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### O'pening Notes

We continue to experience music made during the pandemic. There are solo efforts made in isolation, introspective wonders, and collaborations that used technology to bring artists together virtually. Most benefited from sufficient time to hone their productions.

Our scoring system has been well-received and we will now base the inclusion of feature reviews on the score. This differs from our past practice where only reviews with performance ratings of 4- or higher were considered for features, regardless of sound quality and presentation ratings. The cut off for inclusion is now targeted at scores of 74 or better! We think this will result in less confusion and greater consistency.

**O's Place** sponsored the *Jazz Arts Charlotte Educational Workshop* again this year. We had the opportunity to speak with guest artist **Wycliffe Gordon** on June 28. You can find excerpts of that **Exclusive Interview** on page 21!

### O's Place Jazz Magazine

P.O. Box 38430  
Charlotte, NC 28278

---> Sound advice at a nice price!

[www.OsPlace.Jazz.com](http://www.OsPlace.Jazz.com)

# O'pening Notes cont.

It's a family affair with George Coleman and George Coleman, Jr. in our *Father and Son Feature* on page 28. We call it generational jazz with great DNA!

In the mean time, the quality of the music is increasing and you'll find over 119 new reviews in these 36 pages.

Enjoy the music and your summer!

O

[www.OsPlaceJazz.com](http://www.OsPlaceJazz.com)

## THE TOP TEN SCORES

1. **TROY ROBERTS** - [Live at Perth Jazz Festival](#)
2. **TOWNE GALAHER** - [Organ Trio Live](#)
3. **LAS VEGAS BONEHEADS** - [Sixty and Still Cooking](#)
3. **MARC JORDAN** - [Waiting for the Sun to Rise](#)
5. **BEN SHER** - [Samba For Tarsila](#)
6. **RAY BLUE** - [#People](#)
7. **STEVE SMITH** - [Time Flies](#)
7. **RAFAEL PAYARE** - [Mahler Symphony](#)
7. **JOHNNY BRITT** - [AFTER WE PLAY](#)
10. **EDMAR CASTAÑEDA** - [Viento Sur](#)

Click on the "ARTIST'S NAME" to go directly to the review

O's primary listening is done with a Sony XA777ESS AC D player, Ayre C5-xe<sup>MP</sup> 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.

## O's Rating Scale (X)

0 65 80 95

Pass

Contemplate

Buy

Strong Buy

Unbiased Sound Advice *from* O's Place Jazz

# Top Traditional Picks

## O's Notes

ARTIST Title Label Perf/Sound	
<b>TAIKO SAITO</b> T <sup>A</sup> <u>Tears of A Cloud</u> <i>Trouble In The East</i> 75	Japanese free jazz artist Taiko Saito plays marimba & vibraphone appearing in a solo performance on <u>Tears of a Cloud</u> , his latest endeavor. We liked the intricacies of “Sound Gradation”, the eerie “Underground”, and the subtle energy of “Angry Bee”. It’s a convoluted, dynamic encounter that is very engaging!
<b>ARI SILBERMAN</b> <u>Beneath The Canopy</u> T <sup>B</sup> <i>D. Rotem</i> 77	Ari Silberman plays tenor sax, clarinet, flute, composed, and arranged the music for <u>Beneath the Canopy</u> . We liked the mellow “Waitin’”, “Blossoming into Blessing”, “Hummingbird”, and the bouncy swing of the title track with a warm sax from Silberman. Erin Bentlage adds soft lyrics on “If The Moon Turns Green” to round out the set.
<b>JUNE BISANTZ &amp; GORDON MORELL</b> <u>It's Been A Long, Long Time</u> T <sup>b</sup> <i>Arabesque</i> 76	June Bisantz (vocals) and Gordon Morell (vocals, g) lead a band that includes Lorenzo Martinez (perc), Tom Lackner (d), Tom Ball (harmonica), and George Friedenthal (p). They swing on “I’m Gonna Sit Right Down And Write Myself A Letter” featuring Jim Mooy (t), followed by the country swagger of “Any Old Time”, a well paired couple of tunes. Next up is “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow” with Latin instrumentation. <u>It’s Been A Long, Long Time</u> is a well-coordinated set of songs describing a roller coaster, romantic encounter, musical partnership, and the incredible friendship between June and Gordon.
<b>LAFAYETTE HARRIS</b> T <sup>S</sup> 74 <u>Swingin' Up In Harlem</u> <i>Savant</i>	Pianist Lafayette Harris, Jr. is <u>Swingin’ Up In Harlem</u> with bassist Peter Washington and drummer Lewis Nash. This is a polished trio that plays seamlessly with rich harmony. They play fresh arrangements of ten familiar classic selections. The music mirrors its title in an enjoyable session.
<b>JIMMY HOBSON</b> <u>Premier Chant</u> T <sup>B</sup> <i>Bustleing</i> 74	Drummer, composer Jimmy Hobson assembles a fine team to support him on <u>Premier Chant</u> . They open with “Rattled featuring Oz Ezzeldin (p) and Piro Patton (vibes) followed by the heavily syncopated “Coll The Hots” with Bruce McLeod (g), and “Duetette” with Paul Hanson (bassoon) and Ken Cook (B3). We also enjoyed the title track with Noel Jewkes (flugelhorn).
<b>MATT OTTO</b> T <sup>B</sup> <u>Kansas City Trio</u> <i>JCR</i> 74	Saxophonist Matt Otto is a master of improvisation, compiling over 50 albums during the past three decades. Lately he favors the trio format with bass and drum accompaniment. Marty Morrison (d), Ben Leifer (b) John Kizilarmut (d), Bob Bowman (b), Jeff Harshbarger (b) and Brian Steever (d) join Otto in various configurations for <u>Kansas City Trio</u> . Highlights include the swinging “When Will The Blues Leave”, “Mohawk”, “Darn That Dream” and “Segment”.

# O's Place Features

## EDMAR CASTAÑEDA

## Viento Sur

86  
E. Castaneda  
Latin 2023

Photo: Edmar Castañeda

Latin jazz harpist Edmar Castañeda leads a nonet, his World Ensemble for Viento Sur. His wife, Colombian vocalist Andrea Tierra softens the mood on several selections, notably “Raza” and “Piedra y Camino”, with fine sax accompaniment by Felipe Lamoglia and trombonist Ryan Reberle. We also enjoyed “Arpaquito”, and “La Vie en Chande” with vibrant solos from Gregoire Maret (harmonica), Itai Kriss (fl), Reberle, Helio Alves (p), Rodrigo Villalón (d), and Marcelo Woloski (perc).



## Loïs Le Van & Alban Darche

2023 Ballads  
Yolk 79

## Les Mots Blues

Les Mots Blues features vocalist Loïs Le Van and tenor saxophonist Alban Darche. They perform in many different trios with different musicians on piano, guitar, bass, sax, and harp. They open with a soft ballad, “Comme D’habitude”, then dance on “I’ll Be Seeing You” with Sylvan Rifflet (t-sax) joining the headliners. We also enjoyed “Les Moulins De Mon Coeur” with Baptiste Trotignon (p), and “My Imagination” with Leïla Soldevila (b). The arrangements are unique with lots of air around the musicians. The one grew on us!

## An American Rhapsody

## CALEFAX

81  
Pentatone  
Classic  
2023

This is classic, jazz performed by Calefax, a Dutch reed quintet featuring five musicians: Oliver Boekhoorn (oboe), Bart de Kater (cl), Raaf Hekkema (sax), Jelte Althuis (b-cl) and Alban Wesly (bassoon). They give us a delightful performance with arrangements of American classics. Highlights include the “Rhapsody In Blue”, and “Excursions” suites, “Satin Doll”, and “Overjoyed”. An American Rhapsody is a musical road trip with an excellent map (liner notes) across the United States that will resonate with many, reflecting our rich diversity in music cultures.



Photo: ©Merlijn Doornik



# O's Place Features

## Volume 1: Small Ensemble Repertoire

Vibraphonist Cecilia Smith is not well known but very well accomplished! The Cleveland native now resides in NY. She's got over 30 years of experience, a graduate and professor at Berklee. The first volume of The Mary Lou Williams Resurgence Project includes Lafayette Harris,

Jr., or Carlton Holmes on piano & B3, Kenny Davis (b) and Ron Savage (d). There are bluesy vocals from Carla Cook on "What's Your Story Morning Glory" and "Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone". There's also a legendary ode, "Who Was Mary Lou Williams" featuring Spoken word by Sheila Anderson. We also enjoyed "It's A Grand Night For Swinging" with a fine solo from Davis.

## Cecilia Smith

83

*Innova  
R&B+Jazz  
2023*



Photo: Cecili Smith

### Israel Tanenbaum

78

*Latin  
Zoho  
2023*

Impressions has a deep, personal Israel Tanenbaum. He returns to his what he considers "his first Latin jazz (congas, bongos), and. Jonathan Powell (t) are among many fine artists present. The horns paint a festive atmosphere on the opening tune, "Strange Destiny" and the Latinbaum Jazz Ensemble takes flight! We felt the Calypso vibe on "Mambo Raro", a groove that was present throughout the session.

### Impressions

stamp from pianist, producer, bandleader Puerto Rican roots and musical friends for album ever". John Benitas (b), Richie Flores (congas, bongos), and. Jonathan Powell (t) are among many fine artists present. The horns paint a festive atmosphere on the opening tune, "Strange Destiny" and the Latinbaum Jazz Ensemble takes flight! We felt the Calypso vibe on "Mambo Raro", a groove that was present throughout the session.

Ryan Keberle is one of New York's finest trombonists. His love for Brazilian music leads to Considerando, his second collaboration with Collectiv do Brasil: Paulinho Vicente (d), Felipe Silveira (p), and Felipe Brisola (b). They celebrate the songbook of composer/guitarist/vocalist Edu Lobo. The combination is beautiful. Keberle shines on "Blackbird", "Edu", and "Even Now" while Silveira makes a fine statement on "Casa Forte" in a delightful engagement!Experiment", "One For All", "MRab" and the title track.

## Ryan Keberle

### Considerando

77

*Modern  
Alternate  
Side  
2023*



Photo: Ryan Keberle

# O's Place Features

## BEN SIDRAN

### Swing State

Ben Sidran is a 60-year veteran, keyboardist and producer who leads a trio for Swing State. Billy Peterson plays bass with Ben's 45-year-old son Leo on the drums. They play eight swinging selections including two takes on the mysterious "Laura", "Stompin' at the Savoy", "Lullaby of the Leaves", and "Tuxedo Junction", the latter two with Ben in rare form!

Photo: Ben Sidran



## The Verve Jazz Ensemble

Drummer Josh Feldstein leads The Verve Jazz Ensemble (VJE), seven members who perform in six different configurations from a trio to the All In septet. They are a high energy band! We liked the layered brass on "The Odd Couple", the lazy ballad "Pensive Mess", the subtle bossa nova on "Once I Loved", and the sax/trumpet cat and mouse melody on "What I Meant to Say Was" featuring Jon Blanck (t-sax) and Tatum Greenblatt (t).

2023 Swing 77

Light Groove Media

All In

Jazz Ensemble (VJE),

## Christine Jensen

78  
Justin Time  
Modern  
2023

### Day Moon

Canadian alto saxophonist Christine Jensen is in rare form on Day Moon, her latest album. She assembles a band with Steve Amirault (p), Adrian Vedady (b) and Jim Doxas (d) to perform mostly original tunes. Jensen's tones are pure and expressive. Highlights include "Lined", "Twenty Twenty Blues", "Etude de Mars" and the title track.



Photo: Chrstine Jensen

<b>ARTIST</b> <b>Title</b> <i>Label</i> <b>Rating</b>	<b><u>Big Band Picks</u></b> <b>O's Notes</b>
<b>LAS VEGAS</b> <b>BONEHEADS</b> <b>T<sup>N</sup></b> <u><b>Sixty and Still</b></u> <u><b>Cookin'</b></u> <i>Holman</i> <b>91</b>	<p>The Las Vegas Boneheads are a large ensemble centered around trombonists Nathan Tanouye, Nate Kimball, Andrew Boostrom, Hai Macaggi, Sonny Hernandez, Ralph Pressler, and leader Carl Miller. They play with a swinging style in front of a tight rhythm section including Steve Flora (b), Uli Geissendoerfer (p) and Larry Aberman (d). The harmonized bones make <u>Sixty and Still Cookin'</u> a notable session. "Skylark", "I Thought About You", "Cherokee", and "Giant Steps" are notable.</p>
<b>RAFAEL PAYARE</b> <u><b>Mahler</b></u> <b>T<sup>N</sup></b> <u><b>Symphony No. 5</b></u> <i>Pentatone</i> <b>87</b>	<p>Rafael Payare is a Venezuelan conductor taking the world by storm. His principal role is Music Director of the Montreal Symphony but he has made or will make splashes with the San Diego Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, and numerous international venues. On this recording, he conducts <u>Mahler's Symphony No. 5</u>, performed by Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal. Yes, we've managed to sneak in some classical music under the auspices of Big Band! It is a lively, dynamic performance, grand, and full of splendor. For jazz fans, it's a worthy change of pace and for audiophiles, it is an exceptional recording. Our favorites are the cinematic "Stuermisch bewegt Mit groesster Vehemenz", and the peaceful "Adagietto".</p>
<b>PLANET D</b> <b>NONET</b> <b>T<sup>N</sup></b> <u><b>Blues To Be</b></u> <u><b>There</b></u> <i>Eastlawn</i> <b>81</b>	<p>The Planet D Nonet is a Detroit based large ensemble led by percussionist RJ Spangler and trumpeter James O'Donnell. They celebrate the music of Duke Ellington during his Cotton Club years (late 1950s -early 1960s). Right from the start, this energetic, swinging band grabs your attention. They will have you on the edge of your seat, anticipating the next song. "Moon Maiden" features trombonist John "Tbone" Paxton singing! We also get the raspy, vocals of trumpeter James O'Donnell on "Take the A Train". But it's the instrumental work that stands out on <u>Blues To Be There</u>, a fine salute to Duke.</p>
<b>CANADIAN JAZZ</b> <b>COLLECTIVE</b> <b>T<sup>N</sup></b> <u><b>Septology</b></u> <i>HGBS Blue</i> <b>78</b>	<p>The Canadian Jazz Collective is a septet featuring composers Derrick Gardner (t, flugelhorn), Lorne Lofsky (g) and Kirk MacDonald (t-sax) with Virginia MacDonald (cl), Brian Dickinson (p), Neil Swainson (b), and Bern Reiter (d). Gardner takes center stage on "Dig That" with help from MacDonald. Lofsky swings on "Highway 9" and adds a compelling solo on "Terre De DuSable". We are also keen on "Shadows" and "Silent Voices".</p>

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# Traditional Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
LARA DOWNES	<u>Love At Last</u>	<i>Pentatone</i>	73	T <sup>b</sup>
DANNY FOX	<u>Time Took Care Of It</u>	<i>Adhyaropa</i>	73	T <sup>B</sup>
JOE LOCASIO	<u>November</u>	<i>Tafford</i>	73	T <sup>B</sup>
ALTIN SENCALAR	<u>In Good Standing</u>	<i>Posi-Tone</i>	73	T <sup>B</sup>
BRENDAN LANIGHAN	<u>A Little Optimism</u>	<i>Talley</i>	72	T <sup>B</sup>
ADAM LARSON	<u>With Love, From New York</u>	<i>Outside In</i>	72	T <sup>B</sup>
CECILE MCLORIN-SALVANT	<u>Mélusine</u>	<i>Nonesuch</i>	72	T <sup>b</sup>
BEN MILLER	<u>Feathers Of Ma'at</u>	<i>Truth Revolution</i>	72	T <sup>B</sup>
MAFALDA MINNOZZI	<u>Natural Impression</u>	<i>MPI</i>	72	T <sup>L</sup>
JOSE SOTO	<u>The Ancestral Call</u>	<i>Jose Soto</i>	72	T <sup>L</sup>
DIZZY & FAY	<u>Hooked</u>	<i>Canadian Council</i>	71	T <sup>N</sup>
ROBYN SPANGLER	<u>Last Call</u>	<i>Spangler Enter.</i>	71	T <sup>b</sup>
BRAD MEHLDAU	<u>The Folly of Desire</u>	<i>Pentatone</i>	69	T <sup>b</sup>
FRED FARELL	<u>Season's Journey</u>	<i>Fred J. Farell</i>	64	T <sup>b</sup>

## Joey Locascio

## Joey DeFrancesco Meets Joey Locascio

Crooner Joey Locascio teams up with the late Joey DeFrancesco to perform four brief tunes. The musical team is strong including Paul Bollenback on guitar. They play on time, on point, sizzling B3-oriented jazz moments. Among the best are “You Don’t Know Me” and “Mack the Knife”.

2023 Ballads  
77 J. Locascio

## 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**





# O's Latin Features

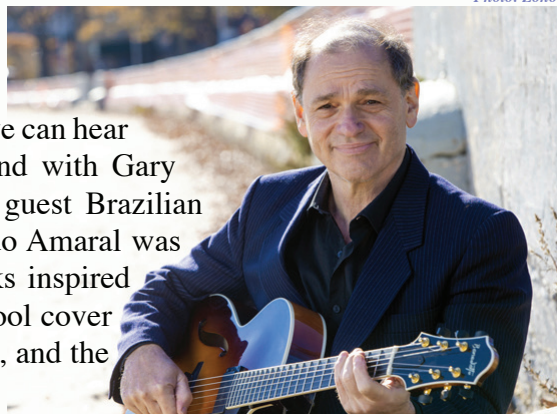
## Ben Sher

90  
Zoho  
Latin  
2023

## Samba for Tarsila

Photo: Zoho

Guitarist Ben Sher lights it up on Samba For Tarsila. He is a Pittsburgh native who was influenced by another famous musician from Pittsburgh, George Benson, and we can hear that ascendancy. Ben assembles a first-rate band with Gary Fisher (p), Gregory M. Jones (b), and special guest Brazilian drummer, Vanderlei Pereira. Tarsila de Aguiar do Amaral was a Brazilian modernist painter. Her vibrant works inspired Sher's soundscapes. We enjoyed “Twilight”, a cool cover of “Never Can Say Goodbye”, “Mas Que Nada”, and the title track in a very engaging session.



## Luiz Milan

Latin 2023

## Brazilian March

Luiz Millan is an under the radar Jazz Station 80 Brazilian vocalist and composer who stands tall and surfaces here with a wealth of talent! There are beautiful, harmonies from The New York Voices on “Full Moon”, warm Brazilian rhythms on “Andar Descalço” featuring Randy Brecker (t). There are bossa nova beats on “Morungaba”, and sweet ballads like “Ecos Da Juventude”. Bassist Mark Egan, David Sanborn (a-sax), Eddie Daniels (cl), Ada Rovatti (t-Sax), and Lisa Ono (vocals) all make notable contributions. Brazilian March is a fine taste of the music and spirit of the country!

## Jacob Young

81  
Fusion  
ECM  
2023

## Eventually

Norwegian jazz guitarist, composer Jacob Young leads a trio with bassist Mats Eilertsen and drummer Audubon Kleive on Eventually. They explore several approaches to jazz fusion, all centered on Young’s compositions and prowess. Most of the melodies come from Young or Eilertsen, with pulsating accents from Kleive. “Told You In October”, the peaceful “Moon Over Meno”, “Inside”, and the electric “Schönstedstraße” are highlights.



Photo: Colin Eick

# O's Piano Features

## Jose Luiz Martins

## Reflections

Brazilian pianist, composer, arranger and producer Jose Luiz Martins now resides in Washington DC where he leads a core band with Michael Chylewski (b), and John Rossy (d, vibes). The program has soft corners and a soothing feeling that makes for easy listening. "317 East 32nd Street", "Bolero", and "Hindsight" are highlights. Alex Hamburger warms the set with vocals on "Stairway To The Stars".



82  
Bebop  
J.L. Martins  
2023

Photo: Joe Luiz Martins

## O's Place Jazz Ruler™

### Traditional

### Contemporary

1900

1920

1940

1960

1970

1980

2000

Ragtime T<sup>R</sup>  
Dixie T<sup>D</sup>

Blues&Ballads T<sup>b</sup>  
Swing T<sup>S</sup>

Bebop T<sup>B</sup>  
Big Band T<sup>N</sup>

Latin T<sup>L</sup>  
Free T<sup>A</sup>

Fusion C<sup>F</sup>  
R&B+Jazz C<sup>R</sup>

Funk C<sup>F</sup>  
Pop+Jazz C<sup>P</sup>

Acid C<sup>A</sup>



82  
Solla  
Latin  
2023

Photo: Emilio Solla

## Emilio Solla

## El Siempre Mar

Argentinian pianist and composer Emilio Solla teams up with Spanish vocalist, saxophonist Antonio Lizana on El Siempre Mar. "Zomba Para No Morir" is the first of many warm ballads featuring Lizana. We also enjoyed "El Otro Mar", and "Siempre Se Vuelve A Buenos Aires". Special guest Roxana Amad joins in for "Lejos De Casa" that also includes strings. The combinations of music and voice makes this album special.

# O's Piano Features

## Jim Alfredson

### *Family Business*

Jim Alfredson mans the B3 and leads a band with Michael Dease (tb), Alex Sipiagin (t), Diego Rivera (sax), Will Bernard (g) and EJ Strickland (d) on Family Business. They're cookin' on "Foster Blues", with crisp horn harmonies on "Winkin', Blinkin', and Nod", before simmering on "REO Town". They get funky on "The Side Eye", and the entire crew gets involved on the mellow, relaxed title track. Alfredson is at the heart of it all with 7 originals plus one from Dease, and the cool cover of "Peepin".

**78**  
**R&B+Jazz**  
**Posi-Tone**  
**2023**

Photo Credit: Akash Wadhvani



## Yelena Eckemoff

**Ballads 2023**  
**L&H 76**

### *Lonely Man and His Fish*

Lonely Man and His Fish is the next chapter for the Russian-born composer, pianist Yelena Eckemoff. For this outing she works with Kirk Knuffke (cornet), Maseru Kona (fl), Ben Street (b) and Eric Harland (d, perc) in a lengthy 87-minute set of mixed tempo songs on 2 discs. "Breakfast For Two", "Man and His Fish", "In Hospital", the free spirited "Pet Store", and the warm "Song For Spark" are among the best of 14 selections.

## Rachel Eckroth

**81**  
**Ballads**  
**Blackbird**  
**Sessions**  
**2023**

### *One*

One is a celebration of solo piano featuring Rachel Eckroth, a skilled composer, bandleader, singer, arranger, and producer. She combines jazz and pop genres to arrive at an enticing set of eleven, mostly original compositions coming in at ~33 minutes. They are easily embraceable, pleasing ballads that make for a relaxing session.



Photo: ACW



# O's Piano Features

## Richard X Bennet & Matt Parker

Photo: Richard X Bennett

78  
BYNK  
Bebop  
2023

### Parker Plays X

This is the first collaboration of composer, keyboardist Richard X Bennett and saxophonist Matt Parker. They form a quartet with Adam Armstrong (b) and Julian Edmond (d). Bennett typically writes and performs modern jazz while Parker leans more towards free jazz. In this session Parker Plays X but his spontaneous improvisation surfaces in a complementary fashion, as on “Countertransference”. Generally, they swing hard as on “Bus 61”, and soothe us with ballads like “Semi Vintage”. The overall impact is positive notably on “Sagebrush”.

### Peter Smith

2023 Modern  
BluJazz 76

### Dollar Dreams

This rousing pianist at the core of the band in this recording is Peter Smith. Mike Gurrola (b) and Reggie Quinerly (d) join him to form a vibrant trio. Dollar Dreams is a set that's ready for a stroll with soft and peaceful tunes as well as upbeat head-bobbers! Among the best tunes are “Sweet Georgia Brown”, a cool cover of “Love For Sale”, and “No, You Go”.

## Satoko Fujii

76  
Libra  
Avant Garde  
2023

### Torrent

Satoko Fujii cannot resist playing inside of the toy box, her piano, a majestic toy that has given many countless thrills and adventurous excitement to her listeners. She is equally capable, formidable, on the keys as well. Torrent, a solo effort, displays a wealth of talent and inspiration. It is a representation of the many moods she feels, as well as the moods of those who surround her, not only in Japan, but globally. We are again excited by her efforts. “Part Three”, “Part Four” including Tamura's creative scatting and “Part Five”.





# O's Piano Features

## Russ Lossing

### Alternate Side Parking Music

76  
Avant Garde  
Aqua Piazza  
2023



Photo: Russ Lossing

Free jazz pianist Russ Lossing forms a quartet with Adam Kolker (sax), Matt Pavolka (b), and Dayeon Seok (d). While the music is spontaneous, we found it to be quite approachable. The musicians feed off each other's vibes in a complementary, yet provocative way, as on "Cloned". There are introspective, mysterious selections like "Next 3 Km" where the musicians play more sequentially. We also enjoyed the syncopation on "Move It Over", and the march of "Double Park".

## Michael Constantino

### The Song Inside The Tune

Polished pianist Michael Costantino forms a trio with bassist Harvie S and drummer Thierry Arpino for The Song Inside The Tune. The program is a good mix of jazzy, instrumental pop tunes, freshly arranged jazz classics and modern jazz. "Satin Doll", "Speak Softly Love" and "Just The Two Of Us" are among the best.

74 Pop+Jazz 2023  
M. Constantino

Photo: Dan Kasberger

## Kevin O'Connell

### Hot New York Minutes

Jazz pianist Kevin O'Connell leads a fine band for Hot New York Minutes, his latest release. Paul Gill (b) and Mark Taylor (d) round out the rhythm section. Saxophonist Adam Brenner (alto and tenor) is the featured artist soloing throughout the set notably on "One For George". Kevin gets his groove on as well with dashing, tasty exchanges with Gill as on "Newest Blues". Other highlights include "Biskit", and "Choose Now".

74  
Ignoramus  
Modern  
2023



photo: Dan Kasberger, Chicago

# O's Sax Features



Photo: Troy Roberts

97  
R&B+Jazz  
*Toy Robot*  
2023

## Troy Roberts

### Live at Perth Jazz Festival

Venerable sax player Housto7 seemingly getting better as he ages. He shares the stage with polished musicians who contribute to yet another fine collection. Start the fireplace, grab a brandy and enjoy! Highlights include “Put Your Head On My Shoulder”, “Please Send Me Someone To Love”, and “Again”.

## Mike Allen

2023 Modern 75  
*Cellar Music*

### To A Star

Saxophonist Mike Allen forms a cordless trio with bassist John Lee and drummer Carl Allen for To A Star, a combination of studio and live recordings at Frankie’s Jazz Club in Vancouver. This is a swinging collection with many very good songs including spirited solos. “Hot Stuff”, “What Is This Thing Called Love”, Tabasco Burn”, “One-Up-Man-Ship” and the cool take of “Stars Fell On Alabama” are some of the bests.

#People is saxophonist Ray Blue’s latest release. He leads a band that includes Eddie Allen (t), Kenny Barron (p), Essiet Okon Essiet (b) and Bobby Sanabria (perc). They take a Latin turn on “Fungii Mama”, add a taste of calypso on “Cross Continental Spirit”, and “Always With A Purpose”, then shine on classics like “Hard Times”. We also enjoyed “Dreamer”, “When Sunny Gets Blue”, and “We’ll Be Together Again”, a fine duet with bassist Essiet.

## Ray Blue

### #People

87  
R&B+Jazz  
*Jazzheads*  
2023



Photo: Anna Niedermeier

# O's Sax Features

## Eric Alexander *A New Beginning*



Photo: Eric Alexander

82  
Modern  
High Note  
2023

Venerable tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander ushers us out of the pandemic with *A New Beginning*. He used his time in isolation to dust off the cobwebs on his alto sax. Yes, after 30+ years, this is his recording debut on alto! David Hazeltine (p), John Webber (b) and Joe Farnsworth (d) are his powerful rhythm section. The program includes hot swingers, as well as luscious ballads with strings (conducted by Bill Dobbins), making this an exciting recording. “She Was Too Good To Me”, “Blues For Diane”, “All My Tomorrows”, and “Anita” are highlights.

## Gianluigi Traversi

77

Pop+Jazz  
ECM  
2023

This is a classical performance, not symphony and find it quite enjoyable. sax, with concertmaster Stephano Consonanti means constant extravagances. The music is comprised of ancient and modern themes, profound yet approachable. It is in an hour-long performance including fifteen selections. The dynamics are excellent, encouraging you to sit back and enjoy the show. We completed the session feeling relaxed and replenished.

## *Stravaganze Consonanti*

jazz, but occasionally we make a trip to the Gianluigi Traversi plays clarinets and alto Montinari leading the orchestra. Stravaganze

## Christopher McBride

### Ramon

Harlem based saxophonist Christopher McBride assembles a fine team of musicians for Ramon. The core is JS Williams (t), Jonathan Edward Thomas (p), Noah Jackson (b), Cedric Easton (d), Corey A Wallace (tb), and Luke Carlos O'Reiley (keyboards) with several guests weighing in. They cook on “Bronx Unchained”, and are steaming on “Dope”. J Hoard sings on “Your Eyes Can’t Lie”, and Bobby Broom adds blues guitar for “You Put A Smile On My Face”. The mode is fresh, modern jazz that will have broad appeal.

2023  
C. McBride  
Modern  
81



Photo: Christopher McBride



# O's Sax Features

## Ben Wendell

### All One

Ben Wendel plays tenor & soprano sax, bassoon and EFX. He arranged and produced All One, six selections, both vocal and instrumental, compiled from home studio recordings around the world, during the pandemic. They open with a stirring rendition of “I Loves You Porgy” featuring Cécile McLorin Salvant (vocals). Next up is “Wanderers” featuring Terence Blanchard (t) nestled among the layered brass. We also enjoyed “Tenderly” featuring José James (vocals).

Photo: Dave Stapleton

78  
Big Band  
2023  
EDN



## Tobias Meinhart

77 Fusion  
2023 Sunnyside

### Dark Horse

German saxophonist, composer Tobias Meinhart recorded his latest release live at the A-Trane in Berlin. We enjoyed the racy opener “Luna Park” at full throttle, and they never let up! “Dreamers” features guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel who weighs in on many selections. We also enjoyed “Dreamers” and the mysterious “Sonic River”. They swing hard on the finale, “Berlin People” with Tobias and Rosenwinkel sharing the melody. *Berlin People* - Dark Horse is a strong effort.

## PJ Perry

### No Hugs

77  
Modern  
Cellar 20  
2023

Alto saxophonist PJ Perry seized the pandemic as a perfect time to write music without interruptions. He collaborated with Toronto-based Neil Swainson for all eight selections on No Hugs. The title is derived from the absence of embraces during the COVID-period. They open swinging with the walking bass of Paul Johnson on “Too Soon Gone” including fine solos from trumpeter Bob Tildesley and pianist Chris Andrew. We enjoyed “So Long”, “March of the Covidians”, the title track, and the harmonized horns on “The Kestrel”.





# O's Drummer Features

## Galaher Towner Organ Trio Live

Photo: The Rock Shop

The groove feels right from the start with “One For McGriff” followed by a cover of “Fever”. Lonnie Gasperini is cooking on the B3 complemented by guitarist Marvin Horne’s bluesy leads. Leader, drummer Towner Galaher pounds a solid beat that keeps our heads boppin’! There are 14 tracks in ~70 Minutes of pleasure. “Lover Man”, “Alligator Boogaloo”, “Lonnie’s Funk”, and “Mellow Mood” are some of the bests making Organ Trio Live a winner!

**94**  
*Rhythm Royal*  
**Blues 2023**



Photo: Jack Roman

## Chembo Corniel

## Artista, Musicos Y Poetas

**Latin 2023**  
**79 Chemboro**

Chembo Corniel is a master percussionist and bandleader who invites a talented team of musicians to pay homage to his roots and forebears. The program is mostly energetic, syncopated instrumentals, with poetic spoken word on “P.R.I.D.E.” By Ismael Carlo East, and Felipe Luciano on “Red Hook Rumba”. Other highlights are “Dalila”, “Lagrima De Monte”, and “Big City Gossip”.

**87**  
**R&B+Jazz**  
**Wounded Bird**  
**2023**

## Steve Smith

## Time Flies

Drummer Steve Smith is back in action with his band, Vital Information for Time Flies. They are a trio featuring pianist Manuel Valera and bassist Janet Gwizdala. The sound is large, and the groove is infectious on the opener “Emergence”, fueled by Smith and running through the entire band. There is excellent work by all three musicians on “Tempus Fugue It”. Guest saxophonist George Garzone comes in on the title track with a more relaxed pace and then drops down another notch on “Self Portrait”. The tempo changes but the groove remains stable over twelve selections for an hour of prime entertainment. Standouts are “What Is This Thing Called Love” and “No Qualm” featuring guest Mike Mainers on vibes. The Bonus Disc is a jam session featuring the trio with Garzone in an 8-part jazz-fusion experience titled “A Prayer For The Generations”.

Photo: Alejandro Padron



# O's Vocal Features

## Joanie Pallatto

## Accidental Melody

Photo: J. Pallatto

83

Ballads  
Southport  
2023



Chicago based singer and producer Joanie Pallatto returns to The Green Mill to record Accidental Melody, a solid effort featuring guitarist Fareed Hague, bassist John Christensen, and percussionists Eric Hines & Juan Pastor. Joanie invites her husband, pianist Bradley Parker-Sparrow to join for duets on “The Melody Of You” and “Sound”. We also liked “Surrender”, “A Shooting Star”, and the Spanish flavored title track in a balanced set.

## Vivienne Aerts

74 V. Aerts  
2023 Ballads

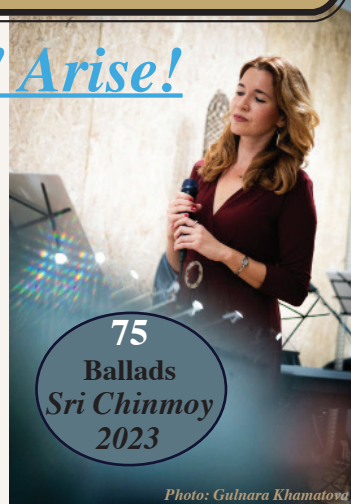
## Typuthang

This is an amazing musical story about women supporting women. Vocalist, composer, producer, arranger Vivienne Aerts leads an expansive cast of female musicians including Camila Meza (g), Adi Meyerson (b), Sara Caswell (violin), and Rachel Therrien (flugelhorn). The project is in support of: (1) 1500 female cocoa farmers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, (2) the environment --> planting trees with proceeds from each album sale, and (3) musicians across the globe during the pandemic with fair wages for their contributions. The sound has natural elements with “this type of thing,” or that Typuthang. Extensive liner notes and an excellent bar of Original Beans chocolate enhanced the relaxing sounds for a delightful set.

## Laila Faerman

## Awake! Arise!

Vocalist Laila Faerman draws upon a wealth of musicians including arranger, co-producer Misha Tsiganov (keyboards), and co-producer Premik Russell Tubbs (s-sax, fl, bansuri). They perform the songs of the late spiritual leader, Sri Chinmoy, arranged in modern jazz and contemporary classical styles. Boris Kozlov plays bass on six selections notably “Phanki Diye Tomas”. Hendrik Meurkens (harmonica) makes a guest appearance on “Awake! Arise!”, and Alex Sipiagin plays trumpet on two selections. Hats off to Laila for ushering in the peaceful meditative forces of Chinmoy’s songs in a world that is desperate for regrouping.



75

Ballads  
Sri Chinmoy  
2023

Photo: Gulnara Khamatova

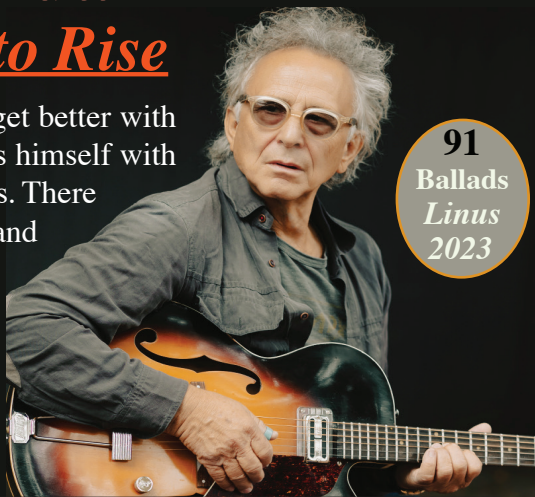
# O's Vocal Features

## Marc Jordan

Photo: Marc Lostracco

### Waiting For The Sun to Rise

Marc Jordan is a polished crooner who seems to get better with time, like an ageless Bordeaux wine. He surrounds himself with the Prague Smecky Orchestra including lush strings. There are also strong soloists like pianist Lou Pomanti, and guest Randy Brecker on trumpet who compliment Jordan in all the right spots. The program includes a dozen classics like "Everybody Wants To Rule the World" and "Best Day of My Life". This is an album that delivers relaxing songs that we listened to repeatedly without fatigue!



91  
Ballads  
Linus  
2023

## Allison Adams Tucker

Vocalist Allison Adams Tucker takes us to the 1980s to the millennium captures has a pleasant voice and delivers pleasing in a healthy 73 minutes. There are sure to be some songs that resonate with you. For us, "Wonderland", "Bomboleo", "La Belle Dame Sans Regrets" and "Sometimes It Snows In April" stood out.

74  
Pop+Jazz  
Allegato  
2023

### Retro Trilogy

on a Retro Trilogy from the late 1970s songs from Gen-X, Y and Z. Allison messages over fifteen selections

messages over fifteen selections

## Ann Hampton Callaway

### Fever: A Peggy Lee Celebration

77  
Ballads  
Palmetto  
2023

Fever: A Peggy Lee Celebration starts with the emotional title, and it ramps up from there. Ted Rosenthal (p), Martin Wind (b), Bob Mann (g) and Tim Horner (d) provide excellent support. Callaway sings in tandem with special guest John Pizzarelli in "The Glory of Love" and on "I Love Being Here With You" where John also makes a strong statement with his guitar. We enjoyed "Black Coffee", "Where Can I Go Without You" and "Johnny Guitar".



Photo: Ann Hampton Callaway



# O's Vocal Features

## John Allee Past Imperfect

78  
Ballads  
*Portuguese  
Knees*  
2023

John is a talented actor, songwriter, singer, and pianist who assembles a strong supporting band to perform 17 originals. There's the blues of "Until the Money's Gone" with Jeff Kaye (t) and Javier Vergara (t-sax) adding sweet harmonies. They swing hard on "Hard Sell", bounce on "A Typical Paris Affair" featuring Adam Bravo (p). Allee is pleasant all the way through crooning on "Truth Be Told", and singing convincing pop, blues, and jazz.



Photo: John Allee

## Stockholm Voices

## New Horizon

The Stockholm Voices are Gunilla Törnfeldt (soprano), Maria Winther (alto), Alexander Lövmärk (tenor) and Jakob Sollevi (baritone). They recreate some of the best tunes composed by Paul McCartney for New Horizons. "Get Back", "My Valentine", "Paperback Writer", "Norwegian Wood", and "Say Say Say" are some of our favorites. The music is glorious with sweet harmonies spread across several genres, from pop to country to jazz.

82  
Ballads  
*Sony*  
2023



Photo: John Gripenholm

## Ben Cassara What A Way to Go!

76  
Ballads  
*J. Irving*  
2023

Ben Cassara is a Cabaret-style, crooner based in New York where he performs regularly at several venues. He's backed by a familiar core with Josh Richman (p), producer, pianist Ronny White (on 4 selections), Boots Maleson (b) and Tim Horner (d). Featured guest Harry Allen appears on eight selections and infuses his warm tenor saxophone seamlessly to elevate everything he touches! Highlights are "The Party Upstairs", "Let's Eat Home", "I Wish I Knew" and "I Just Found Out About Love".



Photo: Eric Stephen Jacobs



# O's Discussion

*Wycliffe Gordon is a jazz trombonist, arranger, songwriter, educator and band leader from Georgia. He also plays many other instruments and has performed around the world. He's got ~23 records as a leader under his belt! We caught him teaching youth at Jazz Arts Charlotte Summer Camp! Here's a piece of the discussion:*

Photo: Wycliffe Gordon & "O"



**O:** You went to high school in Augusta and then to Florida A&M University (FAMU). Tell us about the journey.

**WG:** It was an experience, beyond music, in the marching band under the direction of the legendary Dr. Foster, *the law & the maestro*. I learned a lot, but not as much jazz there.

**O:** You graduated, and worked with several labels. What were the differences?

**WG:** Yeah, I signed on with Atlantic and worked with Nagel-Heyer, Chesky, and Criss Cross but generally they are in charge of your music and your money! Eventually I started my own label, Blues Back to gain control of more of my content and get a larger slice of the revenue! Recording quality differs based on the label philosophy and the engineers. As we've moved more digital, some technicians have no idea of the warmth of real acoustic instruments sound like. Also human interaction is essential in jazz and the best recordings capture that!

**O:** Say more about the evolving economics of the music industry.

**WG:** Streaming changed the business... You've got to create your Intellectual Property (IP), own your IP. That IP is music, arrangements, publishing,... I tell my students to learn the business and be a part of it! James Brown, Ray Charles, Sam Cook and a few others had the right idea. It is essential for success today.

**O:** Were there any differences performing outside of the US?

**WG:** I had eye-opening experiences in Japan, where our music (jazz) is truly appreciated! In New Zealand and Australia, Sony was extremely generous to us (jazz musicians) and made us feel welcomed... One of the best experiences I had was in South America (Brazil), in a restaurant after our performance, and a local band was playing our music (just released the prior month)! I couldn't think of a better expression or a showing of love for another human being for them to do that! I was like, Wow! That expression of love breaks boundaries.

**O:** Well, the pandemic certainly slowed that international love fest down, eh?

**WG:** No doubt. The pandemic locked me down at home. I reflected a lot, got closer to my family and even scheduled a physical. Oh oh, I found out I had cancer, yeah, prostate cancer!

**Wycliffe Gordon Discussion continued on Page 33**

# O's Trumpet Features

## Johnny Britt *After We Play*

Soulful, jazz vocalist, multi-instrumentalist Johnny Britt teams up with a wealth of contemporary jazz stars for Let's Do This. He starts with jazz trumpeter Tom Brown on "Ain't Nothin' But The Funk", then chills with guitarist Peter White on "*After We Play*". He invites Will Downing to join him on "Butterflies", Little Anthony and George Benson (g) on "Goin' Out Of My Head", and Blair Bryant on "Ocean Waves". We also enjoyed "Walk On By", "Love Paradise" and the title track featuring Nils (g). All that talent yields a strong session of contemporary jazz.

87  
R&B+Jazz  
J-Jams  
2023



## Paul Litteral

Pop+Jazz 2023  
Outrageous8 77

## *Legacy*

Hollywood Paul Litteral plays trumpet in the tradition of many jazz trumpeters. He's had a storied history over four decades playing with a who's who of artists across many genres. We liked vocalist Lenny Goldsmith's blues swagger on "Accentuate The Positive". Litteral takes the lead with his horn on "Lonesome Suzie", "For Once In My Life", and a swinging take of "There Will Never Be Another You" featuring vocalist Angela O'Neill. She also stands out on "I Can't Make You Love Me". Our favorite is "Do It Again" lifting *Legacy* as a diverse collection with wide appeal.

## *His Muse*

79  
Modern  
High Note  
2023



Photo: Eva Kapandze

## Jeremy Pelt

*His Muse* is trumpeter Jeremy Pelt's second take on The Art of Intimacy. Volume 2 includes Buster Williams (b), Victor Gould (p), Billy Hart (d) and a string quartet. Pelt opens on "Blues In Sophistication" and adds vocals on "Two For The Road" that also includes a guest appearance from guitarist Chico Pinheiro. Jeremy's tone is the defining characteristic on this recording, world-class and passionate, notably on "Slow Hot Wind".

# O's Trombone Features

Photo: S.E. Shires

## Michael Davis *Open City*

**82**  
**Big Band**  
**Hip Bone**  
**2023**

Trombonist Michael Davis leads a powerful large ensemble armed with potent brass including David Mann (a-sax, fl), Steve Wilson (a-sax, s-sax), Andy Snitzer (t-sax, cl), Charles Pillow (t-sax, cl), Nick Marchioness (t), Tony Kadleck (t), Marshall Gilkes (tb), and Ryan Keberle (tb). The punch comes from the rhythm section with Andy Erwin (p), Jared Schonig (d) and either David Finck or Cole Davis on bass. There are ten original selections composed by Michael Davis or his son, co-producer Cole Davis. Mike's youngest son Zaq (t, flugelhorn) also appears on the album. The energy is high, but not overwhelming, even when they slow down on tracks like "Three and Out". We enjoyed the set.

## Brian Thomas

### *On The Bone*

**74**  
**2023**  
**R&B+Jazz**  
**B. Thomas**

Boston based trombonist Brian Thomas has been igniting the contemporary jazz scene in New England for over 20 years with a funky, R&B sound that packs a punch. He released his solo debut late last year with a close group of musicians he calls the BT Allstars. Five of the six tunes are originals with threads of James Brown, The Crusaders, and Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. It's the stuff that will get you bobbin' your head! Highlights are "Bacudi Blues", "Check Your Intentions" and the title track.

Photo: Brian Thomas



# O's Guitar Features

78  
Pop+Jazz  
Zen Diagram  
2023

## Convertible

## Kingsley Durant

Guitarist, composer Kingsley Durant started his musical career playing jazzy rock and jamming with many talented contemporary artists. He disappeared for a while to focus on his family but returns with a vengeance on Convertible. He band is a quartet with additional percussion on three selections. They bring an old-school contemporary jazz vibe with Steve Hunt on the Rhodes, some wah-wah from Durant and cool beats from percussionist Ricardo Rhodes and drummer Tom Brechtlein. Kingsley steps up on "Vivi's Bounce" with Durant switching to the B3. "Funky Princess" is another winner featuring guest guitarist Eric Johnson along with the Latin-tinged "Marlowe's Mood".

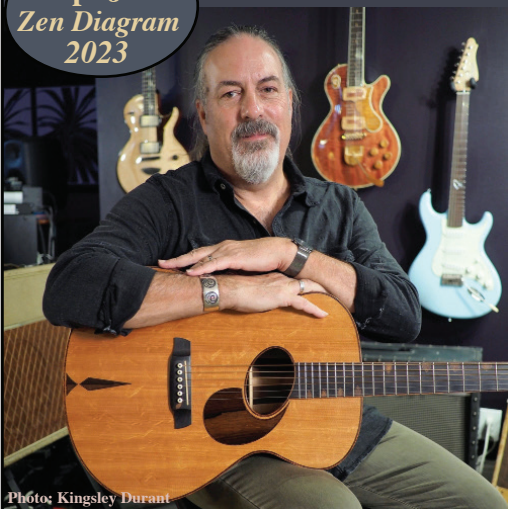


Photo: Kingsley Durant

## Greg Diamond

Guitarist Greg Diamond serves up a on Beata. His band is a trio with drummer Ludwig Afonso. Greg's style Latin jazz and jazz fusion. We liked the unique take of "Giant Steps", the funky "Ensimismado", "Cumbita", and "Song For Jerry" in this lively, session.

75  
Fusion  
Chasm  
2023

## Beata

fresh set of jazz-fusion bassist Edward Pérez and is a contemporary mix of



Photo: Greg Diamond --->

## Jeff Richman

## XYZ

Guitarist Jeff Richman assembles a seasoned quartet with drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, George Whitty on keyboards and bassist/producer Jimmy Haslip. XYZ is fine contemporary jazz-fusion album incorporating syncopated beats with a contagious, funky groove. We enjoyed the relaxed pace of "She's Got To Be Somewhere" and the rockin' vibe on "Left Right Here". Bassist Dean Taba brings reggae beats to "Be Cool", and Otmaro Ruiz steps in on keyboards imparting a Latin vibe on "Ray Barretto" to keep the set fresh.

73  
Nefer  
Fusion  
2023

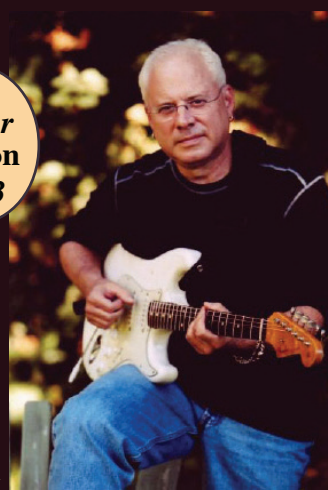


Photo: Jeff Richman



# O's Guitar Features

## Pete McCann

### Without Question

**81**  
**Fusion**  
**McCannic**  
**2023**

Guitarist Pete McCann returns to the jazz-fusion scene with his polished quintet on Without Question and he's in prime form making his guitar speak! They swing on "Lovely Thing" and "Hindsight", both featuring pianist Henry Hey. They get funky on "Conspiracy Theory" featuring saxophonist Steve Wilson and relax on "lost City with McCann" switching to acoustic guitar. Matt Pavolka (b) and Mark Ferber (d) anchor the set.

Photos: Pete McCann

## Joe Bonamassa

The stories are entertaining, and vocalist, guitarist, bandleader Joe and the blues groove is tight on Tales of Time. The stories are entertaining, and vocalist, guitarist, bandleader Joe and the blues groove is tight on Tales of Time. The stories are entertaining, and vocalist, guitarist, bandleader Joe and the blues groove is tight on Tales of Time.

**76**

**R&B+Jazz**  
**J&R Adventures**  
**2023**

### Tales of Time

they are delivered in fine form by Bonamassa. His band is rocking, Of Time, a live set recorded at Red Rocks Amphitheatre on August 8, 2022. It's a CD & DVD set with the video including several more tracks, but both discs rock! There is excellent guitar work throughout, notably on "Questions And Answers".

## Les Sabler

### Living In A Daydream

Guitarist Les Sabler plays eleven contemporary jazz tunes with support from producer, Paul Brown, and Shane Theriot (keyboards, g, b, drum programming). The music was composed mostly by Theriot and Brown with a few classic covers. Among the best are "Compared To What", "Over The Top", "New Bossa", and "Moonlight". This music will delight smooth jazz fans.

**78**  
**New Vista**  
**R&B+Jazz**  
**2023**



# O's Bass Features

## Tyler Mitchell

### Sun Ra's Journey

This is the first edition of the SmallsLIVE Living Masters Series dedicated to capturing the performance of living legends. We celebrate bassist Tyler Mitchell playing Sun Ra's Journey. The extra special accompanying artist is alto saxophonist Marshall Allen who turned 99 on May 25 of this year! He's still got that free jazz fire. In addition to Sun Ra classic tunes there are a few covers and originals from Mitchell and Allen. "Cosmic Hop" (M. Allen), "Fate In A Pleasant Mood", "Carefree", "Velvet", and "Skippy" are some of the bests.



77  
Fusion  
Cellar Music  
2023

## Avaishai Cohen

2023 Latin  
Naive 74

### Iroko

Israeli Avishai Cohen (b, vocals) teams up with Latin American legend Abraham Rodriguez Jr. (Congas, Vocals) for Iroko. Iroko is a Nigerian tree that can live 500+ years and is central to the culture. They open with lively percussion and chanting on "The Healer" moving into their spirited take of "It's A Man's World". Other highlights are "Avisale A Mi Vecina", "Exodus", "Venus" and "Fly Me To The Moon", a fitting finale.

## Leon Lee Dorsey

### Cantaloupe Island

Bassist Leon Lee Dorsey is a first call musician who assembles a fine trio with guitarist Russell Malone and drummer Mike Clark. Together they reimagine nine classics centered around Malone's chord melodies. They open with a gutsy arrangement of the title track to set the stage for a strong, blues-based session. They jam on "Bumpin' On Sunset" and show poise on "The Very Thought of You". We also enjoyed "Thieves In The Temple" and "Sister Sadie".

79  
Jazz Avenue  
R&B+Jazz  
2023



Photo: Leslie Farinacci

# O's Bass Features

## Bruno Raberg

Bassist, composer and producer Bruno Råberg takes a Look Inside for this solo effort. His improvisations are conversational with the listener, using tempo and volume to draw you in. He's inspired by Miles, Ellington, Gershwin, and his life journeys. Solo bass recordings are far and few between, and Bruno's courageous effort is applauded and appreciated.

## Look Inside



75  
Bebop  
Orbis  
2023

Photo: Francesco Gargiulli

## Phil Ravita

One of the finest jazz bassists outside of New York is Baltimore's Phil Ravita. He leads a tight band with Greg Small (p), Mark Leppo (vibes, congas), and Nucleo Vega (d). Vocalist Deidre Jennings sings passionately on "Black Coffee" & "Caravan", and Benny Russell provides warm sax on "Boo's Blues". We also enjoyed the relaxed "Sisters" as Oriana has many moods.

74  
R&B+Jazz  
Ravita Jazz  
2023

## Oriana

## Scott Petito



Photo: Lydia Liebman

## Many Worlds

Bassist, **77** composer Scott Petito **Pop+Jazz** assembles a team of all- **Planet Arts** star musicians mostly (7 of 8), to perform **2023** original compositions on Many Worlds. We liked "Mr. Peanut" with Bob Mintzer (sax), Mike Mainieri (vibes) and Steve Gadd (d), "The Alchemist" with Randy Brecker (t), and "Bombogenesis". Petico shines throughout the set especially when he plays piccolo bass.



# Father & Son Feature

Venerable saxophonist George Coleman joins the SmallsLIVE Living Masters Series with a

**82**  
**Cellar Jazz**  
**Modern**  
**2023**

## George Coleman

### Live at Smalls Jazz Club

live session recorded March 2022. He's in rare form swinging through eight classics including his own "Blues For Smalls". The quartet is Peter Washington (b), Spike Wilner (p), George on tenor, and producer Joe Farnsworth (d). "At Last" and "My Funny Valentine" are notable in the mixed tempo set. The musicians are in sync with the audience and their solos come alive around the 87-year-old Coleman who plays like he's in his prime years!



Photo: Jack Vartoogian/Getty Images

## *Listen, relax and enjoy jazz with "O"*

### [www.OsPlaceJazz.com](http://www.OsPlaceJazz.com)

Drummer George Coleman, Jr. leads a sextet with Mike DiRubbo (a-sax), Brian Charette (organ), Paul Bollenback (g), Danny Sadownick (perc), Richard Livingston Huntley (d), and special guest George Coleman, Sr. (t-sax). These guys are cooking with an R&B groove that swings. It is centered around polished musicians playing at peak performance. We especially enjoy the shared guitar/sax, melodies on songs like "Choppy" and "Little Green Men".

## George Coleman, Jr.

### Resurgence!

**78**  
**R&B+Jazz**  
**Legacy**  
**2023**



Photo: George Coleman, Jr.



<b>ARTIST</b> <b>Title</b> <i>Label</i> <b>Rating</b>	<b>Top Contemporary Picks</b> <b>O's Notes</b>
<b>DOMINIC MILLER</b> <u>VAGABOND</u> <b>C<sup>F</sup></b> <b>ECM</b> <b>79</b>	Argentine guitarist, composer Dominic Miller assembles a quartet with Jakob Karlzon (keyboards), Nicolas Fiszman (b), and Ziv Ravitz (d). <u>Vagabond</u> is relaxing, meditation music with smooth underlying rhythms that sooth the soul. It's a fine instrumental set that will find its way into many spas, especially "Open Heart" and "Lone Waltz"!
<b>BARKMAN</b> <b>C<sup>F</sup></b> <u>TOGETHERNESS</u> <i>Badger Music</i> <b>75</b>	Canadian musician, Barkman (Badger) is a composer, arranger and session player whose has risen steadily over the past 40+ years yet remains somewhat obscure. This self-titled release should bring him closer to the spotlight for contemporary jazz lovers. The beats funky, jazz-fusion that works in the club, or for background, and mood setting. Badger's passion and energy spills through the entire set.
<b>JOE LOVANO</b> <b>C<sup>F</sup></b> <u>Our Daily Bread</u> <b>ECM</b> <b>74</b>	<u>Our Daily Bread</u> is the third release from saxophonist Joe Lovano and his Trio Tapestry with Marilyn Crispell (p) and Carmen Castaldi (d). It is a very dynamic, introspective recording that draws listeners into the experience, if they chose to engage. All three musicians play strong roles during the session. Highlights are "Grace Notes", and "One For Charlie" (Haden).
<b>DAVE LIEBMAN &amp; SAM NEWSOME</b> <b>C<sup>F</sup></b> <u>SOPRANO-LOGUES</u> <i>Somenew Music</i> <b>74</b>	Venerable soprano saxophonists Sam Newsome and Dave Liebman team up for a live recorded performance at the Fire Museum in New York on August 7, 2021. They made <u>Soprano-Logues</u> , two freely improvised compositions that span 44 minutes. The songs are packed with emotion, character and ingenuity encouraging you to sit back and enjoy the masters at work.
<b>NOSHIR MODY</b> <b>C<sup>F</sup></b> <u>A LOVE SONG</u> <i>Noshir Mody</i> <b>74</b>	Indian, American guitarist and composer Noshir Mody combines his cultural experiences to arrive at genre-splitting music. He assembles a fine team to perform <u>A Love Song</u> , a set of soothing ballads featuring vocalist Kate Victor on the title track. The five songs represent the different feelings they experienced during the pandemic. We like the beauty of "Mystic", and "In The Absence Of Answers."
<b>ELDAD TARMU</b> <b>C<sup>P</sup></b> <u>Tarmu Jazz Quartet</u> <i>Bohoindie</i> <b>74</b>	The <u>Tarmu Jazz Quartet</u> is Adam Hutcherson (a-Sax), Sam Bevan (b), Cengiz Baykal (d) and leader, composer, vibraphonist Eldad Tarmu. The self-titled release is a program of contemporary Latin-infused jazz. Hutcherson and Tarmu share the melodies in a decent collection with few disappointments. "Self-Inflicted Wounds" and "Beneath the Gloss and Shine" are notable.

*Jazz thrives, our legacy artform!*

# O's Place Features



Photos: Center Stage

**77**  
Fusion  
MCG  
2023

## Jason Kush *Finally Friday*

Jason Kush plays tenor saxophone and leads a quartet with Alton Merrell (p), Jeff Grubbs (b) and David Glover (d). He lives in Pittsburgh where he's a big part of the jazz community, performing, lecturing, and composing. Finally Friday is the culmination of their preparations before they serve up audiences with their creations. For the listeners TGIF, time to enjoy all these sentiments coming together on spirited tunes like "Razor Burn", swingers like "Hasty J", and "Slipping Through the Cracks".

## Joel Goodman

Emmy winning composer Joel artists John Patitucci (b), Randy Lisa Fischer (vocals), and Philippe consisting of Danny McCaslin (sax), Cinelu (perc), and Scott Cooley (b). We enjoyed the exotic feel on "What Dreamers Dream", the funky "A Change Of Heart", and the cool "Astral Projection". The mood is adventurous, exotic, and engaging.

**74**  
Tourmalet  
Pop+Jazz  
2023

## *An Exquisite Moment*

Goodman (keyboards, b) invites stellar Brecker (t), Brandee Younger (harp), Saisse (p, vibes), to join a core band Eric Harland (d), Adam Rogers (g), Mino

## Mark Ortwein

### *It Was Time*

Master reeds-man Mark Ortwein takes us on a pleasant journey of jazz and blues on It Was Time. He combines styles and musicians to arrive at a very fine set. They open with the mysterious title track followed by some Latin jazz on "Pepperoni Grande Con Queso Mas". Josh Kaufman sings a stirring, soulful arrangement of "I Can't Make You Love Me". John Fell (g), Kenny Rampton (t), and Carrington Clinton (d) join Ortwein for a bluesy take of "After You've Gone", and a touch of fusion on "Lonnie's Lament".

2023  
Daniel  
Baldwin  
Fusion  
78



Photo: Indianapolis Symphony

# O's Place Features

## BUZZ AMATO

76  
R&B+Jazz  
Blue Canoe  
2023

Contemporary jazz keyboard master, Buzz Amato teams up with Doug Payne (sax, EWI, b-cl), Chris Blackwell (g) and several other musicians for an eleven-song collection featuring music inspired by each of the Greek Muses. Muse Café is a balanced smooth jazz album with lots to enjoy. We liked “Angel In My Pocket” with vocals by Melissa Ellen, the funky “Round 12AM”, Going Home”, and “Mt Helicon”.



Photo: Blue Canoe

## Muse Café

## The Griots Speak

Fusion 76  
OA2 2023

## Destiny Calling

The Griots are a blend of straight-ahead and free jazz players coming together as one unit. They are Daniel Carter (sax, fl, cl, t, p), Charlie Apicella (d, bowls, g), William Parker (b, pocket t), and Juma Sultan (perc), with Iron City: Brad Whiteley (organ) and Austin Walker (d). There's an East Indian bent to the music, with coordinated improvisation from all angles. Parker lays down a cool, bass groove that is an excellent foundation for soloing on “We're All Here In Spirit” and “It's Alright To Run”. They take a casual stroll for “I Heard In Passing” before igniting the fire with the finale, “Sparks”.

Photo: Dave Bass Music

## DAVE BASS

76  
Dave Bass  
Pop+Jazz  
2023

## The Trio, Vol. 3

Pianist, composer, and producer Dave Bass re-assembles his band with bassist Kerry Kashiwagi and drummer Scott Gordon for The Trio, Vol. 3. They open with “As Long As There's Music”, an inspirational piece followed by the spirited “Criss Cross” and “Israel”. There is a taste of fusion on “Angebite of Inwit” with a lively guitar solo from special guest Barry Finerty that is buffered by ballads like “With A Song In My Heart”.



# O's Place Features

## Behn Gillece

### *Between the Bars*

78  
Fusion  
Positone  
2023



Photo: Behn Gillece

Vibraphonist Behn Gillece makes great use of sustained tones to create the desired mood. Bassist Peter Slavov makes his presence known throughout the session with dexterous finger-work and using the bow! Art Hirahara (p) and Vinnie Sperrazza (d) round out the rhythm section. Patrick Cornelius (a-sax, s-sax, b-cl), Diego Rivera (t-sax), and Altin Sencalar (tb) provide warm brass in all the right places warming up Between The Bars. We enjoyed the mellow tones on “Mindful Moments”, swinging on “Due Up Next”, “Apogee”, and the title track.

## London Brew

2023 Concord  
Pop+Jazz 74

## London Brew

London Brew is a large ensemble including Benji B (decks, mixing), Raven Bush (violin, electronics), and Shabaka Hutchins (sax, woodwinds). They play music inspired by Miles Davis in his acid-fusion mode. It is a funky, free jazz amalgamation that most closely resembles progressive rock. The groove is contemporary, eclectic, and right on point for those who favor progressive rock. Highlights include “Trainlines”, “Miles Chases New Voodoo In The Church”, “the mesmerizing “Nu Sha Ni Sha Nu Oss Ra”, “Mor Ning Prayers”, and the title track.

## Malcolm Strachan

### *Point of No Return*

74  
Haggis  
Fusion  
2023

Scottish trumpeter, Malcolm Strachan presents his sophomore album, Point Of No Return, a set of seven engaging originals. He gets support from Atholl Ransome (t-sax, fl), George Cooper (p), Danny Barley (tb), Courtney Tomas, (b), and Erroll Rollins (d). Special guest, vocalist Jo Harrop contributes filler voicing on two selections, and Richard Curran adds strings on three selections. The primary story here is Strachan’s trumpet or flugelhorn. We’ll take either because Malcolm makes both work well! We bill it as fusion, but the straight-ahead set will also find it embraceable.



Photo: Malcolm Strachan



## Contemporary Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
HELENA CAMPS	<u>Viu</u>	<i>Microscopi</i>	73	C <sup>b</sup>
MARTY ISENBERG	<u>The Way I Feel Inside</u>	<i>Truth Revolution</i>	73	C <sup>P</sup>
LAURA ELLE	<u>Com Seria Jo</u>	<i>Microscopi</i>	71	C <sup>P</sup>
MICHAEL BLAKE	<u>Dance of the Mystic Bliss</u>	<i>P&amp;M Records</i>	70	C <sup>F</sup>
DAMON SMITH	<u>Skeletons, Skeletons, Skeletons</u>	<i>MoMojo</i>	70	C <sup>P</sup>
BRANDON SEABROOK	<u>Brutalovechamp</u>	<i>Pyroclastic</i>	64	C <sup>F</sup>

### O's Rating Scale (X)

0                      65                      80                      95

Pass

Contemplate

Buy

Strong Buy

## Sara Caswell

### The Way to You

Photo: Emma Mead

Violinist Sara Caswell takes the reigns on The Way To You. She leads a team with Jesse Lewis (g), Ike Sturm (b), and Jared Schonig (d). Vibraphonist Chris Dingman plays on 4 of the 9 selections notably "Voyage", trading with Lewis and Caswell. There's a touch of Spain on "O Que Tinha De Ser" with beautiful work by Caswell.

**75**  
Anzic  
Pop+Jazz  
2023



### Wycliffe Gordon Discussion continued from Page 21

I had successful treatment but this allowed me to reflect more on life. I now want to realize the impact I am having everywhere.

**O:** Where does that lead you now?

**WG:** I respect the truth! I like what this jazz camp does for the kids. I like breaking boundaries. Music is my gift and I share it to: (1) turn hate to love, (2) turn frowns to smiles, and (3) to motivate.

**O:** Thank you Wycliffe, that says it all!

We discussed a lot more, and I'll release more detail in an "Uncut extension on [www.osplacejazz.com](http://www.osplacejazz.com) this summer. Look for it!

# O's Place Legends

## Bill Evans

## Treasures

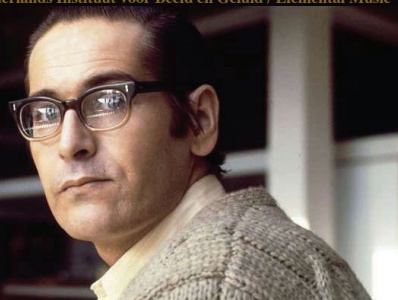
Photo: Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid / Elemental Music

This a collection of remarkable recordings made in Denmark during 1965-1969. Pianist Bill Evans performs in small ensembles with bassist Nils-Henning Ørsted Petersen, and drummer Alan Dawson or Alex Riel. They play fourteen classic Treasures in arrangements that allow for tasteful solos throughout the set. The music is recorded in many venues with live audiences and is just being released since being aired on the radio in the 1960s. There are two discs and a thick booklet with excellent liner notes and photos.

78

**Bebop**

*Elemental*  
2023



## Luis Russell

## At The Swing Cats Ball

71

*Dot Time*  
Classic  
2023

At The Swing Cats Ball is a collection of newly discovered recordings, sixteen live tracks and four solo stride piano pieces. These are the tunes that made jazz back in the early 1900s featuring Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra, Russell's Orchestra, vocalist Sonny Woods, and many other talented supporting artists. They combine blues storytelling with a swinging ragtime groove. Exceptional liner notes embellish the listening experience.

## Kevin Harris

Photo: Kevin Harris

77

*BluJazz*  
Blues  
2023

## Jazz Gumbo



Kevin Harris is a seasoned bluesy vocalist and bandleader who assembles a fine band for his latest release Jazz Gumbo. Donald Harrison (a-sax, b-vox), Will Lee (b, b-vox), Mike Clark (d), Jerry Z (keyboards, b-vox), Tony Garnier (b) and Danny Drasher (g, b-vox) add the supporting R&B. "Yes, We Can", "God Made Me Funky", "More Than You'll Ever Know" featuring Harrison, and "Freedom Jazz Dance" are highlights.

**Final Notes** Jazz pianist and composer **Ahmad Jamal** died at the age of 92 from prostate cancer on April 16, 2023. Jazz trombonist **Don Sebesky** died from complications of dementia on April 29. He was 85. On May 24, 2023 we lost **Bill Lee**. He was a jazz bassist and father of film producer Spike Lee. Bill died at the age of 94. Brazilian vocalist **Astrud Gilberto** died from lung cancer on June 5. She was 83. The musical contributions of these fine jazz professionals will remain with us forever.

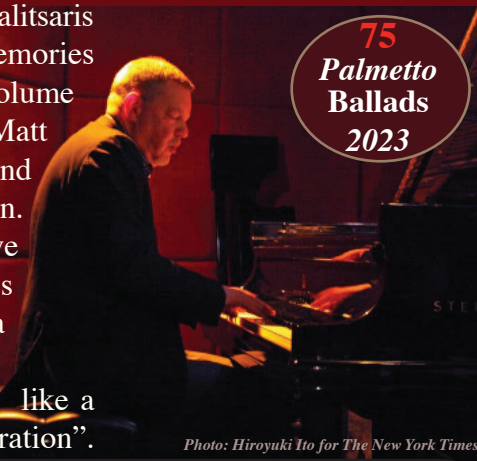
# O's Place Legends

**2003-2006**

**Frank Kimbrough**

Frank was a well-established pianist and composer. Matt Balitsaris remixed two of his trio recordings to rekindle great memories of the late pianist. It is titled 2003-2006. The first volume is Lullabluebye with bassist Ben Allison and drummer Matt Wilson. They had performed many times in the past and their familiarity shows with their comfort and cohesion. They come alive on “Whirl”, swing on “You Only Live Twice” and the syncopated “Fubu”. Volume 2, Play is a peaceful encounter featuring Kimbrough with Masa Kamaguchi on bass and Paul Motian on drums. Trio two is together for the first time on this recording but they play like a seasoned unit. The best here are “Jimmy G” and “Regeneration”.

**75**  
**Palmetto**  
**Ballads**  
**2023**



*Photo: Hiroyuki Ito for The New York Times*

**Tony Allen**

The late drummer Tony Allen made a combination of Nigerian Highlife Younge resurfaces some of Allen's title may not be appealing to jazz lovers, but the music is certainly cool. The 18th edition is funky, jazz-fusion that suggests that jazz is indeed alive. If you like it fast, furious, and funky, Tony Allen serves up a fine appetizer. “Makoto”, “No End” and “Ebun” are fine examples of Allen's syncopated mastery.

**74**  
**Classic**  
**Jazz Is Dead**  
**2023**

**Jazz Is Dead**

and indelible mark with his Afro-jazz, and American jazz. Producer Adrian finest on the Jazz Is Dead series. The

18th edition is funky, jazz-fusion that suggests that jazz is indeed alive. If you like it fast, furious, and

funky, Tony Allen serves up a fine appetizer. “Makoto”, “No End” and “Ebun” are fine

examples of Allen's syncopated mastery.

**from the pen of...**

**Fraser MacPherson**

**81**  
**Cellar Jazz**  
**Pop+Jazz**  
**2023**



*Photo: Fraser MacPherson*

This is a fine collection of traditional jazz with compositions from the pen of Fraser MacPherson played by a wide range of musicians who put their own spin on things! There is a lot of talent and a lot of fun starting with Scott Hamilton wailing on “Night Spot” followed by Virginia MacDonald cooking on clarinet with Lucian Gray (g) and Dan Fortin (b) on “Queen's Pawn”. Next up is Jocelyn Gould (g) singing “It's A Human Race” and we still have eight more to go! Steve Kaldestad (t-sax) warms up the ballad “Rabbit's Habit”, and guitarist Oliver Gannon cooks on “Ol Bill's Blues” featuring Cory Weeds on sax in this re-imagination of MacPherson's gems.



# O's Place Features

Photo: Nite Bjuti



## Nite Bjuti (*Night Beauty*)

75  
R&B+Jazz  
Whirlwind  
2023

Nite Bjuti is an Afro Caribbean trio with a fresh message. Candice Hoyes sings poetic odes with accompaniment from bassist Mimi Jones and percussionist Val Jeanty, provoking thoughts of righteousness on “Illustrious Negro Dead”, “Stolen Voice”, “The Window”, and “Singing Bones”. These ladies leave nothing behind while addressing Black Women narratives.

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