plenty of heat compliments of Shaw's wailing saxophone.

Willie "Big Eyes" Smith's always perfect drumming and wailing harmonica add down home authenticity to the salacious *Roadside Produce Stand* and the Jimmy Reed style shuffle of *Walking & Talking With You*. While most blues discs travel the same lyrical path with bad love, bad luck and bad whiskey getting most of the attention, Mandeville takes interesting detours into the perils of springtime floods, *Sand Baggin'*, the hard-



ships and angst faced by spouses of combat troops, *A Soldier's Wife*, the lessons passed down from earlier generations, *Mama & Daddy Blues* and even the new found role of women in the Military, *My Mama Wears Combat Boots*.

While Mandeville's rich voice powers every tune, the a cappella delivery of *No Fear/Everything* demonstrates the terrific ability she has to go from low register gut-bucket blues to wailing gospel sweetness. After a number of discs that focused more on the party hearty side of the blues, this release reflects a more introspective mood and, as suggested by the title, takes Mandeville back closer to the roots of the blues.

**Mark Smith**



## RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA

**Samdhi**

ACT MUSIC & VISION

Rudresh Mahanthappa is one of the most praised saxophonists to have come to some prominence in the past several years and with such other performers who have their origins in the Indian Subcontinent such as Vijay Iyer has made a significant impact on contemporary jazz. His new release "Samdhi" reflects his musical pursuit and to these ears represents an intriguing and realized musical fusion of jazz and other elements.

Samdhi is a Sanskrit word meaning 'twilight,' but he advises that in Hinduism this word has a greater significance as representing the phase between ages, "the period between the destruction of one universe and the creation of the next." In essence it "represents transition and a reflection of the past while waiting to see what the future will bring." He observes on the album cover notes that his inspirations that go beyond Charlie Parker to include Grover Washington Jr, David Sanborn, the Brecker Brothers and Yellowjackets. He strives to mix passion with virtuosity and has gone beyond the jazz tradition to a whole range of music including aspects of South Indian Music as well as being fascinated by electronic music and hip hop with the new array of sounds and beats.

On the recording, his alto saxophone and laptop electronics is joined by guitarist David Gilmore, bassist Rich Brown, drummer Damion Reid and "Anand" Anantha Krishnan on mridangam and kanjira. Mah-

anthappa's alto playing is wonderful, with a sinewy, singing tone (reminds me of Jan Garbarek at times) and solos that mix intellect and passion. An example of his integration of electronics and his alto playing is presented on the opening "Parakram #1," which is a tone poem with his alto riding over his electronics. The exhilarating "Killer" has fire from him against the South Indian rhythms with Gilmore's guitar contributing some fireworks on his own and the interplay between these two and especially the percussion of Krishnan is entrancing. More of this interplay can be heard on "Breakfastlunchanddinner."

Each of the musicians is featured on this recording. Bassist Brown has a solo "Richard's Game" which segues into "Playing With Stones," with tempo changes and Mahanthappa's playful, lyrical lead of the performance here. Gilmore's "Rune" is followed by the afore-mentioned "Breakfastlunchanddinner." There is a return to electronics on "Parakram #2," which is a lengthier track and very intriguing with his use of hip-hop grooves, loops and overdubs. "Meeting of the Skins" is a percussion feature providing solos for both Reid and Krishnan.

The remainder of "Samdhi" is as fulfilling to listen to with its natural fusion of its musical elements for music that is at times entrancing and other times sensuous and high-spirited. Highly recommended.

**Ron Weinstock**



## THE NIGHTHAWKS

**DAMN GOOD TIME!**

SEVERN RECORDS

The East Coast based Nighthawks have never been afraid to mix a little rock, doo-wop, rockabilly and soul with their blues. This release, which marks the band's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary since their start in 1972, finds their winning formula intact.

With original member Mark Wenner on harmonica, Paul Bell on guitars, Johnny Castle on bass and Mark Stutso (late of Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers) on drums and everyone singing, the band works its way through classics by everyone from Elvis, *Too Much*, to Jimmy McCrackin, *Georgia Slop*, to Billy Price, *Who You're Working For*, to Charles Calhoun, *Smack Dab in the Middle* (which has been covered by everyone from Ray Charles to Buster Poindexter), to Wilbert Harrison's *Let's Work Together* (probably better known for Canned Heat's version), and even a



Nat King Cole track, *Send For Me*. As is typical with the Hawks, these tunes don't get a straight cover but, instead, get bluesed up with a bit of harmonica grease, a salacious nod and wild eyed enthusiasm that sets them firmly apart from other versions.

Along with these classics the band has plenty of original material that showcases its deep well of talent. Stutso and Castle share writing credits on the wry title track which has a soul groove and a terrific vocal by Stutso. *Bring Your Sister* has a power pop groove and tight harmonies that would fit nicely on a NRBQ disc. *Minimum Wage* lets Wenner loose on a great harmonica solo that segues into some nice guitar work by Bell. *Down to My Last Million Tears* is a mid-tempo rocker until it jumps the blues on the bridge with ringing guitar and another great Wenner harmonica solo. Rounding things out is the rocking *Heartbreak Shake* which gives everyone a share of the spotlight with its urgent groove and smoking solos.

After a couple of dozen discs the Nighthawks continue to burn bright. A terrific disc by a blues institution.

**Mark Smith**



## JAZZ SOUL SEVEN

**Impressions of Curtis Mayfield**  
BFM JAZZ

The works of soul music icon Mayfield make for energized, straight-ahead jazz fare in the hands of this "name" line-up. Trumpeter Wallace Roney, tenor saxophonist Ernie Watts, Yellowjackets' pianist Russell Ferrante, and guitarist Phil Upchurch find much to mine in the veins of the legendary singer/composer/guitarist's classic catalog.

Respect for the material is obvious right off. There is no playing down to the material and this septet's approach is more often post-bop than soul jazz. Watts and Ferrante are the first to point the way, exploring the smart, swinging possibilities of "Freddie's Dead". Roney is inclined towards fluid, quarter-note stretches that take on the consistently incandescent rhythm section (drummer Terri Lyne Carrington, bassist Bob Hurst and percussionist Master Henry Gibson) full force, infusing the proceedings with some decidedly tasty tension- "Superfly".

That said, soul cookin' is definitely to be found here. Once again, Ferrante is very much in the fore-

front, as evidenced on his chorus on "It's All Right". Upchurch is a natural on this turf as well, but his solo spaces also reveal a tendency to push out from cliché territory. His participation is special as he was an early and frequent Mayfield collaborator. *Impressions* is well-timed as both a notably fresh set and an ideal "summer" jazz release.

**Duane Verh**



## PETER BERNSTEIN, GOLDSTEIN, STEWART

**Live at Smalls**  
SMALLSLIVE

Among the latest batch of "Live at Smalls" CDs on smallsLive is an organ trio recording by guitarist Peter Bernstein, organist Larry Goldings and drummer Bill Stewart that was recorded in January 2011 at the Greenwich Village, New York City club.

There is a nice program of songs here opening with Duke Pearson's bluesy "The Chant," set to a nice relaxed rhythm with some wonderful guitar from Bernstein followed by some strong playing from Goldings. Goldings' original "Molto Molto" gets a nice relaxed blues groove going. Following is a nice muted treatment of Cole Porter's "Everytime We Say Goodbye" with Bernstein's solo displaying both his dexterity as well as his restraint. Bernstein's "Just a Thought" is a ballad tinged with a bit of melancholy on which the intensity builds through the performance.

After Goldings plays around with some esoteric electronic sounds before he slowly states the theme of Miles Davis' second version of "Milestones," before Bernstein and Stewart join in for a spirited rendition of this familiar theme. Bernstein is stunning on this, followed by strong playing from Goldings and then Stewart takes a drum solo. Jerome Kern's "Nobody Else But Me" starts with some lovely unaccompanied Bernstein guitar before the others join in a subdued fashion under his restrained playing, with Goldings building the performance's intensity before Bernstein returns, now playing with a bit more heat.

Percy Mayfield's "The Danger Zone" closes this recording with Bernstein being a bit more introspective in his blues playing than down-in-the alley, followed by Goldings similarly tasteful, understated playing. It

is a very lovely performance and even while I might prefer a bit less restraint than they display here, one can find no fault in the playing. And that characterizes my reaction to this recording. As a matter of personal taste I may prefer more extroverted organ trios, but I doubt fans of organ jazz will be disappointed by the excellent music here.

**Ron Weinstock**



## THE MANNISH BOYS

### Double Dynamite DELTA GROOVE

Delta Groove has issued a new release by The Mannish Boys, "Double Dynamite," which is two discs of music. One CD evokes the classic Chicago blues sound of Muddy Waters, Little Walter and the like while the other CD is more rhythm and blues rooted with songs from Albert King, Jimmy McCracklin, James Brown and others. Scott Dirks in his notes suggests that The Mannish Boys are a virtual blues festival in a single band.

Sugaray Rayford has joined Finis Tasby to become the band's prime vocalists and brings a contrasting approach with a bit more urbane, gospel-rooted approach to Tasby's grainy, laconic style rooted in the blues of the southwest. Back on guitars are Frankie Goldwasser and Kirk Fletcher, and Delta Groove chief Randy Chortkoff on harmonica with Willie J. Campbell on bass and Jimi Bott on drums. Then there is a fair amount of guests including appearances by James Harman, Mud Morganfield, Jackie Payne and Mike Finnigan on vocals; Elvin Bishop, Nathan James, Kid Ramos, and Junior Watson on guitar; James Harman, Bob Corritore, Rod Piazza, and Jason Ricci on harmonica; and Ron Rio, Mike Finnigan, Rick Wenzel and Fred Kaplan on keyboards.

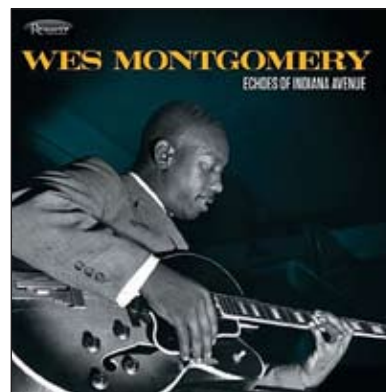
The music on the two discs is traditionally rooted in some classic blues themes and grooves, but the covers here never are simply copies. For one thing, instrumentation varies from the original recordings and if for example Finis Tasby's rendition of "Mean Old World" is derived from Little Walter's recording, employment of Elvin Bishop's slide guitar gives it its own flavor. Sugaray shouts out Son House's "Death Letter" on the first disc entitled "Atomic Blues" with Jimi Bott powering the groove as Goldwasser plays some Muddy Waters on steroids styled slide. His vocal delivery is much more relaxed on "Bricks on My Pillow" with Goldwasser swinging a bit on guitar here while Rob Rio boogies the ivories. Jackie Payne does a nice job singing a Muddy Waters medley of "She's 19 Years Old/ Streamline Woman," with more fine piano, Rod Piazza wailing on harp and Goldwasser sounding strong. Mud

Morganfield conjures up his father on "Elevate My Mama" and "Mannish Boy," with the latter modeled closely on Muddy's version with Johnny Winter. Bob Corritore adds choice harp here. Chortkoff contributes an idiomatic Chicago blues-styled shuffle that Sugaray delivers vocally and Kirk Fletcher rips off a fiery solo. Goldwasser is featured on slide and vocals on Johnny Littlejohn's "Bloody Tears,"

The second disc, "Rhythm & Blues Explosion" continues the fun and solid idiomatic performances. "Born Under a Bad Sign" sports a strong Tasby vocal and searing Elvin Bishop guitar while Sugaray and Cynthia Marley share the vocals on James Brown's "You've Got the Power," which has a crackling solo from Nathan James and solid horns in the backing. Another Albert King cover, "Drowning on Dry Land," finds Fletcher having a bit of King in his tone behind Sugaray's vocal. King also recorded James Brown's "Cold Sweat" for Stax, and it is some of the inspiration for this Kirk Fletcher feature with Mike Finnigan on organ and Goldwasser adding some churning rhythm guitar while Bott gets the funky groove down. Finnigan on piano and vocals does a fine job on Ray Charles' "Mr. Charles Blues," with Fletcher in a jazzier mode here. Songs like Jimmy McCracklin's "Later on" are particularly fine vehicles for Finis Tasby with Nathan James taking a torrid solo.

The remainder of the 26 songs are similarly potently performed and while there are mostly covers, few would be considered heavily recorded. To Scott Dirks suggestion that the Mannish Boys are a virtual blues festival, I suggest "Double Dynamite" is a virtual All Night All Star Blues Party.

**Ron Weinstock**



## WES MONTGOMERY

### Echoes of Indiana Avenue RESONANCE RECORDS

Resonance Records, which last year issued a live Freddie Hubbard recording for the first time, has just issued an important historical recording by the great guitarist, Wes Montgomery, "Echoes of Indiana Avenue." In a handsomely hard digipac package, Resonance has acquired the rights to the nine performances issued on this disc that date from 1957-1958 and include four studio performances and five live performances. Michael Cuscuna, among the contributors to the booklet with background on these recordings suggests these may have been originally recorded in



order to help Wes secure a record deal with Pacific jazz, although it was in 1959 when Cannonball Adderley saw Wes and recommended him to Riverside Records that his place as a major jazz guitarist and innovator would be established.

Musically one can hear the elements of his music including his touch, mix of single notes and chords, the use of octaves and his indelible swing. We can hear the contrast of his delicate playing on "Darn That Dream" with driving, hard bop playing on "Straight No Chaser," with brother Buddy on the piano. Mixing his fluidity with a fertile musical imagination this live performance exhibits the same qualities that would dazzle in a couple years hence with his Riverside releases.

Shorty Rogers' "Diablo's dance," is a lively, Latin-tinged number which starts in a light, swinging fashion until about 1:30 into the performance when Wes takes off, with a piano solo from Melvin Rhyne which is not as dazzling as Montgomery is. Rhyne is heard on organ on the moody "Round Midnight," with spare, evocative playing delving into one of Monk's most haunting melodies. On Horace Silver's "Nica's Dream," the performance starts politely enough with a light swing with Montgomery displaying restraint even in his solo.

The last four numbers are live performances with a group including pianist Earl Van Riper, and exhibit a tad bit more presence by Montgomery than the studio recordings. "Take The A Train" has lively solos from

both. It is followed by a lovely "Misty" as well as a terrific "Body & Soul," where Montgomery's technique and nuanced playing is outstanding. The final performance is a stunning, atmospheric improvisation, "After Hours Blues," with Montgomery providing hard chords (in the vein of T-Bone Walker) to accent the opening late night blues piano solo from Van Riper. On his own solo one hears a blend of string bending, chords and single note runs as the audience responds with delighted laughter, whoops and encouragement. It unfortunately fades out but one can imagine him playing another ten minutes in this vein without repeating his ideas.

The sound and packaging is first-rate and if not essential Wes Montgomery, this is certainly an important release that lovers of jazz guitar and Wes Montgomery will want.

**Ron Weinstock**



## PETER KARP & SUE FOLEY

**Beyond The Crossroads**  
BLIND PIG RECORDS

This second collaboration between guitarist Sue Foley guitarist/pianist Peter Karp sounds like the glorious hey-day of Delaney and Bonnie or even Leon Russell and the Shelter People with its slinky riffs, layered harmonies and large ensemble approach to the tunes.

With the Swingadelic Horns and a host of background singers providing support, Foley and Karp trade vocals and guitar riffs on 12 original tunes that effortlessly alternate between rock, folk, soul and the blues. While Foley's early discs found her struggling to find the right vocal approach to her tunes, she's long since found a compelling voice to match her terrific guitar chops.

These days she sounds like a cross between Dylan and Michelle Shocked with a splash of Bonnie Raitt for good measure. For his part, Karp has a clean, slick, soulful voice that often recalls Tommy Castro. Combined together in harmony the results are a captivating listen. *We're Gonna Make It* sounds like a classic Delbert McClinton duet while *At the Same Time* recalls Little Feat and *Fine Love* could be a Kenny Rogers/Dolly Parton classic.

While the alternating vocals alone make this disc a treat, the musical highlights are not to be overlooked.

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## 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)

*Plank Spank* is a hot wired guitar extravaganza while *You've Got a Problem* is a boogie-woogie gem and *At The Same Time* is a horn-driven number that almost enters jug band territory.

Throughout, the duo trade guitar riffs with Foley's Telecaster cutting an icy counterpoint to Karp's spicy National Steel ResoRocket slide work in much the same way as Smokin' Joe Kubek and B'Nois King use the contrast between their instruments to create a rich texture that simply isn't possible when the whole band suits up with the same guitars.

Complimenting the strong vocals and instrumental work is the fact that they are deployed in the service of terrific songs that explore information overload, *Analyze'n Blues*, finding a way to move past a bad spell, *Beyond the Crossroads*, putting the move on the opposite sex, *Take Your Time*, falling hard for love, *More Than I Bargained For* and being the problem your mate needs to escape, *You Got a Problem*.

While their first release as a duo turned heads, this one should make heads spin with its potent combination of first class ingredients. **Mark Smith**



**ROB GARCIA 4**  
**The Drop and the Ocean**  
BJU RECORDS

Drummer-composer Rob Garcia has a new recording with his quartet on the label of the Brooklyn Jazz Underground, "The Drop and the Ocean" (BJU Records). Garcia's quartet is comprised of saxophonist Noah Preminger, pianist Dan Tepfer and bassist John Hebert on this recording of twelve Garcia originals.

The title derives from the Sufi concept, which deals with the human experience as an individual (the drop), and the path to surrendering to something bigger (the ocean). A friend brought the concept and explained how we can try to hold so tightly to our individuality when we can let go and become the ocean." Garcia's compositions are musical contemplations and reflections on this.

The performances themselves display some rather inspired interplay among Garcia's quartet. On the opening "Will," Preminger asserts himself with his dry tone and a solo using staccato before Garcia takes a solo accented by Tepfer's piano. "Boundaries" opens with Garcia setting the rhythm before Preminger and Tepfer engage in a brief dialogue before Garcia in-

terjects leading to Tepfer's atemporal playing against Garcia's percussive counterpoint as Preminger restates the theme and takes a heated solo followed by Hebert's solo. "Lost By Mourning" provides a contrasting mood with its pensive tone with some lovely tenor sax over understated accompaniment.

"The River" evokes the classic Miles Davis recording, "Nefertiti," with Preminger and Tepfer outstanding in their solos. Interspersed among the lengthier ensemble performances are three short, focused drum solo interludes entitled "Flash."

Garcia's compositions here transverse a wide range of styles ranging from ballads to free-bop and the excellent performances on "The Drop and the Ocean" exhibit marvelous ensemble playing and imaginative, focused soloing. **Ron Weinstock**

**KID CHOCOLATE**

**My Take**  
**FUNKIN HORNS RECORDS**

It was at 2006 New Orleans jazz & Heritage Festival that I first saw Kid Chocolate (real name Leon Brown) when he sung as part of the Marsalis Music Honors tribute to drummer, bandleader and teacher, Bob French. At the time, he was limited to singing, as he had lost his trumpet chops due to illness.

Thankfully the chops have restored and he has been able to resume playing trumpet under the name

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starring RICK ESTRIN with KID ANDERSEN, LORENZO FARRELL and J. HANSEN

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that Bob French gave him in 2000. Kid Chocolate has played with countless folks, including recently overseas with clarinetist Michael White, while establishing a reputation in New Orleans.

With a quartet that includes pianist Thaddeus Richard, bassist Richard Moten and drummer Ricky Sebastian, Kid Chocolate has produced and issued a recording, "My Take" (Funkin Horns Records), that pays homage the great Louis Armstrong as he provides his own renditions of a number of classic songs associated with New Orleans most beloved son. From the opening moments of "Wild Man Blues," to the closing notes of "I'll Be Glad When You're Dead (You Rascal You)," Kid Chocolate and band lays down plenty of ebullient music.

He mixes his spirited trumpet on the opening "Wild Man Blues," as well as on "Shine." The latter tune sports his very effective understated vocals as well as trading fours between his trumpet and drummer Sebastian. He also has a charming vocal on "High Society Calypso," with its delightful Caribbean-tinge. Richard plays marvelously on this.

Take note of their take on Jimmy Rushing's vocal with Bennie Moten of the Hoagie Carmichael ode to the Crescent City, "New Orleans." It is nicely sung by Kid Chocolate in an Armstrong-styled manner and segues into "Up the Lazy River." Richard is stunning on piano both accompanying the vocal and in his short solo. The leader eschews his trumpet on this.

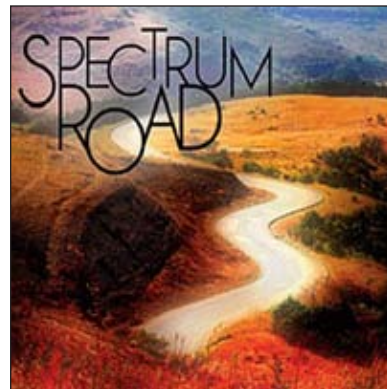
"I'll Never Be the Same" has a nice Latin groove, and after his vocal Kid plays nice muted trumpet in a more contemporary vein. It contrasts with the extroverted trumpet that opens "All Of Me," followed by a some horn-like phrasing in his vocal owing more than a little to contemporary jazz singers such as Jon Hendricks. Moten and Sebastian both take crisp solos on this.

"Weatherbird Rag" is a duet with bassist Moten. His trumpet is a bit more relaxed than Armstrong was on his classic duet with Earl Hines on this Armstrong composition, originally performed by King Oliver. Kid Chocolate employs his mute producing slurs and cries to open the venerable "St. James Infirmary Blues," on a performance that is a terrific bridging of the jazz and blues realms.

He is marvelously complemented by his band, which, like the leader, bring these performances to fruition as Kid Chocolate tells his stories. Most of these performances allude to Armstrong but none of them copy or imitate the master, nor any familiar versions of any songs. Kid Chocolate has a more relaxed vocal and trumpet attack than Armstrong and invests his own musical personality in a consistently ingratiating manner.

The Louisiana Music Factory in New Orleans ([www.louisianamusicfactory.com](http://www.louisianamusicfactory.com)) and other vendors have this available.

**Ron Weinstock**



## SPECTRUM ROAD

self-titled  
PALMETTO

Before fusion had a name, prodigy drummer Tony Williams was creating it. Departing from Miles Davis' group in 1969, Williams teamed up with then rising-star guitarist John McLaughlin and organist Larry Young, creating a highly combustible and adventurous collision of rock and jazz branded as The Tony Williams Lifetime.

Erstwhile jazz/rock bassist/vocalist Jack Bruce has formed Spectrum Road to celebrate the music of the Lifetime era, of which he was a member for that group's second release, *Turn It Over* (as well as appearing uncredited on a track on the Lifetime's third

"TRIUMPHANT, JOYFUL  
BLUES-SOAKED R&B...ONE  
OF THE MOST SOULFUL,  
HONEST SINGERS EVER"  
—Blues Revue

**Curtis Salgado**  
**SOUL SHOT**

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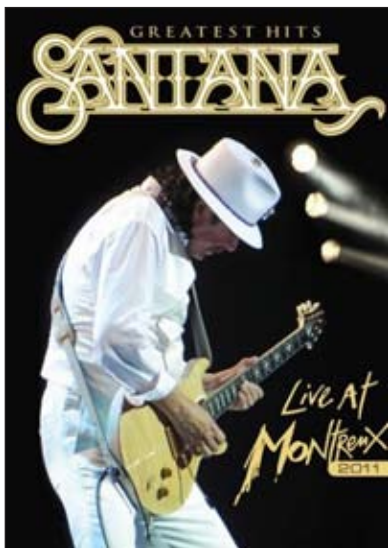
release, *Ego*).

Bruce has matched the spirit of that band's lineup well. Each of Spectrum Road's other players: organist John Medeski, drummer Cindy Blackman Santana and, especially, Living Colour guitarist Vernon Reid, well typify the energy and attitude of their Lifetime counterparts. It is this quality, rather than any attempt to duplicate the playing of the originals, that seems to be the obvious point of S.R. Reid's hyper-fluid solo explosion on the leadoff "Vuelta Abajo", adapted from *Turn It Over*, establishes the approach at work here and each player in turn carries it forward. It's a further joy to behold Bruce's pipes, still powerful in his 70's. Medeski shines on the Larry Young meta-blues, "Allah Be Praised".

*Spectrum Road* makes for an excellent gateway to one the key foundations of fusion music.

Duane Verh

## DVDs



### SANTANA

#### Greatest Hits - Live at Montreux 2011

EAGLE ROCK ENTERTAINMENT 2-DVD

Having been a fan of Santana since they first emerged onto the scene in 1969 with their debut album simply titled "Santana," it is pure pleasure to see this 2-DVD set come out spanning the entire 43 years featuring a 3-hour 20-minute performance at the Montreux Jazz Festival just last year – in July 2011.

There are several other Santana concert DVDs out there, but this particular set concentrates almost entirely on the actual Santana Band rather than his later work with other artists, such as the "Supernatural" album, which he recorded with several artists and varying personnel groupings which garnered him nine Grammy Awards including Album of the Year. While there are a couple from that album, the rest focus

mostly on the Santana Band albums starting with three songs from the above-mentioned debut album – their first hit "Evil Ways" plus "Soul Sacrifice" and "Jingo."

From their second album, "Abraxis," they cover their famous pairing of Peter Green's "Black Magic Woman" with Gabor Szabo's "Gypsy Queen," followed, as it is on the original album, with Tito Puente's "Oye Como Va." Another from that album is Santana's marvelous instrumental "Samba Pa Ti." From "Santana III" you'll get treated to three Santana band originals, "Batuka," "No One To Depend On" and "Guajira" (the latter of which is part of a 2-song medley which we'll get to later).

One of the many highlights is the version of Santana's tear-jerking instrumental "Europa (Earth's Cry, Heaven's Smile)," the finest and most passionate version of which is on the live 2-CD set "Moonflower," but this version is a close second. Two songs are heard from the 1999 massive-selling "Supernatural" – "Maria, Maria" and "Smooth," though some may miss Rob Thomas on that second one.

Some of the nice surprises here include Santana's wife Cindy Blackman, a noted jazz drummer now for quite some time, who replaces drummer Dennis Chambers for a medley of "Corazon Espinado" and "Guajira" followed by a duet featuring Blackman and bassist Benny Rietveld, which includes an excellent solo from Cindy. You'll also be treated to two songs featuring guests Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi, as Trucks offers up some fine guitar work and Tedeschi delivers some refreshing female vocals, not typical for the Santana Band for sure.

Other surprises include a version of Coltrane's "A Love Supreme," a song which Carlos has been quoting in his solos for many years, and also a version of the seldom covered Cream song "Sunshine Of Your Love," which is done so well that it would no doubt make Eric Clapton smile and Ginger Baker frown; due to the work of Dennis Chambers on drums. Chambers also takes a powerhouse yet humorous solo after the band plays "Soul Sacrifice."

Some of the other musicians here in addition to those already named are Paul Rekow and Karl Perazzo, who shine throughout in congas, percussion and vocals; lead vocalists Tony Lindsay and Andy Vargas; Tommy Anthony, guitar; Bill Ortiz and Jeff Cressman on trumpet and trombone respectively and David K. Mathews on organ and keyboards. Mathews formerly played with Tower of Power and Etta James, among others.

The concert actually opens with an instrumental, "Spark Of The Divine," which begins with percussion only before the band joins in. Then we hear "SOCC" with a rather outside improvisation section followed by what sounds kind of like electric Miles meets Santana. Then there is the only song here I don't really care much for, "Back In Black," which is an AC/DC song Santana did with rapper Nas in a few years ago.

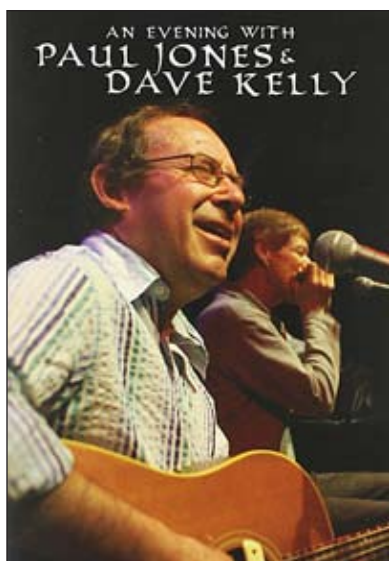


That could have been omitted from this set for sure. Then, after an instrumental “Singing Winds, Crying Beasts” they segue into “Black Magic Woman” and the classics begin.

This band was red hot on that summer night in Montreux, Switzerland and it was marvelously captured on this video, which excels in both audio and video aspects. And it is great to see the band playing all the classics with the horns added and almost everyone in the band singing backup vocals. To make the treat even better, DTS is one of the choices on the audio menu.

So while “Moonflower” is the definitive Santana album, it is now joined on the top shelf by “Greatest Hits Live at Montreux 2011” which I’d have to say is the definitive Santana Band video, although 1993’s “Sacred Fire” is another must-have as well. Enjoy!

**Bill Wahl**



## PAUL JONES & DAVE KELLY

An Evening With Paul Jones & Dave Kelly  
SPV BLUE DVD

Members of the legendary British group, The Blues Band, guitarist Dave Kelly and harmonica player go unplugged for a live performance captured on a new DVD, “An Evening With Paul Jones and Dave Kelly” (SPV Blue).

Jones, who was one-time a member of the British group Manfred Mann, may be best known, but Kelly, brother of the great Jo-Ann Kelly had pretty strong credentials in playing blues. Given over four and a half decades experience by both, one isn’t surprised by how engaging they are, not simply in their musical performances but their banter to the audience.

Songs range from adaptations of classic country blues like Charlie Patton’s “Moon Going Down,” to originals like “Without You,” which Paul Jones notes had an unusual musical structure, but more importantly was a B side of a Manfred Mann single. Not all the performances are in a strict blues song form,

such as “Velocity and Love,” a spirited performance, but Kelly’s “Mr. Estes Said” is a strong original blues that incorporates some classic lines in this moving tribute to the late blues poet. Paul Jones does a moving interpretation of Blind Willie Johnson’s “Nobody’s Fault But Mine,” with his harp prominent and Kelly adding some spare guitar. There is nice use of split screen on this. A washboard player backs Kelly on a driving interpretation of Mississippi Fred McDowell’s “Few Short Lines.”

Paul Jones’ contributes his moving tribute to “Sonny Boy Williamson,” that was composed after Williamson’s passing. It segues into a lively “Dust My Blues,” modeled after one of Elmore James’ recordings. “You’re Wrong” was a recent composition of Jones, performed solo, followed by Kelly nicely handling Robert Johnson’s “When You Got a Good Friend.” Erskine Hawkins’ swing classic “Tuxedo Junction” serves as a showcase for Jones’ skilled harmonica playing and exhibits the influence of Sonny Boy Williamson on his approach.

The two trade verses on a powerful rendition of Muddy Waters’ “I Can’t Be Satisfied,” and then this DVD closes with a relaxed pace with Kelly taking the lead vocal on Jimmy Reed’s “Baby What You Want Me To Do.” It is an amiable close to a very enjoyable concert DVD. This was recorded in 2004 and there is a second volume available, which on the basis of this is worth checking out as well.

**Ron Weinstock**



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