

Jersey Jazz

Journal of the New Jersey Jazz Society

Dedicated to the performance,

promotion and preservation of jazz.

Volume 44 • Issue 3
March 2016



Matt Munisteri and Evan Christopher performed with Jon-Erik Kellso's EarRegulars at the Greenwich House Music School on Jan. 15, 2016. Photo by Lynn Redmile.

Winter Jazzfest | *Hot Time In A Cold Town!*

**47TH Annual
Pee Wee Russell
Memorial Stomp!**

March 6

Details on page 11

Once again trad jazz had its own stage among the 12 venues at NYC's Winter Jazzfest. The Hot Jazz and Swing Party, presented in the ballroom of Greenwich House Music School, featured ten groups over two blowout nights. Top players from around the country performed music spanning the world of early jazz from its New Orleans roots through the Roaring '20s and into the Swing Era. *Jersey Jazz* contributor Lynn Redmile came in from the cold for the hot jazz party and her report and photos can be seen in this issue beginning on page 26.

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Prez Sez

By Mike Katz President, NJJS

I will start off this month's column by reminding everyone who has not already bought tickets to this year's edition of the Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp to do so while they are still available. We have a great lineup this year at the Birchwood Manor on Sunday, March 6 from noon to 5 PM, consisting of (in anticipated order of appearance) Jon-Erik Kellso and the Ear-Regulars, Dennis Lichtman's Brain Cloud, the Warren Vaché Quintet and the Widespread Depression Jazz Orchestra led by Mike Hashim. Order tickets online at www.njjs.org or by phone at 800-383-3006 (select Option 1). Don't miss it!

We had tickets for a concert by Bria Skonberg at Centenary College in Hackettstown last Saturday night; the concert was postponed due to our near record blizzard, but it took place on Sunday afternoon a week later, with a nearly sold-out audience. (Last year, Bria performed at the Newport Jazz Festival, and this year she has been invited to play at the New Orleans Jazzfest, on Friday, April 22.) After that, we repaired to Shanghai Jazz for dinner with Board members Jackie Wetcher, Caryl Anne McBride, Marcia Steinberg and Cynthia Feketie, where we heard one of our newest Board members, singer Stephen Fuller, accompanied by Tomoko Ohno. A great afternoon and evening of jazz by two outstanding artists! We are indeed fortunate to

have many venues here in New Jersey where jazz can be heard in a variety of settings and which attract performers of this caliber.

Next, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the most recent additions to our Board of Directors, who were elected to 3-year terms at our annual meeting last December.

■ Stephen Fuller has been an NJJS member for three years. He was introduced to jazz in his early teens and sang in many local venues and with artists including Norman Simmons, Freddy Cole, Carrie Jackson, Radam Schwartz, Tomoko Ohno, Winard Harper, Diane Perry, Bob DeVos and many others. He is a graduate of Newark's Arts High School and Colgate University, and worked as a district manager at AT&T and as a telecommunications consultant and entrepreneur. While at AT&T he served for two years on the board of directors of the Urban League of Hudson County. His influences include Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Johnny Hartman and Joe Williams. He resides in Newark.

■ Pete Grice was born and raised in North Valley Stream, Long Island, and graduated from Drexel University in Philadelphia (BSEE) and Duquesne University in Pittsburgh (MBA). His professional career was in the electrical industry, with several

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NJJS Members Discounts Hibiscus Restaurant, Morristown and The Crossroads, Garwood offer NJJS members a discount of 10% off their check. The Berrie Center at Ramapo College offers NJJS members 5% off event tickets. \$5 ticket discount for monthly Salem Roadhouse Cafe jazz nights.

FREE Jazz Socials...ongoing. Join us for music and mingling. Free for members, \$10 non-members (applicable to membership) with just a \$10 venue minimum. Watch calendar page 3 for upcoming dates and details. Beyond the schmooze, there are some serious musical prizes raffled off at our socials!!

sales and marketing positions spanning a 45-year period. He retired in July 2015 and now is involved with several community based organizations. He is an amateur musician on clarinet and saxophone, and is a member of several community based concert bands, including a jazz band based in Chatham. He lives in Flanders, NJ and has been a member of NJJS since 2010. Pete is looking forward to honing his jazz chops by attending the hot jazz camp being conducted in Manhattan by Bria Skonberg and Molly Ryan in May.

■ Singer Carrie Jackson is a native and resident of Newark who started singing at the age of 6 and has been a regular on the New York and New Jersey scene, appearing at many clubs, festivals and other venues, where she performs the music of Duke Ellington, the Gershwins, Lerner and Lowe, Rodgers and Hart, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie and Louis Armstrong and many other tunes from the Great American Songbook. Since 1996 she has been the owner of C-Jay Records, which recently released her CD, *A Tribute to Sarah Vaughan, Newark's Own*. In addition to Sassy, she counts among her particular influences Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington and Carmen

McRae. She first joined NJJS in 2011 and served a previous tour on the Board.

■ Irene Miller joined the Board in mid-2015 and serves as Director of Membership, responsible, among other things, for recruiting new members at concert venues and maintaining our membership list and seeing to renewals. Originally from Brooklyn, she lived in Greenwich Village before moving to New Jersey. She lives in Budd Lake, NJ and is a registered nurse working at a hospital in Sussex County. She was also introduced to jazz as a teenager and has fond memories of listening to Miles, Trane, Monk, Nina Simone, Billie Holliday and many others on late-night radio. She was further inspired by hearing live jazz at the Village Gate, Village Vanguard, Five Spot, Smalls Paradise and the Apollo Theater, and one of her fondest jazz memories is hearing Miles Davis live at Carnegie Hall. She has been a member of NJJS since 2012.

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■ James Pansulla has been an NJJS member since 2008. Originally from West Orange, he graduated from Upsala College, then in East Orange, and has a Masters in Reading from Montclair State. For 28 years he was employed at Bloomfield Vo-Tech High School, where he taught

reading, writing, SAT prep, civics and social studies and started a successful after-school music program. At the urging of past president Frank Mulvaney, he became involved in the NJJS scholarship program and serves as a liaison with the major college jazz programs in New Jersey, at Rutgers, William Paterson, Rowan and New Jersey City Universities. He also has volunteered with Jazz House Kids, and hopes to further NJJS's activities in the area of education, including the college scholarship and Generations of Jazz programs. He lives in Bloomfield.

We thank these Board members for their willingness to serve the Society, and please greet them when you see them at our events.

for updates and details.

March 6

PEE WEE RUSSELL STOMP

The Widespread Depression Jazz Orchestra, Jon-Erik Kellso and The Ear Regulars Plus, Dennis Lichtman's Brain Cloud, and the Warren Vaché Quintet
 \$30 members, \$35 non-members advance (\$40/\$45 door)

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 Noon – 5:00 PM | www.njjs.org

March 20

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Hod O'Brien (piano)
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Shanghai Jazz | Madison
 3 – 5:30 PM | www.njjs.org

April 17

NJJS JAZZ SOCIAL

Richard Wyands (piano), Calvin Hill (bass), Pam Purvis (vocal), Bob Ackerman (sax)
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May 15

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NJJS Calendar

Jazz Trivia

By **O. Howie Ponder**
(answers on page 45)



Trivia Time Machine

1996... Bill Clinton is re-elected president, the Spice Girls top the pop charts, the Unabomber is arrested and gasoline is \$1.22/gal. Here are some questions that Howie asked twenty years ago this month.

1. Who dreamed that Herschel Evans had died and that Count Basie had called him to replace Evans — and then it actually happened that way?
2. When Glenn Miller disbanded his civilian band in 1942 to join the Air Force, the rest of his trombone section moved en masse to what band?
3. What Hoagy Carmichael composition was dedicated to Bix Beiderbecke?
4. What musician played clarinet, saxophone and trumpet with Joe Venuti's Blue Four?
5. This group included such jazz greats as Coleman Hawkins, Fats Waller, Benny Carter, Rex Stewart and J.C. Higginbotham. What was the name of the group?

Howie also welcomes suggestions for future questions — or comments from readers. Contact him at jazztrivia@njjs.org.

MARLENE VERPLANCK

Surprise Me Somewhere!

We're starting off the European tour on Feb. 28 at the Cosmic Surf Club, Rotterdam, Netherlands. Then it's on to England & Wales!

2016 UK Schedule

- 3/2 144 Club, Kent
- 3/4 The Verdict, Brighton
- 3/6 John Ruddick's award-winning MYJO Big Band, Gupshill Manor, Tewkesberry
- 3/8 Marlow Jazz Club at the Royal British Legion Hall
- 3/9 Chichester Hotel, Old London Road, Rawreth
- 3/10 Bonington Theatre, Nottingham
- 3/10 Norwich Jazz Club, The Cottage, Norwich
- 3/11 Jazz at the Fleece, Colchester
- 3/12 Louth Playgoers Riverhead Theatre, Lincolnshire



- 3/13 The Stables Theatre, Milton Keynes
- 3/14 The Kings Head, Kent
- 3/15 Marlene returns to Wales at The Treorchy Rugby Club, Treorchy
- 3/16 Swansea Jazzland, St. James Club, Swansea
- 3/17 With the Capitol City Jazz Orchestra at St. David's Hall, Cardiff
- 3/18 Crazy Corps in the heart of London's West End
- 3/20 Southport Jazz Society, Clifton Hotel & Spa, Southport
- 3/25 The Under Ground Theatre, Eastbourne, a new venue

www.marleneverplanck.com



Photo: Chris Drukker

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As a member of the New Jersey Jazz Society we invite you to volunteer for one of several positions that currently need to be filled. No experience required. We ask only that you attend most of our monthly Board meetings (Directors only) and our annual events, and that you share a little bit of your time, your ideas and your talents.

✓ **Become a member of our Board of Directors**

✓ **Help manage our Web site and E-blast advertising**

✓ **Oversee our education and college relations programs**

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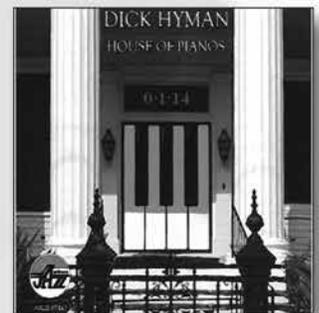
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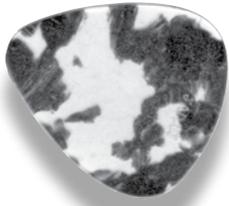
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The Editor's Pick

By **Tony Mottola**
Jersey Jazz Editor



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Do you have questions? contact Linda Lobdell at 201-306-2769 or LLobdeLL@optonline.net.

Comments? Jersey Jazz welcomes your comments on any article or editorial. Send e-mail to editor@njjs.org or mail to the Editor (see masthead this page for address). Include your name and geographical location.

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NJJS Deadlines The deadline for submission of material for upcoming issues is as follows:
April: February 26 • May: March 26

NOTE: EARLY SUBMISSIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

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- Tony Mottola** Editor
38 Beaumont Place., Newark, NJ 07104
e-mail: editor@njjs.org
- Linda Lobdell** Art Director/Co-Editor
352 Highland Ave., Newark, NJ 07104
201-306-2769 | e-mail: art@njjs.org
- Fradley Garner** International Editor
e-mail: fradleygarner@gmail.com
- Dan Morgenstern** Senior Contributing Editor
e-mail: dmorgens@andromeda.rutgers.edu
- Mitchell Seidel** Contributing Photo Editor
e-mail: photo@njjs.org
- Contributing Editors*
Schaen Fox, Jim Gerard, Sandy Ingham, Sanford Josephson, Joe Lang, Don Robertson
- Contributing Photographers*
Vicki Fox, Tony Graves, Fran Kaufman, Lynn Redmile
- Fred McIntosh** Entertainment Contributor
201-784-2182 | e-mail: derfie_07675@yahoo.com
- John Maimone** Entertainment Contributor Emeritus

- NEW JERSEY JAZZ SOCIETY OFFICERS 2016**
- Mike Katz** President
382 Springfield Ave, Suite 217, Summit NJ 07901
908-273-7827 | e-mail: pres@njjs.org
- Stew Schiffer** Executive Vice President
973-403-7936 | e-mail: vicepresident@njjs.org
- Kate Casano** Treasurer
973-762-5876 | e-mail: treasurer@njjs.org
- Irene Miller** Director, Membership
973-713-7496 | e-mail: membership@njjs.org
- Sanford Josephson** Vice President, Publicity
908-346-0558 | e-mail: publicity@njjs.org
- Mitchell Seidel** Vice President, Music Programming
201-243-1813 | e-mail: mitchellseidel@att.net
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- Frank Mulvaney** Immediate Past President
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Marketing/Public Relations Consultant: Don Jay Smith
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Big Band in the Sky

By Sanford Josephson

■ **Kitty Kallen, 94, vocalist, May 25, 1921, Philadelphia – January 7, 2016, Cuernavaca, Mexico.** Kallen sang with several of the most popular bands of the big band era, but her favorite band and bandleader was clearly Harry James. In *Trumpet Blues: The Life of Harry James* by Peter J. Levinson (Oxford University Press: 1999), she said, “Working with Harry wasn’t work. I couldn’t wait to get on the bandstand. He was the most professional man I’d ever worked with.” During the two-year period she was with the James band, she had several big hits including “I’m Beginning to See the Light” (Duke Ellington, Don George, Johnny Hodges, Harry James) and “It’s Been a Long, Long Time” (Jule Styne/Sammy Kahn).

Kallen’s career began when she was hired in her teens to sing with a band led by trombonist Jack Teagarden. From there, she went to Jimmy Dorsey’s band, replacing vocalist Helen O’Connell. “Besame Mucho,” a song written by Mexican songwriter Consuelo Velazquez, became a big hit for her in a duet version with Dorsey’s male singer Bob Eberly. Other Kallen hits with Dorsey were “When They Ask About You” (music by Sam H. Stept/lyrics by Lew Brown and Charles Tobias) and Arthur Schwartz’s “They’re Either Too Young or Too Old”. Kallen, who was Jewish, told Levinson she left Dorsey because he was anti-semitic, joining James in 1944.

According to Will Friedwald, author of *A Biographical Guide to the Great Jazz and Pop Singers* (Pantheon Books: New York 2010), Kallen was the “perfect successor” to James’s previous vocalist, Helen Forrest. She was, he said, “warm, emotional, and swinging, with a beautiful deep voice...It was perfectly fitting that Kallen should be remembered as the first major voice of the immediate homecoming period (after World War II).”

At the end of 1945, Kallen left James to pursue a solo career and had an immediate hit, Cole Porter’s “My Heart Belongs to Daddy,” recorded with the Artie Shaw Orchestra. She had another huge hit in 1954 with “Little Things Mean A Lot” (Edith Lindeman/Carl Stutz). Her last hit was “My Coloring Book” (Fred Ebb/John Kander) in 1962.

Kallen’s first marriage, to Teagarden clarinetist Clint Garvin, ended in divorce, but, in 1947, Frank Sinatra’s first wife, Nancy,



Kitty Kallen and Doris Day in NYC’s Central Park c. April 1947. At the time both were former band vocalists who were appearing as singles in New York clubs and were photographed by William Gottlieb for a magazine cover.

introduced her to Budd Granoff, a press agent whose clients included Sinatra, Doris Day and Jimmy Durante. They married in 1948, and Granoff left his other clients to manage her career. Except for a few years in Los Angeles, the couple spent most of their life in Englewood, NJ. Kallen stopped performing publicly in 1955 because of some vocal chord problems, but she was still able to record, leading her to believe the problem was psychological, not physical.

Granoff died in 1996. Kallen is survived by their son, Jonathan; a companion, Sonny Shiell; and three grandsons.

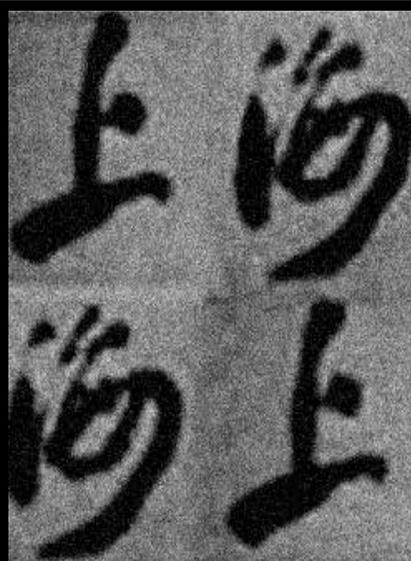
■ **Paul Bley, 83, pianist, November 10, 1932, Montreal – January 3, 2016, Stuart, FL.** “If jazz is a music of constant change, then the Canadian pianist Paul Bley was one of the most steadfast proponents of that demanding characteristic.” That description from theguardian.com, written three days after Bley’s death, encapsulates what Paul Bley was about. The Web site’s Richard Williams quoted Bley as once saying, “Anything

you play twice is once too much.” And music producer Steve Lake told *Jersey Jazz* that Bley was, “the master of thwarting expectations and made a unique career out of not giving listeners what they thought they wanted.” Lake said Bley would warn his students that, “If you have a lot of people who like what you were doing last year, you have a major problem as a creative artist.”

According to *The Washington Post’s* Matt Schudel (January 5, 2016), Bley “stretched the limits of the avant-garde with his innovative and continually changing musical styles.” *The New York Times’s* Ben Ratliff (January 5, 2016) called Bley “a major force in experimental jazz”, describing his playing as “melodic, measured, bluesy, often polytonal and seemingly effortless...He loved standards but distrusted the strictures of the 32-bar song form, and especially distrusted repetition.”

Bley is considered a major influence on such current pianists as Ethan Iverson, Keith Jarrett and Aaron Parks. Parks told *Jersey Jazz* he considers Bley “a poet...Paul Bley allowed himself to truly express emotions when he played the piano. His melodies really seemed to come from the heart...It was not just music for music’s sake. It was music that had emotional content related to actual life away from the piano.”

continued on page 10



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BIG BAND IN THE SKY

continued from page 8

At age 5, Bley began studying violin, switching to piano three years later. In 1949, while a senior in high school, he subbed for Oscar Peterson at Montreal's Alberta Lounge. He moved to New York in 1950 to enroll at The Juilliard School and played with a number of leading jazz musicians of the time, including tenor saxophonists Ben Webster and Lester Young. He met a young pianist and composer named Karen Borg, who was working as a cigarette girl at Birdland. Borg and Bley moved to Los Angeles, eventually marrying in 1957; and she changed her name to Carla Bley. In LA, Paul Bley led a band at the Hillcrest Club, hiring saxophonist Ornette Coleman and trumpeter Don Cherry. He also played with saxophonists Albert Ayler and Sonny Rollins.

Paul and Carla Bley's marriage ended in divorce, although they continued to collaborate musically. In the '60s, Paul Bley was in a relationship with singer/composer Anita Peacock, and they also collaborated musically. In 1963, Bley played on the groundbreaking RCA Victor recording, *Sonny Meets Hawk*, featuring Sonny Rollins and Coleman Hawkins. His solo on "All the Things You Are", according to *The Post's* Schudel, "became something of a musical touchstone." In 1964, Bley helped launch the Jazz Composers Guild, an organization created to promote "free jazz". His partners in this project included pianist Cecil Taylor, trombonist Roswell Rudd, saxophonist Archie Shepp and bandleader Sun Ra.

In 1973, Bley and video artist Carol Goss (whom he later married), established a multimedia company, *Improvising Artists*, which released his and other artists' music. From the '80s forward, Bley spent much of his time performing and recording in Europe, often with musicians such as bassists Charlie Haden and Gary Peacock (Anita Peacock's former husband), and saxophonist/clarinetist Jimmy Giuffre.

Several personal tributes to Bley were provided to *Jersey Jazz*, by his widow, Carol Goss. Pianist/composer/educator Ran Blake, who met Bley in 1959 at the Lennox School

of Jazz in Massachusetts, said, "There have been many 20th century musicians that are takers, and others who give back to the music. Paul was a master of both of these. When on tour, Paul was not shy about getting a luxurious hotel room, and he knew how to get a comfortable chair at a restaurant. He could often get a generous fee as a leader. I also found him to be very generous and loyal. He conveyed this to his students at the New England Conservatory in the '90s. He was never dishonest about his ego, but he also had a capacity to look out for others."

Canadian soprano saxophonist/flutist/bandleader Jane Bunnett admired Bley as a musician "and was intrigued by his thoughts on solving problems — which were sometimes ludicrous. He always had the answer, and it usually involved trickery and more madness." Bunnett's first encounter with Bley was for a recording session in 1993. "At the beginning of the recording session," she said, "he told me to write down 20 of my favorite standards and then promptly pushed them aside and told me to do it on my next recording. He then sent me into the studio alone. Watching from the other side of the window, he said, 'Start playing something, and, if I like it, I will join you.'"

Saxophonist Evan Parker said Bley was "a hero of mine since hearing 'Footloose' and the trio recordings of Giuffre and [bassist] Steve Swallow. His place in the real history of jazz is assured, and I think Paul knew that as well as anyone. He was remarkably outspoken...a very sharp intelligence coupled with a droll sense of humor made him a very quick witted conversationalist, and he loved to hold court."

Pianist/composer Hans Ludemann, currently Cornell Visiting Professor at Swarthmore College, believes Bley has been "a source of inspiration for generations of piano players...As a musician of great intellectual capacity and ear, he preferred to practice in his head rather than with his fingers...We have lost one of the great original voices, personalities, and thinkers in jazz, a great pianist and improvising artist."

The *New York Times's* Ratliff recalled a provocative interview Bley gave to Italian

pianist/writer Arrigo Cappelletti in 2002. "I've spent many years learning how to play as slow as possible," Bley said, "and then many more years learning how to play as fast as possible. I've spent many years trying to play as good as possible. At the present, I'm trying to spend as many years learning how to play as bad as possible." Cappelletti told *Jersey Jazz* that Bley is "different" from most composers. "He wants music to surprise almost to the end... Rather than a creator, he wants to be a creative organizer."

In addition to Bley's wife Carol, survivors include three daughters, Angelica, Solo and Vanessa; and two grandchildren.

■ **David Bowie, 69, singer/songwriter, January 8, 1947, London – January 10, 2016, New York City.** Many fans of David Bowie may have been surprised that his last album, *Blackstar*, was recorded with a jazz quintet, but it wasn't his first partnership with jazz artists. In 1985, he co-wrote "This is Not America" with jazz guitarist Pat Metheny for the soundtrack of the movie *The Falcon and the Snowman* starring Timothy Hutton and Sean Penn. From 2002 through 2004, his band included the jazz vocalist Catherine Russell, who sang background vocals and also played guitar, keyboard and percussion. In October 2014, he recorded "Sue (or in a Season of Crime)," a collaboration with jazz composer and bandleader Maria Schneider. It was a limited-edition single that was part of a Columbia retrospective album called *Nothing Has Changed*.

Blackstar, released by Columbia two days before Bowie's death, featured Donny McCaslin on flute, saxophone, and woodwinds; Jason Lindner on piano, organ, and keyboards; Tim Lefebvre on bass; Mark Guiliana on drums; and Ben Monder on guitar. Jon Pareles, reviewing it in *The New York Times* on the day of its release, described it as "strange, daring, ultimately rewarding...It's at once emotive and cryptic, structured and spontaneous and, above all, willful, refusing to cater to the expectations of radio stations or fans." Pointing out that McCaslin is a member of Maria Schneider's Orchestra, Pareles added that the album "jams its way into rock, funk and electronics from a jazz perspective. The group

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The New Jersey Jazz Society is qualified as a tax-exempt cultural organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to NJJS are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Proceeds of the event help support scholarships.

BIG BAND IN THE SKY

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complicates the harmonies and fills the interstices of the songs with improvisation, often with Mr. McCaslin's saxophone chasing Mr. Bowie's voice."

"Sue (or in a Season of Crime)" was repeated in a shorter version on *Blackstar*. The original featured solos by McCaslin and trombonist Ryan Keberle. According to *Jazz Times* (January/February 2015), it was "a dense, dark, theatrical piece, with betrayal and murder in the lyrics (by Bowie alone) and heavy dissonance in the music (by Bowie and Schneider together), and has met with deep division among Bowie's fans. 'Some people hate it!' says Schneider, good-naturedly, at her home in New York City. 'Some love it; some are probably on the fence.'"

Trombonist Keberle, in the *Jazz Times* article, recalled being impressed by the rock star's lack of ego. "Here's one of the greatest icons of our time," he said, "his stretch limo is sitting outside, and he's very unassuming and deferential. Maria asked him questions, and he'd say, 'Whatever you think.' I think he understood that jazz is a collaboration, a communication."

Catherine Russell recalled her time with Bowie in a Facebook post. "Working with him and just being in the presence of this great man," she said, was "one of the greatest periods of time in my life...I was a fan from the release of *Ziggy Stardust*. He was always gracious and kind to me. He expanded me musically, gave me a chance to contribute everything I do to his incredible band... I am honored to say I got a chance to be in a real rock 'n roll band, which was one of my dreams since I was young."

Metheny, also in a Facebook post, called working with Bowie on "This Is Not America" an "incredible experience. I had written the song as the main theme for the score for *The Falcon and the Snowman*...John Schlesinger, the director of the film, suggested a collaboration with David Bowie for a version of the song to go over the final credits. David came to a screening of the film, and I sat near him as he saw the picture for the first time. He had a yellow legal pad on his lap and was writing constantly. At the end of the film, he had a list of maybe 30 song titles that he had thought of while watching. One of them was 'This is Not America,' a line from the film...Watching him do his vocal was something I will never forget. I can only say that it was masterful — kind of like the feeling I have had whenever I have had the chance to be around a great jazz musician who carried a one-of-a-kind type presence that filled every note that came out of them."

Metheny added that he wasn't surprised about the jazz connection in Bowie's last album. "During our time together," he said, "he expressed a real appreciation and knowledge of this music and saxophone players in particular. He carried the kind of broad view of music and art that was inspiring to me as a collaborator and a fan. I feel very lucky to have had the chance to be around him." JJ

Local Pros Share Their Stage With High School Players

The Clifton-based One More Once 19-piece big band consists of professional players from North Jersey including music teachers, recent alumni from Montclair State, Rutgers and New Jersey City Universities, and freelance players. The group was put together as an outlet for young musicians who share a love of big band jazz and want to keep the music vital, while adding flavors of some more contemporary sounds. They play a wide range of music, ranging from the books of Glenn Miller and Count Basie to Stan Kenton, Thad Jones and Maynard Ferguson, as well as new music from composers within the band and other local writers.

The band plays monthly at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair, where they get high school students involved in the experience of seeing and playing along with professional musicians. "Each month a different high school jazz band is opening up for our big band. Every month there are different schools and guest artists," co-leader Tim Hayward told the *Clifton Journal*. "It's a great experience to stay afterward and see a professional band play with professional artists." One More Once will also host a 3rd annual High School Jazz Festival on April 23.

Here are dates for upcoming One More Once performances, along with some other worthwhile student jazz performances compiled by NJJS board member James Pansulla.

- **March 23** – New Jersey City University Jazz Showcase, Ingalls Recital Hall, NJCU, Jersey City. Walt Weiskopf, Coordinator. 12 – 2 PM, free admission.
- **March 23** – One More Once Big Band at Trumpets, Montclair, with opening set by the West Milford High School Big Band, \$10/door.
- **April 18** – Rutgers Mingus Band, Nicholas Center, Rutgers, New Brunswick. 7:30 PM, \$15.
- **April 20** – One More Once Big Band at Trumpets, Montclair featuring Mark Gross, sax, with an opening set by the Passaic County Technical Institute Jazz Band, \$10/door.
- **April 22** – Rutgers Jazz Ensemble, Nicholas Center, Rutgers, New Brunswick. Conrad Herwig, Director. 7:30 PM \$15.
- **April 23** – One More Once High School Jazz Festival. Nine high school bands join Rutgers University jazz faculty at Westwood Regional High School. 10 - 4 PM, \$10.
- **April 24** – Montclair State University Jazz Ensemble. Kasser Theater, MSU, Montclair. 3 PM, \$15.
- **May 5, 6 and 7** – Essentially Ellington national high school jazz band competition. Rose Hall, JALC, NYC. \$15 general admission tickets are available for rounds I, II and III of the competition, but due to space limitations the final Saturday night performance with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra is not open to the public. JJ

Chops is a 2007 documentary film chronicling a scrappy Jacksonville, Florida high school jazz band in the days leading up to their participation in Jazz At Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington competition. It features several of Duke's charts being readied for performance by the students and the professionals working with them. The film is available at You Tube as a streaming rental for \$1.99 and at Amazon as a \$2.99 rental or \$9.99 purchase.

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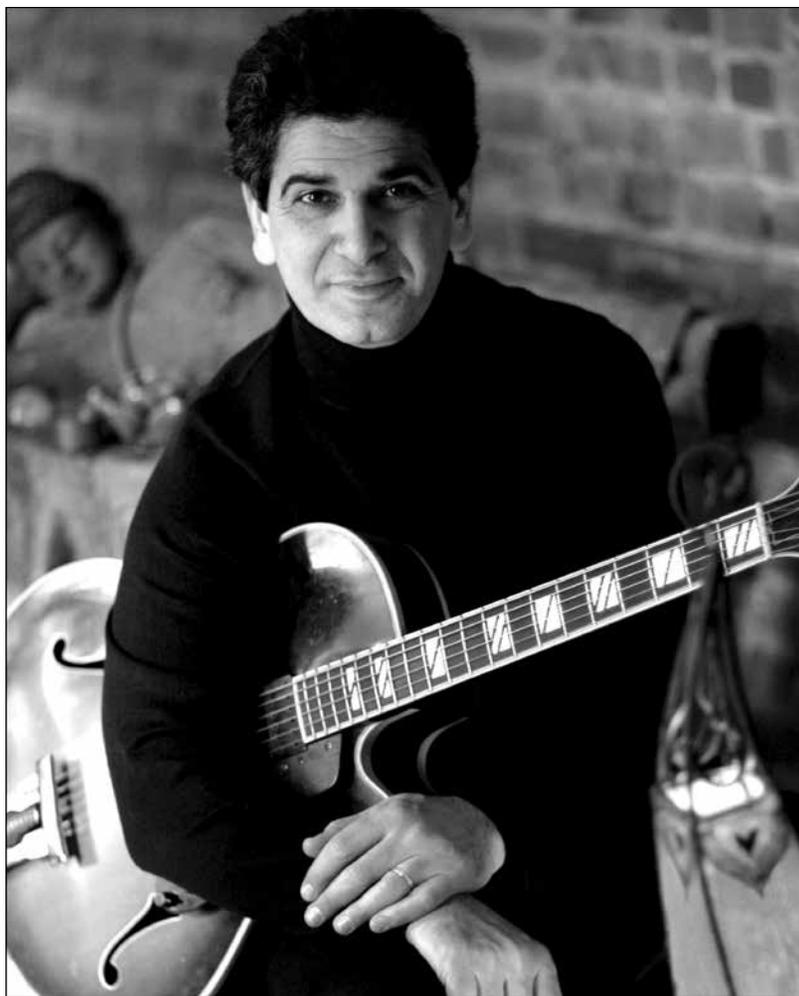
SOPAC programs are made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Talking Jazz

A Jersey Jazz Interview With Roni Ben-Hur

By Schaen Fox

America is always being invigorated by the contributions of its immigrants, be they solitary geniuses like Alexander Hamilton or Albert Einstein, or the millions of anonymous Irish, Germans, Jews, Italians and other newcomers. Jazz has likewise been touched by fresh ideas from foreign shores. In recent decades, musicians from Israel are creating conspicuous platforms for themselves, and making important contributions to the art. This month's subject is one of those with a long tenure right here in New Jersey. We talked in last November about his life and some of the major jazz figures he's known.



JJ: Is there anything special you would like to talk about?

RBH: Sure. First, I'd like to mention my latest recording for the prestigious record label, Motéma Music. The CD is called *Alegria De Viver*, and it features a duet of the divine Brazilian songstress, Leny Andrade and myself. The CD includes beautiful songs, handpicked by Leny, some of which are rarely performed or heard in the United States. Leny is a great master of Brazilian music, with an illustrious career, and one of the most important voices in the music world. I was very fortunate to have this opportunity to record, and perform with her. We will be at Birdland, in New York City from May 10-14.

I have a new recording I am very excited about, called *Manhattan Style*, which will come out in April on the Jazzheads record label. It is of a trio I am in, called Our Thing with two extraordinary musicians, bassist Santi Debriano and drummer, Duduka Da Fonseca. Duduka is from Brazil, Santi is from Panama, and I am from Israel, and our music reflects these backgrounds. There are eight originals on this recording, and three covers, one each by Duke Ellington, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Ornette Coleman. I think you'll like it.

On the education front, my organization, Adventures in Jazz, continues to produce jazz camps, and will have a session in Northern France in April and one in Vermont in August. People who are interested can go on our website www.adventuresinjazz.com and learn more about it.

JJ: Good, I wanted to ask you about your jazz camps.

RBH: I've been producing jazz camps every year since 2000, some of them in partnership with Amy London and Santi Debriano. These camps are an opportunity for aspiring musicians of all ages to spend a week playing every day, all day in jazz, Latin jazz and samba jazz ensemble, attend lessons on improvisation and harmony, participate in daily workshops on their prospective instruments, and take part in nightly jam sessions. These camps always take place in beautiful surroundings. The places we've been to so far were France, Maine, Brazil, Istanbul, Puerto Rico, the Adirondack and Vermont.

JJ: That sounds inviting. I'm curious, is Roni Ben-Hur your given name or one for the stage?

RBH: It is not a stage name or my given name. My family emigrated from Tunisia to Israel, where I was born, in 1955. Our original family name is Bohobza. At the time my family arrived in Israel it was customary for people who came from the Diaspora to change their names to Hebrew names. My oldest brother changed it to Ben-Hur and the rest of the family followed suit. As far as "Roni," in Hebrew it means "my song."

JJ: When I saw that meaning, I wondered if your parents wanted you to become a musician.

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TALKING JAZZ/RONI BEN-HUR *continued from page 14*

RBH: No. The way we grew up, there was no thought of careers in the arts. When I was born, it was more about survival: being alive, healthy, and fed.

JJ: Were there any professional musicians in your family?

RBH: Not professional, but there was a lot of music at home. I had uncles who played traditional North African instruments, and my mother would play the percussion, but nobody had a career in music.

JJ: Were you born in Tel Aviv?

RBH: I was born in a small town in the south called Dimona in the Negev desert. That is where I grew up. In high school, we moved to central Israel. Then I moved to Tel Aviv.

JJ: When did you start playing guitar?

RBH: I started when I was 11. My oldest brother — I am the youngest of seven — had the idea that I should play an instrument, and they got me a guitar, which I was very grateful for. I played casually and took some lessons in the conservatory. I played mostly by ear, popular songs and stuff like that. In high school, I played a little more, but never in a way that was consistent. In 12th grade, I found jazz and started taking lessons and taking it seriously, practicing, and looking at music as something I wanted to do as a career.

JJ: Why did your brother feel that you should play guitar?

RBH: I am not sure, but I think it because guitar was a popular instrument, and he thought, rightly, that I will like it.

JJ: How did you find jazz in 12th grade?

RBH: A high school friend who also played guitar liked jazz, and he turned me on to it, introducing me to some jazz LPs. I was drawn to it, without having any idea what it was.

JJ: How did your family feel about your rather perilous career choice?

RBH: What is probably the most common response, "Oh boy! What is that going to lead to?" I think some thought it would be a passing fancy. All in all, nobody tried to stop me. My mother talked to me about it when I was 18. She said, "It's not really a career. It's a passion and affliction at the same time." [Chuckles] She told me, "It is going to be very hard for you to have a stable life with family and work." She was right, but they wished me the best and were always happy with my accomplishments, patient with my development and supportive with what I was choosing.

JJ: When did you meet Barry Harris?

RBH: I came in 1985 to study with him. As soon as I got off the plane and was able to, I went to the Jazz Cultural Theater, his school at the time. The first time I met him is when I went to an improv class. After that was the singers' class. We finished the improv class and I was ready to pack up and he said, "Guitar player, stay." I stayed and that was it. From then on, I stayed as often as I could and I learned a lot from this wonderful man.

JJ: I assumed that you first met him when he toured in Israel.

RBH: Barry never came to Israel. A bass player, friend of mine from Israel, had lived in the States for a while, and he knew Barry and told me about him and his school. He let me hear some of his recordings, and, I guess in an intuitive way, I felt

that I needed to go to New York and study with him. That was a very good move on my part. I came here without ever meeting him, but Barry is a very personable man. It is very easy to become friends with him and feel you have known him all your life. Right away he made me feel welcome and like I had been there all along.

JJ: Did you have friends or family here to help you when you first arrived?

RBH: I have a cousin who lived in Brooklyn. He picked me up at the airport and I stayed at his apartment the first month. The first thing I did was start looking for

work. I didn't have much money, I think \$700. I did some construction work, then a dishwasher in the Village, busboy, waiter and taxi driver. I did make a lot of friends at the Jazz Cultural Theater, Barry's school. It was a community and easy to make friends. In no time I had a support group.

JJ: Did it take you long to establish yourself as a full time musician?

RBH: I think I was able to just play music to pay my bills around 1989. I had to keep my expenses at a minimum. I was able to drive the taxi the two days of the weekend and make enough to pay all the bills, but I stopped and forced myself to find work as a musician. I realized if I continued to have another job, it takes the urgency out of making sure you have enough work. It was a risk. There were times that after I paid my rent I had five dollars in my pocket. I didn't have a bank account at that time, so things were pretty precarious. It was not until the '90s where I had enough work and my teaching career developed that I was able to breathe, not just pay my bills.

JJ: When did you move to New Jersey?

RBH: The first time was in '85. I lived in Union City for one year, not far from where Barry Harris lives. We used to take the bus or get rides with Pannonica de Konigswater, the Baroness. I had the great good fortune to become friends with her. There was a short period of about five months when I lived in Hoboken. This time, we moved in 1998 when we had our second daughter. We lived in an apartment in New York City and we decided to expand into a bigger place, so we moved to Teaneck.

We knew a lot of jazz musicians who live and lived in Teaneck. There is a long history of jazz musicians living here. That is how we were introduced to the town. Then we learned that it is a more progressive, very versatile and an integrated town. Teaneck was the first town in the country that integrated the school system — before it was the law. It is also an easy commute to the city. It is a very nice community, safe, clean, spacious and, very importantly, with a good school system.

JJ: I thought you might say, "Rufus Reid said, 'There is a house for sale right nearby.'"

RBH: [Chuckles] It was almost like that. Rufus, Ray Drummond, James Chirillo and Lisle Atkinson told me about the town, since they've been living here for a long time.

JJ: The Baroness was such an important person. Would you tell us about her?

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TALKING JAZZ/RONI BEN-HUR

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RBH: She was fascinating and needs to be celebrated forever. You are familiar with the Jazz Foundation [of America] that does wonderful work for musicians today. Nica was a one person foundation, always with her hand on the pulse and ear to the ground, seeing who needs what. She was so helpful to so many musicians, in small and big ways. I also admire her enormous courage, enduring what she had to endure because of her association with jazz musicians at an era where racism was openly and aggressively practiced by people on the street, as well as the police. She was very strong and kind and very, very hip.

She was...she is a treasure. From my encounter with her: I was 22, and she was this elderly person who made me realize that old people could be very cool culturally and mentally. She showed me that a person like that could be very, very young. I feel very fortunate to have known her. She was interested in my well-being and her generosity was very evident.

JJ: Did she still have all the cats when you knew her?

RBH: Yeah. The first time I went in the house, I went with Barry. Before he opened the door he said, "You know there are a lot of cats, so brace yourself for the smell." When I came, I think she had 80-some cats. I know at one point she had 120 some cats. It was wild. They were all over the place. It didn't feel like a zoo. The house was clean and orderly, but there were cats everywhere.

JJ: Do you remember anything she told you?

RBH: She told me to keep doing what I was, and still am, doing. She showed me that it is possible to believe in oneself, and reach for the stars. In a casual and unassuming way she was encouraging and motivating, expressing it through love.

JJ: How did you become part of the jazz program Dr. Frank Forte has at Englewood Hospital?

RBH: My very dear friend, and legendary bassist, Earl May called me to do this with him in 2003. At some point, Earl called the Jazz Foundation and asked, "What can I do to help?" They asked him to put a duet together and play at the hospital. We did that for a few years, and we ended up playing there three days a week until two days before Earl passed. We played on a Wednesday and he passed that Friday. Now, Richard Wyands plays there two times a week, with Lisle Atkinson and Calvin Hill



Guitarist Roni Ben-Hur performs with bassist Santi Debriano at the NJJS's Jazz Social at Shanghai Jazz, Madison in January 2015. Photo by Mitchell Seidel.

joining him half the time. On Wednesdays, my dear friend, and master guitarist, Gene Bertoncini, and I play there. It's a great experience.

I've known Frank Forte from the guitar world. He plays nice guitar, and he used to hold a guitar party at his house, where you'll meet many great and legendary players. I wasn't familiar with the extent of his contribution to the jazz world until I got involved with Englewood Hospital. What Dr. Frank Forte does is truly an angel's work. He is a very busy person and deals with life and death all the time, but when he is dealing with jazz musicians he is just 100 percent there for us. He created a large network of doctors that provide free health care, and Englewood Hospital opens its facilities, and resources to help musicians in need.

It is wonderful to see how the people in the hospital, the president, the management, the doctors and the staff all embrace that kindness that Frank Forte promotes. They are all good people, so I am sure that on their own they have that kindness in them, but I think Frank has that wonderful quality of tapping into people's best part, and bringing it out.

JJ: For those that don't know about the music at the hospital, when and where is it?

RBH: Monday-Wednesday, 12:30-2:00 PM at the lobby

JJ: You mentioned Earl May, would you tell us about him?

RBH: Earl was one of the closest friends I had. I met him through my work with Barry Harris. We connected right away and had a great time just hanging out, laughing, talking and, obviously, playing music. He was a very generous man in his behavior, but also in his music. A beautiful musician, historically a giant really, talking about his career and all the recordings he is on, his effect and influences on all musicians afterwards. Yet he was so humble, but not out of not appreciating himself. He appreciated himself, but had this kind of sense of knowing that there are much greater things than one man. His generosity was wonderful. He showed me a lot in his behavior and musicianship. I was very fortunate to play with him. Earl had this happy, uplifting bounce when he played the bass that when we played in the lobby of the hospital, everybody that passed by would turn around and smile. There was a smile in his personality. I feel very fortunate to have known and been close to him.

JJ: Did you have any idea that anything was wrong when you played with him that last time?

RBH: No. He was very happy. We had a plan to record and there was no indication whatsoever. It was around the beginning of the year. In the holidays he was visiting his daughter. He came back with a lot of stories. I think New Year's day he had gone to Ron Carter's house. He was very excited about things that had happened and looking forward to things that were coming down the pike.

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TALKING JAZZ/RONI BEN-HUR

continued from page 18

JJ: That reminds me of the fate of John Hicks. Were you also close to him?

RBH: Yeah I was. With Earl it was different. With John, I made one record, but we did hit it off and became close friends. We hung out, did gigs, and planned to do a duet recording together. I think my association with John was three years before he passed away, so we didn't have the time to develop the kind of relationship I had with Earl. John was a great person to know and a great musician, so creative and passionate. Before he passed, he was actually doing better. He was taking care of his health, so it was a very unfortunate, untimely departure.

JJ: How did you become associated with Brazil's great Leny Andrade?

RBH: I knew of her. She is one of the greatest Brazilian singers of all time, and I saw her perform in New York. The first time we met, she came to the Kitano when I was playing with a Brazilian group. She sat in. At that time, I was co-directing a jazz and samba camp and she came to teach, so we spent a week together at those workshops. That is when we started playing together. The chemistry was there right away and we did a couple of performances. We fell in love with each other's music. It was wonderful that she loved what I was doing for her. The idea of making a record was born during that week. I flew to Brazil and we recorded in her favorite studio in Rio. It was really wonderful. Motema produced it. As I mentioned, we are going to be in Birdland in May, so hopefully more stuff will come up. She is a master, truly. Playing for her and with her is a learning experience and a real joy.

JJ: Is there a book, film, or play you feel can give us non-musicians a true idea of what a musician's life is like?

RBH: Hum...I don't know. I haven't seen enough plays or read enough books, and if one of your readers knows of one, I'd like to check it out. It could be that people who write about musicians see them through the prism of the performance. After and before the stage time there is so much going on. In that sense, musicians are just regular people with different stories, different background, and different ways of going through life.

JJ: As long as I've mentioned books, would you tell us about your publications?

RBH: I have two instructional publications. One is a book with a play-a-long CD, called *Talk Jazz* and the other a DVD called *Chordability*. *Talk Jazz* is a collection of exercises I learned through my association with Barry. Those exercises gave me a strong foundation in

terms of getting around the instrument and soloing. It is a book that is very helpful for players interested in getting a grasp of the fundamentals of playing bop.

Chordability features 20 lessons of guitar harmony with insights into chord voicing, how to move them around the guitar, as well as tools to help the guitarist expand their vocabulary harmonically and their ability to be more fluid with the transitions of chords.

I did both of those as a labor of love, and I think I am due for another one. For me to put those things into print and video was a great learning experience. It was the most effective way to completely digest the material.

JJ: How did you get involved in music education?

RBH: For some reason, teaching came natural to me. I enjoy it, and I feel fortunate to meet so many wonderful people through it. You could say I'm very passionate about it and very comfortable in it. I learned a lot watching Barry Harris teach. Seeing his patience and generosity and how he focuses on teaching a student to the level they are in.

My first teaching job was when I was 18, in Israel. Someone heard me play, and asked if I'd like to teach guitar two days a week in two kibbutzim — communal farming villages — in the north of Israel. I was happy to have a gig, so I jumped on the opportunity. My students were high school students and almost my age.

In New York, my first teaching job was at the Brooklyn Conservatory of music. I taught guitar and a jazz class for a few years there starting, I think, in 1989. In 1994 I was asked to create a jazz program at the Kaufman Center, on West 67th Street in Manhattan, and I've been there since. The program is going strong, and we offer classes in jazz ensembles, improv and harmony, piano trios, guitar arrangements, and instrumental lessons. If anyone would like more

information, please visit our web page at: www.kaufmanmusiccenter.org/lms/program/the-jazz-program/ or google Kaufman Center Jazz. I also, as we talked about, have the jazz camps I run, and I've published instructional books and DVD.

JJ: What are some of your interests outside of music?

RBH: I love spending time with my daughters, reading, doing crossword puzzles, staying current on world events, traveling, and lots more.

JJ: Do you have any souvenirs of your career that visitors to your home might see?

RBH: I have a lot of memories, and photos. None are hanging in the house, but I am always happy to share them with friends.

JJ: Well, that is a good place to end this. Thank you so much for giving this interview. It was a pleasure talking to you.

RBH: Thank you. I appreciate your interest.



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Schaen Fox is a longtime jazz fan. Now retired, he devotes much of his time to the music and shares his encounters with musicians in this column.

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JAM: A Toast to Jazz in April

By Sandy Ingham

April is Jazz Appreciation Month as decreed in 2002 by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the approximate centennial of the music's birth in New Orleans. The institute continues to promote JAM to stimulate the current jazz scene and encourage people of all ages to participate in jazz — to study the music, attend concerts, listen to jazz on radio and recordings, read books about jazz, and more.

Here in New Jersey, we celebrate the music every month. We reached out to see if special JAM programs are planned here, but most venues' schedules were not set in stone by our early deadline.

But in Red Bank, the Count Basie Theatre has received a 2015 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Art Works award, \$15,000, to help produce a series of programs and activities celebrating Jazz Appreciation Month. Jazz-related lectures,

films and biopics will take place throughout April. On May 19, the celebration will continue with a jazz-centric edition of the NO SHUSH! Kids concert series, starring Louis Prima Jr. and The Witnesses, as well as the Red Bank Jazz Orchestra, led by conductor Joe Muccioli, who also directs the Jazz Arts Project at the Basie's Performing Arts Academy

Another treat just over the river: The Apollo Theater and Opera Philadelphia will stage Charlie Parker's "Yardbird" opera in its New York premiere April 1 and 3.

Set in the famed Birdland jazz club on March 12, 1955, the day Charlie Parker died, the opera invites audiences directly into the mind and heart of the great saxophonist as he composes his final masterpiece, and revisits the inspirations, demons and women who fueled his creative genius. The New York premiere reunites Lawrence Brownlee, the "energetic, bright-voiced tenor" (*The New York Times*) in the lead role as the legendary jazz saxophonist, with much of the original cast alongside Maestro Corrado Rovaris and the Opera Philadelphia Orchestra, who performed the work's world premiere to five sold-out audiences in June. Daniel Schnyder is the composer; libretto is by Bridgette A. Wimberly.

The Freddy Cole Quartet will play at a jazz brunch at NJPAC in Newark on April 10, and Michael Camilo continues the piano series with two performances April 17. The Brick City Jazz Orchestra presents a concert for teens on May 1. Also in Newark, Bethany Baptist Church welcomes guitarist Peter Bernstein to its Jazz Vespers series on April 2.

April is a busy month for the Rutgers jazz program. Saxophonist Abe Burton leads the university Mingus Big Band on the 18th, guest artist Michael Dease on trombone plays with an ensemble on the 22nd and Kenny Davis on bass directs

another ensemble on the 25th. Two free evenings of music by chamber jazz ensembles take place on the 16th and 24th.

Also in New Brunswick, the city's Jazz Project reports completing several grant applications and hasn't yet finalized its April schedule of weeknight dates at several downtown restaurants. NBJP will mark its sixth anniversary during the month.

On other campuses, the Shea Center at William Paterson in Wayne presents the Bill Charlap Trio April 17 and a French-American Jazz Exchange with City of Poets and saxophonist Donny McCaslin on the 23rd. At Princeton, a free concert April 2 features pianist Fabian Almazan and Rhizome with a string quartet. A Festival of Sound to benefit for the Seeing Eye pairs guest Justin Kauflin with Rio Clemente, Carrie Jackson, Grover Kemble and others at Drew University in Madison



Tenor Lawrence Brownlee as Charlie Parker will perform in the opera *Yardbird* in its New York premiere on April 1 and 3. Photo by Dominic M. Mercier.

on April 9. And guitarist Glenn Crytzer is at Ocean County College in Toms River April 13.

SOPAC in South Orange has Juan De Marcos and the Afro-Cuban All Stars April 30, the Seton Hall faculty jazz band on April 5 and James Gibbs III on the 17th.

In New York, every month swings at Jazz at Lincoln Center, with Wynton Marsalis premiering his new work "Spaces" on April 1-2. Steve Miller imagines a collaboration of Ma Rainey and Miles Davis April 8-9, with Bill Charlap at the Rose Theater the same dates. Singers Michael Feinstein (April 13-14) and Catherine Russell (April 15-16) are other headliners.

Farther afield, the annual Berks Jazz Fest in Reading, PA, is April 1-10 with hundreds of performers, including Manhattan Transfer with Take 6, Pieces of a Dream, Four Play, Joey Alexander, the Rippingtons, Chick Corea with Bela Fleck, Keiko Matsui and the Brubeck Brothers.

On April 4, the National Endowment for the Arts will induct its 2016 class of Jazz Masters at ceremonies at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Saxophonists Archie Shepp and Pharoah Sanders, vibraphonist Gary Button and Wendy Oxenhorn, who heads the Jazz Foundation of America, are the honorees. Each year since 1982, the National Endowment for the Arts has conferred the NEA Jazz Masters award to living legends in recognition of their lifetime achievements and exceptional contributions to the advancement of jazz. With this new class, the NEA has honored 140 great figures in jazz.

And if by April you are ready for a really warm post-winter break, head down to where this music all began, New Orleans, where the French Quarter Fest (April 7-10) and the Jazz & Heritage Festival (April 22-May 1) serve up heaping helpings of jazz and other musical and mouthwatering delicacies. 

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The Magic Of A Yellow Ukulele | Jive Aces Spread The Happiness

By Lynn Redmile

I have to admit, I was pretty excited to be seeing the Jive Aces live at The Metropolitan Room in New York City recently — I've been a fan for a while. Sometime in 2011, a wonderful little YouTube video clip was making the rounds, passed along by swing dancers and others, and I loved it. It began with the portrayal of a gloomy lackluster world, bad news on TV, people bored and/or quarrelling, until a man with two-toned saddle shoes strolled along with his yellow ukulele, singing "Bring Me Sunshine" and suddenly the world seemed right, full of smiles, laughter — and jazz.

I couldn't help thinking this group was going to "make it big" with this little creation.



The Jive Aces at the Metropolitan Room on Jan. 17 (l-r): Vince Hurley, Ian Clarkson, Ken Smith, Alex Douglas, John Fordham and Peter Howell. Photo by Lynn Redmile.

The Jive Aces had been around a while. Meeting in London, the band members shared a common love for the music of Louis Prima, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley and Bill Haley, and loved to dance to it. But when they couldn't consistently find the live music they wanted to dance to, necessity being the mother of invention, they decided to create it themselves.

So who are the Jive Aces? Ian Clarkson has always sung, danced, entertained and performed, and loved imitating the likes of Clark Gable or Errol Flynn. With this personality and his proficiency on trumpet (and now, ukulele), he was ideal to be the energetic front man for the Jive Aces. John Fordham started performing classics on clarinet before switching to swing jazz, and embraced the tenor sax (a 1930s Conn is his favorite) during his tenure as a big band musician. His hot solos are key to the Jive Aces sound, and a great contribution to the band's energy. Trombonist Alex Douglas is also a high energy performer, and loves to physically get into the audience, or duel horns with Ian for a bit of excitement. Vince Hurley has been a pianist since he was four years old — his Oxford accent and degree from the London College of Music are quite a contrast to his strident piano and no-holds-barred showmanship, even wilder than Jerry Lee Lewis! In the rhythm section, bassist Ken Smith is a bit of an anomaly — being a lefty is one thing, but playing a regular (right-handed) bass left-handed (effectively back to front) is definitely curious. His deep love of rock 'n' roll and impressive proficiency at swing dancing anchors his impeccable rhythm firmly in its place, although it's not unusual for him to spin the bass around, or

even stand on it, while performing. Drummer Peter Howell has been friends with front man Ian since they were in school today. He was "mentored" by the music of Count Basie and Duke Ellington, although his favorite musician is Louis Armstrong.

The Jive Aces first performed in January 1989, at a concert in Paris, and their trademark wild high-energy floor show was a hit. The release of their first CD in 1992, *Jumpin' with the Aces*, increased their popularity across Europe and the UK. They perform in bright colored suits, and their fresh arrangements of classic swing, jive and R&B songs, such as those made famous by Louis Prima, Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Dean Martin, Bobby Darrin, Big Joe Turner and Sammy Davis Jr., together with superb swinging originals, combine to create a spectacular stage show, well loved by their audiences. But it was soon after the release of the "Bring Me Sunshine" video, which quickly went viral, that things began to really change for the group. In 2012, they became the first band to ever reach the semi-finals of the television talent show *Britain's Got Talent*. This was followed by a performance for the Queen of England's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and performances at the Olympics. They are the UK's top jive and swing band, and have performed at thousands of events in the United Kingdom and internationally in more than 30 countries. They recently headlined at the Royal Albert Hall in London, where they sold out the first ever swing dance held in that beautiful space.

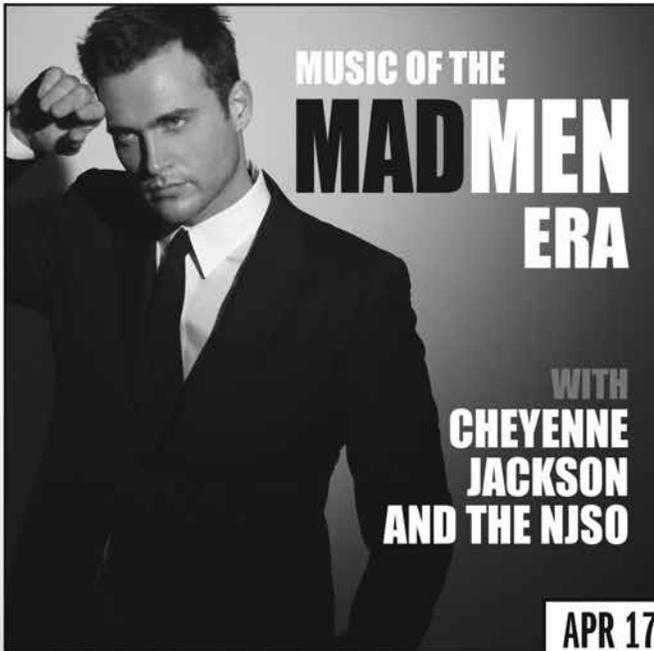
So, back to their performance at the Metropolitan Room in January. Clad in their bright yellow zoot suits, the six-piece band took to the stage with

"When You're Smiling," and within seconds, the room was filled with their exuberance. The Manhattan Dolls joined them for "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," reminiscent of the Andrews Sisters with their three-part harmonies, coordinating outfits and Victory Rolls hairstyles. As the ladies returned to their seats, the band was soon joined by Ms. Cassidy Janson, the UK equivalent of a Broadway star, who has the title role in London's West End production of *Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*. Her vocal prowess is quite remarkable, and her energetic vibrancy and strong stage presence was a perfect match for the Jive Aces. Running through numbers like "Smile," (which they've released as a new YouTube video, evocative of Charlie Chaplin's

films), "Old Black Magic," "Too Darn Hot," and "All The Cats Join In," the Jive Aces and Cassidy crafted their magic, energizing their audience and melting away the cares of the world. The inclusion of mini comedy skits similar to the Three Stooges added another dimension of interest to their routine, generating a sense of anticipation among their audience, and Ian's easy banter brought giggles as we contemplated being separated by a common language from the British. "Just a Gigolo," and "I Wanna Be Like You" (in *The Jungle Book* style) were simply glorious. But no one (except them!) could've anticipated their medley of "Revival Day" and "Hey Boy Hey Girl" which showcased the extraordinary talents of Vince on the piano, with high side kicks, and jumps, while still playing. Ken's bass solo still has me flummoxed as to how he plays it backwards — but it's a perfect solution for a traveling left-handed bass player who needs to borrow or rent the bass wherever they go. Cassidy demonstrated her lingual dexterity with a blisteringly fast performance of "I Want You To Be My Baby." With the grand finale, everyone was on their feet, exuberant and literally uplifted.

Their current tour of the USA has ended, but the Jive Aces return in April — unfortunately, not to the New Jersey area. However, their new CD, *Spread A Little Happiness*, recorded at Chick Corea's state-of-the-art Mad Hatter studio, is available. It features 12 tracks in all, a fun blend of original compositions, and family swing classics, guaranteed to bring a smile to your face. For more information about their CDs, and upcoming tour dates, please check their website, www.JiveAces.com. 

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Some Like It Hot | Trad Jazzers Fire Up Winter Jazzfest

Story and photos by Lynn Redmile

The NYC Winter Jazzfest, co-produced by Brice Rosenbloom and Adam Schatz, started in 2005 with one night featuring 19 groups, and the plan to give greater exposure to jazz in New York and beyond. Its popularity has continued to grow, and this year Winter Jazzfest was a four-day festival, in 12 venues, featuring over a hundred quality cutting-edge acts.

The New York Hot Jazz Festival (founded and directed by Michael Katsobashvili in 2013) sponsored the Greenwich House Music School stage for the second year, courtesy of Jennie Wasserman, the series curator at Greenwich House Music School (and formerly of SFJAZZ, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Joe's Pub and Carnegie Hall). I wish I had been able to see more of the full NYC Winter Jazzfest, but I concentrated on this stage — ten exciting acts were hosted over two nights on January 15 and 16 at the school, and it was standing room only for both nights.

Tom McDermott, one of New Orleans' premier piano players and composers, was the first act, opening with a unique and exciting rendition of Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag." Playing ragtime since the 1970s, and being a Duke of Dixieland for much of the 1990s, Tom has composed for theater, television and movies, and he is also wonderfully adept at improvising and putting his own spin on the originals, enthralling all who listen. Whether he



The New Wonders are Emily Asher, Glenn Crytzer, Mike Davis, Jay Rattman, Ricky Alexander and Jay Lepley.

plays Choro (a Brazilian music form), ragtime, trad jazz, or New Orleans R&B, his performances and recordings (available on his Web site) are always highly acclaimed. Running through compositions like Duke Ellington's "Black Beauty," James P. Johnson's "Carolina Shout," and Jellyroll Morton's "The Crave," even classical composers were included in Tom's set, when he "ragged the classics" with Chopin's Valse in C# Minor. A Cuban rhythm on "Tennessee Waltz" was so beautiful, and a ragtime version of "Stars and Stripes Forever" was an exciting finale.



New Orleans's Tom McDermott performed an exciting "Maple Leaf Rag."

The Bumper Jacksons, comprising Jess Eliot Myhre (vocals, clarinet and washboard), Chris Ousley (guitar, tenor banjo), Dave Hadley (pedal steel guitar), Alex Lacquement (bass) and Dan Samuels (drums), took to the stage with mostly original compositions, and a few reworked traditional tunes in the style of roots jazz, country swing and street blues. Chris and Jess

are the Strathmore Maryland Artists in Residence this year, in addition to their performances scheduled around the US and Canada as part of their Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation touring grant, and Jess recently won the Mid-Atlantic Song Contest (Jazz and Vocals) for "Pretty Mama Put a Spell on Me," which was greatly appreciated by this concert's audience. Jess's impeccable rhythm on the washboard with her thimble-tipped long black gloves, and Dave Hadley's finesse on the pedal steel guitar added an extra dimension to the enjoyment this band brought to the stage — if you missed this

performance, be sure to pick up their latest CD *Too Big World*, released last summer.

Evan Christopher's Clarinet Road is always a pleasure to hear. From New Orleans, Evan combines virtuosity and enthusiasm with dynamic expressiveness, inspired by Sidney Bechet, Barney Bigard and others. For this event, he was accompanied by New Orleans guitarist Brian Seeger, and New York bassist Jacob Webb — you may recall Jacob being the recipient of the New Jersey Jazz Society Jack Stine scholarship in 2009. Evan has a residency at Jazz at Lincoln Center, and he takes every opportunity he can to showcase the New Orleans clarinet tradition. They opened with the traditional "Make Me a Pallet on Your Floor," followed by "Mojo Blues" and Evan's composition "Old Sober March." Hilary Gardner's beautiful vocals added another layer of exquisiteness to the set, joining them on "Everything I Have is Yours" and an evocative rumba-rhythmed "Moon Ray," an Artie Shaw composition. The rest of their set, including "High Society," was equally enthusiastically received. The trio is releasing a CD in March, the fourth in the Clarinet Road series, entitled *Surrender Blue and Other New Orleans Sketches*, which I believe would be a worthy addition to every jazz lover's collection.

The EarRegulars can be heard at the historic Ear Inn on Spring Street in Manhattan each Sunday, but a special configuration of the quartet took to the

stage, with co-founders Jon-Erik Kellso (who most JJ readers know as a member of Vince Giordano's Nighthawks) on trumpet and Matt Munisteri (a prolific composer and lyricist, and currently musical director for Catherine Russell) on guitar, accompanied by Pat O'Leary on bass and Evan Christopher on clarinet. Jon-Erik's original composition "Out of the Gate," based on James P. Johnson's "Victory Stride," opened the set, and was followed by another of his originals "EarRegularity," after which, the well-known "Panama." New York vocalist Kat Edmonson, who has performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival as well as on tour in Europe and the USA, joined them for Cole Porter's "Let's Do It" and took everyone's breath away with an incredibly emotive "The Very Thought of You." Their finale of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" was also fresh and fun — the audience didn't want to let them go! The EarRegulars' latest CD, *In the Land of Beginning Again*, was recorded in New Orleans last year and features Jon-Erik Kellso, Matt Munisteri, Evan Christopher and New Orleansian bassist Kerry Lewis.

For the final set of the evening, Mike Davis's *New Wonders*, named for the model of cornet played by the enigmatic genius Bix Beiderbecke, was perfection. Exquisite attention to musical detail and the Manhattan-based band's deep passion for the original recordings is evident, bringing the dreams and drama of American's 1920's Jazz Age to life. Cornetist Mike Davis wrote most of the arrangements for the sextet and was ably accompanied by Ricky Alexander on reeds, Emily Asher on trombone, Glenn Crytzer on banjo, Jay Rattman

on bass saxophone and Jay Lepley on drums. "Poor Papa" opened the set, followed by "Borneo," and "Smile, Darn Ya, Smile." Each piece was introduced with a little history — but the audience didn't seem to believe him when Mike said he listened to the original records on his Victrola! Little do they know! Their four-part vocal harmony on Donald Heywood's "Clorinda" was particularly loved, as was "Arkansas Blues," "I Lost my Heart in Dixieland," and "The Baltimore," to mention a few. After being begged for an encore, the sextet closed with "Royal Garden Blues," garnering a well-deserved standing ovation.

The second night on the New York Hot Jazz Festival stage for the NYC Winter Jazzfest held at the Greenwich House Music School started with Grammy-nominated New York jazz pianist Christian Sands, a protégé of the late Dr. Billy Taylor. He has played with a number of jazz luminaries, including an outrageous, highly publicized duet with legendary pianist Oscar Peterson, and has played at jazz clubs all over the world. Opening with "Get Happy," Christian transitioned almost seamlessly into Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'," followed by a unique variation of "Maple Leaf Rag." Although billed on the program as a stride pianist, Christian proved that's not the only vocabulary he plays, with an evocative "Nature Boy" and the beautiful "Laura." As a fun finale, he took rapper Drake's "Hotline Bling" and played it in the style of Fats Waller, an impressive feat. Christian has new albums, available on his website: *Take One — Live at Montmartre* and *Sands Trio — Live at the Village Vanguard*.

Vocalists Michael Mwenso and Brianna Thomas presented an energetic and exciting set of

continued on page 28



Clarinet Road included Evan Christopher, Jacob Webb, Hilary Gardner and Brian Seeger.



Ella and Louis? Brianna Thomas, Alexander Claffy, Michael Mwenso and Joe Saylor.



Trumpeter Alphonso Horne mingles with the audience during his performance of "King Porter Stomp" at the Greenwich Home Music School.

WINTER JAZZFEST

continued from page 27

Ella and Louis duets, backed by Alphonso Horne on trumpet, Mathis Picard on piano, Alexander Claffy on bass and Joe Saylor on drums. Michael is a force to be reckoned with, a winner of many music awards and previously ran the jam sessions at London's Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club until Wynton Marsalis asked him to join the programming team at Jazz at Lincoln Center and head the After-Hours program at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola. Brianna is a highly accomplished straight-ahead jazz vocalist, composer and arranger, has collaborated with world-renowned artists, and performed almost everywhere — from Jazz at Lincoln Center to the prestigious Montreux, Umbria and Sochi jazz festivals. Swing and Lindy hop dancers all over the world know her work with pianist Gordon Webster. "They Can't Take That Away from Me" gave a hint of the wonderful musical interplay Brianna and Michael share, and "Makin' Whoopee" clarified it. After a couple of numbers, Alphonso Horne took a stride into the packed-to-capacity and very enthusiastic crowd with "King Porter Stomp" and they closed their set with a well-appreciated version of "Cheek to Cheek."

The acoustic jazz group Rhythm Future Quartet (named after the Django Reinhardt composition "Rhythm Futur") continues its passionate mission to keep Gypsy jazz firmly in the forefront. Chief soloists Jason Anick on violin and



Sidney Bechet's haunting ballad "Petite Fleur" was played to perfection by Oran Etkin. Photo by Lynn Redmile.

Olli Soikkeli on guitar, together with second guitarist Max O'Rourke and left-handed bassist Greg Loughman, are simply awe-inspiring — Jason, also an award-winning composer, is one of the youngest instructors at Boston's Berklee College of Music, and is named one of the best jazz violinists of his generation. Olli, the "Finnish Boy Wonder" has astonishing dexterity and speed with pure soul — it needs to be seen! Determined to not simply add their voice to Gypsy jazz standards, their original compositions bring new light to the genre. The band opened with "Iberian Sunrise," a beautiful composition by Greg, followed by "Made for



Grand Street Stompers: Tamar Korn, Rob Adkins, Gordon Au, Nick Russo, Kevin Dorn, Dennis Lichtman and Jake Handelman. Photo by Lytnn Redmile.

Wesley." "Best Things in Life are Free" was followed by Jason's Balkan-influenced composition "Vessela," which means "happy" in Bulgarian. Other pieces included an arrangement of John Lennon's "Come Together," their arrangement of "Limehouse Blues" (a personal favorite), and the perfectly presented set culminated with Olli's composition "Bushwick Stomp," celebrating his Brooklyn home. Their second album *Travels*, newly released through Magic Fiddle Music, features original compositions reflecting the influence world travel has had on the band and its rhythmic and harmonic stylings.

Tatiana Eva-Marie and The Avalon Jazz Band were up next, featuring Tatiana on vocals, Adrien Chevalier on violin, Olli Soikkeli and Michael Valeanu on guitar, Julian Smith on bass and special guest Oran Etkin on clarinet and bass clarinet. The New York-based Avalon Jazz Band, created by Tatiana and Adrien in 2012, has performed extensively, locally and internationally, playing Gypsy influenced French hot jazz, and representing the Parisian and Golden Age swing spirit. Opening with a beautiful rendition of Irving Berlin's "Russian Lullaby," and following with "Caravan," the scene was set for a concert showcasing the eastern and Gypsy influences on jazz. "Fleur de Lavande" by Manouche composer Fapy Lafertin was a beautiful lead-in to "Golden Earrings," made famous by Marlene Dietrich in the film of the same name, followed by "Joseph Joseph," each piece allowing Tatiana's Gypsy-styled energy to create perfect balance with sensitive French jazz. After a fun audience participation version of "C'est Si Bon," special guest Oran Etkin was mesmerizing on "Songe d'Automne." Sidney Bechet's "Petite Fleur" was the perfect precursor to "Bei Mir Bist du Schoen," which had many audience members singing along! *Do you Zazou?*, the Avalon Jazz Band's tribute CD to Parisian swing kids, is soon available.

The last group to perform on the Greenwich House Music School stage was Gordon's Au's Grand Street Stompers, featuring Gordon on trumpet, Dennis Lichtman on clarinet, Jake Handelman on trombone, Nick Russo on guitar, Rob Adkins on bass, and Kevin Dorn on drums, with crowd favorite Tamar Korn on vocals. They opened with a lively "Do the New York," followed by "That Eccentric Rag" by J. Russel Robinson. A couple of James Monaco compositions ("While They Were Dancing Around" and "On the Sentimental Side") balanced a few of Gordon's original compositions: "Saratoga Serenade," "Pavonis" (which he wrote in response to Duke Ellington's "Azalea") and "Somehow the World Has Turned Upside-Down," with Tamar's lyrical styling highlighting the heartfelt sentiments. Hoagy Carmichael's "Stardust" proved a worthy finale to this fantastic offering of jazz, receiving a standing ovation for the Grand Street Stompers. Their third CD is being recorded soon — check their website for more details.

Although this Winter Jazzfest is sadly over, the New York Hot Jazz Festival is coming in spring. Be sure to join their mailing list on NYHotJazzFest.com to stay informed. Let the jazz continue!



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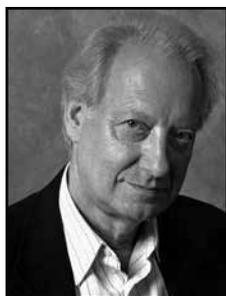
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Dan's Den

Bill Charlap Mesmerizes at Mezzrow

By Dan Morgenstern

On a weeknight in January, Mezzrow was the proverbial right place at the right time. There was already a premonition in the air when Loren Schoenberg and I arrived in what we thought was plenty of time. But we barely managed to squeeze in at the rear of the largest gathering I'd yet seen in the

cozy Greenwich Village cellar. This was my fifth visit, and Loren's first, and the big draw was Bill Charlap, doing a rare solo piano stint.

Mezzrow is the offspring of Smalls and, like that club, has an early set by a different attraction. So it took a while to clear the house, and a while longer for the refill — the room is narrow and tables tightly spaced. But everyone was in a good anticipatory mood, including Bill's pianist wife, Renee Rosnes, drummer Bill Goodwin, in from the Delaware Gap, singer Libby York, and assorted friends and fans. Bill himself just managed to squeeze through, a bit before we got seated at last, kind of shoehorned in — but it was all in the spirit of the Louis Armstrong number of that name.

Mezzrow's, at 136 West 10 Street in Greenwich Village, is primarily a piano room, graced with a fine instrument and good acoustics. We love the Bill Charlap Trio, stoked by the unrelated Washingtons, Peter and Kenny, but as soon as Bill was on his way with "Riverboat Shuffle," we knew we were in for a special treat. For the next hour, we were in the presence of a master, serving up gem after gem in the most natural and unassuming manner, as if we were guests in his living room.

Aside from offering warm applause, the rapt listeners were admirably quiet, so not a note went unheard. Bill's comments were few, identifying tunes, and selections flowed apace, each a jewel. Among them: "How About You," "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes," "The One I Love (Belongs To Somebody Else)," "Star Dust," "All the Things You Are," with the fine, seldom-heard verse, Willie "The Lion" Smith's "Morning Air," perfect, "In A Mist," with thoughtful rubato passages, a Tatumesque "Tea for Two," "Willow Weep for Me," and as a perfect ending to the recital, "I Got Rhythm" presented with Gershwin's own variations. Of course there had to be an encore: a single but lovely chorus of "Two Sleepy People."

Bill also offered two unaffected vocals, one them "Put On a Happy Face," which pretty well reflected the visages of the listeners.

Let me quote from some comments Loren jotted down while still under the Charlap spell: "Flabbergasted is the word that comes to mind after hearing Bill Charlap tonight. He played well over a dozen pieces, some no more than a couple of choruses. All made their points and then finished. Every one was a superior tune, in a bespoke arrangement. What a relief! Interstitial Tatumesque runs were trotted out sparingly but with great purpose...First and foremost were the refreshing harmonies — there were no standard changes laid out for their own sake. Every choice was specific to the melodic line at hand. The music flowed, always surprising, and the audience was caught short by more than one seemingly anomalous ending chord that left the room in stunned silence. It is no hyperbole to say that if a recording of that set came out, it would be a classic. I know 'cause I was there!"

And lucky we were to be. We know that there's a Charlap Trio album coming soon, and that's good news — it's been a while. But please, please, Bill, make us a special gift of a solo disc. It would be a classic.

Musician/ Autobiographer

The man for whom Mezzrow's was named was, of course, a musician, with a considerable recorded legacy. But he was also celebrated for one of the first — and still best — jazz

autobiographies. *Really the Blues*, co-authored by Bernard Wolfe, was published in 1946.

Though there have been several paperback reprints since then, he book has long been out of print.

Now it's back, in a nice, full-size softcover edition, with an introduction by Ben Ratliff of *The New York Times*, published by a newcomer to the book business,

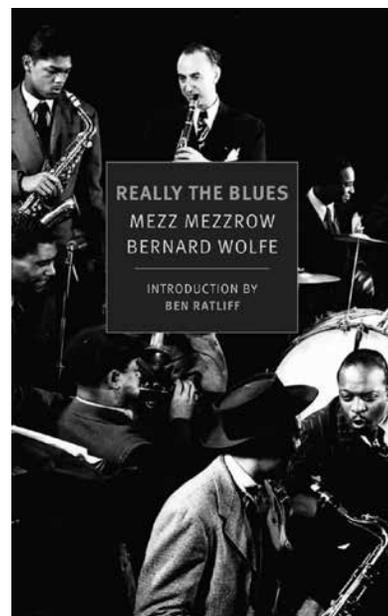
New York Review Books, an offshoot of guess what literary magazine. It's a happy occasion for this longtime fan, who first read it very soon after arriving in the homeland of jazz, a year after its publication. I was already a full-fledged jazz fan, and also very much aware of what the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal titled *An American Dilemma*. I'd read that big work while still in Denmark, as well as Richard Wright's *Black Boy*, Erskine Caldwell's *Trouble in July*, and other books about the race problem, and begun to encounter the real thing. So Mezzrow's fascinating tale about his road to becoming a self-identified black man — this long before Norman Mailer's *The White Negro* — was quite a revelation. But most of all, this was a book about the great musicians Mezz had associated with, and the spirit and essence of the music called jazz.

In Wolfe, Mezz had found the perfect partner, for this then still-budding novelist was a left-wing intellectual (he had been Leon Trotsky's personal secretary before the assassination, about whom he'd write the recently reprinted novel, *The Great Prince Died*), passionately interested in African-American culture and its impact on the mainstream, and he could write well. Wolfe captured Mezz's voice in print.

I loved the book, which also introduced me to what Mezz was famous for supplying to his friends, including his idol Louis Armstrong, to the point where it became synonymous with his name: the weed that has since become legal in some states. But selling it cost Mezz some jail time. He also went through opium addiction, a less happy experience.

If you haven't read *Really the Blues*, which became a huge bestseller in France as *La Rage de Vivre*, may I suggest you do so — it's a vibrant slice of Americana, offering great snapshots of Louis, Bix, Bechet and other legends. You don't have to agree with Mezz's views on music or life to enjoy it.

■ As I write, I'm about a week away from the 50th anniversary of the debut of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra at the Village Vanguard. I was there the first night and will be there for the 50th year. And so long until next month! 



Mezz Mezzrow's *Really The Blues* — "one of the first, and still best, jazz autobiographies" — is back in print.

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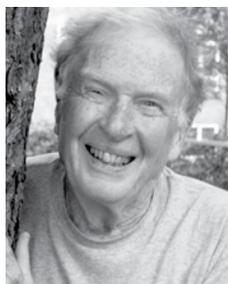
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Noteworthy

Fradley Garner International Editor *Jersey Jazz*

FELIX MOSEHOLM, 17, GETS TIME TO LEARN BASS...TWO CONTEST WINNERS PICK SCOTT HAMILTON ALBUMS...WHEN WILL CONCORD RELEASE 'SCOTT'S BUDDY' ON CD?...NORWAY'S KAREN KROG SMITES THE APPLE

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, Tina Austad, my Danish-Norwegian teacher of classical bass for 25 years, called to ask if a promising young Danish student could borrow my bass. Tina knew her octogenarian pupil had pretty much given up playing. So I said sure. Felix Moseholm, 15, drove up from Copenhagen with his mother to pick up my cherished Romanian contrabass. It turned out the kid wanted to play jazz. At Chetham's School of Music in England, they insisted Felix play cello, but allowed him to study both instruments his first year. The youngster proved so talented on bass, however, he was allowed to study that alone for his second year. But he never went back. Felix was diagnosed with nasal-pharyngeal cancer. In January 2015, his parents flew him to Houston, Texas, for proton radiation therapy at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. The pinpoint-precise treatment wasn't available in Denmark. Declared cancer-free, Felix is back home again, going to "life's great jazz school" — playing with advanced bassists wherever he can find them, and going to master classes. He's formed his own Felix Moseholm Quintet, with Zier Romme Larsen on piano; Jacob Artved on guitar; Felix on bass; Søren Høst, an alto saxophonist playing his first gig on tenor, and Henrik Holst on drums. I caught the quintet's debut in January, upstairs at Charlie Scott in Copenhagen's old town. They delivered standards with gusto — though a tad too loud to these octo ears. They'll learn in time. Meanwhile, we friends and fans are just grateful that Felix Moseholm was given the time to learn.



Felix Moseholm, 17, leads his quintet in Copenhagen. Photo by Hanne Ingerslev.

ONE OFFBEAT UPSHOOT of running a reader contest (Noteworthy, January) is picking up news and tips from the entrants. Both winners asked for albums by tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton. John Herr, of Syracuse, NY, referred me to his favorite online record dealer, in England. "You'll never go wrong ordering from Mark at CrazyJazz.co.uk," John emailed. "His selection, prices & service are the best on the Sceptered Isle." I e-mailed Mark, who recommended Hamilton's latest, *The Best Things in Life*. "Wow," wrote John, ["This] is a new CD to me. Can't wait 'til I hit the Pee Wee Russell Stomp & can hear this on Pat's living room Bose [loudspeakers]." John reported that "Scott Hamilton has recorded at least 4 CDs with the Bernhard Pichl Trio of Munich, including *How About You*, 2 with trumpeter Dusko Gojkovic sharing the front

line (*Tight But Loose & 2nd Time Around*) & 1 under the nominal leadership of the trio's drummer Michael Keul (Superfocus). How do you pronounce Pichl in Deutsch? Peel?" I can't answer that, but the other contest winner, Sid Sirulnick, of Hackensack, NJ, asked for *How About You*, and spelled it Pichi. The i's have it!

SID SIRULNICK RAISES A QUESTION that someone — maybe at Concord Records — can answer: "Might you be able to lend some insight as to why Concord has never released a CD of the Scott Hamilton-Buddy Tate *Scott's Buddy* session? It also had Nat Pierce, Cal Collins, Jake Hanna and Bob Maize on the tracks. It was issued on LP and cassette. My cassette has a copyright date of 1981. Many years ago, I called Concord, spoke to someone who promised 'they' would look into it. I never

heard back and they never did release a CD. I verified this on Discogs.com." If you know the reason, or can refer Sid to someone who does, please email sirulnicks@aol.com.

"KARIN KROG SANG A RUEFUL SONG about disillusionment at Joe's Pub on Wednesday night," wrote Nate Chinen in *The New York Times* last fall. "It was 'The Meaning of Love' by the distinguished jazz pianist Steve Kuhn, her accompanist for the evening. 'By and by, all my dreams will soon disappear,' she began, in a whispery tone. 'I know not when; I know not why.'" The vocalist has been cherished for more than a half century in her native Norway, but New York and other stateside gigs have been too few. Joe's Pub was a showcase for live renditions from two new albums that, writes Chinen, "make a strong argument for her legacy." Karen Krog's latest release is *Break of Day* (Meantime Records), but Chinen calls the earlier album, *Don't Just Sing: A Karen Krog Anthology 1963-1999*, "more consequential." This was released on Light in the Attic, a highly regarded Seattle label founded in 2007. John Herr, our contest winner, e-mailed, "I have only a Storyville LP, *Some Other Spring*, by Karen Krog. She's backed by a 4tet w/Dexter G, Kenny Drew, NHOP & drummer Espen Rud, recorded in 1970." Storyville is a Danish jazz label. Dexter G stands for Gordon, the American tenor saxophonist, and NHOP (really NHØP) stands for "the Great Dane with the never-ending name," Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, the late, astounding Danish bassist.



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Other Views

By Joe Lang Past NJJS President

It seems that when I finish one column, it is about time to start another one. Fortunately, good music keeps coming my way, and I am happy to share my impressions of what I hear.

■ **CHUCK ISRAELS** founded the **NATIONAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE** in 1973, and kept it active for five years. They only recorded three albums that were commercially released. Dot Time Records has released **Featuring Gerry Mulligan (Dot Time – 8002)**, the first of what hopefully will be several albums taken from the concerts performed by the NJE, and not previously available. According to the liner notes by David Berger, this ensemble served as the prototype for the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra that was founded by Berger and Wynton Marsalis. The NJE was a repertory orchestra that featured top musicians from the New York City area. The concert on this disc was recorded at the New School on February 17, 1977, and features Gerry Mulligan playing his baritone sax on six of the nine selections. Five of them, “Back at the Barn,” “Walkin’ Shoes,” “Thruway,” “Idol Gossip” and “Ballade,” were composed by Mulligan, and the other, “Israel” by John Carisi, was often played by Mulligan’s groups. The NJE was highly regarded, and the playing on this collection demonstrates why that was the case. The ensemble playing is tight, and the soloists sparkle. Having newly released material from the NJE is welcome indeed, and having the artistry of Gerry Mulligan included makes it that much more special. (www.dottimerecords.com)

■ When Charlie Parker did his recordings with a string section in 1949 and 1950, they received a mixed reaction from the critics, but the recordings proved to be his most popular with the record-buying public. He eventually performed with strings in concert on a few occasions. There were many arrangements written for Parker and strings that were never recorded, and some never performed in public. Alto saxophonist and Parker enthusiast **CLARK GIBSON** has recorded 14 of these charts on **Bird with Strings: The Lost Arrangements (Blujazz – 3431)**. Since only four of these selections were ever performed by Parker and captured as live recordings, Gibson was free to craft his approach to the tunes from his own perspective, one influenced by Parker, but uniquely his. The tunes include “Stardust,” “Repitition,” “You

Go to My Head,” “Gone with the Wind,” “I Cover the Waterfront,” “Gold Rush,” “Love Walked In,” “Yesterdays,” “Yardbird Suite,” “Ezz-thetic,” “They Didn’t Believe Me,” “Scootin’,” “I’ve Got You Under My Skin” and “When I Dream of You.” Gibson captures the spirit of Parker, but is not strictly tied to the bebop idiom. His playing is refreshing, confident and brings the charts to life in a manner that immediately catches the listeners attention. Parker’s original recordings inspired many of his peers and musical descendants to take their turns at recording with strings, some quite successfully, and others without distinction. This recording is in the successful category! (www.blujazz.com)

■ There are not many superlatives that have not been applied to the tenor saxophone playing of **HOUSTON PERSON**. He has a wonderful tone, is an imaginative and fluent player, his ballad work recalls that of Ben Webster, the master of all ballad players, he never ceases to swing at any tempo, and his song selection is always spot on. All of these attributes are evident on **Something Personal (HighNote – 7282)**. With help from Steve Nelson on vibes, John di Martino on piano, Ray Drummond on bass and Lewis Nash on drums, plus occasional contributions from guitarist James Chirillo, Person explores ten selections with great aplomb. Listen to his caressing of “Crazy He Calls Me,” the way that the group thoughtfully swings “I’m Afraid the Masquerade is Over” or the catchy bossa nova rhythms applied to “Change Partners,” and you can tell that this is a collection of empathetic musicians who are ready to take any path that their leader chooses. Each of the players is among the masters on their instruments, and they play as a unit, not a collection of individuals. *Something Personal* is one of those albums that is immediately destined for the favorites section in your CD library. (www.jazzdepot.com)

■ **ECHOES OF SWING**, a superb mainstream quartet based in Germany, has been producing one fine recording after another for several years. Their latest, **Dancing (Act Music – 9103)** is a 16-song collection that includes standards, jazz tunes, originals and even a taste of Bach. The players are Colin T. Dawson on trumpet and vocals, Chris Hopkins on alto saxophone, Bernd Lhotzky on piano and Oliver Mewes on drums. The song list is eclectic, and the group gives each selection an intelligent and unique interpretation. The appealing originals by Hopkins, Lhotzky and Dawson are right at home among tunes such as “Carioca,”

“Moonlight Serenade,” “Original Dixieland One Step” and Sidney Bechet’s “Premier.” Dawson adds nice understated vocals on “Dream Dancing” and “All You Want to Do Is Dance.” These are terrific musicians who make you tap your feet and smile! It sure would be nice to have an opportunity to see them perform over here. (www.actmusic.com)

■ Since he is based on the West Coast, folks back East do not have many opportunities to catch master guitarist **KENNY BURRELL** in live performance. Luckily, **The Road to Love (HighNote – 7284)** affords us a chance to hear him during a gig at Catalina’s in Hollywood with his band of Justo Almarino on tenor sax and flute, Tom Ranier on piano, Tony Dumas on bass and Clayton Cameron on drums. Burrell’s distinctive style informs the session. He has chosen a nice selection of tunes including “Salty Papa” from the Lionel Hampton book, “Li’l Darlin’,” a tune made popular by Count Basie, and a lovely solo version of Duke Ellington’s “Single Petal of a Rose.” Almarino was a new name to me, and is well worth discovering. Ranier enjoys a place among the first-call piano players on the Los Angeles scene. Barbara Morrison adds her seasoned voice to the final three selections, “The Road to Love,” “Crazy He Calls Me” and “Things Ain’t What They Used to Be.” *The Road to Love* takes you to a set of terrific straight ahead jazz! (www.jazzdepot.com)

■ Trumpeter **JIM ROTONDI** now spends most of his time in Graz, Austria where he is on staff at the University of Music and Dramatic Arts. During his time living in New York, he frequently performed at the Upper West Side jazz haven Smoke, often as part of the band One for All that included David Hazeltine, the pianist on **Dark Blue (Smoke Sessions – 1602)**, a recording made in July of last year. Also on the date are vibist Joe Locke, bassist David Wong and drummer Carl Allen. The program includes six Rotondi originals, an original by Hazeltine, “Pure Imagination,” “Monk’s Mood” and “Our Day Will Come.” Rotondi has a supple sound on his horn, comes from a bebop/hard bop grounding, and has a knack for composing tunes that immediately catch your attention. Locke’s vibes and Rotondi’s horn beautifully complement each other, while the rhythm section provides a solid base. While done in a studio, the album has a live performance vibe. This music from Rotondi and his cohorts is wonderfully engaging. (www.smokesessionsrecords.com)

■ Successfully adapting classical music themes to a jazz context requires knowledge of both musical fields. Pianist **ERIC OLSEN** is one musician who has effectively bridged this gap. He has performed to acclaim in both fields, and one hearing of **Sea Changes (Blujazz – 3433)** will easily convince you that he has mastered this transition. The nine selections on this album are mostly from classical sources, but he has also address a traditional Irish hymn, “Be Now, My Vision;” a song from the Gershwin opera *Porgy and Bess*, “My Man’s Gone Now;” and a Beatles tune, “Something.” Olsen is aided on the session by Don Braden on tenor and soprano saxophones, Ratzon B. Harris on bass and Tim Horner on drums. Among the classical composers addressed on *Sea Changes* are Fauré, Bizet, Messiaen, Sibelius, Chopin and Grieg. Olsen’s creative arrangements give new life to music that seems to enjoy being taken on different rides, from contemplative, Fauré’s *Elegy*, to frenetic, Grieg’s *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. Olsen has created his own form of classic jazz. (www.blujazz.com)

■ The superb Brazilian jazz group **TRIO DA PAZ**, guitarist Romero Lubambo, bassist Nilson Matta and drummer Duduka Da Fonseca, has been making marvelous music together for 30 years. The title of their new album **30 (Zoho – 201602)** reflects that reality. On a program of nine originals and one piece, “Samba Triste,” by legendary Brazilian guitarist and composer Baden Powell, Trio Da Paz gives an overview of their empathetic and exhilarating musicianship. You hear three instrumentalists of equal stature perfectly complementing each other. Lubambo is the lead melodic voice. His fluidity and imagination are consistently mesmerizing. Matta and Da Fonseca are masters of rhythm. They each have a facility for creating melodies that are infectious and interesting. If you dig the samba and bossa nova of Brazil, *30* will grab and retain your attention. (www.zohomusic.com)

■ **Strictly Confidential (Arbors – 19449)** is the fourth album by the trio of pianist **ROSSANO SPORTELLO**, bassist/vocalist **NICKI PARROTT** and drummer **EDDIE METZ**. This is a trio made in jazz heaven. They approached the program with no particular theme in mind, rather settled upon 13 tunes that appealed to them. They will appeal to you also. Six of them were composed by jazz pianists, “Strictly Confidential” by Bud Powell, “John Hardy’s Wife” by Duke Ellington, “Sunset and the Mockingbird” by Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, “Misty” by Errol Garner, “She” by George Shearing and “Sunny Morning” by Teddy Wilson. Two others were composed by sometimes jazz pianists, “Hallelujah, I Love Him So” by Ray Charles and “What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?” by

Michel Legrand.” Sportiello never ceases to amaze. He has limitless imagination, magnificent touch, and is unfailingly tasteful in the manner of Teddy Wilson. This is particularly evident on beautiful takes on “Pure Imagination” and “How Beautiful Is the Night.” Parrott is a bassist supreme, and has become a superlative vocalist as is evident on “What a Difference a Day Made,” “Hallelujah, I Love Him So,” “What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life” and “Close to You.” There are some drummers who never get in the way, but whose presence is always felt, and Metz is among them, with steady timekeeping and an ability to insert just the right accents at the proper times. Put all of this together, and you have a delightful album that will sound fresh to you no matter how many times it is played. (arborsrecords.com)

■ It is rare that you hear a vocal album of all new songs that seems like an old friend. Such is the case with **Moonshadow Dance (Cherry Pie Music – 101)** by **REBECCA KILGORE**. There are three reasons for this. Kilgore is simply one of the best vocalists on the scene today, the songs by Kilgore, Mike Horsfall and Ellen Vanderslice are in the tradition of those found in the Great American Songbook, and the group of musicians from the Portland, Oregon area backing Kilgore plays swinging straight-ahead jazz. The tunes are catchy, and the lyrics are well crafted, some whimsical, some passionate, all literate. The lyrics have a contemporary edge, and never feel forced or pretentious. You want to hear “I Live in a Condo,” “The Day I Learned French,” “Moonshadow Dance,” “Birthday Song, Generic” and “That’s It!” just from

the titles. There are many rewards to be found on this disc, and they become increasingly apparent with each visit. (CherryPieMusic.com)

■ A new concert recording from **ELLA FITZGERALD** is welcome indeed. **Live at Chautuqua, Volume 1 (Dot Time – 8001)** was recorded on July 11, 1968, and Fitzgerald is at the top of her game. With superb backing from Tee Carson on piano, Keeter Betts on bass and Joe Harris on drums, she performs a set that encompasses the breadth of her talent. She swings at any tempo, scats with unmatched imagination, sings ballads with deep feeling, and does it all with equal facility. Some of songs are staples of the Fitzgerald oeuvre like “Midnight Sun,” “A-Tisket, A-Tasket” and “The Lady Is a Tramp.” “The Object of My Affection,” included here, is the first commercial release of her singing that song. She closes her set with an extended scat turn ostensibly on “One Note Samba,” but she covers a lot of other territory during this six-minute tour de force. The title of her opener, “It’s All Right with Me,” will describe how you will feel while listening to this album. Since this is called Volume 1, and it contains the complete first set of the concert, there will hopefully be a Volume 2 to come soon. (www.dottimerecords.com)

■ Barbara Carroll just turned 91, Marilyn Maye is still going strong as she approaches 88, Pinky Winters and **PEGGY KING** are 86, and Annie Ross is 85. All of these lady singers have recorded new material in recent years, except for King who had not made a recording since the 1980s. In fact it was not until a couple of years ago that she renewed her singing career. Based in Philadelphia, King was fortunate to become acquainted with the All-Star Jazz Trio, a long established group with Andy Kahn on piano, Bruce Kaminsky on bass and Bruce Klauber on drums, and there was an instant bonding of singer and musicians. After making appearances in Philadelphia and New York City for a few years, they entered a recording studio last March to lay down the tracks that are now available on **Songs al la King (Fresh Sound -5503)**. King’s voice has aged considerably since the days when she was the featured singer on the 1950s George Gobel Show, and recording for a major label. Marriage and motherhood took King out of the performing spotlight, and except for a brief interlude in the ‘80s, she was inactive professionally. The new album shows that King is still a wonderful interpreter of songs. Her selection of material is tasteful, and includes many songs that are wonderful, but not overdone like “Maybe You’ll Be There,” “Born to Be Blue,” “Be Careful, It’s My Heart,” “Nobody’s Heart,” “Dearly Beloved” and “You’d Better Go Now.” The trio provides the kind

continued on page 36

OTHER VIEWS *continued from page 35*

of support that every singer hopes to receive. Welcome back Peggy King, and start picking the tunes for the next album. (freshsoundrecords.com)

■ Thanks to her NPR show *Piano Jazz* pianist Marian McPartland's name became familiar to many people who might never had paid attention to her or jazz. Her magnetic personality and impeccable artistry brought many new listeners to the music that had been too marginalized by the poohbahs in the music business. On ***Strangers in a Dream* (Harbinger - 3201)** vocalist **STACY SULLIVAN** and pianist **JON WEBER**, who succeeded McPartland as host of the NPR program, pay tribute to McPartland with a program of songs that were played on the show during McPartland's lengthy run as host, including several McPartland compositions. Sullivan and Weber have been musical partners for several years, and with bassist Steve Doyle, they explore the 17-track program in perfect sync. Sullivan opens with a lovely reading of Stephen Sondheim's "Loving You" from *Passion*, and the magic continues right through Weber's

closing performance of McPartland's theme for Piano Jazz, "Kaleidoscope." Along the way they intersperse McPartland tunes like "Stranger in a Dream," "In a Melancholy Mood," "In the Days of Our Love," "A Delicate Balance," "Twilight World" and "Castles in the Sand" with standards including "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "I've Got a Crush on You," "Lullaby of Birdland," "My Heart Stood Still" and "All the Things You Are," into the last of which Weber inventively intertwines Chopin's *Waltz in B Minor Opus 69 #2*. Sullivan has a wonderfully flexible voice, and is as at home singing an aching ballad like "Loving You" as she is swinging "Lullaby of Birdland." Weber is a marvelous accompanist, and an accomplished jazz player. All of the elements, the artists, the music and the concept blend wonderfully to create a tribute that would surely have pleased Marian McPartland. It will please you also! (HarbingerRecords.com)

■ Classic jazz and swing are happening these days in New York City. Vince Giordano's Nighthawks play to capacity crowds, Mona's is jammed for the

Tuesday night jam sessions, and the Ear-Regulares pack them in at the Ear Inn on Sunday nights, just to cite a few examples of this reality.

Another steady presence on the New York scene are **SARAH KING AND THE SMOKE RINGS** who have a weekly gig at the Top of the Standard at the Standard Hotel. They have released their first album ***Sarah King and The Smoke Rings* (Alex Levin Music)**,

a ten-tune collection with King on vocals and ukulele, Alex Levin on piano, Scott Ritchie on bass and Ben Cliness on drums. King has a hip, retro sound to her singing. The trio swings like all get out. They play standards like "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)," "Jersey Bounce,"

"Caravan," "Love Is Here to Stay," "I Don't Know Why (I Just Do)" and "Up a Lazy River" in a danceable manner. If you like good, old-fashioned, fun music, you will dig this disc. (www.thesmokerings.com)

■ Montreal-based vocalist **NANCY LANE** has released her first (self-produced) recording, ***Let Me Love You***, and it is an impressive debut. Lane has a dusky sound, a nice feeling for lyrics and a jazz-influenced sense of phrasing. The arrangements by pianist Lara Driscoll provide Lane a fine bed for her vocalizing. The other musicians involved in this project are Kenny Bibace on guitar, Mike De Masi on bass and Dave Laing on drums, with contributions from tenor saxophonist François D'Amours and trumpeter/flugelhornist Aron Doyle on three tracks each. Lane has selected an interesting program. The songs are mostly standards, "Let Me Love You," "I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me," "Cry Me a River," "Everything I've Got," "All of You," "You Took Advantage of Me" and "What Is This Thing Called Love." She has also dug deep for a few tunes, "We're Together," "Every Time I'm With You," a very hip tune that was recorded by Anita O'Day, "Just Say I Love Him," a song that she picked up from a Nina Simone recording, and a French language version of "Whatever Lola Wants." Based on this recording, we should be hearing more from Nancy Lane down the road. (www.cdbaby.com)

■ Down in South Florida is a very hip duo, vocalist **WENDY PEDERSEN** and pianist **JIM GASIOR** who have a solidly enjoyable self-produced new recording titled ***We Two***. Pedersen is a lady who definitely knows how to sing, and Gasior has the right kind of chops to bring out the best in a singer. These are two folks who are all about the jazz side of things. They chose songs that work with the attitude that Pedersen and Gasior bring to them. There is the hipster side on "The Late Late Show," "Everything But You," "Jitterbug Waltz," "Meet Me at No Special Place" and "Exactly Like You." Both of their medleys are intelligent pairings of songs, "If I Should Lose You" with "If Ever I Would Leave You," and "The Best Thing for You" with "Just You, Just Me." Opting for a gospel feeling on "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" is surprising and effective. When singing a ballad as on the "LoseYou/Leave You" medley, "Besame Mucho" or "Round Midnight," Pedersen finds the right intensity. Gasior's piano interludes are a pleasure to hear. Pedersen and Gasior have produced a winner of an album that is engaging from start to finish. (www.cdbaby.com)



Fran Kaufman photo

Tenor saxophonist Lew Tabackin goes over the drill at a sound check for "Tenor Madness," produced by pianist Ted Rosenthal at the Da Capo Theater in NYC on February 5, 2009. Listening intently are bassist Martin Wind and drummer Tim Horner.

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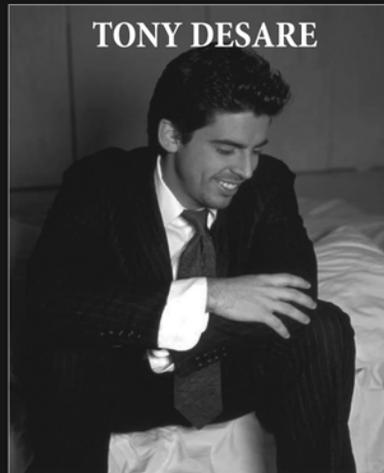
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**LYRICS &
LYRICISTS**
**A FUNNY THING
HAPPENED:
Songs from the
Road to Broadway**

Theresa L. Kaufmann
Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, NYC
Jan. 9-11

The Lyrics & Lyricists series at the 92nd Street Y started by presenting many great lyricists like Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, Dorothy Fields and Stephen Sondheim discussing, and, in some instances, performing their songs. As the years progressed, the universe of potential subjects dwindled, and the series became a more general exploration of the Great American Songbook.

For the initial program of the 2016 series, attention was given to the ways in which Broadway musicals evolve before their opening nights on the Great White Way. Specifically attention was given to songs that were inserted into shows prior to their opening that had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the show.

The title of this program, *A Funny Thing Happened* was most appropriate since a change in the opening number for Stephen Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* was the key alteration that changed the reaction of the audience to the show. The initial opening number, a charming song titled "Love Is in the Air," did not set the audience up for the kind of slapstick comedy musical that they were about to experience. To replace that song, Sondheim wrote "Comedy Tonight," a number that perfectly told the audience what they could expect of the rest of the evening.

Probably the most dramatic example of how a new song can affect a show was the addition of "Oklahoma" to *Away We Go*. It was such a showstopper that the creators changed the name of the show to *Oklahoma*.

Kathleen Marshall, an accomplished Broadway director and choreographer served as the artistic director, stage director, writer and host of the program. Her conception, direction and writing kept the show moving along coherently and smartly. She was a bit flat in delivering her lines, but that is a minor quibble to what was an entertaining and informative production.

The cast of performers was well chosen. They were Aaron C. Finley, Darius de Haas, Ann Harada, Greg Hildreth, Elena Shaddow and Betsy Wolfe. Each of them was given ample opportunities to strut their stuff.

Ethel Merman was a big talent with a big ego. When Russell Nype seemed to be garnering a great deal of attention from the audience during the tryout performances of *Call Me Madam*, she demanded of Irving Berlin that they be paired for a number in the show, and the result was the memorable "You're Just in Love." Finley and Harada wonderfully recreated this tricky duet.

Marshall used "Ten Percent," a song cut from *Chicago*, to illustrate that there were often good songs cut from shows because they just did not well serve the overall production. Hildreth effectively showed the intrinsic quality of this number. "Hook's Waltz" from Peter Pan gave him another opportunity to demonstrate his impressive comic timing.

Throughout the evening the audience learned the background of familiar songs that were added on the road, including "Getting to Know You," a melody recycled from *South Pacific* with new lyrics for *The King and I*; "Take Back Your

Mink" and "The Oldest Established" from *Guys and Dolls*; and "Younger Than Springtime," which changed during the tryout phase of *South Pacific*.

The quintet led by music director/pianist David Chase proved to be wonderfully flexible in providing the instrumental support for an eclectic collection of songs.

By the program's conclusion those in attendance were given a nicely paced insight into the kinds of factors that cause adjustments to the scores of musical theater pieces as they emerge through the tryout stages to their final form.

STACY SULLIVAN
It's a Good Day — A Tribute to Miss Peggy Lee

Birdland, NYC | Jan. 12

Performing tribute programs to iconic performers can be a tricky business. Some opt to attempt channeling the subject, usually a thankless task, while others sing the songs of the honored performer without giving any indication that the songs had a particular relevance to the subject. Stacy Sullivan has found a strong middle ground in her show, *It's a Good Day – A Tribute to Miss Peggy Lee*, a show that she has been performing for the last few years, and brought to Birdland for this performance.

Peggy Lee had a distinctive sound and approach to singing, one that has influenced many who followed her, but also one that was uniquely hers. Sullivan opted to concentrate on the feeling that Lee gave to the songs that she sang, and allow her own natural sound, one distinct from Lee's, to convey her admiration for Miss Peggy Lee. Sullivan did her homework, informing herself of Lee's story, both personal and professional, to construct a show where her enlightening commentary, including how elements in Lee's life affected her artistry, provided the platform upon which she based her vocal performance.

Lee had an oft-troubled life, a childhood burdened with an alcoholic father and an abusive stepmother, four unsuccessful marriages, health problems during later life. She was able to transcend these difficulties to achieve stardom in a career that saw her perform for over 60 years encompassing seven decades.

Sullivan brought fresh life to 22 songs in a program that spanned Lee's full career. She has a strong and flexible voice that she easily adapts to a variety of tempos and shadings. When called for, she adds a jazzy edge, but is equally adept at bringing a convincing sensuality when appropriate.

There were many memorable moments, among them a poignant reading of "Johnny Guitar," a song with music by Victor Young, and lyrics by Lee that were inspired by her first husband, guitarist Dave Barbour, and "The Folks Back Home," composed by Paul Horner with Lee supplying a lyric displaying her love and affection for the people in her native North Dakota.

Sullivan's support came from pianist/musical director Jon Weber, bassist Steve Doyle and guitarist Troy Fannin. Weber's arrangements and accompaniment prowess richly enhanced Sullivan's vocalizing. He also sparkled when given solo space. Doyle laid down a rock solid rhythmic base and his time in the spotlight on "He's a Tramp" lit up the room. Lee often featured guitarists in her supporting cast from her days with Barbour to her later day support from John Chiodini, and Fannin nicely played that role for Sullivan.

This was a thoughtfully conceived and marvelously executed tribute to one of the true superstars of popular singing, Miss Peggy Lee by a singer who has found inspiration from her, a radiant Stacy Sullivan.

Note: Many of the selections from this show can be heard on Sullivan's album It's a Good Day (www.lmlmusic.com).

continued on page 40



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CAUGHT IN THE ACT

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LYRICS & LYRICISTS

A BASH FOR BUCKY: A 90th-Birthday Celebration for Bucky Pizzarelli

Theresa L. Kaufmann Concert Hall —
92nd Street Y, NYC | Jan. 27

Health issues precluded Bucky Pizzarelli from being present for the All-Star celebration of his 90th-Birthday, but the concert was made available on Livestream, enabling him to view the festivities from his hospital bed. Those present on stage and in the audience were full of enthusiasm and good wishes for the legendary guitarist, and the effervescent music that filled the Kaufmann Concert Hall at the 92nd Street Y must have brought that famous grin to his face.

Hosting the evening were three of the Pizzarelli offspring, daughters Mary and Anne along with son John, who also contributed musically to the program.

The roster of performers was impressive. It included guitarist/vocalist John Pizzarelli; guitarists Gene Bertoncini, Ed Decker, Ed Laub, Russell Malone, Vinnie Raniolo and Frank Vignola; tenor saxophonist Harry Allen; clarinetist Ken Peplowski; cornetist Warren Vaché, violinist Aaron Weinstein; pianists Bill Charlap, Russ Kassoﬀ, Lee Musiker, John Oddo and Derek Smith; pianist/vocalist Barbara Carroll; bassists Jerry Bruno and Jay Leonhart; drummer Tony Tedesco; and vocalists Debby Boone, Jessica Molaskey and Sandy Stewart.

When the curtain rose, five guitarists, Pizzarelli, Vignola, Laub, Malone and Raniolo were strung out along the stage to play an appropriate medley of "It's Been a Long, Long Time" and "Don't Take Your Love From Me," followed by a swinging "Tangerine."

Recognizing Bucky's early association with Vaughan Monroe's big band, John Pizzarelli, Vaché, Musiker, Leonhart and Tedesco offered up one of Monroe's hits, "There, I've Said It Again."

Next was a nod to the extensive session work that Bucky did with a stellar list of stars like Nat Cole. Nat's brother Freddy Cole took his place at the piano, and joined by Malone, Leonhart and Tedesco, sang "It Could happen to You" and "Easy to Remember."

Bucky accompanied many female vocalists over the years, and three ladies arrived on the scene

consecutively to pay their respects to him. Joined by Leonhart, Barbara Carroll played and sang a heartfelt version of "Old Friend." Sandy Stewart, accompanied by her son Bill Charlap, gave an exquisite reading of "Two for the Road."

Debbie Boone stood in for her late mother-in-law Rosemary Clooney and sang "Blue Skies" backed by a group similar to the one that accompanied Clooney on so many of her Concord recordings, Allen, Vaché, Oddo, Leonhart and Tedesco. Vaché was on many of Clooney's recordings, and Oddo served as Clooney's musical director and pianist for many years.

For many years, Bucky played with Stéphane Grappelli. John Pizzarelli and Aaron Weinstein, who first played with Bucky while still in high school, recalled that association by addressing "Stringin' the Blues."

Mention was made of Bucky's frequent partnership with Zoot Sims. Harry Allen, probably the closest living approximation of Sims, John Pizzarelli, Leonhart and Tedesco brought back the days of the Bucky/Zoot pairings with a touching rendition of "Memories of You."

John Pizzarelli is a great raconteur. He related a humorous tale about taking lessons from his guitarist-uncle, Bobby Domenick, and meeting one of his other students.

That other young man eventually became a student of Bucky Pizzarelli, and studied with him for 43 years. Much later he became a frequent playing partner and supportive friend of Bucky. That gentleman, Ed Laub, joined with John to play a song by Bobby Domenick, "Bobby's Tune (A Little World Called Home)."

Another longtime associate of Bucky, from the days when they often played on Benny Goodman's band, was pianist Derek Smith, who has also been contending with some severe health issues. His playing form seemed unaffected as he played "Stella By Starlight." He started in a contemplative manner, but it soon evolved into a display of the flashing technique that has been the hallmark of Smith's style.

To conclude the first set, Pizzarelli, Smith, Laub, Allen, Peplowski, Vaché, Leonhart and Tedesco romped through "Stompin' at the Savoy."

The second half of the program found Pizzarelli, Peplowski, Musiker, Leonhart and Tedesco supporting Jessica Molaskey as she enthused "It's a

Good Day." Pizzarelli then sang "The More I See You," dedicating it to his mother, "Saint Ruth."

For many years, Bucky, Leonhart and the late pianist John Bunch had a trio that they called New York Swing. When they toured in Europe, Leonhart sang some of his unique and humorous songs. The language barriers often left his audiences unmoved by his lyrics, but he indicted that they usually responded well to "My Problem Is You," and he proceeded to wow this audience with it.

Pianist Russ Kassoﬀ strode onto the stage, and tore the room up with an imaginative and rousing take on "Lady Be Good." It received one of the biggest ovations of the evening.

The lights dimmed a bit, and two guitarists sat down side by side. First the spotlight was on Ed Decker who wonderfully caressed "A Cottage for Sale." The attention then fell on Gene Bertoncini for a haunting version of "But Beautiful."

Bill Charlap has a particular affinity for the compositions of Hoagy Carmichael. He played a well-conceived version of one of Carmichael's early gems, "Riverboat Shuffle."

Bassist Jerry Bruno turned 96 years of age on the day after Bucky hit the big 90. They have had a decades long association that has continued right up to the time when Bucky recently became temporarily inactive. Bruno came out to join the younger Pizzarelli and Laub for a spirited "Three Little Words."

Finally it was time to bring things to a conclusion, and the five guitarists who opened the program returned to the stage joined by Leonhart and Tedesco. They launched into the number that Bucky has played on just about every gig in recent years, "Honeysuckle Rose." Hearing these five guitar masters play Bucky's crowd-pleasing arrangement of the song was electrifying. This seemed like a fitting ending for the concert, but there was one more nod to Bucky's days with Goodman, a frenetic exploration of "Sing, Sing, Sing," featuring some explosive drumming by Tedesco.

The evening proved to one of unmitigated joy. The musicians were obviously having a fun time paying tribute to their friend and peer, the fabulous Bucky Pizzarelli, and the receptive audience rose as one at the end of the concert to roar their approval at what they had just experienced. It was a fitting celebration of a significant milestone for one of the true gentlemen of jazz.





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On The Road | Washington & Bears Duo Brightens Beantown

By Gloria Krolak

This was serendipity at its best, a last-minute huddle on a Boston street polished by rain. Michael and I had come for the wedding of a special couple. Free time plus new location is algebra for jazz and that is what we sought. A short walk from our hotel, not 700 feet as the GPS flies, the jazz bistro Les Zygomates advertised two sets of jazz, 5:30 and 8:30. It was 5:00 o'clock. We couldn't have planned any better. The best part of all was discovering Toni Lynn Washington, called the First Lady of Boston Blues, and her musical director-pianist Bruce Bears, ready to start their set.

Up the stoop from the sidewalk, the bistro divides into halves. To the right is a dining room-bar. But if you circle around to the left — the hostess will escort you — you'll enter another room with a bar, a mezzanine for musicians to play on and some tables for diners. It was comfortable, just dark enough, and in the business of accommodating some early drinkers and cozy couples at the bar. A wall of glass faced South Street where other businesses were shuttering for the weekend.

First Lady Washington can get into a blues groove as easily as her "brand new silk pajamas," a lyric she sang from "Somebody's Been Sleeping in My Bed." R&B and jazz are strong in her repertoire as well. Ms. Washington, a North Carolina native who calls Boston home, is no newcomer. This seasoned veteran can deliver a tune like a juggler tosses beanbags, with complete confidence they'll be caught.

Bears, her musical partner of 29 years, sits atop the mezzanine at the piano, reached by a ladder, for a perfect sight line. Ms. Washington, however, is not ladder friendly; she stayed on floor level where we could only hear her behind the four-foot wall separating tables from bar. No worries, she sounded as smooth and buttery as my wine felt. Two sets embraced standards like "Autumn Leaves," "Georgia On My Mind," "Willow Weep for Me," and "Angel Eyes." In a blues vein, "Kansas City," "Rock Me Baby," and "Bright Lights, Big City," lit up the semi-darkness. She included the Ashford-Simpson hit, "Don't Need No Doctor," and the bluesy Bill Withers tune, "Who Is She (And What Is She To You)." (Ms. Washington changed the pronouns to feminine.)

The pair has found acclaim as a duo and singly. Ms. Washington has six CDs to date and seven Blues Music Award nominations. She toured Vietnam in the '60s — once her helicopter was shot at — has sung with Jackie Wilson, Sam and Dave and appeared on the Steve Allen Show. A sweet and gentle lady, Toni Lynn Washington is leaning heavily these days towards the blues she loves and Bears is there with patient love and respect, as intertwined as mother and son.

Bruce Bears also plays with the Duke Robillard Band, and has recorded on several of the blues guitarist's CDs, two of which have been nominated for Grammys. He's been touring internationally for 20 years, and formed the original Toni Lynn Washington Band in 1998. He and Ms. Washington work perfectly off each other, his solos flowing loosely and naturally, her vocalizations a blend of sweetness and sass. Born in Summit, NJ,



Vocalist Toni Lynn Washington and pianist Bruce Bears during a recent gig at Les Zygomates, Boston, MA. Photo by Michael J. Ryan.

Bears nows lives in the North Shore area of Massachusetts.

One of the first questions for our waiter was how did the bar get its name. The answer was better than expected — the zygomaticus major are the pair of facial muscles that make it possible for humans to smile. The music, service, drinks, food, certainly had us high-fiving each other.

Michael remarked that the roasted beets with goat cheese starter was incredibly good. Mine, with fried mozzarella, cauliflower, apples and dried chick peas was unique and tasty. Both were topped with a balsamic demi-glaze. Although we'd had a late lunch, we fearlessly ordered dinner. My vegetable couscous — a kind of hybrid between a grain and a pasta — was a perfect meatless dish but too much for me to finish. Michael felt the same way about his lobster roe fettucine with braised beef ribs. His drink, a Manhattan, was mixed quietly by one of the efficient bartenders and served seamlessly. I enjoyed a California Chardonnay selected by our server. We both had to pass on sweets but nursed our coffee and tea in order to linger, regretting that we could

not stay for the Joe Bellomo Group.

We spent \$150 on dinner (with tip). Two bathrooms are gender neutral. Our parking fee was included with the hotel's charges. See Les Zygomates' website for their Tuesday through Saturday jazz schedule.

Les Zygomates

129 South St. | Boston, MA
(617) 542-5108 | winebar129.com

Toni Lynn Washington: myspace.com/thetonillynnewashingtonband

Bruce Bears: www.brucebears.com

Dear Reader,

We've come to the end of our road together. This is my 31st and last OTR column for Jersey Jazz.

It's been a wonderful, fun time during which I've met talented and gracious musicians and club owners. Now it's time to move on to our vacation home and the traveling that Michael and I always wanted to do. I thank my life partner Michael Ryan for being the chauffeur-photographer-payer of tabs and loving supporter; editor Tony Mottola for giving me this opportunity; and Fradley Garner for bringing me aboard and editing the column.

Who knows, we might even visit Frad and Hanne in Denmark!

— Gloria

Gloria Krolak is host of Good Vibes at www.jazzon2.org.

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'Round Jersey

Morris Jazz

The Bickford Theatre
at the Morris Museum, Morristown, NJ
Tickets/Information: 973-971-3706

March may come in like a lion and go out like a lamb, but at the Bickford Jazz Showcase, March is roaring and swinging at both ends.

Despite having lived a very short 28 years, Leon Bismark "Bix" Beiderbecke was one of the most influential jazz soloists of the 1920s. His innovation and beautiful tone on the cornet made him a legend among musicians during his life.

Every year, celebrations honoring this young prodigy occur in his home town of Davenport, Iowa in July, and in Racine, Wisconsin. Every year we also celebrate his birthday here in Morristown, New Jersey where we honor the memory and the music of Beiderbecke at the Bickford Theatre.

This year is no different. On Monday, March 7 at 8 PM, ever popular clarinetist, **Dan Levinson**, once again headlines the Big Bix Beiderbecke Birthday Bash. This year, Dan will bring along with him two premiere cornet players, **Mike Davis**, and from Chicago, **Andy Schumm**. We can enthusiastically anticipate hearing the unique three-part harmonies from these players. Rounding out the group will be **Dalton Ridenhour** (piano), **Rob Adkins** (bass) and **Steve "Spoons" Torrico** (drums).

The always popular twin brother act, Paul (vibes) and Joe Midiri (reeds) will put together their own special sextet for their return on Monday, March 21 at 8pm. **The Midiri Brothers**



Sextet is always known for their spirited jazz that harkens back to memories of the heyday of Dixieland and swing.

Having toured across the country, their music includes authentic and creative arrangements of the music of Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton, Artie Shaw, and Red

Norvo. The other members of this sextet are accomplished musicians in their own right with **Dan Tobias** (trumpet), **Pat Mercuri** (guitar), **Jack Hegyi** (bass) and **Jim Lawlor** (drums). Keep the Midiri Brothers in mind for their future date here on June 6 with an encore performance with Neville Dickie.

Upcoming Music:

April 11: Marlene Verplanck Trio
April 25: The Three Divas –Carrie Jackson, Nancy Nelson and Sandy Sasso

May 9: Beacon Hill Jazz Band
May 23: Glenn Cryzter and Savoy 7
June 6: Neville Dickie and the Midiri Brothers
June 12: An Afternoon with Rosemary Clooney and Mel Torme

— Eric Hafen

All shows 8–9:30 PM;
\$18 at the door,
\$15 with reservation.



Photo by Lynn Redmile

Jazz For Shore

Midweek Jazz at the Arts & Community Center at Ocean County College, Toms River, NJ
Tickets/Information: 732-255-0500

"Bix Lives" at Ocean County College on March 9 when **Dan Levinson** will be hosting a special tribute to the legendary cornetist Bix Beiderbecke, on the eve of what would have been his 113th birthday. Beiderbecke only lived to the age of 28 but has left an indelible mark on the history of jazz,

influencing and inspiring instrumentals for decades, right into the 21st century.

Any doubts about Beiderbecke's impact will be immediately squelched upon glancing at the personnel Levinson has lined up the March 9 concert. Any list of the finest cornet soloists in the Beiderbecke tradition would have to include youngsters **Mike Davis** and **Andy Schumm** and for Ocean County College, Levinson has managed to hire both! It's a Beiderbecke fan's dream come true.

Davis is still in his early 20s and is making a name for himself in New York City, graduating from the Manhattan School of Music and now leading a popular group, the New Wonders. Davis has appeared at MidWeek Jazz in the past with Emily Asher's Garden Party and with Baby Soda but this will be the first time he pays tribute to his hero in Toms River.

Schumm, on the other hand, will be making his MidWeek Jazz debut, something that is cause for celebration. A talented multi-instrumentalist, Schumm is currently based in Chicago, where he performs regularly with the popular Fat Babies Jazz Band. The front-line combination of Davis, Schumm

JAZZ TRIVIA ANSWERS 

Questions on page 4

1. Buddy Tate
2. Charlie Spivak's Orchestra
3. "Riverboat Shuffle"
4. Jimmy Dorsey
5. The Chocolate Dandies

and Levinson will recreate some of Bix's most memorable solos in lush, three-part harmony, with reed virtuoso Levinson breaking out the rarely heard, seldom seen C-melody saxophone, an instrument inexorably linked to Bix's music thanks to his series of recordings with Frankie Trumbauer. Davis will also double on trombone while Schumm is bringing along his bass saxophone to create a variety of textures.

The rhythm section will also be as rock-solid as they come with New York favorites **Dalton Ridenhour** on piano and **Rob Adkins** on bass joined by **Steve "Spoons" Torrico**, blowing in from the Windy City for this spectacular event. Whether you're a longtime Bixophile or you're just looking for an evening of memorable jazz created in 2016, Dan Levinson's Bix Beiderbecke Birthday Bash will surely be one of the most memorable MidWeek Jazz concerts of the year!

Looking ahead, Levinson and Davis will return to Ocean County College on April 13 for a special concert hosted **Glenn Crytzer's Savoy Seven** dedicated to "Jazz From Living Song-Writers." After recent MidWeek Jazz tributes to legends like Beiderbecke and Goodman, guitarist Crytzer has put together an entire evening of original compositions in the vintage-jazz style created by 21st century hot jazz favorites such as Bria Skonberg, Gordon Au, Jason Prover, Dennis Lichtman, Solomon Douglas and more. In addition to Crytzer, Davis and Levinson, the band will also feature **Jesse Gelber** on piano, **Ian Hutchison** on bass and **Kevin Dorn** on drums. We'll have more about this exciting April 13 concert in the next issue of *Jersey Jazz*. — *Ricky Riccardi*

All shows 8-9:30 PM; \$22 regular admission, \$18 for seniors, \$12 for students.

'Round Jersey concerts are produced in conjunction with the New Jersey Jazz Society.



The Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University- Newark is the largest and most comprehensive library and archive of jazz and jazz-related materials *in the world!* — a valuable resource for jazz researchers, students, musicians and fans. The archives are open to the public from 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday, but please call and make an appointment.

Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers, The State University of NJ
John Cotton Dana Library, 185 University Avenue, Newark, NJ 07102
 Web site: newarkwww.rutgers.edu/IJS 973-353-5595

calendar:

please check Web site for upcoming events

free roundtables

JAZZ RESEARCH ROUNDTABLES

All programs are free and open to the public, and take place Wednesday evenings from 7 – 9 PM in the Dana Room, 4th floor, John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University, 185 University Ave., Newark. Financial support for the Roundtable is provided by the Rosalind & Alfred Berger Foundation.

■ **March 23**

Allen Lowe: "In the Diaspora of the Diaspora"

"In the Diaspora of the Diaspora" is a talk offering Allen Lowe's response to comments made in the last several years by the trumpeter Nicholas Payton on the state of jazz and on the kinds of terminology we use to describe the music. In Payton's view the way jazz is depicted is largely a matter of "white supremacy." He tells us that jazz needs a new descriptor — BAM or Black American Music.

But is this necessary? And if it is, are we really, by subscribing to Payton's methodology, dealing with the larger question of historic gaps in our knowledge of American and African American music? Is jazz racially specific or, more accurately, a multi-racial music with roots in Africa and African American modes of sound and expression? And is Payton paying anything more than lip service to that African American tradition? Or is he himself likely unaware of how complex the music's sources are, and of the pervasive influence of Africa on not only black Americans but white Americans? This talk will explore these questions.

Allen Lowe is a historian and saxophonist whose latest CD project, *Mulatto Radio: A Jew At large in the Minstrel Diaspora*, has been called a work of "genius" by John Szwed. In the past he has recorded with Julius Hemphill, David Murray, Matthew Shipp, Roswell Rudd, Doc Cheatham, Ursula Oppens, and others.

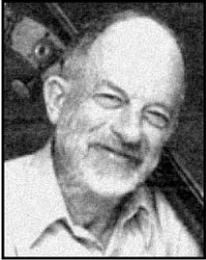
Lowe has written several books on jazz, rock and roll, and the blues, and is currently working on a history of country music. He is also a mastering and restoration engineer.

free concerts

CONCERTS/PERFORMANCE

March 23: Jazz With An International Flavor

The second concert in our Jazz With An International Flavor series features the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Quartet with Mark Taylor (drums) and Yasushi Nakamura (bass). The free concert takes place on March 23 at 2:30 PM in the Dana Room of the John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers-Newark.



From the Crow's Nest

By Bill Crow

I always have a Dave McKenna CD on the player in my car, to cheer me up on long drives. Dave had a solo piano style that thoroughly examined the rich possibilities of the American Songbook, always swinging, always filled with love and joyfulness. He was a broad, sturdy guy with a tremendous command of the keyboard. He was also a two-fisted drinker, and dangerous to be around when fully in his cups. We lived near each other in Chelsea for a few years, and I learned to hang out with him during the day, before he started drinking. But drunk or sober, he could always play the piano in a way that stirred my soul.

When he was the house pianist at Eddie Condon's club, I was the part-time bassist. They only hired a bass player for the three busiest nights every week, and Dave had to make do without one on the other nights. He began playing walking bass lines with his left hand, and got so good at it that a walking bass

became a strong part of his style when he moved on to solo piano rooms.

Toward the end of his life, Dave began to have physical problems that got in the way of his playing. He once told me, "I suppose if I do what my doctor says and cut down on the rich food and the booze, I'll live a little longer. But how will I know for sure?" He finally lost that battle, and I sure hated to see him go. I treasure all the wonderful recordings he left behind.

■ Joe Luciano sent me a clipping from *Reminisce Magazine*, of a piece written by Arnie Ross in Sarasota, Florida. Arnie tells of an encounter he had while he was playing piano at Downey's in Philadelphia in 1976. The pub owner received a call from Frank Sinatra's manager, Bernie Rothbard, asking to reserve the private dining room for Sinatra and his entourage, and specifying the brands of liquor that should be available.

On the big night, Ross saw the room fill up: Al Martino, Rothbard the agent, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Joey Bishop, Peter Lawford, and three lovely young ladies filed in. Finally, Sinatra made his entrance. Ross, at the keyboard, decided to play every tune he could think of that Sinatra had recorded. He hoped Sinatra would be pleased, but instead, the singer called out, "You're too loud!"

Ross immediately went into Wagner's Death March, and got a laugh from everyone. Sinatra walked over to the piano, thanked Ross for the music, and shook his hand, pressing into it a hundred dollar bill.

■ Many years ago, when William Zinn was playing at The Pines, a resort hotel in the Catskills, he was told that the musicians had a separate dining room near the kitchen where they would have their meals.

He found the place and looked through a glass pane in the door, where he saw the busboys setting up for dinner amid a swarm of flies which covered the walls, ceiling, tables, chairs and even the floor. He informed the other 24 musicians who were waiting for dinner that they couldn't eat there until they did something about the flies.

Zinn went into the kitchen and found six large towels. With five volunteers from the band, he equipped each of them with a towel and said, "Follow me." They lined up at the far end of the room, had another musician open the door, and began flailing the walls and ceiling with their towels. The room was filled with a cloud of swarming flies that headed for the door and freedom. A repeat flailing of towels ushered most of the remaining insects out the door.

The musicians borrowed flyswatters from the kitchen staff to search out stragglers from behind curtains and under tables and chairs. Then they hung up rolls of flypaper to catch the remaining few, and the musicians were able to have an undisturbed meal. Zinn was toasted as "our hero, the Flycatcher!" He tells me that in some circles he still has that name.

■ While rehearsing some 6-saxophone plus rhythm arrangements to be played at a Vandoren-sponsored jam session at the Zinc Bar, Scott Robinson thought the band sounded pretty good, and said, "We should be working. We should play Radio City!" Steve Wilson looked up and said, "Radio City, Iowa?"

■ The late Bob Litwak was a thoracic surgeon whose hobby was playing the drums. While chatting in the recovery room with a patient on whom he had just performed bypass surgery, Bob discovered that they had a mutual friend, Bill Wurtzel. Bob said, "I'm Bill's drummer." When Bob told him this story, Wurtzel wondered if the patient thought the surgery was the hobby.

■ Pianist Don Edmonds told Bill Wurtzel about a bassist he worked with who said he was born in 1983. Don replied, "I was washed up before you were born."

■ On my first trip to Boston, when I was just out of high school, I encountered the South Boston accent when I asked a stranger where I might find the bus station, and he said, "Pack Square." After asking some other strangers where Pack Square might be, and getting puzzled responses, I discovered that he was referring to Park Square. So, I guess if Tony Bennett had been born a Southie, he would have left his hat in San Francisco.



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Bill Crow is a freelance musician and writer. His articles have appeared in DownBeat, The Jazz Review, and Gene Lee's Jazzletter. His books include *Jazz Anecdotes*, *From Birdland to Broadway* and *Jazz Anecdotes: Second Time Around*. The preceding is reprinted with permission from *Allegro*, the monthly magazine of AFM Local 802.

From Zaporizhia, Ukraine To Montclair, New Jersey; Oleg Frish's Musical Journey



At the age of 16, Ukrainian-born Oleg Frish entered Tver State University in Central Russia; he also went into show business. Among his first jobs was that of a “singing psychic,” guessing what songs people in the audience were thinking about, and then singing them. Those musical mind reading skills led to national recognition and in 1985 he received accreditation from one of the Soviet Union’s top cultural institutions, the Ministry of Culture of the USSR. In 1992, as the Cold War barriers were eased, Oleg decided to move to the New York area, the biggest metropolitan entry point for Russian-speaking émigrés, especially Brighton Beach, Staten Island and Brooklyn.

He became writer and host of the radio series *Walking The Streets of Moscow* for WMNB in Fort Lee, NJ, interviewing a wide variety of Russian-born entertainers including such notables as Tatiana Samoilova, Elena Kamburova, Alla Pugacheva, Iosif Kobzon, Irina Ponarovskaya, Tamara Miansarova, Natalya Varley, Natalia Kustinskaya and many others who are celebrities for the Russian-American community. He also interviewed American singers, musicians and actors on The People’s Wave Radio 930AM in New York.

Frish sings in 24 languages including Russian, English, Ukrainian, Japanese, Spanish, Polish, Hebrew, Yiddish and Yugoslavian.

In 2014 he recorded his newest CD *Oleg Frish and His American Idols*, a set of duets with iconic American singers who have been guests on his TV and radio shows, including Bobby Rydell, Melissa Manchester, Ben E. King, Peggy March, Lainie Kazan, Tony Orlando, B.J. Thomas, Lou Christie and Gary U.S. Bonds.

If all this piques your curiosity, you can catch the ebullient Mr. Frish at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair on March 8, when he performs two sets at 8 and 10 PM with his four-piece band and his special guest, Grammy Award-nominated jazz singer Roseanna Vitro. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. For reservations visit www.trumpetsjazz.com or call 973-744-2600.



About NJJS

Mission Statement: The mission of the New Jersey Jazz Society is to promote and preserve the great American musical art form known as Jazz through live jazz performances and educational outreach initiatives and scholarships.

To accomplish our Mission, we produce a monthly magazine, JERSEY JAZZ, sponsor live jazz events, and provide scholarships to New Jersey college students studying jazz. Through our outreach program, “Generations of Jazz,” we go into schools to teach students about the history of jazz while engaging them in an entertaining and interactive presentation.

Founded in 1972, the Society is run by a board of directors who meet monthly to conduct the business of staging our music events, awarding scholarships to New Jersey college jazz students, and conducting Generations of Jazz programs in local school systems, among other things. The membership is comprised of jazz devotees from all parts of the state, the country and the world.

The New Jersey Jazz Society is a qualified organization of the New Jersey Cultural Trust.

Visit www.njjs.org, e-mail info@njjs.org for more information on any of our programs and services:

e-mail updates Student scholarships Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp Collaborative Jazz Concerts:

Ocean County College Bickford Theatre/Morris Mayo PAC Morristown

NJJS supports JazzFeast presented by Palmer Square, Downtown Princeton.

NJJS is a proud supporter of the Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival, the NJCJ President’s Jazz Festival in Jersey City, and more.

Member Benefits

What do you get for your dues?

■ **Jersey Jazz Journal** — a monthly journal considered the best jazz society publications in the country, packed with feature articles, photos, jazz calendars, upcoming events and news about the NJ Jazz Society.

■ **FREE Jazz Socials** — See www.njjs.org and *Jersey Jazz* for updates.

■ **Musical Events** — NJJS sponsors and co-produces a number of jazz events each year, ranging from intimate concerts to large dance parties and picnics. Members receive discounts on ticket prices for the Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp. Plus there’s a free concert at the Annual Meeting in December and occasionally other free concerts. Ticket discounts (where possible) apply to 2 adults, plus children under 18 years of age. Singles may purchase two tickets at member prices.

■ **The Record Bin** — a collection of CDs, not generally found in music stores, available at reduced prices at most NJJS concerts and events and through mail order.

■ **FREE listings** — Musician members get listed FREE on our website.

Join NJJS

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS Member benefits are subject to update.

■ **Family \$45:** See above for details.

■ **Family 3-YEAR \$115** See above for details.

■ **Youth \$15:** For people under 25 years of age. Be sure to give the year of your birth on the application where noted.

■ **Give-a-Gift \$25:** Members in good standing may purchase one or more gift memberships at any time for only \$25 each. Please supply the name and address of giftee. Good for new memberships only.

■ **Fan (\$75 – \$99/family)**

■ **Jazzer (\$100 – \$249/family)**

■ **Sideman (\$250 – \$499/family)**

■ **Bandleader \$500+/family)**

■ **Corporate Membership (\$100)**

Members at Jazzer Level and above receive special benefits. These change periodically, so please contact Membership for details.

**To receive a membership application,
for more information or to join:**

Call **908-273-7827** or email membership@njjs.org

OR visit www.njjs.org

OR simply send a check payable to “NJJS” to: New Jersey Jazz Society,
c/o Mike Katz, 382 Springfield Ave. Suite 217, Summit NJ 07901.

What's New?

Members new and renewed

We welcome these friends of jazz who recently joined NJJS or renewed their memberships. We'll eventually see *everyone's* name here as they renew at their particular renewal months.

Members with an asterisk have taken advantage of our three-years-for-\$115 membership, and new members with a † received a gift membership. Members who joined at a patron level appear in bold.

Renewed Members

Mr. Peter Ballance,
Upper Montclair, NJ
Mr. Christopher Barry,
Wood-Ridge, NJ *
Ms. Ann Bergquist, Morris Plains, NJ
Rick Crane, Verona, NJ
Mrs. William H. Earnest,
Warwick, NY
Mr. Joe Esser, Madison, NJ
Sandra Evans, Wilmington, NC
Thomas Gubar, Hackensack, NJ
Ms. Edythe Hittcon, Iselin, NJ
Mr. Robert Kurz, West Orange, NJ
Mr. Linc Milliman, Pomona, NY *
Suzanne W. Newmann,
West Orange, NJ
Mr. & Mrs. Allen Parmet,
Springfield, NJ
Flip Peters, South Orange, NJ
Mr. Bob Seeley, Flemington, NJ
Don & Sharey Slimowitz,
Livingston, NJ
Mr. & Mrs. Robert V. Smith,
Murray Hill, NJ
Terrence Smith, Morristown, NJ
Mrs. Margaret Thompson,
Mountainside, NJ

New Members

Max Donaldson, Hopewell, NJ
Suzanne Douglas Cobb,
Maplewood, NJ
Andrew Hines, Boonton, NJ
Howard Holtz, Maplewood, NJ
Phil Hunt, Long Valley, NJ
Harold James, East Orange, NJ *
Alex Leonard, Staten Island, NY *
Philip Lewis & Fraida Laquara,
West Orange, NJ
Ronald Pelletier, Guttenberg, NJ
Ella Slayne, Mendham, NJ *
Paul Stehn, Cranbury, NJ
Jay Wilensky, Whitehouse Station, NJ
Jerry Zollenberg, Vero Beach, FL

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a member, *a gift membership*
costs just \$25!
See page 47 for details!

Moving? Please e-mail your new address to:
editor@njjs.org; or mail to: NJJS c/o 382 Springfield Ave.,
Suite 217, Summit, NJ 07901.

Great Gift Idea!

Jazz Up Your Wardrobe



See special
offer on
page 6

There's a new crop of NJJS and Pee Wee Stomp t-shirts!

At \$15, they make great gifts for yourself and your friends. You can buy them in person at some of our events, and we can bring them to Jazz Socials on request. But if you don't want to wait, order via mail and get your shirt within days! Shirts are 100% cotton, crew-neck, short-sleeved shirts; they may run slightly snug. Cost is \$15 per shirt + \$4 shipping fee.

Styles — choose from:

- white shirt with red NJJS logo
- black shirt with red NJJS logo
- white shirt with red+black Pee Wee art

Sizes — choose:

unisex S, M, L, XL, or XXL
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(slightly more open neckline,
smaller sleeve cut, slightly
tapered body)

Make check payable to NJJS. Mail to NJJS,
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address in case we have questions about your
order. Do YOU have questions? contact
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Victory Review

CADENCE MAGAZINE, SINCE 1976
www.cadencemagazine.com
www.cadencejazzworld.com

Somewhere There's Music

You can find jazz all over the state in venues large and small. Here are just some of them.

Listings alphabetical by town. We continually update entries. Please contact editor@njjs.org if you know of other venues that ought to be here.

Allamuchy
RUTHERFURD HALL
 1686 County Rd. 517
 908-852-1894 ext. 335

Asbury Park
HOTEL TIDES
 408 7th Ave.
 732-897-7744

LANGOSTA RESTAURANT
 100 Ocean Ave.
 732-455-3275

TIM MCLOONE'S SUPPER CLUB
 1200 Ocean Ave.
 732-744-1155

MOONSTRUCK
 517 Lake Ave.
 732-988-0123

THE SAINT
 601 Main St.
 732-775-9144

Atlantic City

ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 1213 Pacific Ave.
 908-348-1941
 Jazz Vespers 3rd Sunday of the month, 4 PM

Bernardsville

BERNARD'S INN
 27 Mine Brook Rd.
 908-766-0002
 Monday – Saturday 6:30 PM
 Piano Bar

Boonton

MAXFIELD'S ON MAIN
 713 Main St.
 973-588-3404
 Music Wednesdays through Sundays

Bridgewater

THEATER OF SOMERSET COUNTY VO-TECH
 14 Vogt Dr.
 908-526-8900

Cape May

VFW POST 386
 419 Congress St.
 609-884-7961
 Cape May Trad Jazz Society
 Some Sundays, 2 PM
 live Dixieland

MAD BATTER

19 Jackson St.
 609-884-5970
 Wednesdays 7:30–10:30 PM

BOILER ROOM, CONGRESS HALL
 251 Beach Ave.
 888-944-1816
 Sundays

MERION INN

106 Decatur St.
 609-884-8363
 Jazz piano daily 5:30–9:30 PM

Cartaret

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH HALL
 712 Roosevelt Ave.
 908-541-6955
 Somerset Jazz Consortium
 Usually 3rd Monday, 7–9 PM

Cliffside Park

VILLA AMALFI
 793 Palisade Ave.
 201-886-8626
 Piano jazz Fridays & Saturdays

Closter

HARVEST BISTRO & BAR
 252 Schraalenburgh Rd.
 201-750-9966
 Thursdays & Fridays

Convent Station

THE COZY CUPBOARD
 4 Old Turnpike Road
 973-998-6676

Cresskill

GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT
 44 East Madison Ave.
 201-541-7575
 Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Dunellen

ROXY & DUKES ROADHOUSE
 745 Bound Brook Rd.
 732-529-4464

MAGGIE MURRAY'S PUB HOUSE

119 North Washington Ave.
 732-629-7660
 Jazz nights 1st and 3rd
 Wednesdays

Edison

THE COFFEE HOUSE
 931 Amboy Ave.
 732-486-3400

Englewood

BERGEN PAC
 30 N. Van Brunt St.
 201-227-1030

BLUE MOON MEXICAN CAFÉ
 23 E. Palisade Ave.
 201-848-4088
 Sundays

Ewing

VILLA ROSA RESTAURANTE
 41 Scotch Road
 609-882-6841

Fairfield

BRUSCHETTA RESTAURANT
 292 Passaic Avenue
 973-227-6164
 Live piano bar every night

CALANDRA'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILLE

118 US Highway 46
 973-575-6500
 Piano – Fridays & Saturdays

CALANDRA'S CUCINA

216-234 Route 46
 973-575-7720

Florham Park

PULEO'S BRICK OVEN
 162 Columbia Turnpike
 973-822-0800
 Accordionist Eddie Monteiro
 with drummer Buddy Green,
 Wednesdays, 7–10 PM

Garwood

CROSSROADS
 78 North Ave.
 908-232-5666
 Jam session Tuesdays, 8:30 PM

Hackensack

STONY HILL INN
 231 Polifly Rd.
 201-342-4085
 Friday & Saturday evenings

Haddonfield

HADDONFIELD METHODIST CHURCH
 29 Warwick Road
 Tri-State Jazz Society
 usual venue
 Some Sundays, 2 PM

Highland Park

ITALIAN BISTRO
 441 Raritan Ave.
 732-640-1959

Hoboken

PILSENER HAUS & BIERGARTEN
 1422 Grand St.
 201-683-5465
 Live music Thursdays, 8–12 PM,
 no cover charge

MAXWELL'S TAERN

1039 Washington St.
 201-653-7777
 Tuesdays

Hopatcong

PAVINCI RESTAURANT
 453 River Styx Rd.
 973-770-4300
 Big Band, 3rd Tuesday
 of the month

Hope

THE INN AT MILLRACE ROAD
 313 Hope Johnsonburg Rd.
 908-459-4884

Jersey City

MADAME CLAUDE CAFÉ
 364 Fourth St.
 201-876-8800
 Gypsy jazz Thursdays

MOORE'S LOUNGE (BILL & RUTH'S)

189 Monticello Ave.
 201-332-4309
 Fridays open jazz jam,
 open to all musicians,
 vocalists, dancers and
 spoken word artists;
 hosted by Winard Harper
 and Rosalind Grant
 8:30PM – midnight
 First Sundays 6–10PM
 Featuring Winard Harper and
 special guests, \$10 cover

Lambertville

DEANNA'S RESTAURANT
 54 N. Franklin St.
 609-397-8957

Lincroft

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
 765 Newman Springs Rd.
 732-224-2390

Linden

ROBIN'S NEST RHYTHM & BLUES
 3103 Tremley Point Rd.
 Linden, NJ
 908-275-3043

Madison

SHANGHAI JAZZ
 24 Main St.
 973-822-2899
 Wednesdays/Thursdays, 7 PM
 Fridays/Saturdays, 6:30 PM
 Sundays, 6 PM – No cover

Mahwah

BERRIE CENTER/ RAMAPO COLLEGE
 505 Ramapo Valley Rd.
 201-684-7844

Manalapan

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 September – June

Mendham

BLACK HORSE TAVERN
 1 West Main St.
 973-543-7300
 Saturdays

Metuchen

BOUTIQUE BOOKSTORE & CAFE
 420 Main St.
 917-686-6056
 Sunday jam sessions

NOVITA

New & Pearl Streets
 732-549-5306
 No cover

Montclair

DLV LOUNGE
 300 Bloomfield Ave.
 973-783-6988
 Open jam Tuesdays

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

40 South Fullerton Ave.
 973-744-6560

PALAZZO RESTAURANT

11 South Fullerton Ave.
 Fridays/Saturdays, 7 PM

TRUMPETS

6 Depot Square
 973-744-2600
 Tuesday/Thursday/Sunday, 7:30 PM,
 Friday/Saturday, 8:30 PM

Morristown

THE BICKFORD THEATRE AT THE MORRIS MUSEUM
 5 Normandy Heights Rd.
 973-971-3706
 Some Mondays, 8 PM

THE COMMUNITY THEATRE

100 South St.
 973-539-8008

HIBISCUS RESTAURANT

At Best Western Morristown Inn
 270 South St.
 866-497-3638
 Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays,
 Sunday brunch

ROD'S STEAK & SEAFOOD GRILLE

One Convent Rd. (Madison Ave.)
 973-539-6666

Mount Holly

THE FIREHOUSE CAFE
 20 Washington St.
 609-261-4502

Newark

27 MIX
 27 Halsey St.
 973-648-9643

BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

275 Market St.
 973-623-8161
 Jazz vespers, 1st Sunday

DE'BORAH'S JAZZ CAFE

18 Green St.
 862-237-9004
 Thursday evenings
 & Sunday afternoons

DUKE'S SOUTHERN TABLE

11 Clinton St.
 862-763-5757
 Friday/Saturday evenings,
 Sunday brunch, \$5 cover

IDEAL LOUNGE

219 Frelinghuysen Ave.
 973-824-9308

MEMORIAL WEST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

286 South 7th St.
 973-242-1015
 Jazz vespers monthly

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

1 Center St.
 888-466-5722

THE PRIORY

233 West Market St.
 973-242-8012
 Fridays, 7 PM, No cover

New Brunswick

DELTA'S
 19 Dennis St.
 732-249-1551
 Saturdays, 7–11 PM

THE HYATT REGENCY NEW BRUNSWICK

2 Albany St.
 732-873-1234
 New Brunswick Jazz
 Project presents live jazz
 Wednesdays and Thursdays,
 8 –10:30 PM,
 No cover

STATE THEATRE

15 Livingston Ave.
 732-246-7469

TUMULTY'S

361 George St.
 732-545-6205
 New Brunswick Jazz Project
 presents live jazz & jam
 session, Tuesdays, 9:30 PM

Since music offerings frequently change, we recommend you call venue to confirm there is live music at the time you plan to visit.

Tell them you saw it in Jersey Jazz!

We want to include any locale that offers jazz on a regular, ongoing basis. Also please advise us of any errors you're aware of in these listings.

Newfield

LAKE HOUSE RESTAURANT
611 Taylor Pl.
856-694-5700

Newton

THE NEWTON THEATRE
234 Spring St.
973-383-3700
Occasional jazz concerts –
contact venue for schedule

North Bergen

WATERSIDE RESTAURANT
7800 B River Rd.
201-861-7767

North Branch

STONE BROOK GRILLE
1285 State Highway 28
908-725-0011

Oak Ridge

THE GRILLE ROOM
(Bowling Green Golf Course)
53 Schoolhouse Rd.
973-679-8688

Orange

HAT CITY KITCHEN
459 Valley St.
862-252-9147

PRIVATE PLACE LOUNGE
29 South Center St.
973-675-6620

Paterson

CORTINA RISTORANTE
118 Berkshire Ave.
973-942-1750
Wednesdays, 6:30–10:30 PM,
Joe Licari/Mark Shane

Phillipsburg

MARIANNA'S
224 Stockton St.
908-777-3500
Fridays

Princeton

MCCARTER THEATRE
91 University Pl.
609-258-2787

MEDITERRA
29 Hulfish St.
609-252-9680
No cover

SALT CREEK GRILLE
1 Rockingham Row,
Forrestal Village
609-419-4200

WITHERSPOON GRILL
57 Witherspoon St.
609-924-6011
Tuesday night jazz,
6:30–9:30 PM

Rahway

THE RAIL HOUSE
1449 Irving St.
732-388-1699

**UNION COUNTY
PERFORMING ARTS
CENTER**
1601 Irving St.
732-499-0441

Red Bank

COUNT BASIE THEATRE
99 Monmouth St.
732-842-9000

JAZZ ARTS PROJECT
Various venues
throughout the year. Refer to
www.jazzartsproject.org for
schedules and details

MOLLY PITCHER INN
88 Riverside Ave.
800-221-1372

SIAM GARDEN
2 Bridge Ave.
732-224-1233

Somers Point

**SANDI POINTE
COASTAL BISTRO**
908 Shore Rd.
609-927-2300

Somerville

**PINOY RESTAURANT
& GOODS**
18 Division St.
908-450-9878

South Amboy

BLUE MOON
114 South Broadway
732-525-0014
Blues jam Thursdays

South Orange

PAPILLON 25
25 Valley St.
973-761-5299

RICALTON'S
19 Valley St.
973-763-1006
Tuesdays

**SOUTH ORANGE
PERFORMING ARTS
CENTER**

One SOPAC Way
973-235-1114

South River

**LATAVOLA CUCINA
RISTORANTE**
700 Old Bridge Turnpike
South River, NJ 08882
732-238-2111
The New World Order
open jam session
every Thursday, 7:30-11 PM
No cover, half-price drink
specials

Spring Lake Heights

THE MILL
101 Old Mill Rd.
732-449-1800

Stanhope

STANHOPE HOUSE
45 Main St.
973-347-7777
Blues

Succasunna

ROXBURY ARTS ALLIANCE
Horseshoe Lake Park Complex
72 Eycland Ave.
201-745-7718

Teaneck

**THE JAZZBERRY PATCH
AT THE CLASSIC
QUICHE CAFE**
330 Queen Anne Rd.
Teaneck, NJ 07666
201-692-0150
Friday nights, No cover

PUFFIN CULTURAL FORUM
20 East Oakdene Ave.
201-836-8923

**ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

61 Church St.
201-837-3189
Jazz Vespers, 4th Sunday of
the month

Tom's River

**OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE
FINE ARTS CENTER**
College Dr.
732-255-0400
Some Wednesdays

Trenton

AMICI MILANO
600 Chestnut Ave.
609-396-6300

CANDLELIGHT LOUNGE
24 Passaic St.
609-695-9612
Saturdays, 3–7 PM

Union

SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFE
(Townley Presbyterian Church)
829 Salem Road
908-686-1028

VAN GOGH'S EAR CAFE
1017 Stuyvesant Ave.
908-810-1844
Sundays 8 PM, \$3 cover

Watchung

WATCHUNG ARTS CENTER
18 Stirling Rd.
908-753-0190
www.watchungarts.org

Wayne

LAKE EDGE GRILL
56 Lake Drive West
Wayne, NJ 07470
973-832-7800
Friday & Saturday

NOVU RESTAURANT
1055 Hamburg Tpke.
Wayne, NJ
973-694-3500
Fridays

**WILLIAM PATERSON
UNIVERSITY**

300 Pompton Rd.
973-720-2371
Sundays, 4 PM

Westfield

**16 PROSPECT WINE BAR
& BISTRO**
16 Prospect St.
908-232-7320
Tuesdays, Wednesdays,
Fridays, 8 PM

West Orange

HIGHLAWN PAVILION
Eagle Rock Reservation
973-731-3463
Fridays

LUNA STAGE
555 Valley Rd.
973-395-5551

MCCLOONE'S BOATHOUSE
9 Cherry Lane (Northfield Ave)
862-252-7108

SUZY QUE'S
34 South Valley Rd.
973-736-7899

Westwood

BIBIZ LOUNGE
284 Center Ave.
201-722-8600

Woodbridge

BARRON ARTS CENTER
582 Rahway Ave.
732-634-0413

For a link to
each venue's
website,
visit
www.njjs.org,
click on
"venues,"
and scroll
down to
the desired
venue.

Also visit
Andy
McDonough's
njjazzlist.com

The Name Dropper

Recommendations may be e-mailed to editor@njjs.org.

REGINA CARTER — Justifiably billed as the "foremost jazz violinist of her generation," the MacArthur Foundation Fellow performs music from her acclaimed new recording of American roots music, *Southern Comfort*, at the South Orange Performing Arts Center on March 5 at 8 PM. Tickets, \$38–\$48. Box Office: 973-313-2787.

THE HOT SARDINES — The kitschy hot jazz ensemble, led by the irrepressible Miz Elizabeth and equipped with their own tap dancer, serve up their always sizzling show on March 12 at 8 PM at the Berlind Theatre at McCarter Theatre Center, Princeton, \$55 all seats. Info at 609-258-2787.

DIANE MOSER'S COMPOSERS BIG BAND — The workshop band celebrates 19 years of developing and presenting new big band music \ at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair on March 30, 8 – 11 PM. Linda Miksza is their guest composer for the evening, and they will feature compositions by their 11 resident composers.



c/o New Jersey Jazz Society
 Michael A. Katz
 382 Springfield Ave., Suite 217
 Summit NJ 07901

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