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O's Place Jazz Magazine

P.O. Box 38430
Charlotte, NC 28278

O'pening Thoughts

The pandemic has led to more small rooftop concerts, remote, shared recording sessions and more solo efforts, especially piano. Jazz musicians are always ready to improvise, though the spontaneous interactions are absent as are most of the live sets.

The new administration is blazing with a national response to the pandemic and a massive vaccination roll-out that could have us returning to more normal socializing soon! I hope we retain some of the best of the pandemic like some of the virtual jazz sets.

We still encounter those who think the pandemic is a hoax and the vaccine, a poison! Hopefully we can gain enough momentum to beat the variants. Many artists are writing about it (Social Distancing) along with social injustice. Jeremy Pelt's Griot: is a resonating statement. In the meantime, we have more shootings and more polarization...

We've got great music to share including a throwback from Gene Dunlap! There are more than 125 new reviews with almost

---> Sound advice at a nice price!

www.OsPlaceJazz.com

O'pening Thoughts cont.

half of them in the Buy zone including a few strong buys! Any old-school fans of Michael Franks will find a home with Bruce Brown.

Jazz artists like Cyrus Nabipoor are performing in opera houses and Kabir Sehgal & Marie Incontrera combine jazz, opera, and European financial markets as improvisation continues to expand its reach! Pelt's aforementioned examination of jazz history has sparked our interest. I think we will follow up on this theme.

Please share your thoughts, complaints and any ideas with us at:

og@OsPlaceJazz.com

Mr. & Mrs. O will be fully vaccinated as you read this and we're mindful to continue wearing PIP and practicing according to CDC guidelines. While we can see the light, we have also witnessed a wrath of infections, hospitalizations and sadly a few deaths, many too soon, and too close.

We hope to provide guidance for love,

happiness and consideration through our magazine. Listen to the music. Prepare your mind, body and soul for better times!

O

THE TOP TEN SCORES

1. BENJAMIN KOPPEL - The Ultimate Soul & Jazz Revue

2. GENE DUNLAP - Peaceful Days

3. ULYSSES OWENS - Soul Conversations

4. DOUGLAS OLSEN - 2¢

4. BRIANNA THOMAS - Everybody Knows

4. JEREMY PELT - GRIOT: THIS IS IMPORTANT!

7. EMMET COHEN - Future Stride

7. FRANCO AMBROSETTI - Lost Within You

8. JEFF BENEDICT - The Weather Is Here

10. FUMI TOMITA - Celebrating Bird

10. MANUEL VALERA - Jose Marti En Nueva York

O's Rating Scale (X)

0

65

80

95

Pass

Contemplate

Buy

Strong Buy

Unbiased Sound Advice from O's Place Jazz

ARTIST Title <i>Label Perf/Sound</i>	<u>Top Traditional Picks</u> O's Notes
MARTY ELKINS & MIKE RICHMOND T^b <u>'Tis Autumn</u> 81 <i>Jazzheads</i>	<p>Marty Elkins fell in love with jazz while in college and has risen to be an exceptional, under the radar, jazz vocalist with warm tone and polished voicings. She teams up with veteran bassist Mike Richmond for <u>'Tis Autumn</u>, a collection of ten classics that glimmer in these renditions. Richmond plays two seasoned instruments, a 170-year-old Tyrolean bass and a 120-year-old Czechoslovakian cello with fine precision. Mike's bass work and arrangements are a perfect match for Elkins vocals leading to a delightfully, well-recorded session.</p>
CHRIS ROTTMAYER T^b <u>Sunday at Pilars</u> <i>C. Rottmayer</i> 81	<p>Pianist Chris Rottmayer leads a quartet with Jack Wilkins (t-sax), Charlie Silva (b) and Walt Hubbard (b). They swing through a dozen classics in 68 minutes of pleasure. Highlights include "Mamacita", "My Foolish Heart", "Cherokee" and "Skylark", a solo piano effort. All of the band gets into the mix making Sunday at Pilars a winning session.</p>
ALEXANDER McCABE T^b <u>I'd Prefer</u> <i>Wamco</i> 78	<p>Alto saxophonist, composer and producer Alexander McCabe puts together a fine set of eight, mostly original tunes for his latest, <u>I'd Prefer</u>. These are swinging, warm ballads featuring vocalist/sister Anne McCabe and the rich tenor sax of George Coleman. The rhythm section is Paul Odeh (p), Chris Haney (b) and Jeff Brown (d). We enjoyed "You Really Don't Care", the title track, "New York City" and "Out Front Blues", a full-fledged jam!</p>
MARK WINKLER & DAVID BENOIT T^b <u>Old Friends</u> <i>Cafe Pacific</i> 76	<p>Vocalist Mark Winkler and pianist David Benoit are the headliners in a cool septet. These two <u>Old Friends</u> still have the hit-making magic that garnered them countless minutes of airtime! These gentlemen have nothing to prove, so they just play with feeling, elevated by the spirit of the band to our delight. "The Shadow of Your Smile", "Better Than Anything", "Old Friends" and "Thirty Years" are highlights in this set of 13 enjoyable, classic tracks.</p>
KAZE 76 <u>Sand and Storm</u> <i>Libra</i> T^A	<p>Kaze is Satoko Fujii (p) and Natsuki Tamura (t) from Japan with Westerners Christian Pruvost (t) and drummer Peter Orins. The free jazz quartet invites electronic musician Ikue Mori to their ensemble for Sand Storm, expanding on the creativity in yet another dimension. They open with the lengthy, spacey "Rivodoza before settling down on "Poca A Poca" and "Kappa" which invites listeners into an unusual landscape that features lengthy improvisations by Pruvost and Tamura. We also enjoyed the sense of desperation on "Suna Adashi". It is an edgy concoction tempered by the open stage on "Noir Soir".</p>

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O's Place Features

FIVEPLAY *Summer Dusk: Studio Sessions*

FivePlay is Tony Corman (g), Laura Klein (p), Dave Tidbal (reeds), Paul Smith (b) and Jason Lewis (d). Kim Chandler and Iain Mackenzie provide vocals. Phil Hawkins plays drums on two selections and Clairdee adds rich vocals on “Summer Dusk”. There’s also an infusion of flutes, notably Mary Fetting on four of the nine selections adding a crisp element of freshness. They greet us with a warm opening on “Bright Golden Sunshine” followed by the cool instrumental, “Lost and Found”. We enjoyed “Divide Meadow”, the vocal harmonies on “Once Upon A Time”, and “One Better” where Corman comes alive.



Photo: FivePlay

New Faces

New Sounds is the 2nd edition of

81 Modern

Posi-Tone 2021

New Sounds

New Faces, a collective showcase of Posi-Tone artists playing new music and hits from their catalog. Brandon Lee (t), Markus Howell (a-sax), Nicole Glover (t-sax), Caili O'Doherty (p), Adi Meyerson (b) and Cory Cox (d). Producer Marc Free channeled their energy to arrive at this rich set. They open with “Shades of Brown” where the rhythm section sets a strong foundation. We enjoyed the dueling saxophones on “Stop Gap”, a prelude to the glorious, harmonized brass on “Trapezoid” and the swinging “Second Wind”. They also sound good on warm ballads like the lazy “Blues For Tangier”.

Live at the Marigny Opera House

CYRUS NABIPOOR

Portland based trumpeter and composer Cyrus Nabipoor serves up his debut as a leader, *Live At The Marigny Opera House* (in New Orleans) with a fine quintet. Brad Webb opens “Cellmates” with an excellent drum solo. Brad Walker (t-sax) joins Cyrus harmonizing and dueling on several melodies. Guitarist George Wilde, Webb, and bassist James Singleton set a nice backdrop for Nabipoor on “Spector”. “Huckleberry Madness” is just that, starting with a country swinging bounce and transitioning into rock-fusion featuring Wilde. This is a rich set of originals that suggest Nabipoor is a name you’ll hear more of!



Photo: Cyrus Nabipoor

O's Place Features

Juliet Kurtzman & Pete Malinverni

Candlelight

75
Saronac
Ballads
2020



Photo: Juliet Kurtzman

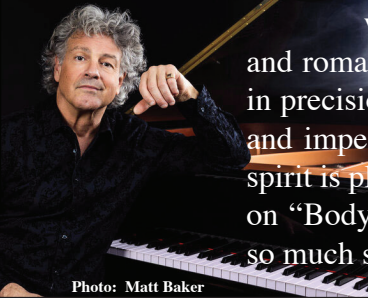


Photo: Matt Baker

Candlelight is a duet featuring violinist Juliet Kurtzman with pianist Pete Malinverni. They combine to bring us a dozen romantic, jazzy ballads rooted across the Americas with a taste of tango, some ragtime, blues, swing and romantic ballads. Juliet's classical training surfaces in precision as she bathes us with soothing, rich ballads and impeccable tone on tunes like "Candlelights". The spirit is playful on "Por Una Cabeza". Malinverni shines on "Body and Soul". Altogether the sound is fulfilling, so much so that we never wanted for more than the duo.

Jazz Worms

75 Bebop

Capri 2021

Squirmin'

The Jazz Worms are Andy Weyl (p), Keith Oxman (t-sax), Paul Romaine (d), Ron Miles (cornet) and Mark Simon (b). They got together back in 1984 and recorded Crawling Out in 1987. They are a Denver band and perform live on occasion. Capri's Tom Burns enjoyed their live performance and recorded this effort in November 2017. Squirmin' was just released in early 2021 proving that some good things take a bit of time. Yes, the music is at least as good as the story: bubbly, flowing originals that are catchy. We'll be looking for them in Denver!

Zoe Scott

Shades of Love

77
Ballads
Zoe Scott
2021



Photo: Zoe Scott

Zoe Scott left England for Rome at 18 and made it to Los Angeles as a rock musician before she became infatuated with Bossa Nova. That brought her to Shades of Love, a dozen ballads steeped in mild samba rhythms. Scott's voice is soft, deep and well suited for these Brazilian rhythms with a taste of strings. These 44 minutes are good, easy listening music that will satisfy many hearts. "Wave", "Quiet Nights" and "My Cherie Amour" are highlights.

O's Place Features

Griot: This Is Important!

Jeremy Pelt

89

Modern
High Note
2021



Griot: This Is Important! is trumpeter Jeremy Pelt's latest undertaking. He captures the history of jazz from the perspectives of his elders, family and peers interspersing excerpts of his interviews with musical interpretations.

The messages are as impactful and intriguing as the accompanying music with Chien Chien Lu (vibes), Victor Gould (p), Vicente Archer (b), Allan Mednard (d) and Ismel Wignall (perc) providing strong support for Pelt. This is an impactful, entertaining and educational session.

Photo: Kasia Idzkowska

Kabir Sehgal & Marie Incontrera

Angela's Ring

Classic 2021

82 Tiger Turn

Many listeners recognize the potential insanity of a jazz opera based on the European debt crisis. Give it a chance, worst case it's a diversion of thoughts as we try to exit the pandemic. Angela's Ring is the genius of jazz bassist and producer Kabir Sehgal with music by Marie Incontrera and The Leveraged Jazz Orchestra. The story is informative and entertaining and the music is pretty good too, certainly worthy of trying something different. There are 2 discs with forty-one titles. It grew on us!

Doug Beavers is a prominent trombonist on the New York jazz scene with Eddie Palmieri, The Spanish Harlem Orchestra and as a leader and composer. For his latest release, Sol, he assembles a large ensemble with lots of horns, percussion and guest vibraphonist Joe Locke. This is a fine collection of jazz, fusing Afro-Caribbean and R&B/soul with vocals from Jeremy Bosch, Carlos Cascante and Walter Parks. Beavers initiated the project during April 2019 in Spain and completed the album in July 2020. The pandemic slowed the process but perhaps enhanced the final product, a winning effort. Some of the best songs are "Sunshine", "Clarity" and the title track.

78

Circle 9
Latin
2021



Sol

Doug Beavers

Photo: Doug Beavers

ARTIST Title <i>Label Perf/Sound</i>	<u>Big Band Picks</u> O's Notes
JEFF BENEDICT <u>The Weather Is</u> <u>Here</u> T^N <i>Groovy Panda 87</i>	<p>Saxophonist Jeff Benedict has been in the music since he was a kid. His passion and enthusiastic approach comes through in the music, and he performs with friends who share his passion. Guitarist Dave Askren steps up on “Ant Dance” and then makes it funky on “Tom and Jerry”, in homage to LA’s Tom Scott and Jerry Hey. We also enjoyed the spirited rendition of “Cheek to Cheek”, “Hikky Burr” and “Armadillo Research”. There’s a good mix of both traditional and contemporary standards all jazzed up and swinging with this large ensemble.</p>
MANUEL VALERA <u>Jose Marti En</u> <u>Nueva York</u> T^N <i>Greenleaf 86</i>	<p>Manuel leads a large ensemble through seven Latin, festive tunes including vocals by Camila Meza and Sofia Rei with lyrics that resonate with today’s social and political issues. The sound is large and also concentrated as on “El Enemigo Brutal” featuring bassist Ricky Rodriguez and Mauricio Herrera (perc). The horns are happy, harmonized, and well-integrated with Valera’s rhythm section, Alex Goodman (g), Ricky Rodriguez (b), Jimmy Macbride (d) and Samuel Torres (perc)) to make a joyful expression.</p>
ALBAN DARCHE T^N <u>Le Gros Cube #2</u> <i>Yolk Music 83</i>	<p>Tenor saxophonist and composer Alban Darche brings us the beauty of a symphonic, large ensemble playing fresh, original, contemporary jazz. It is simply beautiful, and even grandeur on “Beauty and Sadness II”. We also enjoyed “Arcane XV - Le Diable”, “Arcane XVIII - Le Soleil” and the playful bounce of “Le Chemin” featuring trombonist Samuel Blaser.</p>
DAVID ANGEL T^N <u>Out On The Coast</u> <i>Basset Hound 80</i>	<p>Tenor saxophonist, composer and conductor David Angel leads a 13-piece jazz chamber ensemble for 22 original selections over 3 CDs. The music spans the gamut from lively, cool swingers to rich ballads. There are lots of changes in tempo reflecting mood shifts, as expected from a film writer. Out on the Coast brings one of L.A.’s best bands to living rooms everywhere. It’s a treat, one that lasts for over 155 minutes!</p>
SCHAPIRO 17 T^N <u>Human Qualities</u> <i>Summit 79</i>	<p>This is a fine recording of Jon Schapiro’s compositions, seven new tunes along with Evan MacColl’s “The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face” with a rich trumpet solo by Eddie Allen. We also enjoyed “Hallelujah”, a relaxed composition with melodies from saxophonist Paul Carlton, the bouncy “House Money”, the mysterious “Tango” featuring Matt Hong (b-sax), and the complex layering on “Count Me Out”. This is a tasty large ensemble that never over imposes themselves!</p>

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Traditional Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
N.TAMURA, S.FUJII & R.LOPEZ	<u>Mantle</u>	<i>Not Two</i>	77	T ^A
FUTARI	<u>Beyond</u>	<i>Libra</i>	75	T ^A
SUE MASKALERIS	<u>Love Is The Key</u>	<i>Jazilian Records</i>	75	T ^b
LARRY NEWCOMB	<u>Love, Dad</u>	<i>Essential Messenger</i>	74	T ^S
LARA SOLNICKI	<u>The One and The Other</u>	<i>Lara Solnicki</i>	74	T ^b
REBECCA DUMAINE/DAVE MILLER	<u>Someday, Someday</u>	<i>Summit</i>	72	T ^B
CARLA MARCIANO	<u>Psychosis</u>	<i>Challenge</i>	72	T ^B
VARIOUS ARTISTS	<u>Maggots</u>	<i>Composers Concordance</i>	72	T ^C
MELBREEZE	<u>I Love Paris</u>	<i>Blue Canoe</i>	71	T ^b
DOUG MACDONALD	<u>Toluca Lake Jazz</u>	<i>dMac</i>	68	T ^B
DAVE SHELTON	<u>Drift</u>	<i>Dave Shelton</i>	67	T ^b
NOAH PREMINGER & KIM CASS	<u>Thunda</u>	<i>Dry Bridge</i>	66	T ^B
GRÉGORY OTT	<u>Parabole</u>	<i>Jazz Dor</i>	66	T ^C
DIEGO BALIARDO	<u>Este Ritmo</u>	<i>Moondomusic</i>	62	T ^L
AMBER WEEKES	<u>My Romance - A Special Valentine</u>	<i>Amber Inn</i>	61	T ^b
SONIC TWIST	<u>Unity</u>	<i>Muse Eek</i>	59	T ^A
FOSTER JOSEPH	<u>Foster</u>	<i>Foster Joseph</i>	57	T ^b

Jazz thrives, our legacy artform!

O's Rating System

O's Place has evolved with our listeners to create a rating system based on three factors: Performance, Sound Quality, and the quality of the Package (including liner notes). The primary criteria is Performance followed by Sound and finally Package.

The ratings (X) have the following weightings and will provide a score from 0-100 with average reviews in the 70 range. Our new ratings are similar to traditional academic ratings.

Performance: 15x, Sound: 5x, Package: 1x

0	65	80	95
Pass	Contemplate	Buy	Strong Buy

O's Latin Features

Miguel Zenón & Luis Perdomo

El Arte Del Bolero

Photo: Luis Perdomo -->

One of the most impressive duets we've encountered in a while is El Arte Del Bolero featuring Puerto Rican saxophonist Miguel Zenón and Venezuelan pianist Luis Perdomo. It was recorded live at the Jazz Gallery take! Both musicians are masterful and together they that should please a wide audience. Moods span from Among the best are "Que Te Pedi", "Alma Adentro" and "La Vida Es Un Sueño". Rather than trying to dazzle you with speed and complexity, they focus on pure tones, harmony and feel, allowing their instruments to breathe and simmer together in unison.



Photo: Noah Shaye



83

*Miel Music
Latin 2021*

in New York on the first perform a delightful set romantic to melancholic.

Albare

83 Latin
Alfi 2021

Plays Jobim, Vol. 2

This is the Vol. 2 of Albare Plays Jobim and it is about as good as the first act (85) with Albare extending his reach into the Brazilian songbooks. The beauty of a string orchestra resonates on the opener "Dindi" and throughout the session. Guest artist Nestor Torres (fl) shines on "Summer Samba" and "How Insensitive". Randy Brecker (t) and Antonio Sanchez (d) also appear on two selections each. The combinations of Albare's warm guitar with the band and Jobim's classic samba is everlasting bliss.

Diego Figueiredo

Antartica

2021
*Arbors 75
Latin*

Brazilian jazz guitarist and composer Diego Figueiredo assembles a quartet with Eduardo Machado (b), Alexandre Piu (p) and Fernando Rast (d) for Antartica, his latest release. The project was initiated in Cleveland, recording the four solo tracks before Figueiredo returned to Brazil, with the rise of the pandemic (mid-March 2020), to complete the album with his quartet. Diego was a child prodigy and at 39, he has had a wealth of success with over 26 albums under his belt! Highlights are the playful "Caribbean Gonzaga", "Seville", "My Friend Menescal" and the title track in a peaceful set.



Photo: Diego Figueiredo

O's Latin Features

Gabriel Alegria

Social Distancing

Peruvian trumpeter and composer Gabriel Alegria leads the Afro-Peruvian Sextet with Laura Andrea Leguía (sax), Yuri Juárez (g), Mario Cuba (b), Freddy "Huevito" Lobatón (perc) and Hugo Alcázar (d). Guest poet Kitty O'Meara provides the lyrics for the "Opening: And The



74
2021
Saponegro
Latin

People Stayed Home" and "Reprise: Y La Gente Se Quando En Casa". In between we get the "Social Distancing" suite illustrating the pandemic in 4 parts. After dancing around the title track and visiting the state of the pandemic and recovery, Gabriel dives into some funky Afro Caribbean beats, notably on "Octavio Y Natalia" and "Any Day Now" giving us some music to make sequestering almost good!

Gustavo Cortinas

82 Latin 2021
Wool Gathering

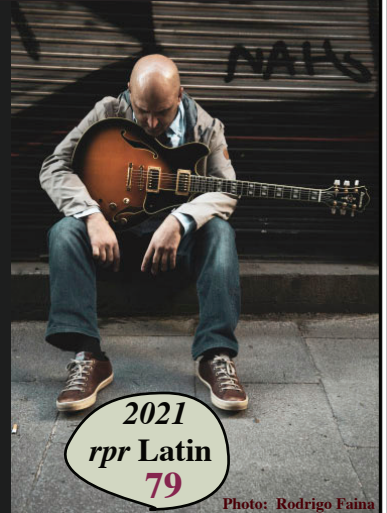
Desafío Candente

Mexican drummer, composer and bandleader Gustavo Cortinas graduated from Loyola and Northwestern and just released his third album Desafío Candente, inspired by Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano. Cortinas' music has super-syncoated, Afro-Caribbean beats with cool intoxicating rhythms. That is combined with nature's sounds and recitations on "Abya Yala". The borderline chaotic state of "El Jinete El Caballo" is a standout followed by the relaxing "La Nostalgia Peleadora De Tu". Lyrics and narration are in Spanish but the music speaks a universal amen.

Rodrigo Faina

Different Roots

Rodrigo Faina fled Argentina to The Netherlands at the dawn of the new millennium to escape the economic demise of his native country. The skilled guitarist and composer immersed himself in the vibrant global music scene. Faina has evolved to produce his latest album, Different Roots with an ensemble of 23 musicians. It is a soft fusion that morphs into a symphonic masterpiece! The music is split between vocals and instrumentals spanning many genres while Faina reflects on his native roots. We enjoyed "At Night" & "An Installment of Time" with the narrative by Fanny Alofs, and "Dreams".



2021
rpr Latin
79

Photo: Rodrigo Faina

O's Piano Features

Edward Simon 25 Years

84
Pop+Jazz
Ridgeway
2020

Composer and pianist Edward Simon celebrate a lengthy career of fine music with this compilation of 25 Years. It starts with music from his self-titled 1995-debut and moves through 2018's Sorrows and Triumphs. There are associations with countless talented musicians during this span including Mark Turner (t-sax), David Binney (a-sax), Larry Grenadier (b), Scott Colley (b), Brian Blade (d), Avishi Cohen (b), John Patitucci (b), Luis Quintero (perc) and Sean Jones (t). Favorites are "Impossible Question", "Navigator" and the more mellow tracks of Disc 2 like "Barinas".



Photo: Edward Simon

Chris Pattishall

Zodiac

79
C. Pattishall
Ballads
2021

This is the debut recording for Chris Pattishall, a polished pianist that has captured respect and admiration from many fellow musicians. He takes on Mary Lou Williams' Zodiac Suite with his own dreamlike interpretations and arrangements. Zodiac gives us a song for each astrological sign and the songs range across the universe encompassing the taste of ragtime, ballads, bebop, and even some spacey out-of-this-world tunes as Pattishall expresses his imagination with a fine quintet including Riley Mulherkar (t), Rubin Fox (sax), Marty Jaffe (b) and Jamison Ross (d). The more we listened, the more we liked!

Ben Rosenblum Kites and Strings

78
One Trick Dog
Modern
2020

Pianist and composer Ben Rosenblum also plays accordion adding an unusual twist to this modern jazz set. Wayne Tucker (t) and Jasper Dutz (t-sax, b-cl) play over a warm rhythm section on "Cedar Place" setting the stage for an exciting and unusual session. The marriage of vibraphone (Jake Chapman) with accordion and horns works extremely well on the title track. We particularly enjoyed Ben's playful romp on the accordion for "Fight or Flight". There's a taste of fusion on "Philadelphia" and warmth of "Bright Above Us" broadening a fine session.



Photo: Kazuo Goshima

O's Piano Features

Future Stride



Photo: YouTube

88
Mack Ave.
Ragtime
2021

Emmet Cohen

Pianist Emmet Cohen is bubbling with exuberance on *Future Stride*, combining his own compositions with several classics. He gets strong support from his core trio with bassist Russell Hall and drummer Kyle Poole. Guest artists Melissa Aldana (t-sax) and Marquis Hill (t) add savory depth and extended presence, notably on “Reflections at Dusk”, “Toast to Lo”, and the fleeting “You Already Know”. Among the best of the rest are the warm “Little Angel” and the title track as Cohen puts stride back in the mainstream.

O's Place Jazz Ruler™

Traditional

Contemporary

1900

1920

1940

1960

1970

1980

2000

Ragtime T^R
Dixie T^D

Blues&Ballads T^b
Swing T^S

Bebop T^B
Big Band T^N

Latin T^L
Free T^A

Fusion C^F
R&B+Jazz C^R

Funk C^F
Pop+Jazz C^P

Acid C^A

Yaniv Taubenhause

Roads

Pianist and composer Yaniv Taubenhause returns with his trio including bassist Rick Rosato and drummer Jerad Lippi for *Moments In Trio Volume Three, Roads*. The tittles are a bit of a road map for the ten compositions, describing the feel of each piece. There are three standards notably Monk's “Boo Boo's Birthday” and “Stare Eyes” by DePaul & Rale. The balance are Taubenhause originals. Of note are “Rush Hour Traffic”, “Morning Night” and “Flow”.



Photo: Yaniv Taubenhause

77
Fresh
Sound New
Talent
Pop+Jazz
2021

O's Piano Features

2021
Fusion
Blue Canoe
76

Inflexion

Russell Ferrante

Russell Ferrante is a California native, a world class pianist, composer and educator. His affiliations look like a Who's Who in music! His latest project is Inflexion, a trio recording with bassist Michael Valerio, and drummer Steve Schaeffer. This is a mature version of jazz-fusion that includes a taste of modern jazz that is centered around Ferrante's strong piano work. Rich tones and dynamics draw you into the music. There are eleven selections plus two bonus tracks including cool covers of "Rhythm-a-ning" and "Isfahan". We also enjoyed "57 Chevy", "How Deep Is The Ocean" and "All The Things You Are".



Photo: Carsten Weide

Lisa Hilton

Pop+Jazz 2020
75 Lisa K. Hilton

More Than Another Day

Like most musicians, pianist Lisa K. Hilton was forced to abort her 2020 tour and hunker down, spawning her creative juices. The result is yet another compelling effort. Hilton assembles her trio with drummer Rudy Royston and bassist Luques Curtis for More Than Another Day. These are a fresh set of Lisa's tunes that have an easily embraceable warmth. They open with the title track and move into a Latin-tinged groove on "Secret Beach" and the sole cover, Cole Porter's "I've Got You Under My Skin". There's a touch of blues and several beautiful ballads over ten selections.

An East African Journey

Omar Sosa

Fans of Omar Sosa know of his passion and intensity, that resonates in his music. For his latest endeavor Sosa takes An East African Journey, collaborating with masterful local musicians in Madagascar, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Zambia, Burundi and Sudan. The instrumentation is a bit different on this release including banjos, violins, guitars, harp and a wealth of percussion that imparts a unique flavor to these traditional African rhythms. We liked the funky sway of "Shibinda", "Thuong Mok Loga", "Eretsetse" and "Veloma E".



77
Ota
Modern
2021

Photo: Omar Sosa

O's Piano Features

Rossano Sportiello

That's It!

That's It! is a beautiful solo piano effort from Rossano Sportiello. The focus is pleasant, classic and contemporary tunes that are suitable as background for a dinner party or any occasion. It's just pleasant, entertaining listening. Rossano serves it up, setting the mood for any type of discussion with songs like "Fine and Dandy", "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" and "Nonno Bob's Delight". There is a lot of ragtime swagger making this 17-song-set ready for deployment.

79
**Ballads
Arbors
2021**



Photo: Rossano Sportiello.

J. Peter Schwalm

German composer, producer and Norwegian Arve Henriksen (t, perc, album. This is a somewhat sedated relaxation, and just overall good listening.

78
**Rare Noise
Pop+Jazz
2020**

keyboardist J. Peter Schwalm teams up with voice) for Neuzeit, a world jazz-fusion set, suitable for meditation, reflection, Schwalm intended the music to be an emergence, following the massive disruption of the pandemic, inspiring many new possibilities. COVID impacted the recording process but the duo persisted to arrive at a meaningful product.

Neuzeit

Chris Nordman

82
**2021
Pop+Jazz
C. Nordman
Trio**

High Wire



Photo: Chris Nordman

Veteran pianist Chris Norman leads a trio with bassist Ward Dumigan and drummer Joe Adcock for High Wire. It is a culmination of Nordman's musical career spanning five decades and many genres. He places the piano at the core of these refreshed classics. Among the best are "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy", "Cold Duck Time", "Watermelon Man", "Sunny" and "Blue Bossa" with fine solos across the band. This is an enjoyable listen.

O's Sax Features

Light of the Sun Paul Winter

Photo: Nick Biello

80-year-old saxophonist Paul Winter is a well-seasoned musician with beautiful tones. He is the featured soloist and composer of several tunes on his new release. We listened to Light Of The Sun during a long walk in the rain. The music was refreshing, reflective, and perfect for helping us to think of what we were going to do in the next chapter. This is excellent music for meditation or reflection. Accompanying musicians include Paul Halley (keyboards), Jeff Holmes (p), Denny Zeitlin (p), Don Grusin (keyboards), Oscar Castro-Neves (g) and Eugene Friesen (cello).

77

**Living Music
Pop+Jazz
2020**

Miles Donahue

Saxophonist, composer and producer jazz set with Just Passing Through. Room Blues” before Donahue soothes Guest Mike Stern (g) adds fusion elements to “7-9-65” and the funky “Railroaded”. We also enjoyed the cool vibe of “Donny’s Groove” and “A Man of Few Words”.

77

**Savant
Modern
2020**

Just Passing Through

Miles Donahue presents a fine contemporary Bassist Joe Santerre gets in the mix on “Living us on song “Killing Me Softly”, the lone cover.

Professor Cunningham

One of New York’s greatest imports is Professor Adrian Cunningham (sax, fl, cl) from Australia! The pandemic pushed him to create the tune, “It’s Alright” with each of band mates contributing from afar (in isolation). It went viral and inspired the Old School Band to record The Lockdown Blues in the same fashion. We liked the New Orleans-style blues on “Sittin’ At Home, Drinkin’ Alone”. The swagger reigns true all the way through with reality-based stories as on “A Quarantine Love Song”. As always jazz spawns creativity!

The Lockdown Blues



**2021
Arbors
Blues
79**

Photo: Nina Galicheva

O's Sax Features

Photo: SRP Photography

79
Bebop
Cellar Music
2021

Jerry Cook

Walk in the Park

Tenor saxophonist Jerry Cook assembles a fine quartet with Chris Gerstin (p), John Lee (b) and Jessie Cahill (d). Dave Sikula adds guitar on three tracks notably “Hello My Lovely” that also includes fine work by Lee and Cahill. Cook leads the way with warm tones in a set of ten swinging ballads on this Walk in the Park. “Smile” is an excellent example of the free-flowing cohesion between the musicians. We also enjoyed the fresh arrangements of “Summertime” and “Georgia On My Mind”.



76
Bebop 2020
Pine Eagle

Photo: Rich Halley

Rich Halley

The Shape of Things

Tenor saxophonist Rich Halley assembles a quartet with Michael Bisio (b), Matthew Shipp (p) and Newman Taylor Baker (d) for his latest release The Shape of Things. They start with a sense of urgency on “Tetrahedron” that is fueled by Halley through much of the set. Baker’s accents, Bisio’s walking bass, and Shipp’s syncopated melodies complement the action on “Vector”. They take a breather on “Spaces Between”, a relatively brief, warm ballad at 3:43. The chase resumes on “Oblique Angels” for a spirited session that will wake up the dead!



ALEXA TARANTINO

Firefly

79
Pop+Jazz
Posi-Tone
2021

New York based saxophonist, flutist and educator Alexa Tarantino assembles a band with vibraphonist Behn Gillece, pianist Art Hirahara, bassist Boris Kozlov, and drummer Rudy Royston.

Warm tones are the defining factor on all of Firefly with lead lines by Tarantino, and Gillece. It’s a strong set of midtempo and relaxed ballads, all originals by Alexa with one song from each band mate and two Wayne Shorter tunes. Highlights are plentiful including “Daybreak”, “Move On The Spirit”, “Lady Day” and “Rootless Ruthlessness”.



Photo: Alexa Tarantino

O's Sax Features

Shape-Shifter is the latest creation from Andrew Van Tassel, a formidable jazz saxophonist, composer, and educator. His music could satisfy traditional, Neobop fans and contemporary jazz-fusion fans alike. He dominates the space on alto and soprano sax with strong support from his band including Rick Rosato (b), Lucas Hahn (keyboards) and Kush Abadey (d). Alex Goodman adds guitar on four selections. The music is mostly original and is easily embraced.

Andrew Van Tassel Shape-Shifter



79
2021
A. Van Tassel
Fusion

Photo: John Abbott

Cory Weeds

79 Cellar Live
Cool 2021

O Sole Mio!

Put the Hammond B3 into the mix in any ensemble and you get a cool groove. Add world class musicians Eric Alexander (t-sax), Mike LeDonne (B3), Peter Bernstein (g), Joe Farnsworth (d) and producer Cory Weeds (a-sax) for an excellent recording O Sole Mio! Cory Weeds is a saxophonist, producer, label owner and former club owner, perhaps one of the luckiest musicians in being able to perform alongside of many great musicians. That's the case on this session and Weeds is easily up to the challenge! There is a lot of positive energy here.

Chad Lefkowitz-Brown Quartet Sessions

Saxophonist Chad Lefkowitz-Brown leads a quartet playing 11 classic jazz and popular tunes on Quartet Sessions. Nice solos all around by pianist and bassist on 'Green Chimneys'. Chad is wailing on 'My One and Only Love' 'Tenor Madness' and 'Yesterday' establishing the fact that he's the headliner in these few of many highlights.



Photo: Chad Lefkowitz-Brown

76
La. Reserve
Bebop
2021

O's Drummer Features

Ulysses Owens Jr. *Soul Conversations*

Drummer Ulysses Owens Jr. Launches his big band debut with a 19-piece ensemble for Soul Conversations. He hits the ground steaming in a live set recorded at Dizzy's in New York. It's an ultra-modern set with tons of energy. The music is heavily punctuated with crisp dynamics and a wealth of lively brass. They perform with a lot of space around the soloist before throttling the power of the full ensemble to the delight of the audience!

Photo: Ulysses Owens Jr.



91
Big Band
Outside In
2021

Junior Santos

Dominican percussionist Junior Santos has resided in Toronto for over 20 years where he has established himself as a key contributor on the Latin jazz scene. Conpambiche is his debut as a leader with mostly original music, a lively Latin-fusion with Afro-Dominican beats. There are also Afro-Cuban rhythms courtesy of the Cuban pianists. We enjoyed "Pri Pri", "Jari's", "Sayen", and "Tambora Blues" in a set that is easy to embrace.

Junior Santos
2021 Latin **81**

Conpambiche

Santos has resided in Toronto for over 20 years where he has established himself as a key contributor on the Latin jazz scene. Conpambiche is his debut as a leader with mostly original music, a lively Latin-fusion with Afro-Dominican beats. There are also Afro-Cuban rhythms courtesy of the Cuban pianists. We enjoyed "Pri Pri", "Jari's", "Sayen", and "Tambora Blues" in a set that is easy to embrace.

A photograph of Reggie Quinerly sitting on a stool and playing a drum set on a city street. He is wearing a blue suit, a white shirt, a green and blue bow tie, and a black fedora. The background shows a busy city street with pedestrians and buildings.

84
Modern
Redefinition
2021

Reggie Quinerly

New York Nowhere

Composer and drummer Reggie Quinerly assembles a swinging quintet for New York Nowhere. There's a sweet harmony between tenor saxophonist John Ellis and trumpeter Antoine Drye that lends to a warm, refreshing sound. They alternate leading melodies and solos while bassist Sean Conly and Quinerly set the pace with pianist John Chin comping and adding a few solos of his own. Ellis displays rich tone on ballads like "Dreaming In Place". Reggie's writing skills stand out as he engages the entire band and they overflow with passion.

Photo: John Rogers

O's Vocal Features

Brianna Thomas *Everybody Knows*

Vocalist Brianna Thomas serves up a serious dose of R&B, blues and soulful ballads on *Everybody Knows*. Brianna is not afraid to sing things her way, and that's not a bad thing. This is her second release as a leader with Conun Pappas (p), Marvin Sewell (g), Ryan Berg (b), Fernando Saci (perc) and Kyle Poole (d). Brianna's voice is large, soothing and warm especially on "How Much Forgiveness" and "It Had To Be You". She also delivers gutsy performances on "Since I Fell For You", "My Stove's In Good Condition" and "Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues". Brianna has a lot to say and we're ready to listen!

89
R&B+Jazz
Breathline
2020



Photo: Matt Ba

The Royal Bopsters *Party of Four*

The Royal Bopsters are a vocal quartet featuring Amy London (soprano), Holli Ross (alto), Pete McGuinness (tenor), and Dylan Pramuk (bass). *Party of Four* is Act II for the tasty quartet featuring well harmonized vocals over a wide range of contemporary popular tunes. They are accompanied by a solid rhythm section and also include guest vocalists Bob Dorrough for "Baby You Should Know It" and Sheila Jordan on "Lucky To Be Me". Bassist Christian McBride appears on a couple of tunes notably the Latin-tinged "Cuando Te Veas". Our favorite is "Infant Eyes" in a program that is enjoyable for all who like good, entertaining music delivered in pleasurable package.

79
Ballads
Motéma
2021

Roxana Amed *Ontology*

Roxana Amed is an Argentine artist now living in Miami, combining her native music with modern jazz for a vibrant, rich mix. For *Ontology* Roxana employs a strong ensemble including Martin Bejerano (p), Mark Small (sax), Edward Perez (b), and Ludwig Alfonso (d) along with several guest artists. Amed sings and scats with rich textures in Spanish and English over 14 selections. Highlights are "Chacarera Para La Mani Izquierda", "Blue In Green", "Milonga Por La Ausencia" and "Amor" featuring guitarist Aaron Lebos.

76
Ballads
Sony Latin
2021



Photo: Daniel Arano

O's Vocal Features

Love Is The Color of Your Butterfly

Photo: Janinah Burnett

Janinah Burnett

Janinah Burnett is a world class soprano who is equally at home singing opera, on Broadway, and soulful jazz. Love Is The Color of Your Butterfly illustrates her musical journey up to now. Terreon Gully (d, perc), Christian Sands (p), Ben Williams (b) and Luques Curtis (b) are some of fine supporting cast. She opens with "Creole Girl" singing with a voice that would resonate throughout an opera hall. As we got into it with more spiritual tunes like "Keep Your Eyes On The Prize" and "I Loves You Porgy", we gained an even greater appreciation for Burnett's vocal strength, range and tone. She is a remarkably talented vocalist.

82
Clazz
Ballads
2021



Ayelet Rose Gottlieb

2021 Gottlieb
World Jazz 74

13 Lunar Conversations

Ayelet Rose Gottlieb is a composer and vocalist with global reach. Her music spans across languages and cultures having lived in 10 cities, 5 countries and 4 continents! Her latest creation, 13 Lunar Meditations combines the works of women from around the world, reflecting on our connections to the moon. The songs are contemporary, free-flowing, improvisational ballads featuring Gottlieb with a variety of other musicians notably violinist Eylem Basaldi. The soundscape is littered with poetic spoken word for additional depth and perspective.

Bruce Brown

Death of Expertise

Photo: Bruce Brown

79
Ballads
Triangle 7
2021

Bruce's lyrics have real stories about true life experiences, love life, the old days and dealing with it. Is he just a grumpy old man, or grappling with change, maturation and reality? The answers are best stated on "Back In The Day", "Find Three Things to Be Grateful For" and "Love Makes Us Who We Are" with a warm sax solo from Glen Berger. All fourteen tracks have an easy going, swing that is enjoyable.



O's Trumpet Features



Photo: Douglas Olsen

89
Bebop
D. Olsen
2020

Douglas Olsen

2¢

Trumpeter, composer Douglas Olsen leads a swinging Latin-tinged bebop ensemble with a tight rhythm section featuring bassist Dave Zinno, pianist Tim Ray and drummer Mark Walker. The horns keep it lively with crisp, harmonized accents throughout the set from Dino Giovanni (t-sax, a-sax), Angel Subero (tb), Yaure Muniz (t) and Tucker Antell (t-sax). "Afro Bueno", "Rat Race", "Critical Mass" are among the many highlights in a strong 2¢.

Franco Ambrosetti

Self-taught Swiss trumpeter Franco on "Peace" establishing a trend that learned to embellish the mood as (which he can still do!) John DeJohnette. Guitarist John Scofield counters Franco with solos along the way. In case that lineup doesn't impress you, bassist Scott Colley and pianists Renee Rosnes & Uri Caine provide strong support while infusing a few appreciable solos along the way too, notably on "I'm Gonna Laugh You Right Out of My Life". They also play swinging tunes like "Body And Soul" making Lost Within You a winner.

88
Modern
2020
Unit

Lost Within You

Ambrosetti opens with very rich tones continues on all of the ballads. At 78 he's opposed to blurting out rapid fire notes (d) keeps time and also plays piano on "Peace".

Chad McCullough

Chicago-based trumpeter and composer Chad McCullough pays homage to his city on Forward, his sophomore effort. Rob Clearfield (p), Matt Ulery (b) and Jon Deitemyer (d) join him with guest co-producer Ryan Cohen adding keyboards and programming on three selections. There are six warm, original ballads notably "Oak Park", "Gentle", that highlights McCullough's rich tone, and the upbeat "Focal Point". It is a rewarding, collaborative effort that deserves applause.

77
Outside In
Ballads
2020

Forward

Photo: Chad McCullough



O's Guitar Features

Dave Stryker

Baker's Circle

One of our favorite jazz guitarists is Dave Stryker. He assembles a quartet with Jared Gold on the B3, tenor saxophonist Walter Smith III, and drummer McClenty Hunter. Mayra Casales adds percussion on three selections. They play swinging blues like “Everything I Love”, jazz-fusion like “El Camino” and the mellow “Superstar” with soulful undertones. They don’t abandon the 8-Track followers with covers of “Inner City Blues” and Love Dance” to round out a fine set on Baker’s Circle.

81
Fusion
Strikezone
2021



Photo: George Kopp

O's primary listening is done with a Sony XA777ES SACD player, Ayre C5-xe^{MP} CD player, Jeff Rowland Consonance preamp, two Jeff Rowland Model 1 amplifiers (balanced mono mode), Classe CA-200 amplifier, Mirage M1 speakers and B&W 800D speakers wired with Cardas Hex 5C speaker wire, Transparent Audio interconnects, Pro-ject Debut turntable with Sumilo Blue Point No. 2 Cartridge and E.S.P. Essence Reference Power Distribution System.

Lee Ritenour

Dreamcatcher

75
Mascot
Fusion
2021

Venerable guitarist Lee Ritenour is now 68 years old with decades of recordings and performances behind him. He has nothing to prove having starred on countless jazz fusion contemporary albums that risen to the top 10. Dreamcatcher is his first solo album, perhaps a result of pandemic reflections. He took the opportunity to reminisce with new tunes and old memories on a wide variety of guitars. He’s deliberate and precise with impactful melodies over a dozen selections. Excellent liner notes for each selection enhance the listening experience.



Photo: Lee Ritenour

O's Guitar Features

Reza Khan

74
Smooth
Reza Khan
2021

Imaginary Road

Bengali guitarist, composer and producer Reza Khan is now based in New York where he is a mainstay on the Latin contemporary jazz scene. He employs special guests Philippe Saisse (Synths, mallets), David Mann (strings, winds), Mark Egan (b) and Miles Gilderdale (g) to amplify the performance. Upbeat standout: “Neo Funk” and best ballad: “I See Stars” in a mostly easy-going set.



Photo: Reza Khan

Nick Cuda

Guitarist, composer and bandleader with this collection of his best tunes Latin flavor on “Broken Roses” that session. There are also a few smooth Cuda’s trademark is infusing catchy hooks into his music.

78
Latin
Melaby
2021

After The Storm

Nick Cuda celebrates his years of success over the last couple of decades. There’s a fine spills into “Be Mine”, and permeates the entire jazz tracks like “Latin Terrain” and “Una de Cauti”.

Groove Rangers



81
TK Music
Smooth
2021

Tony Koch

Funky, smooth, jazz guitarist Tony Koch’s AltNews Band is a quintet featuring Campbell Ryga (sax), Miles Black (keyboards), Bobby Ruggiero (d) and Miles Hill (b). The band is tight and unleashes lots of funky riffs on Groove Rangers. We really enjoyed “Get the Lowdown”, “Q”, and the title track. There’s lots of sizzle, with a genre smashing formula that will excite a wide audience.

Photo: [illegible]

O's Bass Features

Fumi Tomita *Celebrating Bird*

Bassist, composer and educator Fumi Tomita has been polishing his chops on the New York jazz scene for over 15 years. He assembles a fine quartet featuring tenor saxophonist David Detweiler with pianist Art Hirahara and drummer Jimmy MacBride. Their tribute to Charlie Parker *Celebrating Bird* has eight classic tunes that include fresh arrangements and crisp solos across the band. This tribute is one of the best!

86
Next Level
Bebop
2021

Photo: Fumi Tomita



David Kikoski & Boris Kozlov

Pianist David Kikoski plays in a ***Sure Thing*** duet with bassist Boris Kozlov on *Sure Thing*, his latest release. Billed as a dynamic duo David and Boris have played together in many bands of the years as well as leading their own trios. The polished musicians merge in what complement to each other. Sit back and and dynamics the engage you in their is true to the title as they are a perfect enjoy the music as they vary tempo space. "E" is a fine example of that!

74
Modern
High Note
2021

Photo: David Kikoski

Photo: Boris Kozlov



ARTIST Title <i>Label</i> Rating	<u>Top Contemporary Picks</u> O's Notes
TOMBA JAZZ <u>THE SENATE</u> C^A <i>Tomstar</i> 84	<p>Bassist and composer Tomba has assembled a strong, primarily German team with guitarist Jan Zehrfeld, Evan Tate on sax, keyboardist Hansi Enzensperger, trumpeter Bastien Rieser and Tommy Eberhardt on drums. There's an infectious funky beat underneath the serious spoken word from American rapper, Kokayi . He talks about the current plight of America and keeps it real. "<u>The Senate</u>" is a strong single (and a radio edit). We're looking forward to the full album.</p>
TOM KEENLYSIDE C^F <u>FORTUNE TELLER</u> <i>Cellar Music</i> 81	<p>Canadian flautist Tom Keenlyside leads a quartet with Miles Black (p), Miles Hill (b) and Bernie Aria (d). Fortune Teller was recorded live resulting in strong interaction between the musicians. The rhythm section is tight with poignant dynamics that are softened by Keenlyside's melodies. Highlights are "The Summer Knows", "Cuttin' Time", the bouncy "Pratfall", "The Burninator" and the title track.</p>
COWBOYS & FRENCHMEN C^F <u>OUR HIGHWAY</u> 76 <i>Outside In</i>	<p>Cowboys and Frenchmen are a New York quintet featuring pianist Addison Frei, bassist Ethan O'Reilly, Ethan Helm (a-sax, fl), Owen Broder (a-sax, b-sax) and drummer Matt Honor. Helm composed all six selections for <u>Our Highway</u>, their third provocative jazz-fusion album. While challenging the norm, the music is totally accessible. This one was recorded live at SubCulture and is accompanied by a video that was transformational for the experience.</p>
GRASSO-RAVITA JAZZ ENSEMBLE <u>JAGGED SPACES</u> C^F <i>Grassvita</i> 76	<p>The Grasso-Ravita Jazz Ensemble features bassist Phil Ravita and guitarist Skip Grasso in a quintet with Benny Russell (sax), Greg Small (p, t) and Nuc Vega (d). Jagged Spaces is their debut with originals work by Grasso (4), Ravita (2), Russell (2) and Small (1). We liked "Songhai" opening with a bass solo followed by guitarist, saxophonist and drummer and sax with a rousing finish.</p>
SUKYUNG KIM <u>LILAC HILL</u> 74 <i>Sukyung Kim</i> C^F	<p>Korean pianist and composer Sukyung Kim is based in Brooklyn where she assembled a quintet to perform her latest works on <u>Lilac Hill</u>. She defers much of the melodies and solos to alto saxophonist Ethan Helm and guitarist Paul JuBong Lee. We particularly enjoyed the swinging "Bluebird" and "Summer Days" in the 5-song set that serves as a promising debut.</p>

Jazz thrives, our legacy artform!

O's Place Features

MicroCorgi is an international, funky, electric, fusion trio featuring keyboardist Andrew McGowan (New Orleans), drummer Ilya Dynov (Moscow) and guitarist Yuto Kanazawa (Tokyo). They are based in New York where they launched their debut Microcosmos. The session has a good variety of contemporary jazz-fusion music, including soft vocals on “Another Day”, but mostly crisp instrumentals like “Tuff Pretty Lady”, “Avocados Every Day”, the funky title track and the mellow “Utopia” featuring Kanazawa. It is a compelling offering.

MicroCorgi Microcosmos

76
Fusion
MicroCorgi
2020



Photo: MicroCorgi

Julian Gerstin

2020
Zabap
World Jazz
81

Percussionist, composer and band leader Julian Gerstin is continually evolving as a student and teacher in the world of jazz. His

influences are from African/Diasporic countries, and the popular music in the Caribbean and Mexico and Brazil. Julian plays more percussive instruments than we can name. He's accompanied by Anna Patton playing clarinet on “Corculum Cardissa” and Steve Rice playing marimba on “Purpura”, “Grimpotheusis” and “Argonauta argo”. There's an exotic, adventurous feel over sixteen selections.

Littoral Zone



Photo: Jusian Gerstin

Toumani Diabate

Toumani Diabate is from Mali harp. His music reminds us of heard in the lobby of some Japanese with some elements of flamenco and eastern Indian flavor. He partners with the London Symphony Orchestra for Korolen, a commissioned work featuring traditional Malian music that is very relaxing.

2021
World Circuit
Pop Ballads
74

Korolen

and plays the kora, a west African the peaceful background we have hotels and restaurants. It is infused with the London Symphony Orchestra for Korolen, a commissioned work featuring traditional Malian music that is very relaxing.

O's Place Features

DiCosimo & Pagán

81 Subcat
funky Jazz 2021

Con Moto

Bassist Edgar Pagan and keyboardist Bill DiCosimo are a familiar duo in central New York playing with Grupo Pagan. They pitch Con Moto as a solo album with producer Jimmy Haslip who chips in on keyboards, percussion and vocals. There are many other contributors including Jeff Lorber (keys), Gary Novak (d), Jimmy Branly (perc) and Jeff Richman (g). "So It Begins" on a funky note before they weave in covers of two classic contemporary tunes, "Cisco Kid" and "Magic Carpet Ride", and four other originals in 32+ minutes of pleasure. They wrap up with a taste of reggae on "Show The World" making a standout session.

2 from Benjamin Koppel

The Ultimate Soul & Jazz Review

96
R&B+Jazz
Cowbell Unit
2020

Danish Saxophonist, producer and band leader Benjamin Koppel puts together a fine team of musicians for The Ultimate Soul & Jazz Revue, two discs of live entertainment. Randy Brecker (t), Jacob Christoffersen (keyboards), Scott Colley (b) and Bernard Purdie (d) are the core members with Koppel for this live set. The solos are well-developed as the musicians take their time to establish a theme and make it work. Prime examples are "Manteca" and "Con Alma and Sax". There are jazzy covers of "Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing", "Move On Up" and "Respect" featuring vocalist Marie Carmen Koppel. Purdie opens "Close To You" followed by crisp solos from Brecker and Koppel. They close revising Sly and the Family Stone's "Sing A Simple Song". Lots of good memories here. selections notably "Without You", a ballad that rounds out the set.



Photo: Benjamin Koppel

The Art of The Quartet

79
Cowbell
Modern
2020

Saxophonist Benjamin Koppel plays on the traditional side with The Art of The Quartet leading an all-star band including pianist Kenny Werner, bassist Scott Colley and the legendary Jack DeJohnette on drums. They perform eleven originals (composed by each of the members) and a cover of "If I Should Lose You". We enjoyed Koppel's sax serenade on top of Werner's solid foundation on "Ballad for Trane". There's a bit more hard-bop on "One On One" before the peaceful finale, "Sada" tilting our favor to CD2.

O's Place Features

Greg Karukas

78

Pop+ Jazz
Night Owl
2021

Serenata

Pianist, composer and producer Greg Karukas moves away from his usual upbeat smooth jazz to a more universal, contemporary sound. Serenata is a solo piano effort containing fifteen selections, a mix of Greg's original songs and Brazilian classics written or inspired by Milton Nascimento, Clube Da Esquina and Dori Caymmi. Karukas delivers a dynamic, relaxing session that is enjoyable for many occasions.



Photo: Sherry Fisher

Shijin

Fusion 2021

77 Alter-Nativ

Forgotten Melody

Like the oriental symbol, Shijin is the name of a quartet melding the strengths of each of the musicians. They are drummer Stéphane Galland, keyboardist Malcolm Braff, Stéphane Guillaume on reeds and producer Laurent David on bass, a combination of American and European artists. All of the members contribute compositions to Theory of Everything. The music is highly improvised yet mostly approachable modern jazz. "Implosion", "Time Travel" and "Separating Circle" are highlights of eight selections.

Arseny Rykov

Russian-based pianist and composer Arseny Rykov leads a very skilled trio with bassist Nikolai Olshansky and drummer Vitaliy Epov. They play a vibrant, jazz-fusion set of eight songs over 42 minutes. Among the best are "Anxiety", "Breath" and "Broken Watch". The goal of Forgotten Melody is to unite people and we suggest that it certainly imparts good feelings.

Forgotten Melody

79

2021
Rainy Day
Fusion



Photo: Ivan Pustovalov

Contemporary Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
RABERG /CHASE/McMAHON	<u>The Prospector</u>	<i>Orbis</i>	76	C ^F
JOSH SINTON	<u>Céreemonie/Musique</u>	<i>FIP</i>	76	C ^P
CHRIS WHITE EXPERIENCE	<u>Production Sessions: Volume five!</u>	<i>Sunfish</i>	76	C ^P
TODD MOSBY	<u>Aerial Views</u>	<i>Mosby Music Group</i>	74	C ^P
NORTONK	<u>Nortonk</u>	<i>Biophilia</i>	73	C ^F
MATT PANAYIDES	<u>Field Theory</u>	<i>Pacific Coast</i>	73	C ^F
DAVE BRUBECK	<u>Lullabies</u>	<i>Verve</i>	72	C ^P
CRYPTIC CADET	<u>Disconnected</u>	<i>Nonebody</i>	72	C ^P
THROTTLE ELEVATOR MUSIC	<u>Final Floor</u>	<i>Wide Hive</i>	72	C ^P
YVES ROUSSEAU	<u>Fragments</u>	<i>Yolk Music</i>	72	C ^P
PROFESSOR AUCOIN	<u>Mystified</u>	<i>Tim Aucoin</i>	71	C ^f
DAN BLAKE	<u>Da Fé</u>	<i>Sunnyside</i>	71	C ^F
MAURICIO MORALES	<u>Luna</u>	<i>Outside In</i>	71	C ^F
PLS TRIO	<u>Cosmonauts</u>	<i>Dot Time</i>	71	C ^P
JUNK MAGIC	<u>Compass Confusion</u>	<i>Pyroclastic</i>	70	C ^P
SERGE LAZAREVITCH	<u>Still There, Still Free</u>	<i>Rat Records</i>	68	C ^F
SANTIAGO QUINTANS	<u>Kiss The Joy</u>	<i>Yolk Music</i>	67	C ^P
ROBERTO NEGRO	<u>Papier Ciseau</u>	<i>Label Bleu</i>	66	C ^F
DENNIS REA	<u>Giant Steppes</u>	<i>Moonjune</i>	66	C ^P
SUSAN ALCORN	<u>Pedernal</u>	<i>Relative Pitch</i>	62	C ^F
BENOIT DELBECQ	<u>The Weight of Light</u>	<i>Pyroclastic</i>	62	C ^F
THE MASTELOTTOS	<u>A Romantic Guide to King Crimson</u>	<i>7d Media</i>	59	C ^P
DOM MINASI	<u>Eight Hands One Mind</u>	<i>Unseen Rain</i>	59	C ^P
THE END	<u>Allt Är Intet</u>	<i>Rare Noise</i>	58	C ^P
JUDY STUART	<u>The Apostolic Session</u>	<i>Inky Dot Media</i>	56	C ^P
BWANA IGUANA	<u>Around the World @ the Speed of Light</u>	<i>The Music Werx</i>	44	C ^P

O's Rating Scale (X)

0 65 80 95

Pass	Contemplate	Buy	Strong Buy
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O's Place Reflections

Marcus Shelby



Summer Sundays

This was an excellent event, the first of a series summer. It was a recorded, virtual set paired with the 2016 Maestro Red Blend, and it was delicious!

of weekly music on Sundays at the winery this Mondavi wine, a Meritage package. We drank

Jazz bassist Marcus Shelby led a trio with pianist Adam Shulman and featured vocalist Tiffany Austin. They played jazzy blues, a timely set that included moments in African American history. It was titled Black Music and Freedom. Tiffany's voice is rich, soulful and riveting, like she stepped right out of the church! The trio is polished as we've come to expect from Shelby.

There was a great interview of Marcus by host Liam Mayclem. They spoke of the music, COVID19, Black Lives Matter, the election, and harmonizing through music. Shelby described his evolution through the Black church and becoming a musician, educator and upstanding citizen. He was inspired by Wynton Marsalis while studying engineering and playing basketball in college. He knew after hearing Marsalis live that he needed to dust off his bass and dedicate himself to music. We're thankful that he did.

Mondavi made a \$5,000 donation to the LoveLife Foundation in the name of Marcus Shelby. LoveLife supports abused women and children with clothing, food and shelter.

Shelby quoted Nina Simone, "An artist must document life around them!" And on this outing, the Trio did that very well indeed. You can view it on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtTbhE7HKhQ>

Mondavi ran the Summer Sundays bi-weekly series last year and we hope they continue. They are not all jazz but they are all done well!

Gene Dunlap



Peaceful Days

We recently came across this 2005 Dunlap. Peaceful Days was the last of and it is excellent smooth jazz, support from guitarist Perry Hughes on "Sometime When I'm Alone" and "Sweet Sticky Thing". There are many guest appearances: Everette Harp on "Fearless", George Duke on "Dorinda", and Earl Klug on "I'd Rather Be Loving You". Mostly original work, this one stands the test of time and is our featured *Throwback!*

Final Notes Pianist and composer Frank Kimbrough died from a heart attack on December 30, 2020. He was 64. Renowned tuba titan **Howard Johnson**, founder of the original *Saturday Night Live Band* died on January 11th, 2021 at the age of 79 following a string of illnesses. Jazz Fusion keyboardist **Chick Corea** died from cancer on February 8 at the age of 79. Jazz drummer **Ralph Peterson** died due to complications from cancer on March 1. He was 58. Prominent Chilean jazz trumpeter Christian Cuturrufo died on March 19, 2021 from complications of Covid-19. He was 48. The musical contributions of these fine jazz professionals will remain with us forever.

O's Place Features



Photo: Chris Lee

Yoko Miwa

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Songs of Joy

Pianist, composer and producer Yoko Mira assembles a trio with Will Slater (b) and Scott Goulding (d) for Songs of Joy. We liked the festive beat on “Largo Desolato”, the warmth of the title track and the swinging spirit on “No Problem” & “The Rainbirds”. The interaction between the trio is seamless making for a very good recording, a mix of originals and classics. It’s happy music that Yoko assembled to ease the pain of the pandemic. It certainly helps.

Wayne Alpern

Arranger and producer Wayne with Jukebox. He chose the Dorian Gretchen Pusch (fl), Gerard Reuter Kramer-Johansen (horn), and Adrian Morejon (bassoon) play the arrangements passionately and with precision. The music includes classical, jazz and popular music, all reimagined in Alpern’s magical vision. You’ll recognize and appreciate these songs.

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Henri Elkan
Pop Ballads
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Jukebox

Alpern has created a fine piece of work Wind Quintet to express his vision. (oboe), Benjamin Fingland (cl), Karl

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