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O's Place Jazz Magazine

P.O. Box 38430
Charlotte, NC 28278

O'pening Notes

The Holiday Season is upon us! And we've got ten fresh Christmas selections for you to consider. Three of them made our Top Ten for the quarter! They are certainly worthy of purchasing for Holidays in years to come!

This time frame puts most of us with our family and friends, with a wealth of good food, our favorite beverages and gift exchanges. It's a time of love, peace and happiness. And what better time to sprinkle some jazz in, enhancing the ambiance. This is a time when "O" regroups and listens to all of the best of the year. Stay tuned for "The Best of 2023" coming on the web site soon.

There are a lot of new names in this issue and these new jazz artists are *bringing it!* Check out Benjamin Boone, Debbie Spring, Mehmet Ali Sanikol, and Cautious Clay! There are also some seasoned artists populating the issue like Joshua Redman, Cal Tjader, and

---> Sound advice at a nice price!

www.OsPlaceJazz.com

O'pening Notes cont.

Fred Hersch with Esperanza Spalding.

We're entering our 30th year and promise to deliver most than you expect in 2024. We look to see some of you live and share our love and passion for the American art form, jazz.

Enjoy the music!

O

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THE TOP TEN SCORES

1. FRED HERSCH & ESPERANZA SPALDING - [Alive at The Village Vanguard](#)
1. CAL TJADER - [Catch The Groove](#)
3. DOROTHY ASHBY - [With Strings Attached](#)
4. BENJAMIN BOONE - [Caught In The Rhythm](#)
4. WYCLIFFE GORDON - [Hello Pops!](#)
6. BIX CENTENNIAL ALLSTARS - [Celebrating Bix!](#)
6. GEORGE GEE - [Winter Wonderland](#)
6. SAMARA JOY - [A Joyful Holiday](#)
6. JOHN PAUL MCGEE - [A GOSPEL JAZZICAL CHRISTMAS](#)
10. DEBBIE SPRING - [Tocamos](#)

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

O's primary listening is done with a Sony XA777 ESSACD 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 BeLW 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

ARTIST Title <i>Label Perf/Sound</i>	Top Traditional Picks O's Notes
PAUL NOVOTNY & ROBI BOTOS <u>Summertime in Leith</u> T^B <i>Triplet 77</i>	<p><u>Summertime in Leith</u> is an impromptu jazz performance by Canadian bassist Paul Novotny and pianist Robi Botos. It takes place in the historic Leith Church, a live session on July 14, 2018. It was a part of the Leith Summer Festival, and the duo was up to the task, embodying fine jazz over five appreciable selections, notably “The Flick”, “There Will Never Be Another You”, and the title track.</p>
JANET EVRA T^L <u>Meet Me In Paris</u> <i>Plum Jazz 76</i>	<p>Bassist, vocalist, composer Janet Evra leads a quintet with Ryan Marquez (p), Matt McKeever (sax, fl), Will Buchanan (g), and Tomi Kämäräinen (d) for <u>Meet Me in Paris</u>. Janet’s warm vocals in French and English make “Paris”, “Zou Bisou Bisou”, and “Un Homme Et Une Femme” entertaining selections. This is an easy listening set.</p>
ESTRELLA ACOSTA 74 <u>Tierra</u> <i>eStar T^L</i>	<p>Latin vocalist Estrella Acosta leads a quintet focused on songs by Cuban women on <u>Tierra</u>, a swinging, danceable salsa set! Saxophonist Efraim Trujillo shines with melodies complimenting Acosta throughout the set. Samuel Ruiz (b), Enrique Firpi (d) and musical director Marc Bischoff (p, coros) are the core accompaniment. Highlights are “Que Viva Chango”, “Ay Amor”, and “Guasimal”. This is festive music that makes you want to move!</p>
CARLOS MUSCAT T^b 74 <u>Hymns</u> <i>C. Muscat</i>	<p>Saxophonist Carlo Muscat and pianist Tony Tixier are the featured artists in this duo album. They perform arrangements of French classics with seamless interplay. <u>Hymns</u> are warm renditions that sooth the soul, well suited for engaged listening or relaxed background music.</p>
QUINTIN NACHOFF T^A <u>Stars and Constellations</u> <i>Adhyaropa 74</i>	<p>Tenor saxophonist, producer, composer Quintin Nachoff has been a student of music since his high school days in Toronto, inspired by the legendary John Coltrane as well as the Bartok String Quartets. This inspiration is apparent on <u>Stars and Constellations</u>, Nachoff’s latest endeavor. Nachoff combines two string quartets, Bergamot Quartet and The Rhythm Method, with his trio including bassist Mark Helias and drummer Dan Weiss. The resulting production is highly improvised and adventurous, also inspired by the vast stellar universe.</p>
JOE WITTMAN <u>Trio Works Sol</u> T^B <i>J. Witman 74</i>	<p><u>Trio Works Sol</u> is the debut recording for guitarist Joe Wittman. He plays with bassist Daniel Duke and Keith Balla on drums, a seasoned unit with hundreds of live gigs together in New York. The first three selections are popping, centered around Wittman. That’s the theme here! We also enjoyed “Three Trick Pony” and “Boogie for Bloomfield”. Joe is precise and exacting in a session that combines standards and originals.</p>

O's Place Features

79 Latin 2023
Basset Hound



Photo: Medium.com

JIM SELF & JOHN CHIODINI

Touch and Go

Tuba player Jim Self and guitarist John Chiodini are back in action on Touch And Go, Act IV of their collaborations, (one with the David Angel Jazz Ensemble). Self's warm tuba melodies are a refreshing change of pace on the jazz scene. Chiodini provides strong accompaniment and solos as well. Ron Stout (t), Ken Wild (b), and Kendall Kay (d) round out the band. We enjoyed the swagger of "Amber", "Whisper Not", and Angel's 13-piece ensemble on "Prolepsis". Wild sets the tone on "Lament", a samba arrangement. Excellent liner notes detail each selection and the canine crew affirm the finale!

Richard D. Johnson

2023 Hot Bop
AFAR 76

Our Heroes

Pianist, composer, producer Richard D. Johnson is the founder of AFAR music. His latest release is Our Heroes honoring musical forebears that impacted the band members. Saxophonist Geof Bradfield, bassist John Tate, and drummer Samuel Jewell join Johnson for a rich exchange. The songs are all originals by Johnson (4), Bradfield (3), and Tate (2). Bradfield's sax is warm, and his melodies are embraceable especially on "Some Other Sunday". We also enjoyed "Blues For Stanley Cowell" and "High & Low".

SHARON MINEMOTO

Dark Nights Bright Stars

Pianist Sharon Minemoto leads a potent rhythm section with bassist Darren Radtke and drummer Bernie Aria. Saxophonist Jon Bentley shares melodies with Minemoto over twelve songs. This band is a well-oiled machine with lots of swing and a vibrant theme that resonates throughout the entire session. "Color Contrast", "Supermoon", and "Changes" are examples of the musicians playing what they feel and engaging listeners in an enjoyable set.

82
Cellar
Modern
2023



Photo: Sharon Minemoto

ARTIST Title <i>Label</i> Rating	<u>Big Band Picks</u> O's Notes
BIX CENTENNIAL ALL-STARS T^N <u>Celebrating Bix!</u> <i>Turtle Bay</i> 88	<p>Bix BeiderBecke was a renowned and respected cornetist, a pioneer of big band swing with a clear tone that resonated above the clouds. He recorded most of his music in the late 1920s. The Bix Centennial All Stars were formed to recreate that margin with <u>Celebrating Bix!</u> released by Arbors Jazz in 2003. It's been a statement of swing ever since. This 20th Anniversary Edition keeps the fire burning on a two-disc set on Turtle Bay Records. It includes three new (previously unreleased) tunes and is a nice refresher including several of the original musicians.</p>
QUARTET SAN FRANCISCO <u>Raymond Scott</u> <u>Reimagined</u> T^N <i>ViolinJazz</i> 84	<p><u>Raymond Scott Reimagined</u> is an album that spurns adventure with a large ensemble. The band is Quartet San Francisco + Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band + Take 6. The voice of Raymond Scott is captured on several introductory pieces that provide history and context, notably "The Creative Process", "On Rehearsing the Quintette" and "I Remember Nothing of That". Take 6's a Capela freshens "In An 18th Century Drawing Room" and "Serenade", a soothing ballad. Solos are plentiful from Goodwin (t-sax), Wayne Bergeron (t), Jeremy Cohen (violin), Andrew Waddell (g), Andrew Martin (tb), Francisco Torres (tb), and Sal Lozano (s-sax). We enjoyed the music, remembering the Warner Brothers animated classics, and the extensive liner notes.</p>
KENT T^N ENGELHART & STEPHEN ENID <u>Madd For Tadd</u> <i>Tighten Up</i> 82	<p>Kent Engelhart is a saxophonist, composer, and arranger who leads jazz studies at Youngstown State University. Stephen Enid plays trumpet and directs the jazz studies program at Cuyahoga Community College. The Ohio educators came together to celebrate an understated jazz composer. Madd For Tadd is a collection of The Music Of Tadd Dameron, 22 of his songs over two discs that capture jazz in its heyday, 1940s-1960s. They swing on "Dameron Stomp" featuring Brad Goode (t), and "Handy Andy" featuring Dominick Farinacci (t). Erin Keckan (vocals) leads the charge on "Lady Bird", one several vocal tracks, softening a mostly hard charging instrumental endeavor. The leaders do a fine job with Dameron's gems.</p>
GERRY GIBBS Family T^N <i>Whaling City</i> 82	<p>Drummer/composer Gerry Gibbs jazzes up some R&B and jazz classics on <u>Family</u>. Vocalist Michelle Garibay Carey sings a fine arrangement of "Song For My Father", "Betcha By Golly Wow", and soulful, vocal arrangements of "Pick Up The Pieces" and "We Live In Brooklyn Baby/Everybody Loves The Sunshine", featuring Kyeshie Gibbs (perc, vocals). This is a pumping 2-disc set with a lot of passion and groove.</p>
<i>Jazz thrives, our legacy artform!</i>	

ARTIST Title <i>Label</i> Rating	<u>Big Band Picks</u> O's Notes
WAYNE ALPERN <u>Rezurrektion</u> T^N <i>Henri Elkan</i> 79	<p>Composer, arranger Wayne Alpern leads a string ensemble, the Sirius Quartet for <u>Rezurrektion</u>, a collection of jazz-infused classical music, mostly Mozart classics. The musicians are Chern Hwe (violin 1), Gregor Huebner (violin 2), Ron Lawrence (viola), and Jeremy Harmon (cello). There is a crisp freshness that prevails to make the music exciting. Highlights are “Porgy and Bess”, “A Minor Sonata”, “G Minor Quintet”, and “F Major Sonata”.</p>
THE 14 JAZZ ORCHESTRA <u>Islands</u> T^N <i>Dabon</i> 77	<p>Dan Bosanti orchestrates and arranges the music for the 14 Jazz Orchestra, a large ensemble with a large pool of talent. Dan co-produces <u>Islands</u> with pianist Mike Levine. Ed Calle (sax, fl, cl) is the featured artist with special guests Mike Mainieri (vibes), Mark Egan (b), Peter Erskine (d), Will Lee (b), David Liebman (s-sax), and Randy Bernstein (g) all making notable contributions. They open with “Man From Tanganyika” establishing an upbeat, festive vibe that carries through the entire session. Other highlights are “Carmencita”, “Loft Dance”, and “Jitterbug Waltz”.</p>
SEULAH NOH <u>Nohmad</u> T^N <i>Seulah Noh</i> 76	<p>Composer, arranger, conductor Seulah Noh leads her Jazz Orchestra on <u>Nomad</u> released this past summer. There are nine engaging selections including a three-part Traveler’s Suite. We liked “Sail at Dawn” (in the suite), “Have You Heard”, and the warm brass on “Hear The Light” featuring vocals by Astghik Martirosyan. They open and close with alternate takes of “L’illusionniste” with beautiful vocalizations by guest artist Song Yi Jeon accompanying spirited instrumentation. The large ensemble is rhythmic and precise with attention to subtleties that allow individuals to flourish.</p>
DANIEL HERSOG <u>Open Spaces</u> T^N <i>Cellar Jazz</i> 75	<p>Daniel Hersog conducts his Jazz Orchestra for <u>Open Spaces</u>, a collection of folk songs reimagined in jazz space. Six of the ten selections are Hersog originals. The orchestra is rich with talent including Noah Preminger (t-sax), Frank Carlberg (p), Dan Weiss (d), Kurt Rosenwinkle (g), Brad Turner (t), Ben Kono (oboe, s-sax, fl, cl), and Scott Robinson (b-sax, b-cl, fl). The solos are rich and plentiful. The transformation is convincing in a very energetic session balanced with warm ballads like “Shenandoah”.</p>
JESSE WAGNER T^N <u>Bluebeat Holiday</u> <i>Hi Tide</i> 74	<p>Vocalist Jesse Wagner teams with Western Standard Time Ska Orchestra for <u>Bluebeat Holiday</u>, a swinging set that has a country, reggae bent. There are ten selections in just under 30 minutes. “Jingle Bells”, “Santa Claus Is Coming To Town”, and “Christmas Song” are highlights.</p>

Traditional Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY	<u>Finding Beauty</u>	<i>Shanachie</i>	73	T ^b
BENJAMIN KOPPEL	<u>Perspective</u>	<i>Cowbell</i>	73	T ^B
DANIELLE WERTZ	<u>Other Side</u>	<i>Outside In</i>	73	T ^b
MATT BARBER	<u>The Song Is You</u>	<i>M. Barber</i>	72	T ^b
MASUMI ORMANDY	<u>Beyond The Sea</u>	<i>Miles High</i>	72	T ^b
JD ALLEN	<u>This</u>	<i>Savant</i>	71	T ^B
COLETTE MICHAAN	<u>Earth Rebirth</u>	<i>Creatrix</i>	71	T ^L
CARMELA RAPPAZZO	<u>Whispering</u>	<i>C. Rappazzo</i>	66	T ^b

Photo: Concord



93
Latin
Jazz Detective
2023

Cal Tjader

Catch The Groove

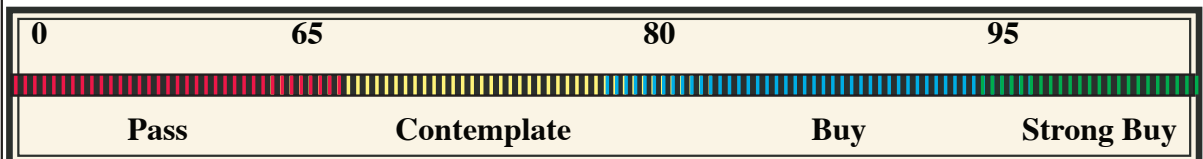
If you don't have the legendary vibraphonist, Cal Tjader in your collection, this is one to Catch The Groove! It's a two-disc, live compilation capturing Cal leading six different quintets over 1963-1967 at Seattle's Penthouse Jazz Club, a venue that lasted from 1963 to 1968. Cal was perhaps the most famous non-Latino, Latin musician. What is indisputable is Tjader's prowess on vibes and the fluid melodies you can witness on these 27 classic selections including a few originals.

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

Photo: ARC Artists



Ivan Lins

Lins is a well-established Brazilian vocalist and composer. *My Heart Speaks*, is his latest album and it is a statement recording including many of his greatest hits. He gets support from the 91-piece symphony of Tbilisi. There are notable guest appearances by Randy Brecker on “Missing Miles”, Dianne Reeves on “The Heart Speaks”, Jane Monheit on “Rio”, and newcomer, Tawanda on “I’m Not Alone” that accentuate the performance. It’s a rich session with a lot to entice a broad audience.

80
Resonance
Latin
2023

My Heart Speaks

Valeria Matzner

Latin 2023

Canterbury 74

Tamborilero

This is a set of nine Latin-fusion Toronto-based Valeria Matzner. She is scatting in concert with the syncopated beats of a strong band that includes composer, arranger, Scott Metcalfe (keyboards), Max Senitt (d), Andrew Stewart (b), Juan Carlos Medrano (perc), Alexis Baró (t), Christian Overton (tb) and several others. Highlights are “Esa Tristeza”, “Grey”, “Forcas D’Alma”, and the title track. We also enjoyed the warm ballad, “Los Artistas”. The lyrics are in Spanish and English. We preferred her native tongue. *Tamborilero* is a pleasant 38-minute session.

Leila Martial & Valentin Ceccaldi

Le Jardin Des Delices

Vocalist Leila Martial and cellist Valentin Ceccaldi combine for an original musical experience. Martial has a delicate but powerful voice with elements of opera (owed to her mother, an opera singer) spread throughout the session. Ceccaldi’s cello is like a full ensemble resonating strongly on songs like “Au Bord De L’eau”. This is an exciting experience that surprised us!

77
Latin
BMC
2023



Photo: Matthais Luggeh

O's Latin Features

Chris Hazelton After Dark

83
Latin
Cellar Jazz
2023

Chris Hazelton mans the B3 and leads a quartet with Brett Jackson (b-sax), Jamie Anderson (g), and John Kizilarmut (d) with Pat Conway adding congas on three selections. The mood is festive on the danceable opener "Amsterdam After Dark". We also enjoyed "So Tired", and the swinging finale, "Watch What Happens".



Photo: Chris Hazelton



Photo: Jazz Music Archives

Debbie Spring

2023 Latin 86
CR Records

Ricano

Debbie Spring plays a 5-string viola with excellent tone, precision, and passionate flow on Tocamos. Keyboardist Hal Roland has dazzling piano solos on "Summer", "Senegal", and then on the Rhodes on "Mockingbird". Spoken word comes from Eddie "Oriente" Balzola on the title track (both English and Spanish versions), initiating the Latin-tinged selection. Our favorite is "Fragile" featuring vocals by Roland. The recording has depth and a warm contemporary jazz groove that is fresh yet somehow reminiscent.

Canadian trombonist, composer Audrey Ochoa has been illuminating the jazz scene north of the border lately and The Head Of A Mouse is a strong statement towards that end. She leads a strong team of musicians over thirteen selections. They open with the vibrant, Latin title track before slowing down a tad on "My Mom" with Jim Head (g), Jennifer Bustin (violin), and Ian Woodman (cello). Head returns imparting a taste of fusion on "The Con Artist" and leading the melody on "Embarrassed To Say" with Ochoa singing as well! They swing on "Ms. Lastrassi" with sweet, harmonized horns including Rachel Therrien (t) and Jeremiah McDade (t-sax).

The Head of A Mouse



Photo: Audrey Ochoa

78
Chronograph
Latin
2023

Audrey Ochoa

O's Piano Features

Rachel Eckroth

82
Fusion
Sam First
2023

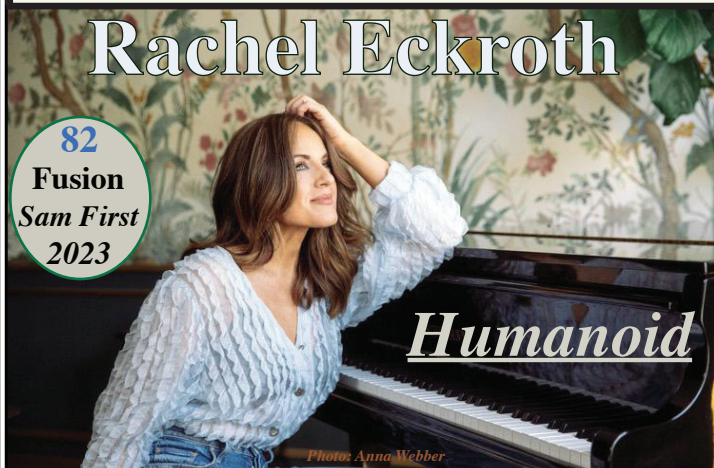


Photo: Anna Webber

Humanoid

Pianist Rachel Eckroth takes a break from electronics returning to a mostly acoustic session on Humanoid. Guitarist Andrew Renfroe takes charge on the opening title track, establishing a cool jazz-fusion groove anchored by Eckroth with Billy Mohler (b) and Tina Raymond (d). Renfroe opens “Fleurette Africaine” and Mohler starts “Evolution” with a fine solo. We also enjoyed “Strange Meeting”, “the relaxing “Lawns”, and the mild reggae beat on “Vines”.

75 Modern
Cellar Jazz 2023



Photo: Martina DaSilva

Miki Yamanaka Shades of Rainbow

Japanese pianist and composer Miki Yamanaka assembles a quartet with Mark Turner (t-sax), Tyrone Allen (b), and Jimmy McBride (d). Shades of Rainbow is the second recording of Yamanaka’s expanded trio including Turner. The foursome is now fully congealed as a unit. There are eight original selections. We liked the breakneck pace on “Uh Oh”, “Gin”, “That Ain’t Betty”, and the warmth of “Calm” featuring Turner best in the eight-song set.

Hiromi Sonicwonderland

Contemporary jazz pianist Hiromi leads her new band Sonicwonder with a sizzling rhythm section including bassist Hadrien Feraud and drummer Gene Coye. Trumpeter Adam O’Farrill adds crisp melodies to make Sonicwonderland pop, especially on “Wanted”. Hiromi uses electronic keyboards to impart a bubbly funky sound on the title tracks and across the nine original selections. Oil Rockberger sings on “Reminiscence”, the sole vocal track. Our favorites are the funky “Go Go”, “Utopia”, and “Up”. The Japanese keyboardist continues to reinvent herself and push the envelope.

78
Fusion
Telarc
2023



Photo: Hiromi

O's Piano Features

Photo: Michel Pinault

3 from **Marianne Trudel** **Time Poem**

83
M. Trudel
Pop+Jazz
2023



Pianist, composer, and arranger Marianne Trudel leads an engaging trio with bassist Rémi-Jean Leblanc and drummer John

Hollenbeck on Time Poem, a rather dynamic, inviting session. Leblanc is out front on “Les Vagues”, the fusion laced “Le Reveil des Rivières” and “La Joie De L’épée mène”. Also notable are “L’odeur Des Spain’s” and the darkness of “De La Fragilité D’un Monde”. This trio is more approachable than the duo recording.

Marianne Trudel & John Hollenbeck

Dédé Java Espiritu

2023 Pop+Jazz
M. Trudel 77

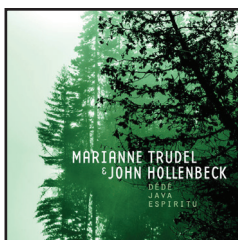
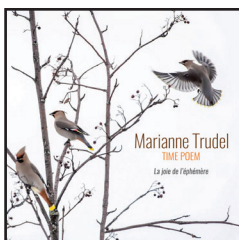
This is an adventurous duo featuring pianist Marianne Trudel and drummer John Hollenbeck. There is heavy improvisation with Trudel playing the on the keys and in the piano box while Hollenbeck adds generous doses of percussion. They shine on “Resonances et échos”, “Dédé Java Espiritu”, “Le Sol Et La Terre”, and the mysterious “Coquillages”.

Marianne Trudel

Quiet Sounds For A Loud World

Pop+Jazz 2023
M. Trudel 74

Trudel goes solo on Quiet Sounds For A Loud World, playing piano, harmonium, and percussion. The mood is solemn on “Profondeurs”, hopeful on “Les Vagues”, and eerie on “De Temps Et D’Espace”. This is a true reflection of global sentiments nowadays as we struggle to find the right cause to rally around.



O's Piano Features

Enrico Pieranunzi

Chet Remembered

83

Big Band
Challenge
2023

Pianist, composer Enrico Pieranunzi and trumpeter, arranger, conductor Bert Joris join forces with the Frankfurt Radio Big Band for Chet Remembered. Enrico composed many tunes for Chet Baker, a mentor and influence on both Pieranunzi and Joris. The collaboration is a powerful statement, all Pieranunzi originals highlighted with spirited arrangements that bring memories of the legendary trumpeter.

Photo: Enrico Pieranunzi

David Lopato

75 Modern 2023
Global Coolant

Short Stories

Pianist David Lopato leads an energetic ensemble through 67 minutes of nine Short Stories. Ed Neumeister (tb), Lucas Pino (sax), Michael Sarin - drums, Rogerio Boccato (perc), and Keita Ogawa (perc) round out the band. They touch many jazz genres along the way. "Through The Veil" is a free, chamber jazz, extravaganza with sizzle, and layered harmonies, featuring shadowing vocalizations by Anson Jones. "Clarity" is a refreshing tune featuring bassist Ratzon Harris. The bouncy "Mr Babar", and the warm Latin "Papagayo" including Bobby Sanabria (perc), are other highlights in a balanced session along with our favorite track, "Prince of Darkness".

Angelica Sanchez

Nighttime Creatures

Pianist, composer Angelica Sanchez leads a nonet in a highly improvised session. The band is a nonet with reeds, brass, and a balanced rhythm section. They feed off each other with good interplay on tunes like "Land Here". There is a touch of madness on "Cloud House" with the squawking sax, but it eventually subsides suggesting a calmness after the storm. Our favorites are "Ringleader", and "Big Wierdo". Nighttime Creatures is an appropriate title for these nocturnal sounds.

75
Pyroclastic
Ballads 2023

Photo: Angelica Sanchez

O's Piano Reviews

Photo: Tatler Asia

Jeremy Monteiro

Sings

78
Bebop
Jazz Note
2023

Pianist Jeremy Monteiro Sings on ten classic selections for his latest release. He gets support from Tony Lakatos (sax), Ben Poh (b), Hon Chanutr Techatananan (d), and The Jeremy Monteiro Sinfonietta Strings with Han Oh (violin). Wesley Gehring adds guitar on the first two selections. Lakatos shines on “Let’s Fall in Love”, “My Romance”, and “Josefina” in a sea of ballads well-suited for Monteiro.

Micah Thomas

Bebop 2023

Reveal

Pianist/composer Micah **75 Artwork** Thomas leads a new trio set with bassist Dean Torrey and drummer Kayvon Gordon. They play nine of his original compositions. They are syncopated, dynamic pieces that invite listeners into their zone, as on “Eros” and “Stars”. Each of the songs Reveal different elements in a pleasant way.

Photo: Antoine Jaussaud



Dimitri Landrain

77
Zoho
Latin
2023

Astor's Place

French pianist Dimitri Landrain leads a trio with drummer Keith Balla and bassist Jim Robertson. For Astor's Place Landrain draws on his jazz and Latin influences to craft nine original tracks. They start with the energetic title track and trace through his musical career with tastes of tango, samba, Cuban, and modern jazz. The Latin threads are dominant especially on “Eight Years” and “O Carnival”. They wrap up swinging on “Waltz For Billy” with Landrain dancing across the keys.

Photo: Stage & Cinema

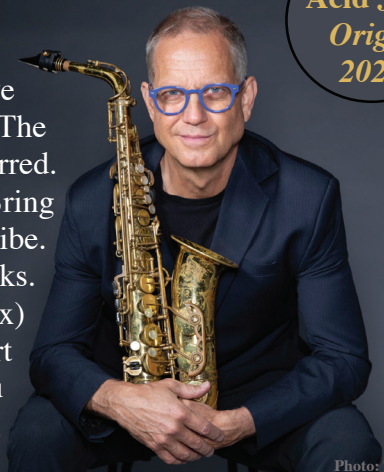


O's Sax Features

Benjamin Boone

Caught In The Rhythm

Saxophonist Benjamin Boone presents another provocative album of spoken word and jazz, Caught In The Rhythm. The messages reflect the reality of the people, no holds barred. Rapper Faylita Hicks adds a change of pace on “We Bring The Soul To It” with Boone’s raging sax paralleling the vibe. That’s just one of many powerful messages from Hicks. Guest artists Ambrose Akinmusire (t) and Greg Osby (a-sax) accentuate the shock on “Caught In The Rhythm” and “Art Pepper” respectively. These are intriguing stories that you want to hear but wish they weren’t true. Be careful Ben, some states are banning reality!



89

Acid Jazz
Origin
2023

Photo: Tamela Ryatt

Gorka Garay

2023 Fusion
Microscopi 76

Third Moon Of Jupiter

There are a variety of different modes on Third Moon of Jupiter that provides music for different palates. It’s the third recording from saxophonist Gorka Garay, and he continues to explore unique instrumental arrangements and sounds. This is an intriguing effort that caught our attention. “Beneath the Crimson Night” is an eerie tune with deep, raspy vocals. Garay’s strong sax tones reign on “Traveling To The Unknown” and throughout the session. We liked “Imaginary Enemies”, the warm, soothing “Aehaa Aehoo”, the pleasant “Happiness Flows Through Ears”, and the adventurous “If I Were A Bird”.

Boston-based saxophonist Jerry

Bergonzi

Bergonzi assembles a fine band for Extra Extra, recording in his home studio under the direction of producer, bassist Harvie S. The program is all (Bergonzi) originals including Harvie’s “The Truth” that displays Bergonzi’s exceptionally warm tone. Guitarist Sheryl Bailey reigns large on tunes like “Loudzee”. She makes her presence known throughout the session, supporting Bergonzi like a true partner. Harvie S does more than anchor the rhythm section. He shows up with notable solos, as on “They Knew”. Luther Gray play drums and Phil Grenadier plays trumpet on three tracks as well adding another layer of depth.



75

Modern
Savant
2023

Extra Extra

Photo: Roberto Cifarelli

O's Sax Features

A Change of Destiny Bobby Zankel

Bobby Zankel plays alto sax and leads a free jazz ensemble with Jaleel Shaw (a-sax), Robin Eubanks (tb), Diane Monroe (violin), Somi Tonooka (p), Lee Smith (b), and Pheeroan Aklauff (d, perc). Ruth Naomi Floyd adds blue vocals on two selections. Bobby wrote all the compositions, arranged, and produced A Change of Destiny. The session was written as a score for *The Spirits Break to Freedom*, a story describing the lives of the nine slaves serving George and Martha Washington. Yes, you can hear the anger and pain in “Destiny” and evolving moods to a taste of freedom on “To Be A Human Being”. “Spirits Break To Freedom”, and “Naming Names” are other highlights.



82
Modern
Mahakala
2023

Photo: Michelle Lyu

Benjamin Koppel

White Buses

Composer, saxophonist Benjamin Koppel leads a septet with Thana Alexa (vocals), Uri Caine (p), Scott Colley (b), Hendrick Dam Thomsen (cello), Soren Møller (keys) and Antonio Sanchez (d). *White Buses* is a warm collection of thirty-three selections including sixteen testimonials about the caravan of Red Cross buses that saved ~20,000 people from the Nazi camps



Photo: Benjamin Koppel

in the later months of WWII. The songs and narratives illustrate the things the passengers witnessed while being transported back home to Denmark, the pains of aerial bombing, and the destruction of towns along their journey. They dreamed of life back home, with meals they could eat in peace. The music parallels their courageous journey with all the associated emotions. We liked “The Planes In The Sky”, “The Goodbye”, and the title track. These are just a few of many riveting stories along the passage to freedom.

80
2023
R&B+Jazz
Cowbell Unit

O's Sax Features

Photo: Clare Daly



Claire Daly

Vuvu For Frances

79

Swing
Daly Bread
2023

Claire Daly (b-sax, vocals) leads a band with George Garzone (t-sax), Jon Davis (p), Dave Hofstra (b), and David F. Gibson (d). They open sizzling on “All The Way”, soothing on “Mood Indigo” and “The Very Thought of You”. VuVu For Frances is a great listening session! It’s dedicated to Frances Ballantyne. We enjoyed “Harlem Nocturne” featuring Jon Davis on “Manhattan” featuring Garzone, and “The Saga of Harrison Crabfeathers”.

Joshua Redman

Where We Are

Tenor saxophonist Joshua Redman ponders our plight as we navigate through increasingly difficult passages in life on Where We Are. We reviewed the 2-disc, vinyl edition with 13 selections spread across four sides. Aaron Parks (p), Joe Sanders (g) and Brian Blade (d) are the core musicians behind featured vocalist Gabrielle Cavassa. Special guests Kurt Rosenwinkle (g), Joel Ross (vibes), Nicholas Payton (t), and Peter Bernstein (g) each add additional flavors on one selection apiece. Redman’s tone is warm and supports the blues theme. The massages are rich, and Cavassa’s delivery draws listeners into the music, a well-balanced session, Redman’s first featuring a vocalist.



84
Modern
Blue Note
2023

Photo: Jazz Arts Charlotte

The Tide of Love

T.K. Blue

T.K. Blue (Talib Kibwe) plays alto sax, flute, and leads a band with Stefan Harris (vibes, marimba), James Weidman (p), Gavin Fallow (b), Ron Jackson (g), and Lenny Robinson (d). The warmth of TK’s sax, blend with Stephan’s soothing tones and Weisman’s fine work on piano to make this an enchanting, romantic encounter. “When Sunny Gets Blue”, “The Tide of Love”, “That’s All”, and “To Mend A Broken Heart” are some of the fine ballads in this session.

2023
Arkadia
R&B+Jazz
78



Photo: T.K. Blue

O's Drummer Features

Gregory Hutchinson

77

R&B+Jazz
Warner
2023

Drummer, composer, producer **Da Bang**

Gregory Hutchinson serves up a winner with the pounding beats on Da Bang. The stories in the lyrics speak a myriad of emotions: trash talking, deceit, broken hearts... perhaps modern romance? Guest artists reign large with vocals from Leona Berlin, Sy Smith, PJ, Kameron Corvet, Tim Smith, Liselotte Östblom, Javier Starks, Soweto Kinch, and Samora. We enjoyed the program, especially Hutchinson's skit, "Sugar Bang Bang", "Fly Away" featuring Nicholas Payton (t), and "Last Time We Gon Be Polite" with trumpeter Christian Scott.



Photo: Open Studio

Joel Haynes

2023 Fusion
Cellar Jazz 74

The Return!

Producer Cory Weeds continues to unveil strong Canadian musicians. Drummer, composer Joel Haynes is the current focus on The Return!, his third album after 15 years away from the studios. He assembles a strong quartet with bassist Neil Swainson, pianist Tilden Webb, and Seamus Blake on tenor sax. They play four Haynes originals, two by Webb and a couple of covers. Our favorites are "Allure" and "Payback" with Blake blazing.

Bobby Kapp & Richard Sussman Synergy

Bobby Kapp Plays The Music of Richard Sussman

2023 Modern 77
Tweed Boulevard

81-year-old drummer Bobby Kapp commissioned pianist Richard Sussman to write the music for Synergy and assembled a fine band to perform it. Aaron Irwin (cl, b-cl), Abraham Burton (t-sax), John Clark (French horn), and Zach Brock (violin) are out front with Harvie S (b), Sussman, and Kapp keeping the rhythms tight. Among the best are "Tweed Boulevard", the swinging "Infinite Mobility", "Inner Space", and "Trance Dance" featuring Irwin and Brock.

Photo: Erika Kaplin



Photo: Bobby Kapp

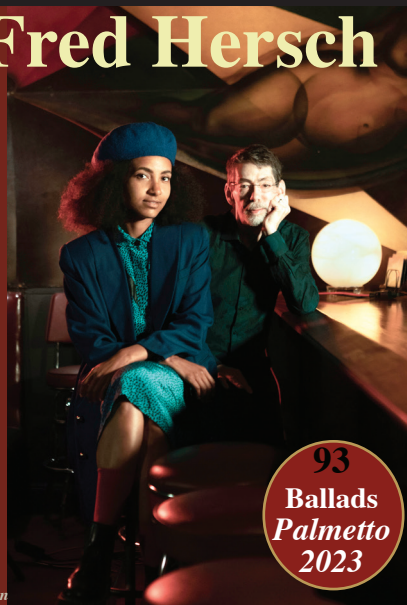
O's Vocal Features

Esperanza Spalding & Fred Hersch

Alive at the Village Vanguard

Following up on the limited edition 2020 release *Live at the Village Vanguard*, we have the 2023 release, *Alive at the Village Vanguard*. Both albums contain music recorded October 19-21, 2018, a truly magical engagement. Hersch is tickling the ivory and Spalding, sans bass is singing, scatting, and vocalizing, including played exchanges with the audience. The latest recording includes the five titles that were on the first release (perhaps different takes), along with “Little Suede Shoes”, “Evidence”, and “A Wish”. We enjoyed both and listened to them tirelessly, two masters at work! Delightful.

Photo:Erika Kapin



93
Ballads
Palmetto
2023

Heidi Martin

74 Heidi Martin
2023 Ballads

Gifts & Sacrifices

Heidi Martin is a provocative singer, songwriter with meaningful lyrics, and a resounding palette. She backed by a strong core of Tarus Mateen (b), Eric Harland (d) and either Raymond Angry or George Burton on piano. Paul Bollenback adds guitar and Paige Brown provides background vocals on six of nine selections each. “Memphis”, “Given To The Left”, and “Rice” are among the best.

Sinikka Lageland

Wind and Sun

80
Ballads
ECM
2023



Photo:Dag Alveng / ECM

Norwegian folk singer Sinikka Lageland plays traditional instrumental and performs in a quintet on Wind And Sun. She composed the music to the poems of Jon Fosse, one of Norway’s most important contemporary authors. There’s a gentle bossa nova on “The Love”, tranquility on “A Child Who Exists” featuring Trygve Siem (s-sax, and a grand allure of mystery and adventure on the title track. Lageland’s vocals impart a sense of warmth and comfort in her native tongue along with the warm brass tones from trumpeter Mathias Eick.

O's Vocal Features

Photo: Lezlie Harrison



82
Ballads
Cellar
2023

Lezlie Harrison

Let Them Talk

Canadian vocalist Lezlie Harrison took a passive approach to American discrimination for most of her life before realizing that silence is passive approval. Although racism is not at the core of Let Them Talk, Leslie selects nine classics and challenges us to let the music and the words bring us closer together. Whether you get granular or not, the soulful exchange is a worthwhile experience. Ben Paterson mans the B3, Pete Zimmer plays drums, and producer Matt Chertkoff is on guitar. Harrison's voice is warm rich and inviting. She's preaching her message, and you'll get that vibe on tunes like the title track.

Cautious Clay

Karpeh

Cautious Clay (Joshua Karpeh) is a singer, songwriter, and producer from Cleveland. He also plays flute, saxophone, bass clarinet, guitar, synthesizer, and bass. Clay makes his Blue Note Records debut with Karpeh, a bit of a history lesson intertwined with the music that parallels the path of African Americans in the US through the eyes of one family. Julian Lage (g) appears on three tracks notably "Another Half" and "Unfinished House". Ambrose Akinmusire (t) and Immanuel Wilkins (sax) appear on "Yesterday's Price". We also enjoyed "Moments Stolen", 'good music and a solid message!

77

R&B+Jazz
Blue Note
2023



Photo: Cautious Clay

Hannah Gill

Everybody Loves A Lover

Step back into the days of swinging vocal jazz and singer Hannah Gill helps us relive the experience in true form. The lyrics come alive on eleven romantic classics with crisp brass and a swinging rhythm section. "Moonlight Savings Time", "What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry", and "You Were Only Fooling" are just a few of many delights on Everybody Loves A Lover. We enjoyed contrasting the romance lyrics of then with now!

Photo: Hannah Gill



81
Ballads
Turtle Bay
2023

O's Vocal Features

Angela DeNiro

Swingin' With Legends 2

79
Ballads
Early Autumn
2023

Angela serves up warm, sultry vocals on the opener, "New York City Blues" backed by Ron Aprea's powerful, swinging Big Band. There's lots of brass in Aprea's band, and it's accentuated by guest Ken Peplowski on clarinet for "You'd Be So Easy To Love", Randy Brecker (t) on "Hello Young Lovers", and Lew Tabackin (t-sax) on "It Might As Well Be Spring". DeNiro's delivery is passionate, dynamic, and rich with coloration lifting this session a notch above most!



Tatiana Eva-Marie

Ballads 2023
Turtle Bay 75

Two At The Most

Two at the Most is the documentation of a duo that performs regularly around Manhattan, in small venues as well as after-hours joints. The headliners are vocalist Tatiana Eva-Marie and her accompanying pianist Jeremy Corren. They recorded this album as New York was opening post-pandemic, having fled to Switzerland during the height of it. Guest Mark Buchan sings on two selections as well. There are ten standards here, a reminder of what we've missed and better experienced now, live in the Big Apple!

Douye

Photo: Douye

75
Ballads
Douye
2023

The Golden Sekere

Douye is a Nigerian jazz vocalist now residing in Los Angeles. The Golden Sèkèrè was created to honor and celebrate her heritage. She has a powerful voice with deep, warm tone that she spreads across 14 classics. They shine on "Green Dolphin Street", "It Don't Mean A Thing", and the big band arrangement of "I've Got You Under My Skin". Guitarist Lionel Loueke appears on two selections notably "I'm Confessin That I Love You". Trumpeter Sean Jones makes a guest appearance on "My Funny Valentine" and bassist Buster Williams is featured on "Devil May Care". The booklet includes beautiful photos of Douye in full color for every selection!



O's Trumpet Features

Benny Benack III *Third Time's The Charm*

Photo: Benny Benack III

Benny Benack III is a trumpeter, singer, composer, arranger, producer, and bandleader on Third Time's A Charm. He adds a touch of humor to "I'll Never Fall In Love Again". Crisp trumpet notes complement his lyrics across the set. There is also fine work from guitarist Peter Bernstein on three tracks, notably "Thank You For The Heartbreak". Bria Skonberg sings with him on "In A Mellow Tone". Chad Lefkowitz-Brown is featured playing tenor sax on two selections blending nicely with Benack on "Twilight Blue."



77
Classic
Benack
2023

Brad Turner

Modern 2023
74 Cellar Jazz

The Magnificent

Canadian pianist/trumpeter, composer Brad Turner assembles a quintet with co-producer Cory Weeds (t-sax), Peter Bernstein (g), Neil Swainson (b), and Quincy Davis (d). The Magnificent is a cool set of nine songs with the energetic "Bernice" and "You're OK" serving as a solo springboard for the band. We also enjoyed "Slapped My Mind", and the title track, a reference to The Magnificent Thad Jones, who inspired Turner on these works.

The New Wonders

Mike Davis

Mike Davis plays cornet and sings on this throwback, early 1900s, taste of New Orleans. The New Wonders includes Ricky Alexander (cl, a-sax, vocals), Joe McDonough (tb), Jared Engel (banjo), Dalton Ridenhour (p), Jay Rattman (b-sax, vocals), and Jay Lepley (d, vocals). This is festive, circus music absent the clowns with tunes that take you back in time. Vocal harmonies on "Clorinda" are spot on as is the instrumentation throughout the set. We also enjoyed the vamp on "Jungle Crawl".

76
Dixieland
Turtle Bay
2023



Photo: Jane Kratochvil

O's Guitar Features

Joe Marcinek *Dead Funk Summit*

Guitarist Joe Marcinek leads the Dead Funk Summit, a series of live shows with a different set of musicians for each performance. They merge Grateful Dead rock, blues, funk, and jazz-fusion to create memorable experiences. This edition features George Porter, Jr. (b), Melvin Seals (Hammond), Michael Lemler (keyboards) and Terence Houston (d). Tony Hall sings the blues on “Fever Dream”, and “Still Got It” backed by Marcinek and the band. We liked Melvin Seals work on the B3 on “Probably Nothing” and “Melameter”. We envision their live show is a blast!



Photo: Relix.com

81
Pop+Jazz
Vintage League
2023

Jaume de Viala

Guitarist Jaume de Viala used composed in the late 1970s, a He engages co-producer, guitarist Aleksander Petrov (perc), Vasil Hadzimanov (keys), Bernat Hernandez (b) along with a few guest artists for Calidoscopi Embruixat. The music has a Spanish bent and favors the contributions of the guitarists. Of note are “Cavalcada per la nocturnitat arabiga” and “Calvert 1979”.

74

Fusion

J. de Viala
2023

Calidoscopi Embruixat

the pandemic as a time to revisit music he blend of progressive rock and jazz fusion. Dusan Jevtovic, drummer Asaf Sirkis, Bernat Hernandez (b) along with a few guest artists for Calidoscopi Embruixat. The music has a Spanish bent and favors the contributions of the guitarists. Of note are “Cavalcada per la nocturnitat arabiga” and “Calvert 1979”.

Peter Xifaras *Fusion*

Peter Xifaras plays guitar and keys leading his band on Fusion. He composed, arranged, and produced all seven selections. Their funky music is packed with adventure on the opener, “Chaos”. Bassist Max Gerl shines on “B Blues” and “Shunzo” both featuring trumpeter Shunzo Ohno. Drummer/percussionist Scott Jackson anchors the beats and the Czech National Symphony, Orchestra weighs in on “While My Guitar Weeps For Mehdi Rajabian”. As depicted on the cover, this is a blazing effort!



Photo: Peter Xifaras

78
P. Xifaras
R&B+Jazz
2023

O's Guitar Features

John Scofield



Photos: John Scofield

76
Fusion
ECM
2023

Uncle John's Band

Uncle John's Band is a 2-disc set featuring guitarist John Scofield with bassist Vicente Archer and Bill Stewart on drums. They play a soft classic jazz-fusion. It's tilted a bit towards blues with a dash of funk on "Mask". Scofield's guitar melodies are like a singing chorus, and he puts a lot of feelings into every note. "Stairway to the Stars", "Mo Green" with a fine bass solo by Archer, the title track, and the peaceful "Somewhere" are notable.

Connor O'Neill

The Same Changes, Vol II is an album of original compositions by guitarist, arranger, and producer Connor O'Neill. Alex Delcourt (b), Steven Perry (d), and Morgan Walbridge (vibes) are his primary accompaniment. Melvin Toussaint (a-sax) is in his zone on "Gears" backed by soothing vibes and guitar accents. Jessica O'Neill adds vocals on "Early Departure" on top of Latin rhythms complemented by O'Neill's buttery solo. We also enjoyed the strong interaction between O'Neill and pianist Micah Graves on "Singularity". The music reflects Connor's views and serves as an inspiration to recover and re-emerge from some of the recent pains we've all encountered.

74
Fusion
C. O'Neill
2023

The Same Changes, Vol II

John Stein

No Goodbyes is the miraculous story of guitarist John Stein's return to action after a debilitating diagnosis of an autoimmune disorder in 2021. Nearly fully recovered, he celebrates this release with bassist Ed Lucie and drummer Mike Connors. Stein is passionately melodic in his playing. He's scatting on "Dig Blues", and in fine form on "Tristre". Cindy Scott sings on five tracks notably "Our Love Will See Us Through", "Every Stepping Stone", and the title track. Welcome back John!

No Goodbyes

75
Whaling City
Bebop 2023



Photo: John Stein, Scullers

O's Bass Features

Wojtek Mazolewski



Photo: Whirlwind Recordings

77
Fusion
Whirlwind
2023

Spitit To All

Polish jazz bassist, composer Wojtek Mazolewski is re-igniting the jazz scene in his country and his music is catching attention globally on *Spirit To All*, his latest release. Tenor saxophonist Marek Pospieszalski shines notably on “Ghost Town”. There’s excellent trumpet work by Oskar Török on “The Power of the People”. We also enjoyed the sounds of nature on “Slavic Spirits” and “The Year of Magical Thinking”. They wrap up the set with a warm ballad, “My Heart”, like the engaging, opening title track.

Dave Young

Dave Young plays bass and invites and Davide Di Renzo (d) to join him blues including timeless classics. experience, and it shows! Of note are “June Night”.

76
Swing
Modica
2023

June Night

Reg Schwager (g), Brian Dickinson (p) on *June Night*, a set of cool, swinging. This is a polished team with years of “Jordu”, “Milestones”, “June Night”, and

John Lang

Bassist, composer, arranger John Lang leads a star-studded ensemble including Gary Smulyan (b-sax), Pete McCann (g), and guest artist Kevin Winard (perc). John took advantage of time away from the clubs during the pandemic to polish up some unfinished compositions and tailor them to his current band. The results are this vibrant contemporary jazz-fusion set, *Earotica*. We liked the brass on “Blues For Faddis” featuring Bruce Harris (t) and McCann, and the swinging “The St. Virus Dance”, both representations of the twelve selections.

Earotica

75
Cellar
Fusion
2023



Photo: John Luang

O's Trombone Features

2 from Wycliffe Gordon

Trombonist, composer Wycliffe Gordon pays homage to his hero, the legendary Louis Armstrong on Hello Pops! He opens with the title track singing a fine introduction to the 15-song set, a collection of early jazz classics and Gordon originals. Anat Cohen (cl, t-sax, perc), Aaron Diehl (p), Corcoran Holt (b) and Marion Felder (d) form the core band with Bria Skonberg (t, b-vocals), Emily Asher (tb, b-vocals) playing on six and seven selections respectively. Gordon is in rare form notably on "Up A Lazy River" on his bone and on the mic! Nancy Harms adds soft, inviting vocals on "Dream A Little Dream" and "I've Got The World On A String" balancing a fine set that would make Pops proud!

Hello Pops!

89
Blues Back
Swing
2023



Photo: Jazz Arts Charlotte

82

Ragtime
Blues Back
2023

I Give You Love

I Give You Love is a 2016 recording and producer, Wycliffe Gordon with his Internationally All Stars on I Give You Love. The rhythm section is Ehud Asherie (p), Yasushi Nakamura (b), and Alvin Atkinson, Jr. (d). Adrian Cunningham (cl, t-sax) adds vocals on three selections notably "When You're Smiling". The set is mostly ragtime jazz with a few warm ballads like Wycliffe's "New Beauty's In The Eye". Other highlights are "Sweet Spot", "I Give You Love", and "Bourbon Street Parade".

Andrew Danforth

Born, raised, educated, and educating Danforth is truly Homegrown, his personal voice on sax, but also to the Avenue, and a prominent Black neighborhood displaced by the Interstate. It was also home of jazz legends Freddie Hubbard, Wes Montgomery, and JJ Johnson. Danforth wants to bring that spirit back to Indy and he's a seed! We liked "Absence of the Avenue", "No Range Hue In The Uplands", and "In Motion" with strong interplay from bassist Nick Tucker, and tenor saxophonist Sean Imboden. Christopher Pitts plays piano with bassist Nick Tucker and Carrington Clinton on drums over eight original selections that should catch your attention.

74

Modern
A. Danforth
2023

Homegrown

in Indiana, trombonist Andrew latest release. In part, it refers to his once famous jazz scene on Indiana Avenue, and a prominent Black neighborhood displaced by the Interstate. It was also home of jazz legends Freddie Hubbard, Wes Montgomery, and JJ Johnson. Danforth wants to bring that spirit back to Indy and he's a seed! We liked "Absence of the Avenue", "No Range Hue In The Uplands", and "In Motion" with strong interplay from bassist Nick Tucker, and tenor saxophonist Sean Imboden. Christopher Pitts plays piano with bassist Nick Tucker and Carrington Clinton on drums over eight original selections that should catch your attention.

ARTIST Title <i>Label</i> Rating	<u>Top Contemporary Picks</u> O's Notes
MACIEJ OBARA <u>FROZEN SILENCE</u> C^F <i>ECM</i> 79	<p>Polish jazz saxophonist, composer Maciej Obara assembles a quartet with Dominek Wania (p), Ole Morten Vågan (b), and Gard Nilssen (d) for <u>Frozen Silence</u>. The sound is cozy on an overcast day with Obara's warm sax peeking through the clouds. The rhythm section provides a solid foundation on "High Stone", "Rainbow Leaves", and the title track.</p>
SILVAN JORAY <u>UPDRAFT</u> C^F <i>Ubuntu</i> 79	<p>Swiss composer, guitarist and bandleader Silvan Joray is cooking on <u>Updraft</u>, his latest jazz fusion encounter. Bassist Nadav Erlich and drummer Jeff Ballard support him over eleven engaging mostly original songs. There are rich solos all the way around on the title track. They sprinkle in a couple of warm ballads notably "Very Sweet Stuff, But Nice!" However, we enjoyed the burn on "Kokodrillo" and "The Liar", well-suited for Joray.</p>
THE COLD STARES <u>VOICES</u> C^P <i>Mascot</i> 78	<p>Vocals come from guitarist/keyboardist Chris Tapp. Brian Mullins plays drums and percussion with Bryce Klueh on bass. They are The Cold Stares. The stories are living blues with all the associated joy and pain, professed on top of a grungy rock fusion featuring Tapp with Klueh mirroring his moves. Highlights are "Nothing But the Blues", "Got No Right", and a more relaxed pace on "The Joy".</p>
HUGES MAYOT & L'ARBRE ROUGE C^F <u>INVOCATIONS</u> <i>BMC</i> 75	<p>Hugues Mayot (t-sax, cl, voice) leads L'Arbre Rouge, a quintet with Sophie Bernado (bassoon, voice), Clément Janinet (violin, voice), Bruno Ducret (cello, voice), and Joachim Florent (b, voice). It is a peaceful marriage of chamber musicians with jazz. We enjoyed the string ensemble on "Remembering Old Times", featuring Janinet, "Ataraxia" showcasing Bernado and Janinet, and "Refuge".</p>
STAX SONGWRITER DEMOS C^R <u>Written In Their</u> <u>Soul</u> <i>Stax</i> 74	<p>These are the bluesy romantic tunes that used to dominate radio airwaves back in the 1970s and 1980s. We thought they were provocative then, but not even close to some of songs that permeate the airwaves today. It gives us a sense of what good love, songs and blues are all about. You'll hear Carla Thomas, The Staple Singers, Homer Banks, Eddie Floyd, and many more. Some of these artists were famous, and some of them faded into obscurity, but all of them had a common thread for good music, great messages, and a lot of fun.</p>

Listen, relax and enjoy jazz with "O"
www.OsPlaceJazz.com

O's Place Features

Richie Goods & Chien Chien

Taiwanese vibraphonist Chien Chien Lu and African American bassist Richie Goods are leading musicians on the contemporary jazz scene. They coalesced during to pandemic commiserating about Asian hate crimes and the Black Lives Matter movement. They listened and learned from each other with deep conversations and ultimately some great music forming a band called Connected. Sy Smith adds vocal color to “Water/H2O”, Brett Williams (keys), David Frazier (d), and Danny Sadownick (perc) anchor a strong foundation on the syncopated



Photo: Richie Goods

Connected

78
Fusion
Richman
2023



Photo: Chien Lu

“Treasure Mountain”. They chill on “Embrace the Now” featuring Japanese keyboardist Big Yuki, and on “Rain” with Shedrick Mitchell (organ). Jamison Ross adds vocals on “Someday We’ll All Be Free”. Lu and Goods visit social justice during the interludes bringing us in touch with DEI evolution and/or the lack thereof.

Wolfgang Muthspiel

This is a trio lead by guitarist, composer Cooley and Brian Blade on drums. were written by Muthspiel. Dance of following Angular Blues, and continuing along those lines, inspired by folk and classical music. The music has a subtle floor with dynamic accents that engage listeners particularly on the title track.

74
ECM
Fusion
2023

Dance of the Elders

Wolfgang Muthspiel with bassist Scott All but two of the seven compositions the Elders is the second release by this trio inspired by folk and classical music. The music has a subtle floor with dynamic accents that engage listeners particularly on the title track.

Norine Braun

Conventus The Eye of the Heart

Norine Braun sings, plays guitar, and composed all the words and music for Conventus The Eye of The Heart. Adam Popowitz (b, g, perc), Elliot Polsky (d, perc), Alice Fraser (keys), and Huggybear Leonard (Blues harp, penny whistle) are her band mates. There’s a honky tonk, reggae groove on “How Would We Know”, and an old school rhythm underlying “Dizzy” with Norine singing and rapping! “The Perfect Love Affair”, and “99%” also stand out in this adult alternative, blues, rock showcase that has some excitement for everyone.

2023
N. Braun
Pop+Jazz
75



Photo: Karolina Turek

O's Place Features

80
Pop+Jazz
Dünya
2023

MEHMET ALI SANLIKOL *Turkish Hipster*



Photo: Mehmet Sanlikol

Jazz pianist, composer and band leader Mehmet Ali Sanlikol is bringing the world together through his music. Turkish Hipster is performed by a large ensemble incorporating jazz, Turkish folk, samba, hip hop, and rock. It is accessible and enjoyable to a wide audience. Anat Cohen (cl) shines on “A Capoeira Turca”. They take an urban twist on “The Boston Beat” featuring rapper Raydar Ellis with spoken word followed by the funky, fusion on “Estarabim”. We enjoyed the “Abraham Suite” featuring Antonio Sanchez, notably the sweet brass and percussion on “The Sacrifice”, and the heartfelt ballad, “The Call - A Touch of Eternity”.

Kevin Fingier

75 R&B+Jazz
Fingier 2023

Not Strictly Soul

Kevin Fingier is an Argentine producer, composer, and multi-instrumentalist. He runs his namesake record company that specializes in contemporary urban, pop. Not Strictly Soul is the result of a 3-year journey combining Latin, soul, and contemporary jazz. The band includes guest appearances by vocalists Diane Ward, Jo Ann Hamilton and Josi Dias who appear on five of the eleven selections. Derrick Harriott sings on the “Intro/Forward” and Abdoulaye Badiane provide vocals on “Dunia Doman Doman”. We reviewed the heavy weight, vinyl album and noted its warm tone.

ALEX HITCHCOCK *Dream Band:* *Live in London, Vol 1-3*

Alex Hitchcock is a UK-based saxophonist and composer who assembled his Dream Band(s) for Live In London at Vortex Club. There are three distinct concerts with three lineups performing Hitchcock’s compositions. This is mellow jazz-fusion with rich brass harmonies, as on “Oblique” including a fine piano solo by Kit Downes. The live audience mirrored our enthusiasm! Vocalist Liselotte Östblom provides shadowing on “Verglas” and “Grace Pt.2” that softens the edges nicely. Hitchcock leads the charge on “Cakeism”, “Momentum” and punctuates “North End” with a warm solo intro. We also enjoyed “Cat Circles” with strong bass from Conor Chaplin.



78
Whirlwind
Fusion
2023

Photo: BLACKHAM IMAGES

Contemporary Selections

ARTIST	Title	Label	X	T
APEL LES CAROD	<u>Abismes I Flors</u>	<i>Microscopi</i>	73	C ^P
BUTCHER BROWN	<u>Solar Music</u>	<i>Concord</i>	72	C ^A
LAURA AINSWORTH	<u>You Asked For It</u>	<i>Eclectus</i>	71	C ^P
BOB GLUCK	<u>And Every Fleck of Russet</u>	<i>Electricsongs</i>	71	C ^P
HU VIBRATIONAL	<u>Timeless</u>	<i>Metarecords</i>	71	C ^F
SETH KIBEL	<u>Clown With A Stick</u>	<i>Azaela</i>	71	C ^P
PABLO MASIS	<u>Thought and Memory</u>	<i>bju</i>	71	C ^F
DONNY McCASLIN	<u>I Want More</u>	<i>Edition</i>	71	C ^P
DAVE MEDER	<u>New American Hymnal</u>	<i>Outside In</i>	71	C ^P
ROSSI, HESS, MORAN	<u>You Break You Buy</u>	<i>Diskonife</i>	71	C ^F
JASON KAO HWANG	<u>Book of Stories</u>	<i>True Sound</i>	69	C ^F
SARA SERPA/ANDRE MATOS	<u>Night Birds</u>	<i>Robalo</i>	62	C ^P

AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE

Owl Song

Ambrose Akinmusire is a jazz trumpeter who has performed a lot in free jazz space. Owl Song is his Nonesuch debut, tilted more towards a mellow, jazz-fusion. His band is a trio with guitarist Bill Frisell and drummer Herlin Riley. The music is full of rich tones that blend well together, suggesting relaxation and peace. Frisell's guitar, Riley's cymbals, and gentle pats are a textured canvass for Akinmusire's melodies. We enjoyed all of the eight selections, a refreshing, rejuvenating elixir for the ears and the soul!

81
Fusion
Nonesuch
2023



Photo: Ambrose Akinmusire

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O's Rating Scale (X)

0 65 80 95



Pass

Contemplate

Buy

Strong Buy

O's Place Legends

Dorothy Ashby *With Strings Attached*

90
Swing
New Land
2023



Photo: Jazz Arts Charlotte

We don't normally consider the concert harp a staple jazz instrument, but Dorothy Ashby did a fine job as a jazz harpist during the 1960s. As a Black woman during that time, she was a pioneer on many fronts! While she was a prominent straight-ahead jazz artist, she was also fluent in contemporary genres, even Jewish traditional music, along with her original compositions. A petite woman, she was dwarfed by her harp but played it masterfully. Ashby is one of the lesser-known jazz stars and thankfully *With Strings Attached* surfaces a wide span of her music between 1957 and 1965. She's influenced many musicians and been sampled by many more.

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Final Notes *Jazz composer, arranger, pianist, and band leader **Carla Bley** died from brain cancer at the age of 87 on October 17, 2023. She was quite the improviser and performed a wide range of music from provocative Avant Garde to subtle chamber jazz ensembles. She leaves her life partner, husband, bassist Steve Swallow and countless fans. **Mars Williams** was both a rock and jazz saxophonist. He died from ampullary cancer on November 20, 2023. He was 68. He starred as a member of *The Waitresses*, a new wave band, *The Psychedelic Furs*, a post punk band, *Liquid Soul*, an acid jazz group, and the free jazz based *NRG Ensemble*. The musical contributions of these fine jazz professionals will remain with us forever.*

O's Place Legends

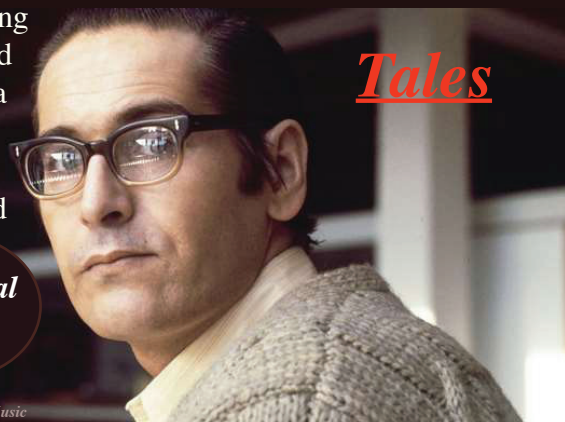
Tales captures jazz pianist Bill Evans at a session Live In Copenhagen, 1964. He performs in a trio with bassist Chuck Israels and drummer Larry Bunker performing for Danish Radio. The mood is bright, and the band is lively over ten classic selections. There is also a bonus take of “Round Midnight” grouping Evans with Eddie Gomez (b) and Marty Morell (d) from November 1969. The audience is enthusiastic and appreciative of another fine example of Evans in his prime. There is a 24-page booklet with photos and stories that further embellishes this work!

Bill Evans

Tales

80
Elemental
Bebop
2023

Photo: Elemental Music



George Shearing

In Concert is a live session capturing dances across the keys in a jolly fashion through meaningful arrangements of six Swainson for a delightfully interactive Dance” and “Lullaby Of Birdland”. It was just released in 2023 to capturing the late pianist in prime form with the venerable Canadian bassist.

78
Swing
Arkadia
2023

In Concert

the masterful pianist in prime form. He that warms the audience. He takes us classic tunes. He teams with bassist Neil session, especially on “Freedom Jazz

Joe Williams w/George Shearing

A Song Is Born

83
Arkadia
Ballads
2023

Vocalist Joe Williams and pianist George Shearing were both jazz legends. They came together for this recording, A Song is Born with Neil Swainson (b) and Paul Humphrey (d) anchoring the rhythms. They performed together on many occasions and this live recording commemorates some of their best songs. The set showcases Joe scatting and singing the blues with Shearing dancing across the keys as heard best on “Roll ‘Em Pete”. It’s easy to see why Joe excited audiences wherever he landed! These thirteen tracks are a fine example of masters at work.

ARKADIA
RECORDS

Photo: Terry Gibbs



ARTIST Title <i>Label</i> Rating	<u>Holiday Picks</u> O's Notes
GEORGE GEE <u>Winter</u> T^N <u>Wonderland</u> 88 <i>George Gee</i>	<p>Bandleader George Gee assembles a swinging large ensemble that delivers Holiday cheer over ten classic songs. John Dokes is the vocalist, and he shines on the seductive “What Are You Doing New Year’s Eve” with Patience Higgins (b-sax), and “Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas” with a warm solo from music director, arranger David Gibson (tb). Hilary Gardner joins Dokes singing “Baby It’s Cold Outside”. The solos are plentiful including fine work from Freddie Hendrix (t), Andy Gravish (t, flugelhorn), and Steve Einerson (p). Winter Wonderland is a hit from start to finish!</p>
SAMARA JOY <u>A Joyful Holiday</u> <i>Verve</i> T^b 88	<p>Samara’s rich, silky voice spills over six Holiday classics on her first Christmas album, <u>A Joyful Holiday</u>. There are six selections, four never heard before. “Twinkle Twinkle Little Me” features pianist Sullivan Fortner in a duet. We also liked the live recording of “The Christmas Song”, a duet with Samara and her father Antonio McLendon, “Warm in December”, and “O Holy Night” featuring the McLendon Family.</p>
JOHN PAUL McGEE C^P <u>A Gospelsjazzical</u> <u>Christmas</u> 88 <i>Sugo Musical</i> <i>Group</i>	<p>Jazz pianist/vocalist John Paul McGee perform eleven Holiday classics on <u>A Gospelsjazzical Christmas</u>. He plays solo, in duets, trios and quartets, both instrumentals and vocals. Bassist Joel Powell and drummer Larry Wilson are his core accompaniment. Guitarist Patrick Arthur appears on 3 songs, notably “Emmanuel”. The arrangements are fresh and really jazzed up! “Little Drummer Boy”, “Christmas Time Is Here” featuring vocalist Lori Williams, and “Jesus What A Wonderful Child” featuring Wendi Henderson-Wyatt, are some of the bests in a strong session.</p>
NORAH JONES & LAUFHEY T^b <u>Christmas With</u> <u>You</u> 80 <i>Blue Note</i>	<p>Vocalists Norah Jones and Laufey team up for Christmas With You. Their harmonies are sweet and inviting on two selections, “Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas” and their collaborative original, “Better Than Snow”. Jones tickles the ivory while Laufey plays cello and guitar in this minimalist production. We’d love to hear more!</p>
DAVID IAN T^B <u>Vintage</u> <u>Christmas Trio</u> <i>Prescott</i> 78	<p>This is a piano lover’s holiday feast all jazzed up with a bow featuring pianist David Ian. Bassist John Estes and drummer Josh Hunt provide strong support, but Ian remains centerstage. The <u>Vintage Christmas Trio</u> performs fresh arrangements of Christmas Classics. “What Child Is This”, “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen”, and the swinging “Away In A Manger” are a few of the best on the set of ten.</p>

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ARTIST Title Label Rating		Holiday Picks O's Notes
TEDDY PENDERGRASS <u>This Christmas I'd Rather Have Love</u> Craft Concord 76		Fans of R&B Classics will love this Holiday selection from the late Teddy Pendergrass. There are eleven classics including “The Christmas Song”, the upbeat “Little Drummer Boy”, and soothing “Christmas And You”. Teddy encourages you “Having A Christmas Party”. These songs are timeless.
MADS TOLLING <u>Cool Yule</u> Madsman 75		<u>Cool Yule</u> is a Holiday album featuring violinist Mads Tolling with his band The Mads Men, a quartet with Colin Hogan (keyboards, accordion), Gary Brown (b), and Eric Garland (d). They play a dozen classics in a minimalist form. We enjoyed “Santa Baby” a duet with Tolling and Brown, “My Favorite Things” and the title track with special guest vocalist Sonny-Freddie Pedersen.
STEPHEN PHILIP HARVEY <u>Little Gifts</u> Hidden Cinema 74		<u>Little Gifts</u> is a jazzy set of Christmas Classics, featuring the leader, Stephen Philip Harvey on tenor and soprano saxophones with Max Murray on bass and drummer Jordan Stanley. It's a brief 20 minutes and four selections, but they pack a lot in, especially on “Go Tell It On The Mountain” featuring Stanley.
DAVID HAZELTINE <u>Christmas Cards from David Hazeltine</u> High Note 74		Pianist David Hazeltine leads a trio with bassist Neal Miner and drummer Pete Van Nostrand. It's titled <u>Christmas Cards from David Hazeltine</u> , one each for the four freshly arranged classics. They each has David's dominant stamp on them. Our favorites are “The Christmas Song” and “Winter Wonderland” including solos from Miner and Van Nostrand.
JESSE WAGNER <u>Bluebeat Holiday</u> Hi Tide 74		Vocalist Jesse Wagner teams with Western Standard Time Ska Orchestra for <u>Bluebeat Holiday</u> , a swinging set that has a country, reggae bent. There are ten selections in just under 30 minutes. “Jingle Bells”, “Santa Claus Is Coming To Town”, and “Christmas Song” are highlights.
<div>O's Place Jazz Ruller™</div> <div> <div>Traditional</div> <div>Contemporary</div> </div> <div> 1900 1920 1940 1960 1970 1980 2000 </div> <div> Ragtime T^R Blues&Ballads T^b Bebop T^B Latin T^L Fusion C^F Funk C^f Acid C^A </div> <div> Dixie T^D Swing T^S Big Band T^N Free T^A R&B+Jazz C^R Pop+Jazz C^P </div>		

O's Place Features

Arkadia Jazz All-Stars

Thank You, Tom Jobim!

Thank You, Tom Jobim! is a collection of songs composed or inspired by the legendary Brazilian, pianist, guitarist, and songwriter, Antonio Carlos Jobim (also known as Tom Jobim). The performing artists all record on Arkadia Jazz and have celebrated Jobim's music. We are graced with a wide variety of approaches and unique arrangements of Jobim's music. Tetel Di Babuya sings "Vocé", Harold Land (t-sax) shines in front of Ray Ellis's big band on "Wave", and there are several small ensembles notably Joanne Brackeen's (p) trio on "Quiet Nights Of Quiet Stars", and Nigel Clark's (g) quartet on "Once I Loved". We also enjoyed Bob Brookmeyer (tb) and Lee Konitz (a-sax) blending their horns on Gerry Mulligan's "Theme for Jobim".



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