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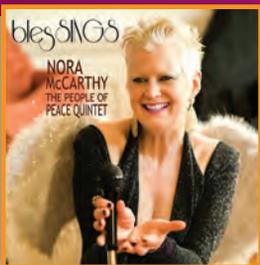
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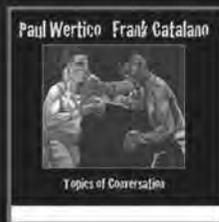
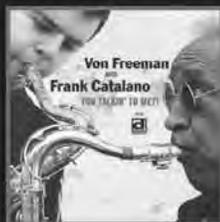


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Feature

Nora McCarthy

Way Beyond Vocalist

Interview by Eric Nemeyer

JJ: What has impressed me about you is that you are much more than a jazz vocalist—or specifically, a female jazz vocalist. You are a singer, you play piano, you compose music and write lyrics—comprehensive artistry in the grand tradition of someone like Carmen McRae or Betty Carter. Could you share your ideas about how you came to recognize the importance of developing these divergent and convergent crafts and disciplines?

NM: Well I think it all begins with what kind of a relationship you have with music in the first place. If you are in love with music, then it only stands to reason you'd want to know as much about the object of your affection, in effect, your craft, as you can. Like any other position within the field of music, it is paramount for a vocalist to be a consummate musician in my opinion. I have a high respect for skill and knowledge. If you're going to

do something, you want to be the best you can be and arm yourself with as many tools as you can in order to accomplish that objective. Singers in particular, first and foremost need to see themselves as instruments and as musicians because that is what we are—in fact, we need to hold ourselves to a higher standard because we are the first instrument. From the onset of my career I wanted to learn all I could and I set out to do so. I sought out and reached for everything that I know today. When there was something I wanted to learn, I either got a book, got a teacher, enrolled in school, observed, worked it out on the stage and made the sessions, six out of seven nights a week. Being a vocal musician, is being more than a singer, it's being an equal, a "boss" so to speak, and that was my motivation from the onset. I had no idea at the time, all that it entailed, but always being around musicians and being influenced by their expertise and knowledge of music made me strive to be that. Horn players especially were my biggest influences after

the singers. A great singer to me is one who is a hybrid of a voice and a horn. Knowing how to deliver a lyric is one defining skill of a good singer and especially if it's done to perfection, but for me, interpreting a lyric to perfection and then taking off improvising over the changes and then to go even further into free vocalizing is the totality of expression and mastery over one's instrument and absolute creativity, not to mention pure joy. All singers need to be able to communicate in musical terms, plain and simple, in order to advance on their instrument and be respected. They need to separate themselves from being the so-called stereotypical singer that is prevalent in today's industry. But that being said, you have to want that. Many singers don't and are satisfied with what they do because what passes today as excellence isn't and much of what you hear is fixed or manufactured in a studio—a whole other story. Then take into consideration, audiences and their limited ability to under-

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

stand advanced vocal techniques or who measure all singers by what they hear on the TV show the *Voice* or *America's Got Talent* and others like it. Where are the jazz shows? Hah! That, unfortunately, is what the record labels have done to the art. Singers like Carmen McRae and Betty Carter that you cite, set the bar high decades ago and are the god standard by which all jazz vocalists measure themselves initially. They are examples of extraordinarily gifted voices, because they embodied a unique *sound* but more importantly, were musicians, and ground breakers who advanced the craft as schools of higher learning in and of themselves. Yes, they were musicians but not because they played another instrument such as the piano, but because they understood how to play their own God-given instrument and possessed an innate sense of musicianship. So, I always believed, that in order to find that place of excellence within yourself, you don't mimic or bite off of someone else's style, but are inspired by the kind of excellence that singers like, Ella, Betty, Carmen, Abbey, Billie, Sarah, Jimmy Scott etc. possessed, *and* to do whatever it takes to find your own voice, get the information in order to do that and then and be committed to make a contribution to the art form by raising your own personal bar of excellence. During the time that Billie, Carmen, and Betty were coming up, that wasn't necessarily how the role of the singer was viewed, though they surpassed those limitations, they broke down the barriers singers had been confined by, especially Betty, more than any of the others, who never stopped expanding the art form encouraging and paving the way for vocal instrumentalists like Bobby McFerrin and the avant-garde/experimental singers such as the great Jeanne Lee, Joan La Barbara and Meredith Monk for instance to emerge. Today, with all of the jazz schools having outstanding vocal programs, singers are taking their rightful places alongside musicians, which wasn't the case when I was coming up, so clearly, I wanted more for myself early on and understood what I had to do in order to achieve that. The singing, composing, lyric writing, poetry, and delving into the more abstract facets of sound development and vocal production was the natural process of the journey for me which has been a lifetime of study and I welcome more.

JJ: What have been the paths of study that you pursued to develop your skills in these areas?

NM: The path has been long and winding! I am, for the most part, self-taught, in that I have a combination of formal and informal training. What I have is a plethora of life experience. Much of what I know I learned from other musicians and from the stage, so much hard earned practical knowledge there. I studied with jazz horn players, pianists, bassists and drummers, the very people who created this music initially back in Cleveland where I'm from, and then here in New York; from basic theory to advanced concepts. I've studied voice with several private instructors from classical to jazz and a couple in an academic situation. I studied piano as a child and intermittently throughout my lifetime as an adult with private instructors and, I still am pursuing that path. I use the piano mostly for learning new music, accompanying myself, for composing and teaching voice. Also, I've studied the bodhran-Irish drum, with several teachers, an instrument that I love and resonate with. I've taken music courses at Cleveland State University, The Cleveland Institute of Music, The Cleveland Music School Settlement and received a scholarship for Jazz Vocal Performance at New School University in 2003. However, that was short lived. Suffice to say, that after performing in a professional capacity at that time for well over 20 years, having written over 25 compositions and innumerable lyrics/poetry, produced several CDs and having led my own bands as well as having been a member of many prestigious ensembles with some of the greatest musicians in the world — I found it difficult to find my place within a structured system that is geared toward younger students just learning the craft and, also then contending with the economics of it. But truly, for me, my greatest learning has come from two sources: the first being the study of self, my own personal instrument. Over the years, I meticulously documented ideas and concepts I developed through self-discovery and experimentation with my own voice and from listening, listening, listening and studying the greats. The second, and an immeasurably invaluable source, came from working and learning from the musicians I shared the stage with. Finding myself in great company and challenging myself alongside musicians that are masters on their instruments is a learning experience that cannot be duplicated in any school. In that regard I've had many professors! But none more valuable to me than my

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(Continued from page 5)

musical partner and collaborator for the past sixteen years, alto-saxophonist Jorge Sylvester who gave me an opportunity to quadruple my understanding of music, to expand and explore my vocal ability, and advance my overall level of musicianship.

JJ: Could you talk about the importance in general, and how it is for you on a daily or regular basis, to be a constant student of your craft — driven by the foundational, artistic understanding of the importance for constantly honing your technical skills — voice, piano, composing, writing lyrics — and nourishing your creativity to make it easy for new ideas, songs and in the moment interpretations to come through you?

duce something like a song, poem or lyrics, or a lesson, within a specific time frame because I have developed those skills over the years and understand how it works but because my antennae are always up, I am receptive to inspiration 24/7.

JJ: You are lithe and flexible in your ability to create music at a high artistic level, with fluency — whether in an avant-garde or open form setting as you've done with small and large ensembles - such as Butch Morris' group or the big band with Jorge Sylvester, or performing challenging original music in progressive, Latin and mainstream jazz settings, and with impeccable intonation and articulation, or in a duo or trio settings performing jazz standards. What are some of the challenges you've experienced in these pursuits and having accomplished all you have with your performance and quite a number of recordings?

NM: I've had extensive training working within all

sic is perfect. If you surrender to it, and get out of the way, you will serve it well.

JJ: How do these various stylistic pursuits feed each other in your ongoing development and pursuits in the creative process?

NM: They all do because they are all rivers that flow into the same ocean. The ocean of music, of sound. They come from the same source. Improvisation for instance across all styles and various creative disciplines comes from the same source, they share a common thread. That thread is creative energy which is a universal energy. Art is spirit driven. The spirit of creativity flows through all living things. Breath equals life. Therefore music is art, but it is the highest form of art because it is sound which is what God is — whatever that may mean to you. Style is just a detail contrived by a need to label and identify something, to own something, to claim something. Now, inasmuch as culture and religious beliefs are all entangled within that word "style" when it comes to indigenous music, folkloric music, of course then takes on a much deeper meaning and respect and reverence for those differences is essential and mandatory if you're going to honor the history. So now you're talking rhythm and ritual and therein lies the challenge of learning what all of that entails. When you put the time and effort into understanding that one concept, you basically understand how everything is tied together—rhythm.

JJ: What were some of the key understanding that you gleaned from performing open form or avant garde music that have contributed to your development performing standards and more mainstream music?

NM: Well, I was "inside" before I went "outside" not the other way around. I came out of the school of thought that you can't go "out" unless you understand what "in" is. In other words, form versus space. Seeing as how I always was fascinated by the concept of time and have an innate sense of rhythm, I realized that all time exists at once so it was always easy for me to take liberties with it as well as with the form, the melodic and harmonic line—which is merely rhythm assigned to notes—and never be "wrong," by conservative definition. I still don't to this day, like the restriction of bar lines. Of course I understand why they are there and I do respect them, but when it comes to phrasing it is more about a personal feeling of expression within the confines of a harmonic/melodic/rhythmic structure, when singing standards. When you are performing with other instruments within a large ensemble and something is specifically written, then of course the discipline of reading what is written is mandatory and a whole other thing. I take liberties when I'm interpreting a standard but it must always swing, be it a ballad or an up tempo tune. I believe that everything swings in accordance with itself because nothing can be out of place in a perfect universe. But, in order to sing free you have to hear it all and make your creative choices in real time based on not only what you are feeling/hearing/seeing but on the unknown elements that reveal themselves in the moment. That's freedom. When I apply that fearless freedom to a standard for instance, I can drop in from anywhere,

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"Knowing how to deliver a lyric is one defining skill of a good singer and especially if it's done to perfection, but for me, interpreting a lyric to perfection and then taking off improvising over the changes and then to go even further into free vocalizing is the totality of expression and mastery over one's instrument and absolute creativity, not to mention pure joy."

NM: The art dictates. Every day is different in terms of what I do toward any given aspect of my craft, much of which is determined by what I'm currently working on, be it a performance or a lesson for one of my students or my own personal study. What is of paramount importance is that no matter what I'm doing it is all directly related to singing. So, if I am say, taking a walk, I am singing. I can find something in the experience of walking that I can relate to singing. Using that as a basic example, I can do breath work, practice focusing, write a song or a poem and remember it, arrange it and practice it in my head, practice sound technique, work on rhythm, etc. I do specific vocal exercises mostly every day to keep the pipes in shape or I can spend hours working on my voice and ear at the piano, or on a particular piece of music, or composing, writing lyrics, it depends on the circumstances or sometimes I do nothing — never underestimate the necessity for down time and clearing the mind. I also spend a great deal of time on the business of being a musician — promotion, marketing, teaching, producing CDs, looking for work — which is a necessary component to the overall picture. Staying physically fit, nutritionally healthy, and maintaining a level of peace, cultivating a quiet mind and being right here right now in the moment I believe is essential for everyone. I can conjure up the creative energy if I have to pro-

of the settings you've listed here, each of those kinds of forms do call for a different skill set in terms of application — be it free, jazz standards, duo, "Latin," big band, and their respective repertoires but it all leads back to the initial concept of knowing how to play your instrument in the first place before you can benefit from any experience. But also consider this. The artists I've worked with and learned from are Masters! Once you've been exposed to that kind of education, you can do anything. The rest truly just involves knowing the material and preparation especially if you're doing new and challenging music that requires a lot of sight reading with elaborate and complicated scores, such as the ones in the ACE Collective and the ConceptualMotion Orchestra that Jorge Sylvester writes. His scores are extremely challenging and his abstracted Afro-Caribbean rhythmic concepts are demanding and rigorous. Working with Butch Morris was an amazingly expansive experience as well. He was demanding in terms of focus and absolute surrender to his methods. He helped develop my improvisational skills as well as my ensemble performance skills. He advanced my knowledge of conduction and inspired my poetic writing. Ultimately though it's all music. Finding your place within it, whatever size ensemble, whatever the setting or situation and being a professional. The challenge is always with self. The mu-



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be where I have to be and go anywhere, there is no such thing as being lost, it's just a matter of stylistic choices after that and good taste.

JJ: How did you begin writing lyrics?

NM: I'm tempted to say I'm Irish so it came naturally. I'm a story teller and a poet so I've been intrigued by language and words all of my life, I come from people who knew how to tell a great story. I love to write, and have an active imagination plus I was always good at expressing myself through writing. Language is another form of music and the ability to pair the two in a way that incorporates all the senses, the emotional as well as

wrote were amazingly close to what Jobim had originally intended because that is the power of intuitive communication. Around the same time, I was also writing my own songs so the music and the lyrics either came hand in hand, or one led to the other in either order. Singers make up songs all the time. Orchestrating and arranging them however is another story. I've written lyrics not only to jazz instrumental pieces, but to many of Jorge Sylvester's compositions. Also I wrote the lyrics for the wonderful pianist composer, Lucian Ban's piece, "Night On Earth" which is on my new release, *blesSINGS* and have been recently asked to write lyrics for a beautiful composition written by the brilliant composer, George Brandon entitled "Lovely" which I'm working on now.

JJ: What have been the ongoing sources - songs, literature, plays, books and so forth - that have made an impact on your technical development as a

innuendo, Cole Porter. But that having been said, I love a great lyric and won't sing a song with a bad lyric no matter how much I love the melody. I detest cliché, obvious rhyme, syrupy sappy sentiment and low IQ words. I've been very influenced by abstract painter and conceptualist, Wassily Kandinsky's work and his essays and theories about art and patterned my abstract minimalist voice and saxophone duo with Jorge Sylvester, *A Small Dream in Red*, after his work. We've put out two CDs *A Small Dream In Red*, and *In the Language of Dreams*, the latter was listed in the "Best Jazz of 2012 for Female Singer and Top Vocal Jazz Album" categories by Arnaldo DeSoueire, Journalist, Founder and CEO of JSR (Jazz Station Records.) I'm a huge fan of Oscar Wilde, Sam Shephard, Eugene O'Neill, James Joyce, most recently George Bernard Shaw, poets D.H. Lawrence from which I did write a song I titled "Isis" from his poem *Don Juan*. I love Shakespeare, the work of e. e. cummings, Charles Bukowski, Sylvia Plath, Sonia Sanchez, Arthur Rimbaud, Jack Kerouac, Sekou Sundiata and James Rudolph Daniels-Akinwale-Pitan-Ogun Adisa whose poem "Love Poem For the People" inspired me to write a composition and is the first track of my new CD *blesSINGS*. This is more or less a very brief list.

JJ: Why is it important for a vocalist to study and develop a command of the musical language and play an instrument, or more than one instrument?

NM: Beside it being a beautiful gift you give yourself, as I stated in an earlier response, you should learn to play your instrument and develop a relationship with music. You want to know how to communicate your ideas to other musicians at the very least. You also need to write down your ideas—composition, write your own charts, these are the basic tools of your trade. If you intend singing to be your livelihood, you should be well armed with the tools that will make you more hireable. Music world is a big place. Having a command of the musical language makes you eligible as a voice-for-hire for other work such as in large ensembles where reading is a requirement, or jingle work where time is money and good sight reading is essential. In addition, you can't teach what you don't know, so it is imperative that you know about your craft if you want to earn money as a teacher and help other singers. I personally don't care how you get your information or knowledge, only that it is valid and has been tested through performance and experience.

JJ: There are few barriers to enter the music world — and the critical thresholds of ability and experience for entry are often quite low. This is true in the jazz world in particular—whether for managers, promoters, publicists and to a lesser degree for musicians. Musicians need essential skills to be able to sound great, command interest and sustain a presence and career. What has been your experience? And how have you observed those vocalists or wannabe jazz vocalists who fit into this paradigm?

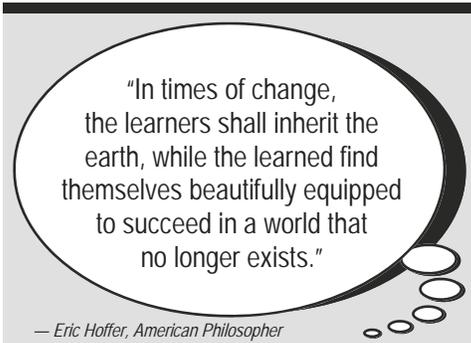
NM: I have been a professional singer for 35 years which makes me sound ancient. [laughs] Yes, I am familiar, as we all are, with the easy accessibility
(Continued on page 9)

“... in order to find that place of excellence within yourself, you don't mimic or bite off of someone else's style, but are inspired by the kind of excellence that singers like, Ella, Betty, Carmen, Abbey, Billie, Sarah, Jimmy Scott etc. possessed, and to do whatever it takes to find your own voice, get the information in order to do that and then and be committed to make a contribution to the art form by raising your own personal bar of excellence.”

the visceral components of a shared experience or better yet one that uses imagination to create a new and unfamiliar experience and give it life based off the music is pure magic. Finding the right words and having the ability to interpret the music is a specialized art form as the words to a song for me are as important as the melody and the harmony. I began writing lyrics from wanting to sing instrumental songs like J. J. Johnson's, "Lament" or Denny Zeitlin's, "Quiet Now," or Jobim's, "Estate." Interestingly about Jobim's song, there were already words written when I decided to write my own but I couldn't find them. This was back in the early 80's. But here is a perfect example of music that is written so well it conveys the story without words and it just so happens, the lyrics I

lyric writer as well as helped you hone the creative process?

NM: An ongoing source for inspiration would have to be my own life experiences and my spiritual journey. My children, the loves of my life, the struggles and the strife...the lessons and the blessings as I like to call them from life's experience. I draw from what I know and what I've lived. I also like to write about spiritual matter, abstract things, or from the perspective of another or many others, for instance I wrote a piece called, "Something Red" which is on my first CD *red&blue*. The lyrics are about the intensely emotional feeling of the color as it relates to a woman who is the object of many men's desires. "In The Early Morning Light" which is on my duo CD with John diMartino, *Circle Completing* is about betrayal. I wrote all the lyrics on my latest CD, *blesSINGS* and one in particular "Listen Close To What The Trees Are Saying," was written to bring awareness to the loss of our forests and the destruction of trees across the globe. "Restless Mind" also on the new release is about self-love. So, as you see, I write about everything. I haven't actually studied anyone's lyric writing style but anyone who sings songs from The Great American Songbook, which I have, is getting an incredible extended education in the art of lyric writing, especially those written by the master of



"In times of change, the learners shall inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to succeed in a world that no longer exists."

— Eric Hoffer, *American Philosopher*

(Continued from page 8)

into the jazz world by under-experienced and un-knowledgeable, ineffective, quote unquote, industry professionals, and I have had personal experiences with same. It is unfortunate but I cannot stress enough the importance of vetting anyone in the business to whom you give your hard earned money to and invest your trust in. That goes across the board, in life. I suppose the biggest deterrents would be the “gate keepers” who don’t know anything about the music or who have a personal agenda, but then again, who doesn’t these days? If you’re looking for things to be fair, you’ll be waiting a long time. The best thing to do is to stay on your own mission. Stay positive. Believe in yourself. Make beautiful music and create your own opportunities, don’t waste time on dead ends. *Next!* And, always, always maintain your creative integrity. Help your friends, and give back as much as you can. It’s not about the money. That being said, know who your friends are, in this business, there are a lot of poseurs and a lot of fakes and frauds. And it’s OK, but at the end of the day, remember everyone’s humanity, and be respectful, that’s important. Personally, I don’t go out to hear singers like you describe — if they have nothing to give, if they lack the essentials as you cite. But, everyone has to start somewhere and this business of music is a tough learning process that cannot be accomplished overnight. For me, the right attitude and the spirit with which you approach the music holds a lot of weight. I place a high value on honesty and being true to self. If you are open and humble you will grow because you will attract that which you need. I’m not into cliques, and I don’t make the “scene” very often unless it’s to go out and hear someone like Henry Threadgill. I do however, make an occasional exception and go out to hear new music and new artists that are doing cutting edge music. But to the “wannabe jazz vocalists who fit into this paradigm” that you cite, I have seen where a little talent went a long way because they had the right connections, money or the machine behind them, but eventually they burned out. Either way, they hold no interest for me. But I wish everyone well, it’s no skin off my nose if someone who doesn’t “deserve” to make it, makes it. I’ll still be doing what I do. “Making it” in the typical sense of the word, was never my motivation for playing music in the first place and success as I define it, is doing something you love.

JJ: You’ve been very generous in helping out musicians for years. Often you have hired musicians, given them opportunities, and from time to time experienced the disappointment of not experiencing reciprocation. Like many, you have experienced the disconnect between the many in this arena who pay lip service to “we’re all in this together,” and the battle cry for artist-musicians to help each other out. Yet all too often those lofty words and the faux camaraderie, are often easily displaced—and usually within days following the enthusiasm that permeates the array of industry soirees so many attend. The ideas are replaced by overwhelming self-absorption and self-importance at best, if not a disturbing toxic and chronically

diseased undertone of backstabbing at worst. Could you share your observations?

NM: If you do something or give something with the intention of getting something in return, then you are doing it for the wrong reasons. That’s a hard one for many to learn. Disappointment is on you. Yes, wouldn’t it be a beautiful world if we all did the right thing. That being said, when musicians you’ve hired or helped in other capacities don’t pay it forward, then they are their own victims, and the energy you put out is the energy you get in return. Change the way you see things and things will change.

JJ: For years you have also honed your skills as a business person in the jazz world, the music world. Many musicians have not taken the time or invested the effort to develop those skills. In turn, and to their disadvantage, many are perpetually *hoping* that a manager or promoter will come along and unburden them from the responsibilities of making their own opportunities—and then, that the opportunities or level of success that they feel they deserve will magically develop. Talk about how initiative, taking responsibility, not blaming others, and investing your own time, effort and money as an independent artist are important in general, and more important than ever in today’s reality and landscape of the proliferation of the independent artist.

NM: I’ve honed skills that would qualify me to be the CEO of a major corporation [laughter] over the years. Each one was spawned out of necessity. Plus, I like running my own show. But seriously, I apply the same thinking to being a hands on independent artist as I do to being a well-rounded musician. Because let’s face it, nobody is going to come knocking on the door and give you a lucrative career. It’s nice to dream but if you want to be competitive in this business you have to know how it works. It’s too easy to blame others, the industry, the system—you’re just digging your own grave. Even if it was all true, nobody owes you anything, bottom line and you must do for self. You have to take responsibility for your own future. Yes, it is daunting all of the things you have to know, but anyone can learn how to manage their career. The information is out there. The internet is packed with advice for independent musicians. It takes time, it takes effort, and it takes money. If you look at it like a business, which is what it is, then you are simply investing in your business because you understand that in order to succeed you have to take risks. I’ve learned so much from talking to other musicians who are making it happen for themselves and their success and advice has helped me. But, that being said, there are no guarantees. Bassist Juini Booth told me years ago, “It’s a war out here. Everyday wasted, is a missed opportunity.” I took that and applied that knowledge. But, as with anything else, you must accept that it could take a long time or never happen to the extent that you would like it too, it is as you say, very competitive and the landscape is ever changing. That’s why you have to have Plan A and Plan B and never stop revising your methods until something breaks. You can’t let anyone stop you. You have to believe in yourself and be smart about where to put your efforts and your money. One quote that I’ve used to

stay on my path when I felt overwhelmed and beaten down was one that John Hicks is given credit for saying and that is, “Nobody said it was easy, and Nobody was right.”

JJ: Most of the influential artists whose music we love—Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Bill Evans, Thelonious Monk, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Sonny Rollins, Thad Jones, Joe Henderson, and many others—rarely did tribute albums. Could you talk about the phenomenon of tribute albums that have proliferated the jazz recording landscape more and more over the past ten to fifteen years—an *modus operandus* that record labels have taken in the interest of a more conservative approach to ensuring sales and profits, and an approach which numerous artists have taken as well—perhaps to capitalize and piggyback on the name, brand, reputation and success of others?

NM: This is my understanding and take on your question. The masters you listed made the music, and defined the art form. It was an art form based on innovation, revolution, creative expression, and freedom. To me, that has always been what jazz is all about, new discoveries, experimentation, pushing the envelope, and invention...originality. In fact every one of those masters you listed stressed the importance of making your own music, having your own sound, your own voice—that is what sustains the art form and keeps it progressing... alive. The music, that was later given the label “jazz,” was clear in its intention and came out of a people, spirituality, not commerciality. Originality and genius ruled its emergence and then the possessors came. Jazz for me, especially that made by the above cited masters, represented the antithesis of “commercial.” But, as we all know, that is rarely the case today. I understand preserving the art form for historical and educational purposes, but in some cases, it is so over-the-top that it becomes exclusionary, prejudicial, straight up watered down mimicry, that it reminds me more of musical taxidermy. Jazz will always live but in our earnestness to treat it as if it were on its death bed by pandering to the record labels’ greed rather than forcing their hand to get behind the art form, the creative artists, and encouraging individuality and progressive thinking instead of reducing the music to a pabulum imitation of its former self, by placating the ignorance of the consumeristic mentality—that they are in part and parcel responsible for, we are in essence, contributing to its death. Marketing instead of educating the ever diminishing jazz audience is the problem and quite possibly behind the plethora of tribute albums being made today—it’s a viable way of selling more CDs—success by association, sales by association. It’s like serving the same old soup warmed over to the masses, not very nourishing. No wonder the art form is dying of malnutrition. I guess it works to bring in the money for the labels and perhaps some crumbs for the artist at the expense of the music but I’ve never made a tribute album and have no intentions of doing so. In fact, just recently while preparing to make *blesSINGS*, I was asked to ride on the coat tails of a very famous jazz saxophonist by changing the focus to this man’s music with the idea that I was aligning myself to him and using his name to get more atten-

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tion for myself. With no disrespect whatsoever, he was great, I couldn't do it. I declined. I didn't feel it was ethical to sell out. So I went with my original plan to put out a CD with predominantly my, and other living composer's music on it and still left room to honor several musicians that have had an influence on me by writing lyrics to their songs and listing one of them in my dedication namely: Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris, Ornette Coleman and McCoy Tyner. But back to the question of tribute albums, I know that certain clubs of the cabaret persuasion have the artist use the idea of a tribute show in order to attract an audience. It's the same deal. But lack of originality prevails in our culture and is destroying it. I understand the exception to

building blocks to the overall development of the voice and the professional singer. I am planning on releasing a handbook later this year but I've been collecting data, designing exercises and writing the various components of its methodology for about twenty years. It is tailored to address each student's specific needs and is for all levels of experience.

JJ: You have a busy teaching schedule and that's obviously because you are generous with your time and you have ample experience and expertise to share with your voice students about singing, playing, composing and writing lyrics, performing and business. Could you talk about your teaching and a quick overview of the beginner, intermediate and advanced students that come to you.

NM: I love teaching. I don't believe there is anything more fulfilling than to help someone improve themselves and give them the tools they need to

tions regarding their instruments after hearing them speak. Depending on their specific needs and after their vocal assessment which takes place at the first session, I begin with one or several of the learning modules I've developed to address their issues and map their course of action. Subsequent lessons may draw from one, several or all of the modules-so that we have total picture to work from. This is my method that I am in the process of patenting. I have developed many exercises and approaches that get consistent positive results sometimes immediately through sound and breath techniques that free the voice from the confines of years of bad training or no training; bad habits and fear. I mentor them, I teach them how to play their instrument, and give them the tools they need to succeed. I teach out of my home and depending on availability, I use a studio in Brooklyn but I am currently seeking an affordable space to teach out of, and am open to sharing. I also have done performance workshops here in New York and elsewhere in the world.

JJ: What would you advise students regarding going to college for music versus seeking a mentor and private study?

NM: I would advise them to do both. To seek out as many varied learning environments as they can and challenge themselves, try new things, take risks, invite new experiences, keep an open mind, learn from every situation and everyone, travel and experience different cultures, read a lot, and continue self-study for the rest of their lives.. "Know thyself and all will be revealed." — Pamela Theresa Loertscher

JJ: Could you talk about your background and experience in Cleveland and your move to New York years ago?

NM: I worked professionally in Cleveland from approximately 1979 to 1994 when I moved to New York. I ran my own groups there and played at all the clubs, large and small venues, performance spaces, hotels and several colleges in the city and surrounding areas. I also created several new opportunities to perform in places that didn't have music before one such place was the China Restaurant and Lounge in Ohio City where I ran a weekend music series that provided work for a lot of musicians. It had a downstairs room that looked like the Village Vanguard and was a great learning experience. Even though I was new at the game I was already realizing how to be a business woman, by making my own opportunities and actually getting my first taste of how to promote and market venues and myself without the use of computers because they hadn't been invented yet! While doing all of that, I started to study with a couple of private voice teachers here and there, took some college music courses, voice, chorale, sight reading, piano and also studied jazz with private teachers, horn players, piano players, bass players, drummers and set a strict daily regime for myself that was divided into segments: ear training, sight reading, improvisation, learning tunes, vocal exercises—stuff like that. Since I was also going to jam sessions, getting gigs and leading my own bands, I began writing out my charts and doing simple arrangements until I had my book together which

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"I have seen where a little talent went a long way because they had the right connections, money or the machine behind them, but eventually they burned out. Either way, they hold no interest for me. But I wish everyone well, it's no skin off my nose if someone who doesn't 'deserve' to make it, makes it. I'll still be doing what I do. 'Making it' in the typical sense of the word, was never my motivation for playing music in the first place and success as I define it, is doing something you love."

the marketing ploy behind making a tribute CD, if you are genuine in your honoring of a particular artist that you love or that influenced you greatly and it's coming from an altruistic place. Or by putting a fresh new veneer on the music, arrangements etc. bringing it up-to-date, you are keeping the memory of a particular artist alive without sacrificing your own creative integrity. But if you are putting out CD after CD of tribute albums that would be suspect. However, I prefer artists who make original albums or if they are going to do covers that's fine, but do them with a sense of invention. In all honesty, I'd rather listen to the original artist then buy a tribute album.

JJ: Could you talk about your *Zen of Singing* book and some of the highlights?

NM: *The Zen of Singing, the Spiritual Path to Finding Your Voice™* is a comprehensive course that takes a conceptual, physical and spiritual approach to singing and improvisation. It integrates ten essential elements I've determined are the

excel. It is the most selfless act of love there is and completes the circle of giving and receiving which is the life flow, it's amazing healing energy. That being said, I am learning as much as I am teaching so it is a reciprocal experience. The singers I'm working with now are all different in every way, age, musical knowledge, experience, instrument, style, abilities and personalities but similar in that they are all abundantly creative women who are earnest and eager to learn. I'm so impressed at how hard they work and how committed they are and amazed at their progress, I'm very proud of them. Some are professional, some are novices. Two of them have produced CDs of their original music and run their own bands. One was sent to me from the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary because she had vocal health issues that I was very successful in helping her overcome. They range in age from early 20's to mid-30's but I have taught children as young as nine years old and adolescents as well as older students, both professionals and beginners. After the initial consultation I begin to design their first class based on our conversation and my intui-

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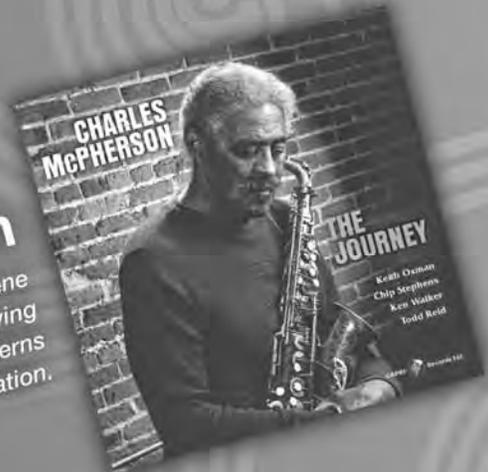


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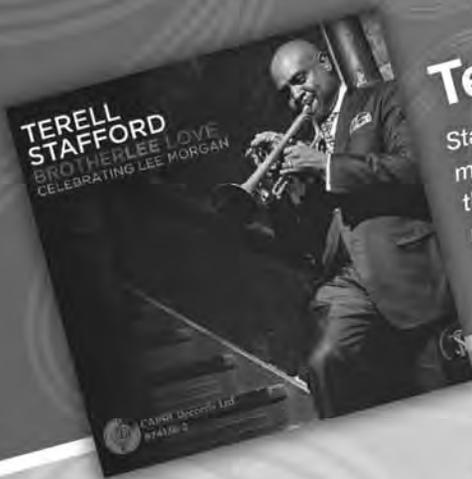
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His flowing lines on up-tempo cookers are impeccably clean and fiery, bearing the mark of a first-rate improviser, while his chordal work on heartbreaker ballads is the final word in finesse. — Guitar Player magazine.

JOSHUA BREAKSTONE



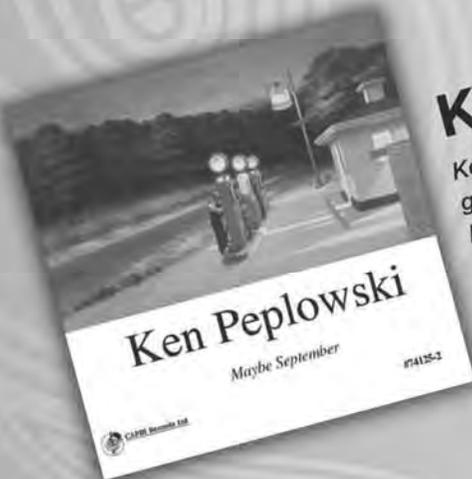
Ken Peplowski

Ken Peplowski is reunited with his NYC working group that includes Ted Rosenthal on piano, Martin Wind on bass and Matt Wilson on drums.

Ken Peplowski

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Limitless shows that the partnership is working quite well and in all likelihood hadn't even hit its ceiling yet. — S. Victor Aaron, Something Else Reviews



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(Continued from page 10)

grew to be quite sizeable; then amidst it all I began to write songs and lyrics. I had already been writing poetry and as I progressed, everything started to come together. The more I did, the better I got, the more I wanted to know, and I just kept working on my vocal skills, practicing and doing. I worked with the best musicians in Cleveland, most notably, pianists Carl "ACE" Carter and Neal Creque; and alto saxophonist, Willie Smith who were also mentors. But there were many great musicians in Cleveland that I worked with and it was a serious training ground in preparation for New York which was the next logical step for me to take in my progression as a vocal artist and composer. When I got to New York, it was a whole other ballgame. So, starting over, as it were, on the parameter of a galaxy of scenes, making my way, meeting musicians navigating through the many channels of styles of music, getting gigs, doing jam sessions—sitting in everywhere I could, honing my craft and acquiring new skills in order to keep it going, challenged at every turn by just trying to live, find housing and make the rent ... the endless pursuit of day jobs and those intense experiences, being a woman alone on her own trying to make it in New York City. Looking back, I was very determined and I survived. That is why I always say, never give up. You have to believe in yourself and don't let anybody stop you, you have to be strong to survive in

this world and that applies to whatever you do in life, whatever you're faced with, that's it. I made my first record *red&blue* in 1996 with pianist John diMartino, bassist Essiet Okon Essiet, drummer Alvester Garnett, percussionist Sato Takeishi and tenor saxophonist Mike Lee; seven out of the nine tracks were my original compositions, a rather gutsy move at the time for an unknown singer, or so I was told. But that CD got me a lot of great reviews — starting with Alex Henderson's — and many gigs, including The Five Spot and Birdland. But more than that, it gave me a direction that I remained true to, I had found my voice. I still had a long way to go but I had my tap root. That was 20 years ago and the rest as they say is history.

JJ: Could you discuss one or more of the essential stylists in this music — and how they might have significantly influenced your development, vocabulary and or perspectives as an improvising musician?

NM: That would be Betty Carter. When I first heard Betty live back in Cleveland in the early '80s, hers was a sound that filled an auditorium; it was huge. So was her musicianship. She impressed upon me the significance of being a musician. She ran her band like a man. She was bold, she was fearless and she was tight. She could improvise for days, never ran out of ideas, she was flawless in her delivery, and she could spit rhythmic lines and bob like a horn player. She remains the epitome of a what a jazz singer is. Her phrasing, how she draped her lines, stretched her words, that glorious dark

rich mellifluous sound that had so many facts, manipulated and played with every nuance within the music—sheer genius. Betty was the one singer who continued to evolve as an artist throughout her career. Eric Dolphy's was the first jazz album I bought that wasn't a singer's album. Go figure that his music called me—shades of what lay ahead in my own career. He was something else. He would later be responsible for how I approach my own improvising and to this day, I still listen to him and he still blows me away. I also listened to Dexter Gordon early on because I could relate to his phrasing. He was just like a singer. I love and listen to a lot to Sonny Rollins. Ornette Coleman gave me a new perspective on sound, design, dimension, and movement. These singularly important voices *are* the advanced course in the school of higher knowledge when it comes to improvisation and Albert Ayler who represents to me raw freedom of spirit.

JJ: A mentor once told me that compliments, like perfume, are meant to be inhaled and not swallowed — otherwise they can impede us from ongoing growth. Please comment.

NM: I like compliments. They are like little kisses, little flowers of affection. Why not just take them for what they are — gifts — especially if you know who *you* are. Besides, perfume tastes like Gin and I never liked the taste of Gin. It goes to your head!

JJ: What do you see as the challenges facing this music we know as jazz, and the prospects in the years to come?

(Continued on Page 34)

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, February 6

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- James Silberstein 3 at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Joe Farnsworth Prime Time 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Theo Crocker at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- Pat Martino 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Shannon Powell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Napoleon Revels-Bey at Sistas' Place, 9:00 and 10:30 PM. 456 Nostrand, Bklyn.
- Patrick Bartley: Parallel Worlds at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Greg Glassman at Fat Cat, 1:30 AM. 75 Christopher.
- Philip Harper 5 at Smalls, 1:30 AM. 183 W. 10th St.

Monday, February 1

- McCoy Tyner 4 feat. Gary Bartz at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

Tuesday, February 2

- Harlem Stride Celebration: Carolina Shout(s) 2016 – a Lecture with Musical Examples by Ethan Iverson at National Jazz Museum, 7:00 PM. 58 W. 129th.
- Brooklyn Big Band at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Aruan Ortiz 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Victor Wooten at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Warren Chiasson Group at NYC Baha'i Center, 8PM. 53 E. 11th St.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Willie Martinez y La Familia at Fat Cat, 9:00 PM. 75 Christopher.
- Patrick Bartley: Bix & Tram – A Retrospective at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Tadataka Unno at Fat Cat, 12:30 AM. 75 Christopher.

Wednesday, February 3

- Silver City Bound + Sammy Miller & The Congregation at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Pat Martino 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Talib Kweli at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Patrick Bartley: Bix & Tram – A Retrospective at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Thursday, February 4

- Peter Mazza 3 at Birdland, 6:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Mickey Bass & NY Powerhouse Ensemble at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Jimmy Cobb 3 at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- Pat Martino 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Simona Premazzi at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Talib Kweli at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Songs of Todd Almond at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Patrick Bartley: Bix & Tram – A Retrospective at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Friday, February 5

- Rick Stone 3 feat. Harvie S at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Joe Farnsworth Prime Time 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Pat Martino 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Shannon Powell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Janis Ian at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. B'dway @ 60th.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Julian Shore 5 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 9:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Patrick Bartley: Parallel Worlds at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

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oscar peñas

FEB 2

brooklyn big band

FEB 3

silver city bound
& sammy miller and the
congregation

FEB 4

mickey bass and the
new york powerhouse
ensemble

FEB 5-7

joe farnsworth prime time
quartet

FEB 8

the mark sherman quartet

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Sunday, February 7

- Joey Morant & Catfish Stew at Blue Note, 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Ike Strum & Evergreen at St. Peter's, 5:00 PM. 619 Lexington.
- Joe Farnsworth Prime Time 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Shannon Powell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Joel Frahm 3 at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.

Monday, February 8

- Keio Light Music Society at Shapeshifter, 7:00 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Mark Sherman 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Eden Ladin's YEQUUM at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Kermit Ruffins & BBQ Swingers at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Franky Rousseaus Large Band at Shapeshifter, 8:15 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra 50th Anniversary at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

Tuesday, February 9

- Gotham Kings at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Jonathan Kreisberg 4 feat. Dave Kikoski at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Kermit Ruffins & BBQ Swingers at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Keith Jarrett at Stern Auditorium, Carnegie Hall, 8:00 PM. 57th @ 7th Ave.
- Jon Burr at NYC Baha'i Center, 8:00 and 9:30 PM. 53 E. 11th St.
- John Yao's 17-Piece Instrument feat. Jon Irabagon at Shapeshifter, 8:15 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Green II feat. J.D. Parran & William Hooker at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Mathis Picard at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Yoshi Waki at Fat Cat, 12:30 AM. 75 Christopher.

Wednesday, February 10

- Realm of Possibilities feat. Chris Dingman at Shapeshifter, 7:00 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Bria Skonberg at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Freddie Hendrix 7 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Kermit Ruffins & BBQ Swingers at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Michael Feinstein w/Madelyn Baillo, Lucas DeBard & others: Blame It on My Youth at Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall, 8:00 PM. 57th @ 7th Ave.
- Blue I feat. Dick Griffin & William Hooker at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Fabian Almazan & Rhizome at Shapeshifter, 8:15 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Colin Stranahan at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Nicolas King at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Harold Mabern 3 at Fat Cat, 9:00 PM. 75 Christopher.
- Blue II feat. Michael Attias & William Hooker at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Mathis Picard at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Thursday, February 11

- Taeko at Birdland, 6:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Flavio Silva 3 at Bar Next Door, 6:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Rachele Ferrell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Indigo I feat. Steve Dalashinsky & William Hooker at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Mathis Picard at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Avi Rothbard 5 at Fat Cat, 1:30 AM. 75 Christopher.

Friday, February 12

- Vince Giordano & The Nighthawks at Rainbow Room, 6:00 and 8:30 PM. 30 Rockefeller Plz.
- Cécile McLorin Salvant at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 7:00 and 9:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Jeff McLaughlin 3 at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Freddy Cole: Songs for Lovers at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Mingus Big Band at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Rachele Ferrell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Claudia Acuña at Iridium, 8:00 PM. 1650 Broadway.
- Monty Alexander & Friends: Sinatra at 100 at Rose Theater, Lincoln Center, 8PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Julian Kirschner 3 at Shapeshifter, 8:00 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Joan Belgrave at Cassandra's Jazz, 9:00 and 11:00 PM. 2256 7th Ave.
- Ellery Eskelin 3 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 9:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Red II feat. Andrew Lamb & William Hooker at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Mathis Picard at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Saturday, February 13

- Vince Giordano & The Nighthawks at Rainbow Room, 6:00 and 8:30 PM. 30 Rockefeller Plz.
- Cécile McLorin Salvant at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 7:00 and 9:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.

(Continued on page 16)

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TUE FEB 2
ARUÁN ORTIZ TRIO
 WITH SPECIAL GUESTS **Enildo Rasna - mauricio Herrera**
 BRAD JONES - ERIC McPHERSON

WED-SAT FEB 3-6
PAT MARTINO TRIO
 PAT BIANCHI - CARMEN INTORRE JR.

TUE FEB 9
JONATHAN KREISBERG QUARTET
 DAVID KIKOSKI - RICK ROSATO - COLIN STRANAHAN

WED FEB 10
FREDDIE HENDRIX SEPTET
 BRUCE WILLIAMS - ABRAHAM BURTON - DAVID GIBSON
 BRANDON McCUNE - CURCORAN HOLT - CECIL BROOKS III

THU FEB 11
STRYKER/SLAGLE BAND EXPANDED
 JOHN CLARK - BILLY DREWES - CLARK BAYTON
 BILL O'CONNELL - GERALD CANNON - McGLENTY HUNTER

FRI-SUN FEB 12-14
MINGUS BIG BAND

TUE FEB 16
NIR FELDER
 KEVIN HAYS - ORLANDO LE FLEMING - ROSS PEDERSON

WED FEB 17
LAURENCE HOBGOOD TRIO
 MATT CLOHESY - JARED SCHONIG

THU FEB 18
ORRIN EVANS TRIO
 LUQUES CURTIS - MARK WHITFIELD JR

FRI FEB 19
ORRIN EVANS' CAPTAIN BLACK BIG BAND

SAT-SUN FEB 20-21
ORRIN EVANS TRIO
 WITH SPECIAL GUEST **KURT ROSENWINKEL**
 LUQUES CURTIS - MARK WHITFIELD JR

TUE FEB 23
OTIS BROWN III
 JEAN BAYLOR - KEYON HARROLD - JOHN ELLIS
 SHEDRICK MITCHELL - BEN WILLIAMS

WED FEB 24
CAMILA MEZA QUARTET
 WITH SPECIAL GUEST **SACHAL VASANDANI**
 SHAI MAESTRO - MATT PENMAN - JODY REDHAGE - JEREMY DUTTON

THU-SUN FEB 25-28
★ERIC HARLAND'S IV PSALMS★

THU FEB 25
ERIC HARLAND TRIO: I PSALMS
 VERY SPECIAL GUEST ITBAI - ALAN HAMPTON

FRI FEB 26
ERIC HARLAND TRIO: II PSALMS
 VERY SPECIAL GUEST ITBAI - MICHAEL LEAGUE

SAT FEB 27
ERIC HARLAND TRIO: III PSALMS
 CHRIS POTTER - LARRY GRENADIER

SUN FEB 28
ERIC HARLAND QUARTET: IV PSALMS
 BEN WENDEL - TAYLOR EIGSTI - LARRY GRENADIER

★MINGUS MONDAYS★MINGUS MONDAYS★
 MON FEB 1, 8, 22 & 29
MINGUS BIG BAND

MON FEB 15
MINGUS ORCHESTRA

★MAR 10-13★
STEVE KUHN TRIO

★MAR 17-20★
VINICIUS CANTUARIA QUINTET

★MAR 24-27★
GUILLERMO KLEIN Y LOS GUACHOS

★MAR 29-APR 3★
RAVI COLTRANE SEXTET

★APR 5-10★
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The Somewhere Project is made possible, in part, by generous support from the Howard Gilman Foundation and Martha and Bob Lipp.



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- Leslie Pintchik at Alvin & Friends, 7:30 PM. 14 Memorial Hwy, New Rochelle NY.
- Ben Monder 3 at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Freddy Cole: Songs for Lovers at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Dan Weiss Large Ensemble at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Mingus Big Band at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Rachele Ferrell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Clifford Paparo 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Monty Alexander & Friends: Sinatra at 100 at Rose Theater, Lincoln Center, 8:00 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Gregory Porter at Town Hall, 8:00 PM. 123 W. 43rd.
- John Menegon's 3 for All at Shapeshifter, 8:15 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30, 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Joan Belgrave at Cassandra's Jazz, 9PM. 2256 7th Ave.
- T.K. Blue 4: Tribute to Jimmy Scott at Sistas' Place, 9:00 and 10:30 PM. 456 Nostrand, Bklyn.
- Luis Perdomo/Rufus Reid at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Mathis Picard at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Sunday, February 14

- Martina & The Ladybugs at Blue Note, 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Janice Marie Robinson at Cassandra's Jazz, 4:00 and 8:00 PM. 2256 7th Ave.
- Cécile McLorin Salvant at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 7:00 and 9:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Gerry Gibbs 3 feat. Essiet Essiet at Melanie's, 7:00 PM. 24 Prospect, Bayonne NJ.
- Freddy Cole: Songs for Lovers at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Chris Turner at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- Mingus Big Band at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Supermambo: Vibes Tribute to Tito Puente at Subrosa, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 63 Gansevoort.
- Rachele Ferrell at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Sheila Jordan 3 feat. Alan Broadbent & Harvie S at Cornelia St. Cafe, 8:30 and 10:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Chris Potter 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Yellow II feat. Jon Irabagon at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.

Monday, February 15

- Lainez Cooke at Zinc Bar, 7:00 PM. 82 W. 3rd St.
- Antoinette Henry Sings Jazz Standards at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Mingus Orchestra at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Rotem Sivan 3 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- McCoy Tyner 4 feat. Gary Bartz at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Sonia Szajnberg 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Matt Brewer 4 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.

Tuesday, February 16

- Mostly Other People Do the Killing + Ron Stabinsky at Shapeshifter, 7:00 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Greg Lewis 5 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Nir Felder at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Darius Jones/Matthew Shipp at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Gianni Agliardi 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- John Pizzarelli 4 at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- David Chmielinski at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Nick Hempton at Fat Cat, 12:30 AM. 75 Christopher.

Wednesday, February 17

- Brandee Younger at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Laurence Hobgood 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- BeatleJazz at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Mark Ferber at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- John Pizzarelli 4 at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

- Harold Mabern 3 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Adam Douglass 3 at Silvana, 11:00 PM. 300 W. 116th.
- David Chmielinski at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Thursday, February 18

- Yuto Kanazawa 3 at Bar Next Door, 6:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Chris Johansen 3 at Home Sweet Harlem, 6:30 PM. 1528 Amsterdam.
- Kuni Mikami 2 at Cleopatra's Needle, 7:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Todd Herbert 5 at Fat Cat, 7:00 PM. 75 Christopher.
- Ben Allison Group at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- James Carney 6 at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Orrin Evans 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Shauli Einav 4 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Broc Hempel 5 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 8:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Pete McCann 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- John Pizzarelli 4 at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Todd Caldwell 3 at Caffe Vivaldi, 8:30 PM. 32 Jones.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- J.C. Stylls 4 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- David Chmielinski at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Eill Terrill at Fat Cat, 1:30 AM. 75 Christopher.

Friday, February 19

- Laura Campisi 3 at Flatiron Room, 5:30 PM. 37 W. 26th.
- Steve Ash 3 at Fat Cat, 6:00 PM. 75 Christopher.
- Film Screening: *Round Midnight* (1986) Starring Dexter Gordon, Introduced by Maxine Gordon at Irene Diamond Education Center, Lincoln Center, 7:00 PM. Free. 22 W. 60th.
- Pietros Klampanis 3 at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Ben Allison Group at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.
- Dion Parson & 21st Century at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- John Ellis 11 feat. Gretchen Parlato: The Ice Siren at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Orrin Evans' Captain Black Big Band at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Ralph Lalama & Bop Juice at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Rudi Mwongozi 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Pedrito Martinez Group at Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall, 9:00 PM. 57th @ 7th Ave.
- Lage Lund 3 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 9:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Mike Longo 2 at Knickerbocker Bar, 9:00 PM. 33 University Pl.
- Darius Jones 5 feat. Nasheet Waits at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Svetlana Shmulyian & Seth Weaver Big Band at Zinc Bar, 10:00 PM. 82 W. 3rd St.
- Mike Rodriguez Group at Fat Cat, 10:30 PM. 75 Christopher.
- David Chmielinski at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Saturday, February 20

- Roberto Gatto 3 feat. Lew Tabackin at Bar Next Door, 7:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Ben Allison Group at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.
- Brianna Thomas at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- John Ellis 11 feat. Gretchen Parlato at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Orrin Evans 3 feat. Kurt Rosenwinkel at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Jamale Davis 5 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Carol Sudhalter 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Andy Karl & Orfeh at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:00 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- John Pizzarelli 4 at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Eddie Henderson 4 at Cassandra's Jazz, 9PM. 2256 7th Ave.
- George Garzone 5 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 9:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Mike Longo 2 at Knickerbocker Bar, 9:00 PM. 33 University Pl.
- David Chmielinski at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Greg Glassman at Fat Cat, 1:30 AM. 75 Christopher.
- Philip Harper 5 at Smalls, 1:30 AM. 183 W. 10th St.

(Continued on page 17)

Sunday, February 21

- Marlene VerPlanck 3 at Blue Note, 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Ellen Rowe 3 at St. Peter's, 5:00 PM. 619 Lexington.
- Ben Allison Group at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.
- Orrin Evans 3 feat. Kurt Rosenwinkel at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Dave Holland 3 feat. Kevin Eubanks at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Bruce Cox 3 at Shapeshifter, 9:30 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Behn Gillette 4 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.

Monday, February 22

- Ashley Gonzalez Daneman at Zinc Bar, 7:00 PM. 82 W. 3rd St.
- Akua Allrich at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Gilles Naturel 3 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Melissa Stylianou 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Bebel Gilberto at Joe's Pub, 9:30 PM. 425 Lafayette.
- Matt Malinowski Trio/Quintet at Metropolitan Room, 9:30 PM. 34 W. 22nd.

Tuesday, February 23

- Bebel Gilberto at Joe's Pub, 7:00 PM. 425 Lafayette.
- Joe Chambers Outlaw Band at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Shai Maestro at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Otis Brown III at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Florian Hoefner 4 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 8:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Jan Kus at Drom, 8:00 PM. 85 Avenue A.
- Frank Perowsky at NYC Baha'i Center, 8:00, 9:30 PM. 53 E. 11th
- Smith/Karakis/Pearlman at Tomi Jazz, 8:00 PM. 239 E. 53rd.
- Yuki Shibata 4 at Shapeshifter, 8:15 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Joyce w/Dori Caymmi & Trio da Paz at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 178 7th Ave. S.
- Noah MacNeil 4 at Shapeshifter, 9:30 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.

Wednesday, February 24

- Svetlana Shmulyian & Delancey 5 + Dan Lipsitz' Brass Tacks at Joe's Pub, 7:00 PM. 425 Lafayette.
- Joe Chambers Outlaw Band at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Sarah Elizabeth Charles at Harlem Stage Gatehouse, 7:30 PM. 150 Convent Ave.
- Camila Meza 4 feat. Sachal Vasandani at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Adam Birnbaum 2 at Mezzrow, 7:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Lage Lund at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Milos at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Javon Jackson 3 feat. Ron Carter at Iridium, 8:00 and 10:00 PM. 1650 Broadway.
- Dave Stryker at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Joyce w/Dori Caymmi & Trio da Paz at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Rhiannon Giddens 3 at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Sammy Miller & The Congregation at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Thursday, February 25

- Gioel Severini 3 at Bar Next Door, 6:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Ray Parker 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 7:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- George Cables 5 feat. Craig Handy: Music of Dexter Gordon at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Revive Big Band at Ginny's, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 310 Lenox.
- Jeremy Dutton 3 at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Eric Harland 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Lage Lund at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Russ Lossing 3 feat. Hark Helias at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Jerome Sabbagh 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- La Santa Cecilia at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Joyce w/Dori Caymmi & Trio da Paz at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.

- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Sammy Miller & The Congregation Big Band at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Friday, February 26

- George Cables 5 feat. Craig Handy: Music of Dexter Gordon at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Charles Altura 4 at Jazz Gallery, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 1160 Broadway.
- Eric Harland 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Chris Flory 4 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Justin Weret 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Christian McBride Big Band + Henry Butler/Steven Bernstein Hot 9 at Rose Theater, Lincoln Center, 8:00 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Dori Caymmi, Trio da Paz at Birdland, 8, 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Charles Busch Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. Bdwg & 60
- Abe Ovadia 3 at Sugar Bar, 8:30 PM. 254 W. 72nd.
- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Antoinette Montague at Cassandra's Jazz, 9PM. 2256 7th Ave.
- Jamie Baum 8 at Cornelia St. Cafe, 9:00 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Alan Broadbent 2 at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Theo Walentiny 8 at Shapeshifter, 9:30 PM. 18 Whitwell, Bklyn.
- Ken Peplowski 4 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Sammy Miller & The Congregation at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Saturday, February 27

- Nanny Assis at Lambs Club, 11:00 AM. 132 W. 44th.
- George Cables 5 feat. Craig Handy: Music of Dexter Gordon at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Ingrid Laubrock, Tim Berne at Jazz Gallery, 7:30 PM. 1160 Bdwg.
- Eric Harland 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Masami Ishikawa 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Bdwg
- Christian McBride Big Band + Henry Butler/Steven Bernstein Hot 9 at Rose Theater, Lincoln Center, 8:00 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Terri Lyne Carrington's Mosaic Project at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 8:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 178 7th Ave. S.
- John Colianni 2 at Knickerbocker Bar, 9:00 PM. 33 University Pl.
- Rashied Ali Tribute Band feat. Billy Hart at Sistas' Place, 9:00 and 10:30 PM. 456 Nostrand, Bklyn.
- Alan Broadbent 2 at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Ken Peplowski 4 at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.

Sunday, February 28

- Billy Drewes & NYU Ensemble at Blue Note, 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Marianne Solivan at St. Peter's, 5:00 PM. 619 Lexington.
- George Cables 5 feat. Craig Handy: Music of Dexter Gordon at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Eric Harland 3 at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Seu Jorge at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Helio Alves 4 feat. Vic Juris at Cornelia St. 8:30 PM. 29 Cornelia.
- Ambrose Akinmusire 4 at Village Vanguard, 178 7th Ave. S.
- Alan Broadbent 2 at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.

Monday, February 29

- Gerald Clayton 3 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.
- Will Sellenraad 3 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Artemis Polonyi 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:30 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- David Hazeltine at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.

Tuesday, March 1

- Gerald Clayton 3 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.
- Ehud Asherie 3 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Bela Fleck/Abigail Washburn at 92nd St. Y, 8:00 PM. Lexington @ 92nd.
- McCoy Tyner 4 feat. Gary Bartz at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Matt Mitchell 4 at The Stone, 8:00 and 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.

Wednesday, March 2

- Tia Fuller 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Talib Kweli at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.



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- Myra Melford 5 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Snark Horse feat. Jon Irabagon & Matt Mitchell at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.

Thursday, March 3

- Steve Elmer at Cleopatra's Needle, 7:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Willie Jones 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Talib Kweli at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.

Friday, March 4

- Moonglow: The Magic of Benny Goodman at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 7:00 and 9:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Willie Jones 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Ivan Neville at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Kate Cosco 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Myra Melford 5 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

Saturday, March 5

- Moonglow: The Magic of Benny Goodman at Appel Room, Lincoln Center, 7:00 and 9:30 PM. Broadway @ 60th.
- Luiz Simas at Metropolitan Room, 7:00 PM. 34 W. 22nd.
- Willie Jones 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Ivan Neville at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Sonelius Smith 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.

Sunday, March 6

- Jim Black 4 Plays John Zorn's *Bagatelles* at The Stone, 3:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Willie Jones 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Ivan Neville at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Myra Melford 5 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

Monday, March 7

- NY Jazz Workshop at Shrine, 6:00 PM. 2271 7th Ave.
- Leonard Thompson 3 at Silvana, 6:00 PM. 300 W. 116th.
- William Paterson University Jazz Orchestra w/Randy Brecker at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Jimmy Heath 90th Birthday Celebration at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.

Tuesday, March 8

- Hsinwei Chiang at Shrine, 6:00 PM. 2271 7th Ave.
- Christie Dashiell 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Jimmy Heath 90th Birthday Celebration at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Lou Caputo Little Big Band at NYC Baha'i Center, 8:00 and 9:30 PM. 53 E. 11th St.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Shenel Johns 4 at Dizzy's Club, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Alexander Claffy 3 at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.

Wednesday, March 9

- Jae Young Jeong at Silvana, 6:00 PM. 300 W. 116th.
- Helen Sung 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Jimmy Heath 90th Birthday Celebration at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Arjun at Shrine, 8:00 PM. 2271 7th Ave.
- Ryan Muncy 3 at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Danny Lipsitz' Brass Tacks at Edison Rum House, 9:30 PM. 228 W. 47th.
- Dan Peck 3 at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Alexander Claffy 3 at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

Thursday, March 10

- Jordan Piper 2 at Cleopatra's Needle, 7:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Helen Sung 4 at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Roy Haynes Band w/Pat Metheny at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Yacine Boularis 3 at Tomi Jazz, 9:00 and 10:30 PM. 239 E. 53rd.
- Julian Lage 3 at Stage 2, Rockwood Music Hall, 10PM. 196 Allen.
- Alexander Claffy 3 at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.

Friday, March 11

- Linda Oh at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Roy Haynes Band w/Pat Metheny at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Michika Fukumori 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Bdway.
- Mar Sala at Shrine, 8:00 PM. 2271 7th Ave.
- Peter Evans 2 at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Alexander Claffy 3 at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.

Saturday, March 12

- Roy Haynes Band w/Pat Metheny at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Mike Lattimore 3 at Cleopatra's Needle, 8:00 PM. 2485 Broadway.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Carla Cook at Sistas' Place, 9, 10:30 PM. 456 Nostrand, Bklyn.
- Alexander Claffy 3 at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir.

Sunday, March 13

- Mark Feldman 2 Plays John Zorn's *Bagatelles* at The Stone, 3:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Roy Haynes Band w/Pat Metheny at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Phyllis Chen & Guests at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Bill Frisell 2 at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.

Monday, March 14

- NY Youth Symphony: Dedicated to Diz at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Ameen Saleem at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.

Tuesday, March 15

- Terry "Doc" Handy at Shrine, 6:00 PM. 2271 7th Ave.
- Shoko Igarashi at Silvana, 6:00 PM. 300 W. 116th.
- Sinne Eeg at Dizzy's Club, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.
- Roy Hargrove at Blue Note, 8:00 and 10:30 PM. 131 W. 3rd St.
- Mike Longo 3: Celebrating Dizzy Gillespie & Miles Davis at NYC Baha'i Center, 8:00 and 9:30 PM. 53 E. 11th St.
- Lucas Joelton at Silvana, 8:00 PM. 300 W. 116th.
- Angelica Sanchez 4 feat. Kirk Knuffke at The Stone, 8:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Steve Smith's Groove Blue feat. Tony Monaco at Birdland, 8:30 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Bill Frisell 5 feat. Petra Haden at Village Vanguard, 8:30 and 10:30 PM. 178 7th Ave. S.
- Margi Gianquinto at Edison Rum House, 9:30 PM. 228 W. 47th.
- Angelica Sanchez 3 at The Stone, 10:00 PM. 2nd St. @ Avenue C.
- Evan Sherman Entourage at Dizzy's Club, 11:15 PM. 10 Columbus Cir. #10.

REGULAR GIGS

Mondays (2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 2/29)

- Mingus Big Band (except 2/15) at Jazz Standard, 7:30, 9:30 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Vanguard Jazz Orchestra at Village Vanguard, 178 7th Ave. S.
- Woody Allen & Eddy Davis New Orleans Jazz Band at Cafe Carlyle, 8:45 PM. 35 E. 76th.
- Ari Hoinig 4 (except 2/15 and 2/29; Trio on 2/22) at Smalls, 10:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Jam Session (w/Jonathan Michel on 2/1, Jonathan Barber on 2/8, 2/22 and 2/29, Benny Benack III on 2/15) at Smalls, 1:00 AM. 183 W. 10th St.

Tuesdays (2/2, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23)

- Ehud Asherie & Guest (except 2/2) at Mezzrow, 7:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Spike Wilner 3 at Smalls, 7:30 PM. 183 W. 10th St.
- Annie Ross at Metropolitan Room, 9:30 PM. 34 W. 22nd.

Wednesdays (2/3, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24)

- Midday Jazz at Midtown at St. Peter's, 1PM. 619 Lexington.
- Louis Armstrong Eternity Band at Birdland, 5:30 PM. 315 W. 44th.

Thursdays (2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 2/25)

- Chris Gillespie at Bemelmans, 5:30 PM. 35 E. 76th.
- Jon Regen at Django, 7:00 PM. 2 6th Ave.
- Spike Wilner at Mezzrow, 7:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.
- Gene Bertoncini at Ryan's Daughter, 8:00 PM. 350 E. 85th.

Fridays (2/5, 2/12, 2/19, 2/26)

- Birdland Big Band at Birdland, 5:15 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Johnny O'Neal at Mezzrow, 9:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.

Saturdays (2/6, 2/12, 2/20, 2/27)

- Barbara Carroll at Birdland, 6:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.
- Spike Wilner & Guest at Mezzrow, 7:30 PM. 163 W. 10th St.

Sundays (2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28)

- Jazz for Kids: Jazz Standard Youth Orchestra at Jazz Standard, 2:00 PM. 116 E. 27th.
- Peter Mazza 3 at Bar Next Door, 8:00 PM. 129 MacDougal.
- Arturo O'Farrill's Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra (except 2/14) at Birdland, 9:00 and 11:00 PM. 315 W. 44th.

□ □ □

"In times of change,
the learners shall inherit
the earth, while the learned
find themselves ideally
equipped to succeed in a world
that no longer exists"

— Eric Hoffer, Philosopher

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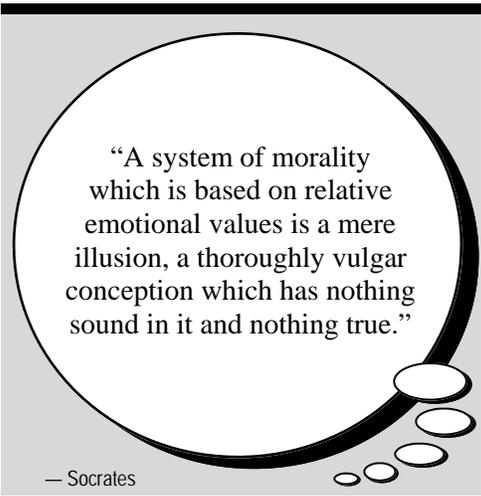
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“A system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception which has nothing sound in it and nothing true.”

— Socrates

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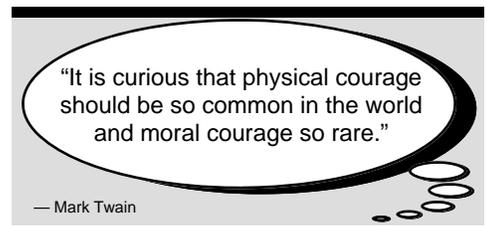
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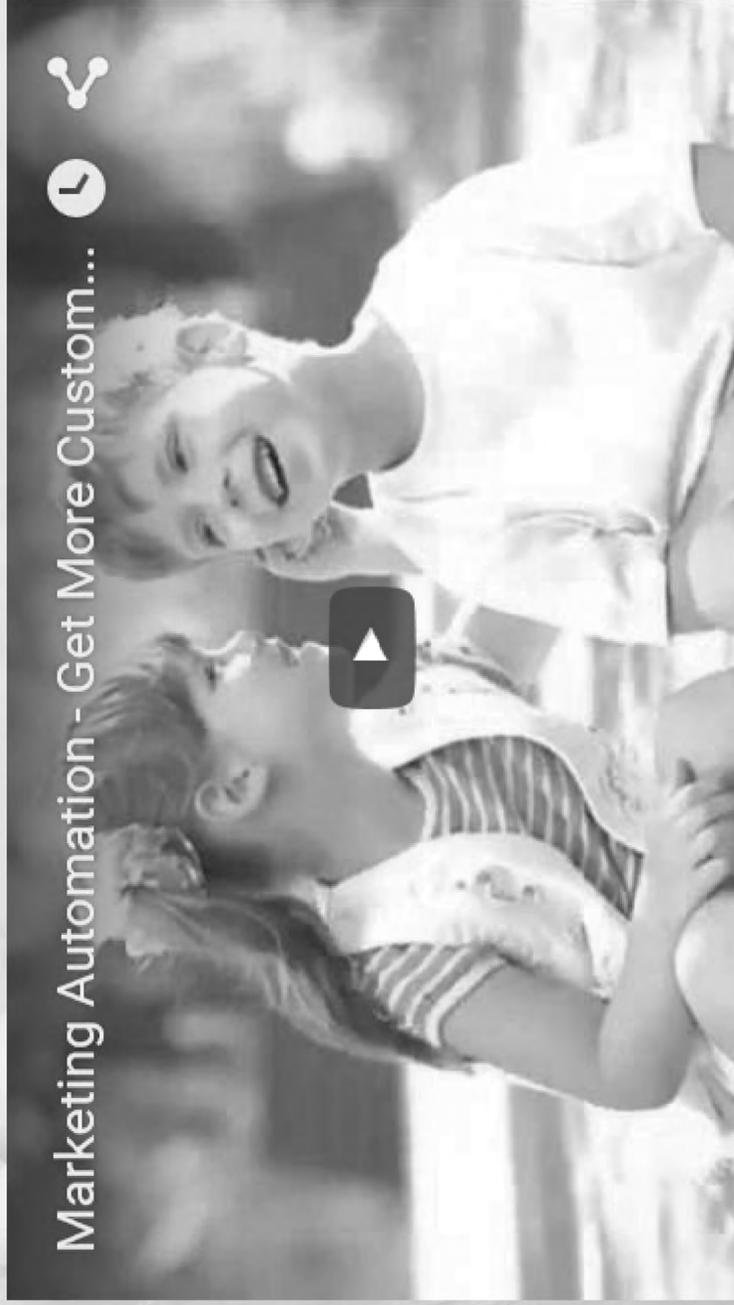
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Candido

Sense, Heart & Head

Interview & Photo By Ken Weiss

Candido de Guerra Camero (born April 22, 1921 in Havana, Cuba) moved to New York City in 1946 with the dance team Carmen and Rolando and was soon playing with pianist Billy Taylor after meeting Dizzy Gillespie. By the early '50s, Candido was a featured soloist with the Stan Kenton Orchestra and would go on to work with most of jazz' luminaries from the '50s and on. Some of the leaders who hired him include Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Tony Bennett, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Wes Montgomery, Sonny Rollins, Clark Terry, Gerry Mulligan, Buddy Rich, Count Basie, Stan Getz, Lalo Schiffrin, Mongo Santamaria, Tito Puente, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Art Blakey, and Slide Hampton. In addition to being the most recorded conga drummer in the history of jazz, he pioneered the use of three congas and was the first conguero to develop the technique of coordinated independence, allowing him to keep steady rhythm with one hand and improvise with the other. By tuning his three congas he was able to play melody and complement horn, piano and bass lines with harmonic contributions. In 1954, Billy Taylor wrote, "I have not heard anyone who even approaches the wonderful balance between jazz and Cuban elements that Candido demonstrates." This interview took place on April 20, 2015 at Lincoln Center in New York City, a few hours before the 2015 NEA Jazz Masters Awards ceremony. Two days from his 94th birthday, Candido was spry and

"When I got to the United States, it was like a dream come true. I came to the United States in 1946, July 4th, with the dance team Carmen and Rolando. After I finished my contract with them, I played with Billy Taylor, which was my first job in the jazz field."

quick to laugh during the interview. He remained very diplomatic throughout and wasn't going to be pinned down to announcing favorite musicians, bands or recordings that he had worked on. I would like to thank Candido's assistant – Roberto Marrero, Esq. for his valuable help during the interview.

Jazz Inside Magazine: You're turning 94 in two days. How are you celebrating birthdays at this point?

Candido: I have a lot of friends all over the world and they've been sending me birthday cards and calling me, even from Cuba, and I've also got Mr. Bobby Sanabria who's been celebrating my birthday for many years with his beautiful band. Even Tony Bennett, since 1958, has sent me a birthday card every year and nice presents. He calls me to have dinner with him when he has a chance, which makes me feel very happy, very lucky, and proud.

JJ: We're meeting a few hours before the 2015 NEA Jazz Masters Awards ceremony at Lincoln Center in New York. You've been coming for many years to the event. Would you name someone who deserves to be in next year's class?

C: Well, there's so many people that I know that should be included in this event. It seems almost everyone that I've played with has already been named as a Jazz Master. If I had to give you more names of people who deserve this it's gonna' take from now to next year at this time because it's gonna' look like a telephone book! [Laughs]

JJ: You had a strict upbringing in Havana. You weren't allowed to smoke or drink and you've continued that healthy lifestyle throughout your life. Tobacco and rum are so prominently associated with Cuba, was it uncommon for a young Cuban adult in the early 1940s not to smoke or drink?

C: Not that I know. Like they say in English – to each his own. I'm not telling anyone what or what not to do, but since I was born, until now, I've never drunk, smoked, or used false inspirations. I was different. The other musicians liked to smoke and drink, that's what they enjoyed, so good for them. [Laughs] That's how I was raised, my father was very strict. When I used to come home from work, he'd smell my hands to see if I was smoking and then he'd tell me, "Say ha," so I'd say, "Ha, ha." He'd say, "One is enough." He'd want to know if I was drinking by the smell. Another example of

how strict my father was, was when he'd have to send me to the store, he'd say, "I want you to go to the store for me. If you find one of your friends outside, I don't want you to be playing. You're going just to the store." He'd give me a list of what he wanted and he used to spit on the floor and I'd have to come back before the spit dried. I was running then.

JJ: During the early part of your career, you were working with other musicians who were drinking and drug use was very common at that time.

C: Everything you mentioned, but now, after all these years, I'm not gonna' do now. [Laughs]

JJ: I wanted to ask if the fact that you were very clean-living ever hindered you from getting hired by musicians who were using drugs and might not want someone who wasn't going to participate in what the rest of the band was doing? Also, did you ever not accept a job because you knew the other musicians were using drugs?

C: No, no, I never looked that way. I go do my part and I don't care what anybody else did as long as they didn't interfere with my private life. That's what counted.

JJ: So the other musicians were OK with you not participating with them?

C: No, I never had a problem. I never thought that way.

JJ: What was the extent of your jazz exposure during your time in Cuba?

C: I used to listen to the radio, day and night, all the time, to all the programs from the United States, especially jazz music, and I was influenced by that. When I got to the United States, it was like a dream come true. I came to the United States in 1946, July 4th, with the dance team Carmen and Rolando. After I finished my contract with them, I played with Billy Taylor, which was my first job in the jazz field. I met Dizzy Gillespie at the Palladium Ballroom where Tito Puente and Machito were playing and Dizzy asked me, "Are you familiar with the jazz music?" I told him that I didn't play jazz but I liked it. He told me if he could certify that I could play, he could use me, so he took me to the Downbeat club and Billy Taylor was there with his trio. I was allowed to sit in with the trio and when I finished playing with them, Dizzy Gillespie asked my friend, who I was with and was my interpreter, because at that time my English was not too good. The only words I knew then were hot dog and hamburger. I was hungry all the time so I learned that right away! Anyway, Dizzy told my friend, "Tell Candido I like the way he play and I like for him to go with me tomorrow on the road." I said, "Gracias, gracias," but Dizzy tried to tell me everything by himself in Spanish, but his Spanish was so funny, the only thing I could understand was manana. I thought he meant for me to go back to the Downbeat club the next day, which is what I did, and the club owner signed me for one week with options, every week I had to sign a new contract, and I stayed that way for a year and a

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half. Dizzy Gillespie sent over Wynton Kelly, the piano player whose family was from Panama, to tell me that I was supposed to go with Dizzy's band on the road yesterday. I told him what happened and I stayed in that manana for a year and a half. [Laughs] Dizzy told me that when I finished there, I was to go on the road with him and that's exactly what happened. After that, I played with all the big names in the jazz field – every one of them.

JJ: So all you knew to say was hot dog and hamburger? You must have eaten a lot of hot dogs and hamburgers.

C: Yeah! [Laughs] But now I can ask for what I like.

JJ: Were Cuban's playing jazz in Cuba at the time you were growing up there?

C: Always, always. Every club had two bands, a jazz band and a Latin band. There were always a lot of tourist from all over the world so they tried to please everyone. You had to be a complete musician then and play all kind of music.

JJ: Were they using congas to play American jazz in Cuba at the time?

C: Oh, yes. Chano Pozo was the first to come to the United States and play. Mario Bauza saw him in Cuba and brought him over. He had great showmanship. He sang, he danced, he played. So that's why he got the opportunity to come over. He wrote "Manteca," a song that's never gonna' die. I use that song a lot in my performances.

JJ: Are you still performing?

C: I just finished a performance last night at the Lincoln Center and next week, I'm gonna' be in Toronto, Canada, and from there, all over the world. My assistant, also my attorney, Mr. Roberto Marrero is here and I don't have to do nothing. I just have to go and play, that's it. Hello and goodbye.

JJ: How did you come to be known by just your first name, Candido?

C: My dad's name was Candido Camero and my mom's last name was Guerra, but for the stage, to make my name easier for the people, I just used Candido. But when I sign the paper with the people that have the money, then [Laughs] I sign Candido Camero Guerra!

JJ: Well, Candido certainly is a very catchy name.

C: Yes, it's also in the dictionary. It means sincere.

JJ: You had an early relationship with Mongo Santamaria, you played in a septet with him in Cuba. It's a great story that you helped him deliver mail at times to help him finish his job as a mailman early so that he could get to band rehearsals sooner. Any more memories to share about him?

C: We were very close friends. He was a gentleman and a very good musician. We played at the Tropicana together.

JJ: You moved from Cuba to New York City in



1946. That had to be a hard transition for a 25-year-old who didn't speak English. What was your early impression of America and how easy did you transition to life here?

C: I've always said that if you respect everybody, everybody respect me, and if you don't respect me, you're out. That's my way of feeling and everybody respect me until now. I always had an interpreter to go around with me, especially in Japan, I was there six months. Wherever I went, whatever country, they always had an interpreter for me in Spanish so it was always easy for me to travel. I'll always remember the first time I saw snow. That

was in Chicago. [Laughs] I was with Tony Bennett at the club Latin Quarter the first time I saw snow. I thought it was melting wax coming from the sky. It was so soft and so white.

JJ: When you first came over, did the general American audience have great interest in Cuban music or was it primarily popular with Latinos?

C: Both. Everybody enjoyed Latin music.

JJ: At the time you came to America, were you playing one or two congas at a time?

C: I started playing three congas while I was in Cuba and when I came to America, I played two at that time. I was playing melody on the congas, I was the first one. I was also the first one to play three congas.

JJ: So in Cuba, were you playing jazz along with Cuban music?

C: I was playing both. We had a lot of tourists so we had that kind of music for them.

JJ: You were the first to develop extended technique on the conga. You played a steady rhythm with one hand while improvising with the other. When did you develop that skill and how long did it take you to master it?

C: I practiced that a lot because I wanted to have independence and coordination so that one hand would have nothing to do with the other one.

JJ: So how did you come up with that if no one else was doing it?

C: Because it came to my mind when I saw the tympani player in the symphony orchestra. That's what gave me the idea.

JJ: And how long did it take for you to achieve that skill?

C: Not long, not long, because I enjoyed it very much so I tried to hurry up and be the best and the first one.

JJ: Is there an advantage or benefit in playing with coordinated independence when playing Cuban music?

C: Yes, especially during the shows in the nightclubs in Cuba when they dance what they call the rumba. That's when I used it to keep a straight rhythm on the conga and then I improvised on the

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Candido

(Continued from page 23)

one they call quinto (a smaller conga). I used two different sized congas for two different sounds.

JJ: Did you have a specific role model in jazz who you used to develop your hand independence?

C: It's a long, long list.

JJ: What made you decide to use three congas when the standard was one?

C: I had the inspiration from the tympani player in the tympani orchestra.

JJ: Did you ever experiment with four?

C: No, only three. Before, I used to travel with six of them but it was too much for me.

JJ: Are you saying you were playing six at one time?

C: Yes, but that was too much to travel with so I reduced to three and stayed with it.

JJ: Were you playing six in Cuba or just in America?

C: Both.

JJ: The way you played congas and your introduction of Cuban music into jazz certainly went against the standard Cuban music tradition. Did your playing anger any of the Cuban purists?

C: No, never, they liked it. Everyone called me, no matter what type of music. No matter jazz or Latin.

JJ: Chano Pozo came to America in '42 and started playing with Dizzy Gillespie in '47. Was Pozo much of an influence for you?

C: No, not at all. My uncle, from my mother's side, was my complete influence since I was four years old.

JJ: When you moved to America, were you hoping to play jazz or Cuban music?

C: Both. We opened in a nightclub in New York by the name of Havana Madrid and the show was Latin and jazz.

JJ: If you had to make a choice early in your career between playing jazz or Latin, which would you have picked?

C: Both. If I only played one, then the money would be less. [Laughs] This way I can get money from playing jazz and from playing Latin.

JJ: Were you getting paid better to play jazz or Latin?

C: No, for me it's about playing for here [points to

head] and here [points to heart]. Both paid the same. I said, 'You want me? OK, it's so much. Let's get together.'

JJ: Before you hooked up with Dizzy and Billy Taylor in 1952, had you ever played with any other American jazz musicians?

C: No.

JJ: The list of great musicians you've collaborated with doesn't miss many big names. Did you ever work with John Coltrane?

C: I played with him on the same show [but in separate bands].

JJ: What was Coltrane's level of interest in Cuban music? Did he ever approach you?

C: I spoke with him.

JJ: Would you share a memory from your many years on the road?

C: I won't mention the leader's name but I was on a tour all over England. One night, I was in my room and they called me from the desk. They said, "We have to tell you something." I said, "What happened? What's wrong?" They said, "Nothing's wrong. You can stay here but the rest of the band, no, they cannot stay here." I said, "What happened?" They said, "You're the only quiet one!" [Laughs] The whole band, a fourteen piece band, had to change to a different hotel.

JJ: What are your memories of Dizzy Gillespie?

C: When I played with Dizzy and Miles Davis, Miles was very thin and he asked me pick him up and shake him just for fun. He had a lot of fun with that. Yeah, I had a good time with everyone. Charlie Parker used to call me "Dido" instead of Candido.

JJ: How did you meet Charlie Parker?

C: Dizzy introduced me to him in Birdland. I knew who he was even from the time I was in Cuba. His name was big all over.

JJ: Desi Arnaz was another Cuban-born conguero player who's famous for his role as Ricky Ricardo on the TV show *I Love Lucy*. Did you have a relationship with him and how talented was he on the congas?

C: I know him very well, very well, before he pass away. He came to hear me every night in Chicago at the club called El Mirador. He was coming every night. He was a good showman and had a good sense of rhythm. He was a very nice musician, very natural with a good sense of rhythm and showmanship. That's what made him so big.

JJ: You've been a spectacular showman throughout your career. When and why did you start using your head to beat the congas?

C: That's been part of my act so that the people can see that and say, "Wow! Wow!" [Laughs]

JJ: When did you start doing that?

C: Since I started playing in Cuba. I also use my elbows too.

JJ: Did you see anyone else do that first?

C: I didn't see anyone use their head or elbows before me, or use their chin. I did it to change the sound on the drums.

JJ: Have you ever gotten hurt using your head or your chin on the drum?

C: No, I never got hurt. Not yet. [Laughs]

JJ: You also play standard drums. Would you compare the experience of holding drum sticks to beat the drums versus using your bare fingers on the skin of the congas?

C: It's the same. The only difference is one is with the hand, the other is with the stick. One doesn't feel better than the other, it depends on the occasion.

JJ: When you picked up the drumsticks for the first time, how did it feel? Did it feel natural?

C: It was good. I was able to do it because it comes from the heart. I started playing with drumsticks in Cuba at the Tropicana nightclub. I was there for ten years.

JJ: Who would you say was the most unusual or unexpected person that you worked with?

C: I played with anybody that called me. I never thought I'd get to play with Tony Bennett. He called me when I was in Chicago in 1958. That was the first time I played with him. It was on the Steve Allen show, and since then, I've recorded and traveled with him.

JJ: I saw you in the hall earlier today with Randy Weston. You two seem to have a little act going.

C: [Laughs] Yeah, every time I see him, I say, 'Uhuru,' that's one of his recordings that I played on, and he always says back, "Vaya," which means "go."

JJ: What are you most proud of having done during your career?

C: Of being able to keep going until that's it. I have great memories. When I played with Lionel Hampton, every time we were to go on the road, he asked me to come to his house to have breakfast with him before we'd leave. He only asked me, not the rest of the band. They had to wait at the bus, ready to leave.

JJ: Why did he give you special treatment?

C: I don't know. I think it had something to do with admiration and respect. I think that's what it was. Yeah.

JJ: Looking back through your career, who would you name as the most creative artist you've ever

Candido

worked with?

C: I would say all of them.

J: You have your own line of congas that are marketed to the public. What makes them so special?

C: They're special because I play them. I've been endorsing them since 1977. I like the sound, it's very clean, and they have something to do with my feeling and my soul when I play with those congas.

J: Did you help design that line of congas?

C: No, they put my picture on the congas. I did decide on the color though. They're white so that when on the stage, under bright lights, you can see them. Black congas you cannot see in that lighting. I only use white congas so I don't have to worry about the spotlight and that people cannot see the congas.

J: Most congueros use congas that are of different sizes. Why do you use three congas that are of the same size?

C: The sound has something to do with that. The [official] names of the [three different sized] congas are tumbadora, conga and quinto. [Generically, we say conga for all of them but technically, the large one is the tumbadora, the middle sized one is the conga, and the smallest is the quinto, which is what I play.] I use three quintos because they are the best to use to improvise with, [they give a higher pitch.] I tune them with the piano, three different keys, to be able to play melody.

J: Any thoughts on the current talk of America opening up relations with Cuba?

C: You know what, with all my respect to you, one thing I never liked to talk to – politics, religion, nationality and race – because I've been all over the world and I keep being that way because I've never had any trouble in any country and people ask me when I'm coming back. I go there to play music, not to talk about politics. I will say I like this and I wish that something can come through with the relationship like before. I was born in Cuba, but I'm an American citizen now. There's an expression in Spanish that rhymes – Cuban by birth, American by gratitude. I've been here since 1946, never had any trouble, and I don't look for any trouble.

J: Do you have a 9/11 experience to share?

C: I live two blocks from Lincoln Center but I only saw what was on the TV. I was scared, sure. The only thing I can say is that I hope that never happen again.

J: What does music have to offer the world?

C: Music is the international language. Anywhere you go, you go with the same music and the musicians they play. Music is the international language

and nobody can change that.

J: The last questions are from other musicians who have given me questions to ask you:

Jerry Gonzalez (trumpet) said – “Tell Candido that he is a big hero of mine and that I love him dearly with a lot of respect and it's been an honor and a pleasure to play with him in my life. His life experience is so huge - it's mind blowing! I have a few questions for him. First, how did it feel playing with Charlie Parker and Dizzy when you first came to the US? It had to be an amazing experience. I wish I could take a time machine!”

C: I felt like I was dreaming. [Laughs] It was a dream come true because I was listening in Cuba all the time, before I came to the United States and when I came here, the first thing I did, I no open my suitcase in the hotel, I went to 52nd Street to listen to them both. There were jazz clubs on either side of the street. So, for me, to play with them, it's like “wow!”

J: Were you scared the first time playing with them?

C: No, never scared, never scared. I say why do you have to be scared if they called me? Why? I was very proud to be playing with them and I'm sorry they're not here. I was lucky because there's never going to be another Dizzy Gillespie and there's never gonna' be another Charlie Parker.

J: How did musicians such as Dizzy and Charlie Parker advise you on how to play for them?

C: No, they never told me what to do. I was free to do what I wanna' do. They gave me a paper with the songs listed and I put it in my pocket. That way I did what I wanted to do but I do the right thing and the way it was supposed to be done. [They did tell me when to come in, how many measures to play, and I would play the style that was appropriate for the tune].

J: Did you talk about money ahead of time?

C: No, no, never. They paid me good, that's why I never asked for the money because I was afraid I was gonna' ask for less! [Laughs]

Jimmy Owens (trumpet) asked – Dizzy Gillespie always gets credit for introducing Latin music into jazz. Would you talk about playing in Billy Taylor's band and what Latin influences you brought?

C: When I played with Billy Taylor's band, I go by the way and the sound of the music. I think that's the right way for that type of music, so that's the way I worked with him for one year and a half.

J: Did you help Billy Taylor make his music sound more Latin?

C: No, oh, no. The music called for a Latin beat, a Latin sound.

Andrew Cyrille (drums), who is of Haitian descent, asked – “Is there another country in the Caribbean that has drumming similar to Cuba?”

C: I would say Puerto Rico.

Andrew Cyrille also asked – “What African tribes and countries contributed to Cuban drumming?”

Candido: Africa is the mother of drums and rhythm so everything come from there but then, through the years, it go all over the world and people created all over that to be different. Every country has their own things.

Milford Graves (drummer, percussionist) asked – “Are you familiar with some of the drummers in free-jazz, such as myself, who have thoroughly explored Afro-Cuban drumming and have extended it into free-jazz drumming?”

C: I am not familiar with this type of music. I've heard the name avant-garde before. Every twenty years, there's a new generation and they create their own music, the way they're dressing, and everything is different. That's what makes things change, but the rules, that never gonna' die.

Trilok Gurtu (percussion) asked – “Do you still need to practice and does the music still flow naturally without thinking?”

C: I never, never practice because I don't think I need it. Because when it comes to the time [to play], I use my sense, my heart, and my head.

Adam Rudolph (percussion) asked - “How did you approach playing with Elvin Jones?”

C: I enjoyed, thank very much. We had a rehearsal and I listened to the music. I listened to the arrangement and I went with what I heard.

Paquito D'Rivera (saxophone, clarinet) said – “Candido is “The dearest musician I ever met in my long career”, according to Tony Bennett. I would ask him how did he meet my father Tito?”

C: Paquito is good. His dad used to go to every nightclub in Cuba to sell saxophones, trumpets and trombones. He sold all these instruments. He was a sergeant in the Cuban army and he also played saxophone.

Paquito D'Rivera also asked - “Tell me something about *Congo Pantera*– the first production of high caliber at the Tropicana – and also about your years in that legendary night club, where Chico O'Farrill and Bebo Valdés were part of the Armando Romeu orchestra.”

C: The star of *Congo Pantera* was Chano Pozo. He was in the show and I was in the band with Armandito Romeu. Also in the band was Chico O'Farrill, a fat trumpet player, and Bebo was the piano player.

Airto Moreira (percussion) asked – “Over the years you have developed a very strong and positive energy in your teaching and playing. How would you describe the source of this energy?”

C: Clean living!

J: That's it. Oh, I wanted to ask how your fingers are at this point after all the years of playing?

C: So far, so good. [Laughs]

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Douglas Ewart

The Sound We've Never Heard

Photo & Interview by Ken Weiss

To label Douglas R. Ewart [b. Kingston, Jamaica, September 13, 1946] a multi-instrumentalist is a gross understatement. He's proficient on perhaps 50 instruments, many of which have been devised and created by himself. He's an improviser, composer, sculptor, visual artist, mask maker, instrument builder, educator and past chair of the influential Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians [AACM]. Ewart immigrated to Chicago in 1963 where he discovered the embryonic AACM and was one of the first students enrolled in the organization's school. His career thrust has been centered on seeking new ways to be an agent of transformation, on music as well as those around him. This interview took place in Princeton, New Jersey on July 4, 2015 while Ewart was on the East Coast to perform at the Vision Festival in New York City. During the interview, he pulled out two handmade flutes and treated the unsuspecting patrons of the diner on Route 1 to an impromptu mini-concert.

Jazz Inside Magazine: Trombonist and author George Lewis, in his classic book, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American*

"The power was cultivation. If you are growing your own food, you have enormous power. You might not have a lot of money, but if you govern what you ate ..."

Experimental Music [Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009], describes you as, "Undoubtedly a critically important pivotal figure" in the "second wave" of AACM members, yet you've only issued nine recordings as a leader. Why have you produced so little recorded music? In comparison, your fellow AACM member, Anthony Braxton, has made it his life's mission to document everything and has some three hundred recordings under his name.

Douglas R. Ewart: I'm not that interested in recording everything I do. I don't have the same impetus about doing that, although I certainly have the same impetus about making work. I'm a musician, composer, visual artist, craftsman and an

educator. I think there are many ways to leave your mark and make your contribution. Not that many companies have been that interested in recording my work so I put them out on my own label when I have the funds to do it. I like to have the recordings produced at a certain level on the artistic, philosophical, ideological and graphic aspects. I have a lot of recordings that may eventually be put out. A lot of the companies basically want you to give them the recording for little or no compensation and I'm not inclined to do that.

JJ: You named your record label Aarawak Records [founded in 1983]. What does Aarawak mean?

DRE: The name Aarawak comes from the Arawakan language spoken by a number of people that inhabited the Caribbean and Latin America. The indigenous people of Jamaica are called Tainos. Their DNA and cultural influences are still in Jamaica and when I was a boy growing up, they were called Arawaks. To salute them and their contributions to the development and the sustenance of the area, I called my label Aarawak. I spelled it with two A's since that puts the name at the top of the list when you're being mentioned and also the Tai-

nos/Arawaks built round houses that look like an A from the frontal view.

JJ: You have a philosophy that composition should constantly change. Why is that and what is your approach to composition?

DRE: Composition is a history and history is not a static development, enterprise or chronicle. It's constantly evolving and so my thing is we have to find better ways of communicating both among artists and among the populous, and therefore, your compositions should be flexible, incorporate new ideas, and communicate well, so I'm always looking for new methods and ways of making a score.

JJ: You're very inspired by nature.

DRE: I grew up as a young boy in an environment with lots of trees and nature. I grew up in my maternal grandmother's home in Kingston and she was from the rural area of Trelawny. There were a lot of people who migrated from the rural areas of Jamaica to Kingston and these people didn't forget or give up some of the power that they had. The power was cultivation. If you are growing your own food, you have enormous power. You might not have a lot of money, but if you govern what you ate ... She actually was so influential in my life that I attribute being a vegetarian to her although she wasn't a vegetarian. We ate very little meat, her emphasis was on fresh fruit and vegetables. Also our backyard opened up into a hundred acres of open land which went right down to the Caribbean Sea. In many ways, it was paradise.

JJ: Would you talk about your intention of being an agent of transformation and the spiritual aspect of playing music?

DRE: As a human being, one has to choose what their trajectory is going to be. What are you going to do with your life? One of the things I learned early was caring for people. That's what I saw coming from both my grandmothers, they were both very civic and community minded. They actually took people into their homes who they didn't know. I grew up in a whole community that was nurturing, it was an intrinsic part of the culture, so it's natural that I would follow along with that. Also, my early involvement with the Rasta movement in Jamaica guided and counseled and helped me to be the kind of person I've turned out to be. All of these things are tentacles that protrude from my being and as tentacles, they also draw in as a source of nourishment, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional development. You absorb but you also reflect and return, you give back. That's the kind of symbiosis that I see in life.

JJ: Can music change the world we live in?

DRE: Yes, I think music has changed the world in many respects. We have the notion of the universality of music in that it's one of the mediums that we've used to communicate across linguistic barriers. There's something about sonic resonance that is inescapable to humans, it does something to humans. We know that a certain sound can engender certain feelings and conduct from humans but I also feel there has to be a consciousness to be able to fully draw from art. We're living with great music and art and yet people can be pretty savage even with that. I ask my students, "What is the medicine of music doing for you?" If music is a medicine, it has to be applied in certain ways in order for you to extrapolate the vibrations and the conditions that will help to civilize us. You have to interrogate yourself and say, "Well, I'm listening to this music, it should affect my conduct," and if it's not to the degree that it should then you have to ask some questions about that. It requires consciousness to make change. People have to apply the moral and spiritual aspects. Music has changed the world, is changing the world, but I think it could do so more if we looked at it as an ingredient that

(Continued on page 28)



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should make change and how is it applied because there are many forms of music. If music is a medicine, how can we better channel it so that it has this positive aspect to it?

JJ: You're perhaps best known for your unique, handmade musical instruments. You use discarded items, things that have outlived their original purpose. Why is that important to you?

DRE: It's a part of creativity. It's to see something possible in something that was fashioned for something that was completely different and it's a cultural influence in the sense that, when I grew up, people re-bottomed their pots. They didn't throw away a pot if it broke. There was a technician that would come along and put a whole new bottom on that pot that might last another five years. The Rastas that I grew up around, they made shoes from car tires and those were some of the most durable shoes you could have. Those influences, and also growing up making a lot of my own toys, gave me confidence, creativity and skills. We didn't have new nails. We went around to construction sites to find bent nails or rusty nails and learned how to straighten them and get the rust off. I was always interested in crutches because they are so sturdy. I came up with string instruments, rain sticks, bell trees, chimes and drums that were all made utilizing crutches. I liked being creative. I didn't see anyone else making instruments out of these things. I think it's cycling, not recycling because the item is still there, you're just transforming it into this new item. The word I use for this is crepuscular instruments. Crepuscular means activity that takes place at twilight and the instruments that are made from these items, they are now in their transitional period, which is the twilight of their initial intent. I have a lot of crutches in my home and I'm now using them as picture frames. I'm also using tennis racquets, oars and skis. I think we've surrendered the idea of making things for ourselves and that's dangerous.

JJ: You mentioned creating a lot with crutches. Is that because they are so easy to find or is the attraction that you are taking something originally designed to help people and you're continuing on with that mission?

DRE: Yes, there's something very special about the crutch. It's a great metaphor because, you know, we think of a crutch as something you lean on because you are weak, incapacitated, and that's true, but one leans on a crutch because they're smart. [Laughs] One leans on a crutch when you need help and knowing when you need help is as smart as any other thing you can sort out. Being able to know when you need to talk with somebody is as important as knowing when you need to solve the riddle by yourself. The crutch is special and maybe we look at music as a crutch. Music can make you feel good, bringing you out of a funk, or making you melancholy because sometimes we seek being reflective. My intent in doing this is to get people to reflect on the value of things because

I think you understand the value of things if you ever had to make something yourself.

JJ: You've made many interesting instruments. Which is your most prized?

DRE: That's a tough one. I do like the Ewartophone. The idea was initiated in Japan. I was there and I was getting good press and there was a good possibility of getting on Japanese primetime television. I had made these giant bamboo flutes, some of them from the ground to the ceiling, but when they said they weren't that interested in flutes, I said, 'No, no, I have an instrument that's much more interesting than that, [Laughs] I call it the Ewartophone.' And so I had to run to my laboratory there and start to construct an instrument that was a cross between a tenor saxophone and a bass clarinet and it was made with bamboo and plastic tubing and it has an incredible sound, the sound is somewhat like a clarinet, saxophone, and a bassoon, but then it has this distinctive voice that's unlike anything you've heard. I had to come up quick in my thinking. They say necessity is the mother of invention, and that's true. When they told me they weren't interested in flutes, because Japan is a country of flutes, although I didn't see any big flutes like the one's I was making and carving and inlaying stone. Their interest was in something unique. I've also made the Bamboon which is inspired by the bassoon, it's a double reed instrument.

JJ: Is there an instrument that you would still love to build but haven't?

DRE: Yes, in fact, I recently saw a story about a guy who made a string instrument that is also a digeridoo. Now what I am looking for, which wasn't discernable in his invention, was the sound of the digeridoo being influenced by the string quality. He made a dual instrument- a digeridoo and an instrument that you can pluck. I want to have something that when you blow, it initiates the strings to make sounds. I want a symbiosis. I've made duel instruments but their sounds combine, that's what I'm interested in. I have flutes that are percussion instruments. The percussion and flute sounds influence and impact each other. The thing about making things is that when you do it, your imagination gets expanded.

JJ: Do you have a catchy name for this new instrument?

DRE: [Slight pause] Stolen Legacy! [Laughs]

JJ: Do you sell your invented instruments?

DRE: Yes I do. I sell them and they've been exhibited in museums and galleries. One of the things I want to encourage, especially in young people, is that if you have a dream and a vision, is to follow it. Not just for the economic success, but the internal success that one feels. There's nothing wrong, since we live in a society where you have to earn a living, to create something that people want to acquire. When I started building flutes I was building them for myself and then other musicians saw them. In fact, John Stubblefield was one of the first who said, "I want you to make a set of these for me and I want to pay you," and that was so encourag-

ing to me. That somebody of his caliber of musicianship would buy my flutes. It heightened what I was doing.

JJ: Your Ewart Sonic Tops combine your spiritual and musical side. Would you talk about that?

DRE: Tops, to me, indicate infinity. Square tops behave differently from round ones when they collide. Tops seem so simple of a thing but the infinite nature of it, the fact that we live on a top, the globe is a top, and we're spinning all the time. The idea of round, something unbroken. The cycling we just talked about, the cycling of items, this is all part of infinity. One of the things that initiated my tops were children. If we, as a community, do things to engage the children, they wouldn't have to do things that, maybe, are destructive. I started making these tops and children were so engaged that I thought why not make a musical piece with tops and make tops that make sound. It involves trajectory, equilibrium, momentum, inertia, acceleration and Doppler effect; all of these physical qualities are intrinsic to tops. I've made almost 400 tops now, made from LPs, CDs, cups, saucers, bamboo and balls of different kinds, anything that will spin, and many of them give flute-like sounds. The tops lead to social interaction with people coming together, getting close, getting down on the ground, which is something we kind of scorn these days, at eye level, discussing. This opens up other conversations. I saw the social implications of tops, the communal possibilities of tops, as well as the scientific aspects of the top, as a way to introduce children to science in a practical way. Children like music because they can hear it and see people performing it. If they were to meet a physicist, botanist or a mathematician it would inspire them, they wouldn't feel so estranged. If you meet a poet, you don't feel it's impossible for you to become a poet.

JJ: Your background is certainly an unusual one for a jazz musician. Growing up in Kingston, Jamaica, your main musical influences were not jazz based. Your father, Tom Ewart, was one of cricket's most internationally acclaimed professional umpires and was inducted into the Cricket Hall of Fame. Your aunt, Iris King, was a member of Jamaica's House of Representatives and became the first woman mayor in Jamaica. What in your childhood led you to a career in music?

DRE: Growing up, there was a place near me called Ronny Bop Shop that sold cooked Jamaican foods and there was a picture of Charles Parker in there. We heard on the radio Billy Eckstine, Billie Holiday, Charles Parker and Louis Armstrong. In fact, when I was a little boy, Louis Armstrong came during a State Department tour, which, at that point, was the largest gathering of people I had seen at one place. Also, my cousin Hermon, who was a Rasta, had an enormous record collection with Coltrane, Charles Mingus, Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins and I read all of those liner notes, scoured them. And then, of course, we had Cuba nearby so I heard all their greats. Jamaican radio stations were eclectic so I heard Franz Liszt, Bach, Beethoven, Jimmy Smith, Louis Jordan was big in Jamaica, Miles Davis, Brubeck and R & B, all on the same radio station. I was exposed to a lot of different music. On top of that, there was ska; there were a lot of big bands in Jamaica during the thir-

Douglas Ewart

ties, forties and fifties. And then Count Ossie and the Mystic Revelation of Rastafari, which was one of my first really powerful inspirations to want to play. I used to go to their camp and they'd be listening to shortwave radio and they'd pick up The Ionious Monk and Art Tatum.

JJ: You grew up in Jamaica during British rule. What hardships did you encounter as a result of that?

DRE: The biggest hardship for me growing up was to realize that you didn't have control over your ultimate destiny. One of the things that I experienced very early was "God Save the Queen." You had to sing that and you had to stand in theaters when it came on and I got thrown out of theaters early on because I was like, 'I ain't standin' up.' [Laughs] I came from a very political family and I had already been very influenced by the Rasta movement. For me growing up in Jamaica was fabulous because my doctor, nurses and teachers were black people. However, whenever there was a big criminal case, the inspector that would come was a white man. And then you also had to stand up for the British flag. I'd already begun to be educated in terms of what imperialism and capitalism meant for Jamaica and for poor people, particularly for Rastas, because Rastas were mistreated then. Now people talk about Bob Marley in glowing terms but when I was a boy, you could be arrested, beaten, shaved and framed for being a Rasta, particularly a locks Rasta. You could get five years if they found you with a marijuana seed, not even a marijuana cigarette. I saw a lot of that. There was also a lot of issues related to skin color. You would meet people that were light-skinned and they felt they were better than dark skinned Jamaicans. They would instruct their children not to play with other children who were darker. My inner circle was not like that. Baha'i

JJ: At one point, you ran away from home and dropped out of school to live in a Rasta camp that had no running water or food. You slept on cardboard. It sounds like you were essentially homeless. What was the attraction to living there for you?

DRE: I had become disenchanted with school. I had a very creative mind and school was so regimented when I went that if you were a creative thinker, you might even be considered someone who wasn't too swift because you didn't do things

in the orthodox way. It wasn't a teacher's responsibility to find a way to communicate with you, it was your responsibility to deal with the communication that was being proffered and to extrapolate what you needed from that. There was also the lore of being free. [Laughs] You think free. You know, at home, you have a lot of constraints, a lot of people telling you what to do, you think that when you go to live with people that seem free to you, that you'll be free of these constraints but it's only for a moment that that happens, and then, the responsibilities come in. You have to get water, there's a lot of people not working so how are you going to feed yourself? Where are you gonna get your clothes from? These are things that don't occur to you as a young person when you are thinking romantically about life. I thought I could live freely and then the Rastas started to impose the same things on me that my parents did - "You have to go to bed," "You can't smoke," "It's time for you to do some home schooling." We'd have to read from the Bible. You then realized that there's no escape from the rigors of life but it was very alluring and I'm glad I did it. It gave me a greater appreciation for what my family had given me. With the Rastas, I slept in a shack on a bed but on the top of it was just cardboard with no cover. I was used to sleeping on sheets and my folks were so extreme they even ironed the sheets you slept on. I think the idea of living free and not having responsibility is not a reality, it only looks rosy. My cousin Hermon eventually came and got me and I lived with him, his wife and children.

JJ: You also later explored the (Not Bahia) Baha'i Faith so you've obviously been on a spiritual search. Have you resolved your faith at this point or is it a mixture of beliefs?

DRE: It's a mixture of beliefs and I think the ultimate part of it for me is interacting with people and trying to do good with everyone that I meet. I never grew up in a household that had prejudice. My grandmother was a Marcus Garveyite but we weren't taught to hate, it was to have pride about being a black person, being a person of African descent, and looking at Africa as a developed place and not some savage land like what had been proffered in so many books. I got into the Baha'i Faith because of my eldest sister. I already had a universal outlook on things and the Baha'i Faith was a great outlet for me when I got to the United States because the mix of people I came in contact with was very wide and open. I have a lot of misgivings about organized religion, hierarchical behavior and classicism.

JJ: You moved to America in 1963 when your mom found employment in Chicago through a relative. What was your first impression of America?

DRE: Gigantic and abundance. You come from a place where the streets are half the width, the homes are small and there's no high-rises. The wealth was very evident. Jamaica is a very classist society. Besides color, the class barriers are much more rigid in Jamaica. In Jamaica, it would be an impossibility for a professor or doctor to marry a waitress because of the kind of stigma you would have to deal with.

JJ: You were in trade school learning to be a tailor when a classmate took you to an AACM concert that changed everything for you. What did you experience that day?

DRE: I was inclined for experimental work and it was like a dream come true when I ran into the AACM. My first concert was a Joseph Jarman concert with Fred Anderson, Charles Clark, Christopher Gaddy and Thurman Barker. After that I went to many other shows.

JJ: When the AACM opened their free school in 1967, you were in the first class of students.

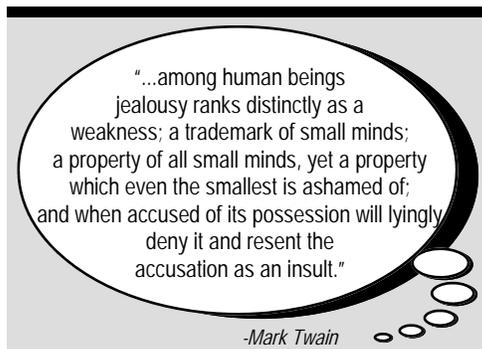
DRE: I was studying saxophone, clarinet and flute. I was studying theory because the school immediately inducted you into composition along with instrument technique. The first theory teacher was Braxton. He had us do a harmony for one of Sousa's marches. I studied instrument technique with Roscoe Mitchell. I first studied at Joseph Jarman's house, he was my first formal teacher. At first I was teaching myself and then I went to Joseph until the school opened. Later I moved from Braxton to Muhal who trained me in his own methods and in the Schillinger System right away. In addition, I started going to Loop College [now called Harold Washington College] to learn from James Mack, a formidable musician and theorist. What was wonderful about the AACM School was being able to study theory and instrument techniques, writing compositions and formulating our own bands. We had our own group called Cosmic Musicians and we used to play coffee shops. We had recitals at the school where we'd do standard tunes and then we wrote our own compositions that we rendered at the recitals. You were embroiled in the whole production of music. We also got to go to the rehearsals of all the AACM bands. To show our appreciation for the school, we worked at the door collecting funds and selling merchandise.

JJ: There was an exodus of original AACM members to Europe soon after you joined in the late '60s. Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, Malachi Favors and Lester Bowie were some of those who left. How did this sudden loss of leadership and creativity effect you personally and the AACM organization as a whole?

DRE: What it did was to make you realize that your time to be self-assured, your time to put to use the knowledge, no matter how little you had, that now you had to become responsible. You now had to assume some leadership roles, whether you wanted to or not. It was a do or die situation in that respect. Of course, with them leaving, we still had Muhal and other members like John Stubblefield, John Jackson, Vandy Harris and Amina Claudine Myers. We still had a nucleus but we had the responsibility of the continuation of the school and the leadership of the organization. Necessity made us develop faster.

JJ: Anthony Braxton told me during an interview that at the time he left for Paris, he had been living in such poverty that, "I was determined not to die in Chicago, I would die in Paris," and he arrived there with fifty dollars in his pocket. How was life for you at that time?

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Douglas Ewart

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DRE: Life was challenging. [Laughs] I had embarked upon being a musician. I didn't study music in high school. Most of the people we've been talking about had been musicians since they were kids and I had only two to three years involvement with music at the time. I gave up the idea of being a tailor where I could earn a living but I continued doing tailoring and I did art fairs where I sold my goods. I made leather goods – briefcases, bags, wallets and flutes. I was also playing in bands. Life was difficult. I had a part-time job at one point where I worked for a veterinarian. He was a rugged guy but a great soul from Poland who had been to Siberia and seen a lot in his life. He told me stories about people eating boiled leather shoes to survive. Life was a struggle but it was of my choosing. I had every hope and vision and was sure that things would get better. It felt great to be a musician. One of my big influences was Eric Dolphy and the more I learned of his life, the more I realized if you're gonna choose music as an occupation, it's not going to be an easy road.

JJ: You served as chairman of the AACM from 1979 – 1986. You took over shortly after another exodus of leading AACM members had moved to New York City. What were the main hurdles that you faced during your term?

DRE: It was a great time in many respects. By that time we still had some original members along with people who came shortly after me like Edward Wilkerson, Mwata Bowden, and still a little later, people like Ameen Muhammad and Ernest Dawkins, who at one point was a student of mine. We had gotten an NEA grant, which made it possible for us to have an office, hire an administrator, and we were able to take over the entire building that we were in. We had about six classrooms, an office and a concert space. It was about running the organization with a very firm hand, maintaining the school and trying to remain self-sustaining. What we didn't have for the school as teachers internally, we hired people from outside to come and teach. It was a challenging period but we went to it with such gusto and confidence that as I look back on it now, I feel really proud about what we were able to do given that we were young musicians and that we had lost a lot of the people that were experienced. They had taught us well so we were well prepared in many respects to move on. We even started doing festivals and brought back many of the musicians that had migrated to New York and other parts, back to Chicago annually. For years we did that. We were tenacious and very successful. We were, as Coltrane said, the believers. [Laughs]

JJ: What does the job of the AACM Chairman entail?

DRE: You're in a leadership position. You have to make sure that whatever the organization has undertaken is being done to the maximum. You help to convene meetings. You have to be unyielding in terms of the governance of the organization,

which is tricky because you have to follow the bylaws but you also have to be flexible enough to have the organization function because you can stick too much to an idea to where it can be detrimental but you also have to impose the rules of the organization in order to function. You have to pay your dues. You have to be active as a member in terms of helping the organization. We had to clean the building, make sure there was merchandise for sale, make sure the school was well run and that there were enough pupils. You have to pay the rent. You have to be strong, dedicated, unflinching and untiring to be the chairman.

JJ: Is the AACM Chairman a paid position?

DRE: No, [Laughs] it's all volunteer to this day. One of the most impressive things about the school when we attended as students was that we never paid a penny and we never had any cancellation of classes. Even when it was 20 or 30 below zero, everybody was there including the teachers and the students. That kind of dedication is what we inherited. You know, those things infuse you with a spirit and a tenacity that makes you unyielding and unrelenting and that is what has kept the organization alive and thriving over these 50 years.

JJ: There was friction between the AACM chapters in Chicago and New York during your time as chairman. The Chicago organization kept the New York contingency actively working in Chicago by arranging gigs for them but the New York chapter did not return the favor. Plus, the older musicians who had moved to New York did not know the younger Chicago musicians very well and, vice versa, the older musicians felt the younger generation players didn't know them well enough.

DRE: Yes, I think that's a natural kind of estrangement that can develop. A lot of the younger musicians didn't know the older musicians. I'm sort of the bridge in that I was there with the original musicians and got to know them well and studied with them. In fact, some of my earliest recordings are with them. There were some things that some younger musicians did in Chicago that might have been a little self-aggrandizing and soured some of the feelings but we never gave up on having that contact with the "parent." Sometimes the older trees can't bend but the younger ones can. That's my philosophy and I've maintained that philosophy even when I've been angered sometimes about the estrangement and I've continued to keep those connections. I think where we were going to go as an organization was always a big question because with a new chapter in New York you had different philosophical and practical ideas between them. There was the problem with distance and the fact that the new musicians vaguely knew or didn't know the older musicians and that made for a disconnect. We've been able to keep things going, not fully the way I'd like to see it but they say while there's life, there's hope.

JJ: How would you summarize the current day relationship between the Chicago and New York chapters?

DRE: It's good in the sense that you have a lot of younger members in New York. We've lost a num-

ber of the older members in New York but we still have Muhal. There are good possibilities. Some of the newest members have gotten connections with some of the older members such as Nicole Mitchell with Anthony Braxton and Muhal. George Lewis has served as a bridge and supported many people. There are new branches that are sprouting and the connection is reemerging and I feel very confident.

JJ: You've done some influential work as a sideman including working on one of Anthony Braxton's more unusual recordings – *For Trio* [Arista, 78], which was entirely made up of two versions of his *Composition 76*. Version I was performed by Braxton, Henry Threadgill and you, while Version II featured Braxton with Roscoe Mitchell and Joseph Jarman. How was it to perform directly up against your two biggest mentors – Mitchell and Jarman?

DRE: I never think of music as a battle, I don't believe in that. We spent one week rehearsing eight hours every day, sometimes more, to do that recording and we were all together. We ate together. I never saw any of them as my rivals. I saw it as a wonderful opportunity and I was enamored and elated to be asked to be part of that project. There's always a healthy competition among good artists but it's not a cutthroat kind. I'm not battling with anybody. This is not war. You know they're gonna come with something so you're plotting to come with something that's strong too. I think that recording speaks for itself, that you had that kind of contrast and that wonderful kind of similarity in terms of the caliber of work that we were able to develop and the work ethic of rehearsals that went into that. When one group was rehearsing, the other people were sitting down and watching listening and learning.

JJ: In 1979, you recorded with George Lewis on his *Homage to Charles Parker* recording (Black Saint). Has Charlie Parker had a significant influence on you?

DRE: Undoubtedly, I used to love his song "Slow Boat to China." Charles Parker had a big influence on me, along with Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman, who were disciples of Bird in many respects. I was also exposed to Johnny Hodges and many others like Sonny Stitt, Louis Jordan and Hank Crawford. I still listen to Parker almost daily.

JJ: You also collaborated on an unusual quartet recording in 2008 called *Voice Prints* (Meta Records, 2013) which included Roscoe Mitchell, Adam Rudolph and an 88-year-old Yusef Lateef. Playing with the legendary Yusef Lateef had to be very special for you.

DRE: Oh, that was heaven on Earth. I had been familiar with Yusef from Jamaica and I had the greatest reverence for him as one of the most solid musicians from the early days of making the music and an experimenter as well. His spirit, he was so giving, it made you feel that what you were doing was important. To be able to play with him was one of the highlights of my life as a person and as an artist. The fact that Yusef used to make instruments was an encouraging thing and another connection. I gifted him with a couple of my flutes. He

Douglas Ewart

was a great man and thinker. Playing with him was very much like playing with Von Freeman and Fred Anderson.

JJ: You lead a number of groups including the Inventions Clarinet Choir which you've recorded a few times including *Angles of Entrance* (Aarawak, 98) which brought together an ensemble including Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Henry Threadgill, Don Byron and J.D. Parran. How did you approach organizing and maximizing such a powerhouse collection of talent on clarinet?

DRE: It was actually one of those fortuitous moments. We happened to be all together in Atlanta at the same time so I was able to organize the stupendous project.

JJ: Have you done much in the way of exploring the connection between reggae and your jazz side?

DRE: I would describe it as my folk music because I wouldn't just think of it as reggae or ska but mento and all the other folk songs. They're indelible to my life. I've played in reggae bands but I've stayed more towards my experimental side of music but it comes out. I have a group called the Nyahbingi Drum Choir which utilizes the liturgical music of the Rasta and some of the influence of reggae and mento comes out in those recordings. I was in Jamaica when ska and rocksteady emerged. You could only hear that in dance halls, you couldn't hear it on the radio. We were being neglected at home, both linguistically and the classist idea ideas and philosophies and the idea that music that came from other places was better than our own music.

JJ: You've been splitting your time between Chicago and Minnesota since 1990, teaching music in both locations. Would you talk about your teaching experience and what's special about what you have to offer students?

DRE: I've been teaching music history at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I used to do an instrument making course there. The thing about teaching is that you have to keep your wits sharp, you have to be constantly delving into new material. It makes me read a lot and listen wider. If you want your students to learn from you, you have to learn from them, even if it's not the most interesting work that you've heard. It's best to listen and not be so opinionated.

JJ: You create original art as a sculptor as well as with paper, canvas, clothing and found objects. Would you talk about your artwork and if you've had formal training in visual arts?

DRE: I've had no formal training in visual arts and I'm glad that I haven't. I'm self-taught in that area and my skill as a tailor helped guide me. I see my work, the sonic and the visual and the intellectual parts of it, as one. They're inseparable and they help to stoke each other. My interest in making visual arts came out of making instruments and then to provide more interesting instruments, I began to embellish them and out of that, sculptures

grew and assemblages of different kinds. My interest in learning different techniques in painting, welding, riveting and metal work, came out of the notion that I felt I could make it happen. I have taken some photography courses and drawing lessons.

The last questions are from other musicians who've given me questions to ask you:

Steve Lehman (sax) said – "You've done and seen so much in your career. I'm interested to know what younger musicians impress you today?"

DRE: Mankwe Ndosi, who is a vocalist, writer and a poet, has a very unusual sound. Tomeka Reid, I've watched her develop into a fabulous cellist. She's developed her skills as an improviser

Fred Anderson's group was a big help because I was able to bring my own compositions to the band. He allowed George Lewis and myself to develop as young writers. The same thing with Joseph [Jarman], who before anyone else, took me on the road with him and allowed me to bring in my own compositions. Those things really helped make me feel a certain surety about what I was doing. I think all of us want acceptance and you sometimes play to get the house but when you get to play with someone like Fred Anderson, you realize you can't serve too many masters and you have to make up your mind about what you really want to pursue. I had the propensity to go my own route pretty early in the game.

Jon Irabagon also asked – "What do you see as something common in the music/improvising these

"Open improvisation is something that a lot of musicians are undertaking now. What I find lacking in it is spirit, rhythm, the melody, there's almost an aversion to these things. There's a way to go about doing it that makes for interesting work. You listen to a recording once and you might never listen to it again because there isn't much there to pull you in. It takes skill to be a good improvisers and you have to work at it. You have to realize when you're playing crap."

and a leader. Benjamin Lamar Gay, a young trumpeter and flugelhornist, lives in Chicago and does electronic music as well. He's a fantabulist artist. I love his spirit and his humility. Duriel Harris is an incredible poet and vocalist who came to my Inventions group and has developed an unbelievable delivery. Jerome Crosswell, who has moved to New York, is a fantastic trumpeter and flugelhorn player. Vincent Chandler, from Detroit, is a great trombone player. There are many other young artists that I dig including JoVia Armstrong, drummer and percussionist; Taylor Moore, drummer; Elizabeth Diaz, flutist; Norman Palm, trombonist; Leon Q. Allen trumpeter; Kevin Nabors, tenor saxophonist and Saalik Ziyad, vocals and composition; and the unique chorographer, dancer and Capoeirista Ni'Ja Whitson.

Jon Irabagon (sax) names you as one of his most influential artists. He asked - "While you were developing, did you ever consciously adjust your playing or concepts towards (or away from) perceived popular styles to develop a unique voice, or did your individuality exist immediately?"

DRE: I think some of my individuality was there but other things had to be acquired. One of them was the surety to take my own path, which is very difficult to do, and you still need to have the necessary fundamentals. Being able to have played in

days that didn't exist when you were developing and what do you see lacking now?"

DRE: I think open improvisation might not have been so readily seen or accepted. You usually had some programmatic information that you had to improvise from. Open improvisation is something that a lot of musicians are undertaking now. What I find lacking in it is spirit, rhythm, the melody, there's almost an aversion to these things. There's a way to go about doing it that makes for interesting work. You listen to a recording once and you might never listen to it again because there isn't much there to pull you in. It takes skill to be a good improvisers and you have to work at it. You have to realize when you're playing crap. You have to be the first one to realize that you are playing rapid shit and let it go.

Joe McPhee (multi-instrumentalist) - "It was very interesting for me to learn that we both come from Caribbean backgrounds. My parents were from The Bahamas, and the influences, musical, political, and social attitudes, for example, were formed from a very different life experience than the so-called African American experience. To what extent do you attribute your life search to this heritage? I'm constantly looking to defy the laws of gravity and fly straight up...without wings."

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Julian Shore

“if you can find a way to portray your life and thoughts through music, it can’t help but be original.”

Interview by Eric Nemeyer

JJ: Could you talk about your initial guidance and inspiration when you started lessons with Hal Crook early on.

JS: As anyone who’s ever studied with him knows, there’s only one Hal Crook. I could write page after page about how much I owe to his mentorship and direction. I was incredibly fortunate to get to study with him towards the end of high school, and throughout college, and he’s responsible for getting me serious about the music, for my scholarship to Berklee, my improvisation and compositional concepts... everything. He has this beautiful way of speaking about music, and observing it from this very macro level, while always being present in the creative process. It’s absolutely devastating to witness, and equally inspiring. He focuses on truly improvising; developing ideas, taking risks and remaining curious throughout. I can go on and on...

JJ: How did your experience in the academic world of Berklee College of Music support and/or challenge your artistic pursuits?

JS: Berklee was a terrific place for me. They gave me a full scholarship which obviously allowed me to relax a bit when looking into the future, and focus on my studies there. One of the biggest moments for me was getting to study with Danilo Perez there, who remains one of my greatest heroes and a huge influence. Actually, my arrangement of “Con Alma” on the new record was dedicated to him, and I always have his words in mind when creating. And perhaps the most important element of being there was meeting so many musicians and friends who I continue to play with and be inspired by today. I learned as much from them as I did in the school itself!

JJ: What words of wisdom have you received or heard from your mentors or influential artist musicians that have made a significant impact on your life and music?

JS: Well one thing that I always come back to was when I got to meet and speak with Wayne Shorter in Panama, while at Berklee. He talked to us about originality and what that meant to him. I remember another student asked him about how daunting it is to be leaving school and entering a world where so much has already been done musically—and not just in jazz, but music in

general. And Wayne told us that all you need to bring something new to the music, is the life you’ve lived. It was great, he said something to the effect of “no one has lived your life, and you didn’t live John Coltrane’s life, or Zorro’s life for that matter.” And basically that if you can find a way to portray your life and thoughts through music, it can’t help but be original. And in fact, we sort of owe it to the universe to do that, and ‘give it back’ in a sense. That hit me so hard, and has never left.

JJ: Talk about your experiences working with Gretchen Parlato—which was a touring opportunity that opened the door for you after school and moving to New York.

JS: You know, I’ll never be able to thank Gretchen enough for that opportunity, ever. I was just a month or two removed from Berklee, and her music was some of my absolute favorite, and still is. I never could have dreamed that I’d be playing it with her, and with guys I had looked up to, and who I had only known through recordings. And honestly, I was woefully under-prepared for that experience. I was such a nervous wreck throughout, and I had never performed in that capacity with musicians of that caliber. I had barely played anywhere outside of New England! It was incredible. I tried my best, but I felt very much like a little kid trying to keep up for most of it. That she was willing to have me along for the ride has always been amazing to me, and I’ll never forget it. I learned more from those shows than maybe anywhere else. I was able to see my heroes as real people, and it gave me something tangible to really work towards and aspire to.

JJ: What kinds of changes have emerged in your playing since your album in 2012, *Filaments*?

JS: Well, I think as I get older my values kind of change a bit, and my playing and concept can’t



help but follow. *Filaments* was very much about telling little stories about my life, and trying to find a way to capture moments and memories as best I could. *Which Way Now* is more about finding the joy in the journey and exploratory process itself. Not focusing on the ‘who’ but really the environment that the ‘who’ exists in. I tried to create the world as I see it and take the listener from place to place, and try to help them experience that surprise and awe that comes with discovery as best I can. It’s actually a bit hard to explain, but I think it comes across more easily in music than in words.

JJ: What composers and arrangers have played a significant role, and how have they done so, in your development as a composer in general and film in particular?

JS: I sort of touched on that above, but I can certainly speak to many influences from a compositional standpoint. Wayne Shorter of course is a big one; the way he’s been able to consistently push the boundaries of jazz decade after decade is so extraordinary to me. He just has this honest, curious way to his music that I’ve always aspired to understand. I’ve also been very influenced by the music of Gabriel Fauré recently, his second piano quintet has been on repeat for a while now. Also Charles Ives’ symphonies have played a large role as well. Danny Elfman for sure, he’s just a titan of songwriting, and I love pretty much everything he’s ever done. I really have to mention that I’m often most influenced by my friends

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Douglas Ewart

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DRE: One of the things that happened to me when I came to the U.S. was I went to Chicago which was fairly unusual then. Most [immigrating Jamaican] people went to New York or the New England area. It was bad that I lost a lot of my childhood friends who migrated because they went to New York, but, although we still kept in touch, it also freed me in terms of becoming a different person and being able to explore in a different way. Your friends can stymie you. The other thing that was great for me when I came here was my self-assuredness about being a black man, that I didn't feel any inadequacy and wasn't afraid of going to places that black people weren't supposed to visit, places considered to be "white" areas. Growing up in the Caribbean, in an environment where there was a confidence about being black and not having to think about integration, because I wasn't an integrationist and, in many ways, I'm still not, I'm very happy living in a Caribbean community but I have friends from all walks of life so it doesn't mean that I have some narrowness about it. I love my community. I love my language. I like, love and embrace my African heritage. I like the way my lips are big and my nose is wide.

Nicole Mitchell (flute and past chairman of the AACM) said - "So Douglas, you're a really great visual artist in addition to being a fantastic instrumentalist, improviser and composer. I always wanted to know how your teaching of art history and this idea of cultural anthropology in terms of teaching about Jamaican art, and also your instrument making, how does that all transcend into your work as a musician? How does this passion translate into your music?"

DRE: It translates into my music in the sense that I want to be able to tell stories about this conglomeration of ideas that I'm fed from a lot of streams. I don't see these as compartments but rather as tributaries to a river. So playing my instrument, embellishing it [with art work], wearing my costumes that was sewn by me, that gives people, including myself, a certain feeling. I think my attire is an important part of the magic of what I'm trying to impart. We're playing for people that can see and feel and all of these things are important in feeding what you are doing. I'm influenced by all this. I

look at a visual idea and I can develop a musical score and also make an attractive garment. The imagination is always at work.

Nicole Mitchell also asked - "How do you see the AACM fifty years from now and what can you do to help it get there?"

DRE: What I can do to make it get there is to continue believing and earnestly working, paying dues and contributing to the organization and help pass on the information that I've gotten. Being supportive of young people and people that are having a difficult time and being supportive of other people's endeavors, no matter what they are, and encouraging them. Those are the things that the organization has done well for fifty years and if we are going to thrive for another fifty years, then we have to redouble those efforts. I think the simple things are the things that enable us to survive.

James Newton (flute) said - "I have a number of thoughts for my dear friend Douglas. Please discuss the impact of playing instruments that you have built with your own hands?"

DRE: Finding out how they work because once you build them, there is a learning curve for it to be utilized to the maximum. You have to spend years working on the instrument, playing it, practicing it, playing it with other musicians, and playing it when it's challenging because one of the things about playing a new instrument is often you want to grab an instrument that you already excel at, because you want people to go away with the best impression of you, but sometimes you have to sacrifice that in order to gain greater understanding of the instruments that you're still learning. That's a really good question. Learning the new instruments and what the possibilities are.

James Newton - "What drew you to Eric Dolphy? Did his Panamanian roots and your Jamaican roots have something to do with being drawn to him? Did his multi-instrumental genius help you find your own path to developing a personality for each of the instruments on which you perform?"

DRE: That's a great question from James. He has a great affinity for Eric Dolphy as well. Interestingly enough, my maternal grandparents and my mother lived in Panama. And most of her siblings were born in Panama, and they spent years on the Canal Zone so I have a deep connection to Panama. Dolphy's skills on all his instruments were just top

flight. There's no one else we can point to that's governed their instruments so well, and not just his technique, his creativity and his fundamental grounding as an instrumentalist and a musician, and what happened to him when he came into himself and the point of departures that he made to new vistas. He was a sonic iconoclast.

James Newton also asked - "The bassoon is such a rare choice of instruments in the music, what drew you to it? Was Yusef Lateef a major inspiration?"

DRE: Yusef Lateef was definitely a big influence playing oboe, English horn, flute, tenor saxophone, you name it, balloons. [Laughs] He was a great experimentalist and another person who was fully grounded in the fundamentals of his instruments. Illinois Jacquet and Eric Dolphy also played bassoon. Someone who didn't play the bassoon but also had great impact on me was Rahsaan Roland Kirk. I love the bassoon because of its enormous range, textural possibilities, timbral qualities, its myriad of multiphonic possibilities and the technical challenges endemic to the instrument. I also like that there are so few great improvisers playing the instrument.

The last question is a question that you gave me recently to ask of another musician. It's a great question and I'd like to hear your answer.

Douglas R. Ewart asked - "Why do you make musical instruments, and why do you make instruments when there are already so many instruments in the world?"

DRE: [Laughs] We're all looking for that sound that we've never heard, a sound unheard. That is a driving factor. And also to be one of the contributors to the world of making instruments. You can look back at the work of Adolphe Sax. He didn't just make saxophones, he made all sorts of things. He also improved musical instruments. He was so formidable that his rivals tried to have him assassinated, they actually sent somebody to kill him.

JJ: Any final comment?

DRE: Always be open to listening, learning and growing, and, at the same time, be firmly planted, be immovable. Mana Lapho means stand your ground in Zulu!!!

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Julian Shore

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and contemporaries. All my bandmates are essential to the writing process, and all of them are in the music somewhere. Gilad Hekselman has been hugely important to me both as a musician and a person, as has Noah Preminger, Dayna Stephens, Edward Perez, Godwin Louis... everyone involved with record, honestly, and there are too many to list here. Pianist Carmen Staaf for certain.

JJ: What were some of the jazz recordings or performances that you initially heard growing up that motivated you to get serious about playing and playing piano in particular?

JS: My piano teacher played me some Bill Evans when I was really young and mainly playing classical and blues, and that sort of started the journey down the rabbit hole. I also attended a jazz camp that year, and got to see my first live jazz from the faculty, guys like Don Braden, Jimmy Greene, John Benitez etc. I got to go the festival at the end and hear pianists like Ray Charles, Brad Mehldau, Danilo Perez etc. and that kind of sealed the deal. Hearing *Speak No Evil* was big for me, as was

Concert By The Sea. Also seeing Elvin Jones play in Boston when I was in high school was huge... Getting to experience a titan like that in a small club made the history feel like it was still part of the fabric of the music, and not just on records.

JJ: What do you do to relax when you're not making music?

JS: I'm a big baseball guy, and I watch almost every game of the season. I spend way too much time reading articles about statistics and projections, or the craft of the sport in general. I'll read and watch anything about it. Including, embarrassingly, fantasy baseball.

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Nora McCarthy

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NM: You know, I try not to project doom and gloom. I have faith in this generation of young and talented musicians out there today. I know many of them and they have brilliant minds and are incredible people. They've inherited a lot of responsibility for not only making sure the music continues but for cleaning up the mess our generation and generations before us left them with regard to the earth. I believe they are up to the task of taking on the challenges that face the music we call "jazz." I hope for one, we can start getting away from labels and find a way to just calling it music...be it good or bad, it's freakin' music. If you have to label it something, call it what it is, Black Music. Isn't that

"The masters you listed made the music, and defined the art form. It was an art form based on innovation, revolution, creative expression, and freedom. To me, that has always been what jazz is all about, new discoveries, experimentation, pushing the envelope, and invention... originality. In fact every one of those masters you listed stressed the importance of making your own music, having your own sound, your own voice—that is what sustains the art form and keeps it progressing...alive."

what genus is and the way we categorize everything else on this earth according to its origins and not profits? So, I hope if they do anything, they remove the stronghold that has exploited this art form for too long and just let it be what it is and go where it goes and do what it does, period. Everyone wins, but most importantly, the musician.

So, I put my faith in them. They are smart and they are savvy. They grew up with technology yet and still have a reverence for the organic way, for preserving what is essential to humanity, for purity and I believe they will find a better way so that this music, its presence in our culture, its importance and its value increases and multiplies.

JJ: What have you discovered about human nature during your career?

NM: Human nature is complex...it has its lower and its higher elements, but it is at its core hard wired toward survival. Given that truth, nothing surprises me and human beings are capable of anything and everything. It's my human nature to turn my eyes toward self to make sure I'm doing the right thing and to correct myself if I'm not, that's the work. We're not perfect but we always can be better. Sometimes we lose sight of our higher selves in the pursuit of a career for instance. There's no shortage of examples of competitive or right treacherous behavior in the music business that's not news—back-biting, gossiping, obstruct-

tion, using/abusing, unfair dishonest business practices, larceny—it's all there but you have two choices. Walk toward the light or give in to the darkness and become a part of all that is wrong and it will chew you up. So, you must always turn to what's beautiful and what sustains you, the music, turn to the music, stay above the fray, stay focused, remain positive, take care of your health, take care of your mind, lead with your heart, do no harm, help when you can and "remember to look for the blessings," be grateful.

JJ: The music world, the jazz world are replete with temptations associated with varying desires for power, fame, fortune that can have the potential to compromise one's focus, one's integrity and character. What do you do to maintain your focus and to ensure that you minimize those kinds of influences and people?

NM: I know who I am and I've dealt with all my

pleting. An arrival. It's a peace in knowing who you are, why you are, and that you are, here, right here right now.

JJ: What do you do to decompress from your business and musical pursuits?

NM: I enjoy sitting down at the piano and working on my playing or composing, that kind of focus is most healing. Walking is a big thing for me, I love to walk and I walk a lot, running has been phased out over the years. I go to the gym and work on my body to keep it strong and flexible. I'm thinking about doing some swimming but from what I know about public pool water, I may scratch that one or at the very least, keep my head above water. [laughing] I love the sauna and sweating really helps cleanse the negative effects of stress and the toxins that surround us. I splurge on a massage occasionally but mostly have my partner help me out with that. I've been meditating a lot and partaking in sound baths, they're incredible and I highly recommend them. I go to the movies or out to eat on "date" night with my partner, that's cool. And, I read, mostly to advance my knowledge on nutrition, health, spirituality and other things that enhance life and that I can incorporate into my teaching and practice. That is something I've enjoyed most of my life. And last but not least, I pray.

JJ: Is there anything you'd like to promote or discuss that I haven't prompted you about?

NM: Yes, and thank you for asking. I have some gigs coming up in March that I'm looking forward to. On March 2, I'll be Celebrating Women's History Month as part of the annual Lady's Got Chops Festival at Muchmore's, 2 Havermeyer Street, in Brooklyn with Musique Libre Femmes from 7:00 - 9:00 - New HER-stories in free improvisation with Cheryl Pyle- Flute/Jamie Baum- Flute/Claire Daly-Bari Sax/Shayna Dulberger-bass/Madeleine Yayo-dele Nelson-percussion. On March 7, that's a Monday, I'll be back at the Bar Next Door, 129 MacDougal Street, between 3rd and 4th Streets in Greenwich Village with The Nora McCarthy Purely Jazz Trio that features the talented: Matthew Sheens on Piano and Samuel Zerna on Bass - sets at 8:30 and 10:30. We'll be playing beautiful music in the tradition with a touch of modernity to keep it honest and free. On Thursday, March 17th at 8:00 & 9:30pm I'll be at The Baha'i Center Jazz Night located at 53 East 11th St. between 5th Ave. and Broadway with Jorge Sylvester ACE Collective Extended Edition, sets at 8:00 & 9:30pm. The band is featuring some outstanding musicians:

Jorge Sylvester - Alto Saxophone and Compositions, Waldron Mahadi Ricks - Trumpet, Jay Rodriguez - Tenor Saxophone & Bass Clarinet, Marvin Sewell - Guitar, Pablo Vergara - Piano, Gene Torres - Electric Bass Guitar, Kenny Grohowski - Drums and a String Quartet. On March 20, CD Release Party at Nublu, 62 Avenue C on the Lower East Side, with my People of Peace Quintet celebrating my new CD *blesSINGS*. I'll be doing a double bill with a wonderfully creative vocal artist from Denmark by the name of Cecilie Beck who just released a great new CD herself of original music called, *Here Is Now*.





Art Blakey

WITH THELONIOUS MONK – Atlantic SD-1278. *Evidence; In Walked Bud; Blue Monk; I Mean You; Rhythm-A-Ning; Purple Shades.*

PERSONNEL: Art Blakey, drums; Thelonius Monk, piano; Johnny Griffin, tenor sax; Bill Hardman, trumpet; Spanky DeBrest, bass. “Blue Monk” and “I Mean You” recorded at Atlantic Studios, New York City, May 14, 1957; all other titles recorded at Atlantic Studios, New York City, May 15, 1957.

By Jan Klinecwich

I’m a sucker for unique pairings of musicians. I expected this outing to be such a release, but after a few bars, it becomes apparent that Blakey and Monk are hardly the Odd Couple. As founding fathers of Bop, Monk and Blakey were certainly no strangers to one another. Blakey took the style his own way, straining out the excesses, and adding the gospel-tinged funk which became the Messenger’s signature sound for decades. Monk, on the other hand, created his own genre. Monk was Monk, recognizable from the first note.

This release combines the souls of both masters, and although the tunes are all Monk (with the exception of one Johnny Griffin original), it is as much a Blakey date as a Monk one.

While everyone covers a Monk tune sooner or later, you know the real deal when you hear it. Thelonius Sphere Monk gets a personal sound out of a piano which is unmistakable. Combine that with the patented Messengers ensemble timbre and fiery soloing stoked by Art’s masterful percussion, and you can imagine what this disk sounds like.

Blakey does not disappoint, pouring out poly-rhythms like a fire hydrant. From whispering brushwork to jackhammer snare and bass duets, he prods, inspires and supports.

Monk seems unaffected, as usual, by his surroundings, and plays the same way he has always played, virtually since Minton’s. There are sonic surprises aplenty. When you expect to hear a more rhythmically regular pulse of, say, Bobby Timmons, and instead get jarred by a full-pedal-down off-beat tone cluster out of nowhere, you realize this is not your everyday Messengers recording.

Soloing is up to par, with some wonderful blowing by Johnny Griffin and Blakey. Bill Hardman’s trumpet is a little sloppy in execution as well as intonation, but this may be in tribute to Monk’s looser way of looking at things.

If you think you’ve heard all Monk and Blakey had to say, try this on for size. It’s one of those gems that’ll bring a smile to the most jaded

collector of either artists. It’s been reissued by Rhino-Atlantic (R2 75598) with three alternate takes as bonus tunes.



Duke Ellington Orchestra & Count Basie Orchestra

FIRST TIME! THE COUNT MEETS THE DUKE – Columbia 65571. Released 1962; Re-released 1999. *Battle Royal; To You; Take the “A” Train; Wild Man; Segue in C; B D B; Jumpin’ at the Woodside; One More Once; Take the “A” Train (The Count Departs); Jumpin’ at the Woodside (alternate); B D B (alternate); Blues in Hoss’ Flat; Wild Man (alternate); Battle Royal (rehearsal).*

PERSONNEL: Duke Ellington, Count Basie, pianos; Billy Strayhorn, 2nd piano on “Take the ‘A’ Train;” Cat Anderson, Sonny Cohn, Willie Cook, Lennie Johnson, Thad Jones, Eddie Mullens, Ray Nance, Snooky Young, trumpets; Lou Blackburn, Lawrence Brown, Henry Coker, Quentin “Butter” Jackson; Benny Powell, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Harry Carney, Charlie Fowlkes, Paul Gonsalves, Jimmy Hamilton, Johnny Hodges, Budd Johnson, Russell Procope, Frank Wess, reeds; Freddie Green, guitar; Aaron Bell, Eddie Jones, basses; Sonny Payne, Sam Woodyard, dr. By John Barrett, Jr.

“Battle Royal.” This would have been the title but Basie’s manager took the cover art and flushed it down the toilet. Basie wouldn’t solo on “Take the

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‘A’ Train” and made himself scarce; that sound on the left speaker is Billy Strayhorn. A fight in the studio caused Tizol to quit; he would leave music forever. Those events make it sound like a battle, but you won’t hear that on disc. It sounds like a jam session, all those big names getting their turns and blending with their counterparts across the aisle. Sometimes it’s cluttered but mostly it works; these bands don’t battle but they win over the listener.

The setup puts a band on each speaker; hearing Freddie Green on the left, you can figure the rest. Some surprises in the cast: Duke mainstay Quentin Jackson was with Basie at the time; the Count also had Budd Johnson, best known with Earl Hines. Lou Blackburn would later join Phil Spector’s studio band, a builder of the Wall of Sound. The rhythm sections rarely play together, but the pianists always do. Take “Battle Royal:” Green on top, Duke with the Count’s brevity. Horns slowly rise, and Basie strides. Frank Wess surges hard, with a spot of “Rhythm-a-ning;” Car-

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ney takes it mellow, and Frank Foster is anything but. It keeps going like this, 13 solos in five minutes, capped by Cat Anderson's impossible notes. Now the drummers: Sam Woodyard makes like Louis Bellson, tuning the toms in mid-solo; Sonny Payne crashes like mad. The album in capsule, and we're breathless already. It isn't always this hot, but the bands have a fun time trying.

Thad Jones' "To You" is the best in balladry, and the only tune with one solo. That's Butter: the plunger is deep, though oddly metallic. On " 'A' Train" Strayhorn does a credible Count; easy-going notes, with Duke adding his own. The theme has big brass, in pure Basie style; Nance then trades with Sonny Cohn, with sly matching tones. Budd gets a swagger, and then everybody - talk about power! "Wild Man" starts in the jungle: Wess soars on flute, with Hamilton's clarinet for company. But then the wild man finds a club: Thad Jones, with shining purity; Cat Anderson, hitting the ceiling. The tenors battle; Foster by a nose. Everyone shouts the theme, and the natives are terribly restless. Wild, man.

Wess' "Segue in C" gives us more flute, and all the horns play behind him - you call that easy? The pianos talk to each other, and Budd takes it easy, a big wide tone while mutes go berserk. "BDB" is an uneasy blues; Lawrence Brown has a great yawn of a solo, and Butter has his say (or rather, growl.) The two reed sections trade a chorus, and it slowly slinks away. And "Jumpin'" is Basie all the way, with perfect rhythm (Duke strides a bit) and first-class Foster. Gonsalves is softer, but holds his own on ferocious exchanges as the bands get louder. One grand glorious blare - as you thought it should be.

The bonuses have some good stuff, but most are merely "interesting." "One More Once" is a simple jam blues, with a solo for every tenor. (My favorites are Budd and a swift Gonsalves.) Real basic, real good. The " 'A' Train" rehearsal has fascinating chatter (hear Duke and Strayhorn figuring out what to do) but the resulting take is weak compared to the master. Gonsalves is stronger on the alternate "Woodside," but Foster is weaker; the "oomph" isn't there. Same with "BDB," despite the excellent 'bones.

"Hoss' Flat" is a high-steppin' blues by Foster; Snooky Young takes it with his only solo. Foster is also good, and Blackburn drawls softly over tough drums. Three beautiful minutes break down abruptly; it was great while it lasted. "Wild Man" starts sluggish and Jones sounds lost; hear the sloppy ending and know why this wasn't used. "Battle Royal" starts uncertain; Duke has an intro that doesn't seem to fit; the answer comes from Aaron Bell, his bassist. The solos are different: Charlie Foulkes gets a chance next to Carney, and Cat quotes "I Got Rhythm" on his turn. It breaks down on Anderson's part, but he keeps on bleeping until Duke says "Don't waste it!" If anything, the bonus tracks show an order to all this; the final cuts have a polish to them, and the arrangements seem fine-tuned. In all, both sides won: you get Duke's tunes and Basie's power.

Miles Davis

MILES DAVIS QUINTET 1965-'68—Sony Music
7464 67398 2

Disc 1: E.S.P.; R. J.; Eighty-One; Little One; Iris;



Agitation; Mood; Circle; Orbits; Dolores; Freedom Jazz Dance; **Disc 2:** Gingerbread Boy; Footprints; Limbo (Alternate Take); Limbo; Vonetta; Masqualero (Alternate Take); Masqualero; The Sorcerer; Prince Of Darkness; Pee Wee; Water Babies. **Disc 3:** Nefertiti; Capricorn; Madness (Rehearsal); Hand Jive (First Alternate Take); Hand Jive (Second Alternate Take); Hand Jive; Madness (Alternate Take); Madness; Sweet Pea; Fall; Pinocchio; **Disc 4:** Pinocchio; Riot; Thisness; Circle In The Round; Water On The Pond; Fun; Teo's Bag (Alternate Take); Teo's Bag; **Disc 5:** Paraphernalia; I Have A Dream; Speak Like A Child (Rehearsal); Sanctuary (Rehearsal); Side Car I; Side Car II; Country Son; Country Son (Alternate Take); Black Comedy; **Disc 6:** Black Comedy; Stuff; Petits Machins; Tout De Suite (Alternate Take); Tout De Suite; Filles De Killimanjaro

PERSONNEL: Miles Davis (trumpet, chimes); Wayne Shorter (tenor saxophone); Herbie Hancock (piano, Fender Rhodes, Wurlitzer, electric harpsichord, celeste); Ron Carter (acoustic & electric basses); Tony Williams (drums). Additional personnel: George Benson, Joe Beck, Bucky Pizzarelli (guitar); Buster Williams (bass). Recorded between January 20, 1965 and June 21, 1968.

This six disc boxed set chronicles the studio recordings of Miles Davis' second great Quintet. The boxed set includes all the tracks from the albums originally released during that period: *Miles Smiles*, *E.S.P.*, *Sorcerer*, *Nefertiti*, *Miles In The Sky*, *Filles De Kilimanjaro*. You'll also find tracks that subsequently showed up on albums (*Water Babies*, *Directions*, *Circle In The Round*, *The Columbia Years*) that were released several years after the quintet ceased performing and touring together in 1968. There are also never previously released versions alternate takes of various compositions, and a rehearsal version of Herbie Hancock's "Speak Like A Child," a composition that Hancock recorded in 1969, on his own Blue Note album of the same name.

The historic significance of Miles Davis' Quintet 1965 to 1968 is clearly evidenced in these recordings. In public, the Quintet continued to play the compositions that had always been an integral part of Davis' live performance repertoire ("All Of You," "Stella By Starlight," "On Green Dolphin Street"). Indeed, the *Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel Box Set* (recorded at the Chicago nightclub around Christmas 1965) supports this. In the studio, however, Davis was recording new compositions contributed by his sidemen Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. The new elements that characterized these compositions, compared to the standards and well-known jazz titles Davis was accustomed to, included unexpected harmonic movements (that is, resolutions to tonalities, or to chords, that for example, may not have been the next logical step within the cycle of fourths), as is the case in songs such as Wayne

Shorter's *Nefertiti*, *Pinocchio*, and *Orbits*, and Hancock's *Sorcerer*.

The use of larger intervals (specifically intervals of a perfect fourth) as in Jimmy Heath's *Gingerbread Boy* and Shorter's *E.S.P.* are notable examples of a shift in melodic foundations - ideas and techniques that do not necessarily appear in Davis's solos, but consistently in the vocabulary of Shorter and Hancock's improvisations and compositions.

The inspired and innovative rhythm section sparked by Tony Williams approach to playing time - often implying the pulse through his assigning different rhythms to various combinations of cymbals and drums - was essential in creating the freedom to enable these new compositions to breathe.

The impact of Miles' group from this period can be observed among musicians who are currently active. Many of the so called "Young Lions" are today writing compositions and improvising in ways that rather than evidencing any groundbreaking ideas, pay a significant debt to music that was happening over 30 years ago in the Miles Davis Quintet (1965 through 1968).

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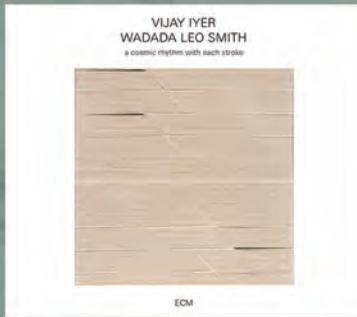
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