

“SNAPSHOT” Jazz Recording Reviews
Posted July 12, 2009 by TyBailey Productions

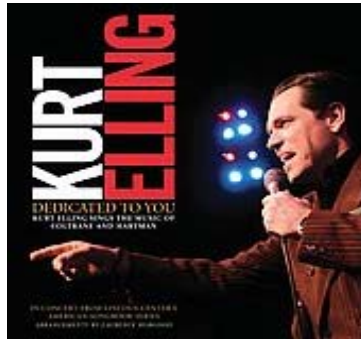
**Michael Wolff – Joe’s Strut - Wrong Records
RONGO16-2**



On this CD Michael Wolff gets great joy in playing piano. Although having played with Cannonball Adderley himself, Michael was friend to and influenced by Joe Zawinul. Actually, he dedicates this CD to Joe. Michael has been known to have great hard bop chops. However, he appears to feel at home reaching a more expansive audience. Here Michael does this by cleverly combining mainstream and contemporary elements of music. This set should be appealing to those who appreciate attractive contemporary Jazz. There are exciting moments throughout... Michael can swing and so does his reedman here, Steve Wilson.

Kurt Elling – Dedicated To You - Dedicated to You: Kurt Elling Sings the Music of Coltrane and Hartman – Concord Jazz –CJA31314-02

This Kurt Elling release - *Dedicated To You* is a tribute to one of the most significant and beautiful recordings in Jazz, *John Coltrane & Johnny Hartman*. Just as Hartman, Elling hails from Chicago flawless intonation Ernie Watts, a west supporting sax Ernie is also a “Tonight Show” throughout. Elling flawless classic here have arranged. *Dedicated to You* is a live recording from Lincoln Center's Allen Room in, New York as part of Lincoln Center's American Songbook series. The new release also features the Laurence Hobgood Trio and string quartet, *ETHEL*. Elling and company have recaptured “John Coltrane & Johnny Hartman” with another masterful touch in “*Dedicated To You*”. Outstanding!!!

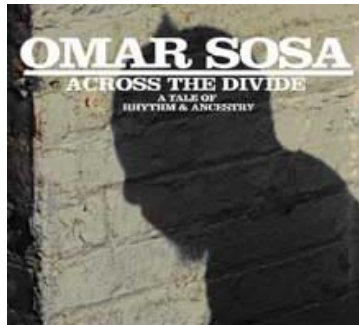


Track listing: All Or Nothing At All, It's Easy To Remember, Dedicated To You, Medley: What's New (Instrumental)/Lush Life/Autumn Serenade, Say It (Over and Over Again), They Say It's Wonderful, Medley: My One And Only Love/Nancy With The Laughing Face, Acknowledgments, You Are Too Beautiful.

Personnel: Kurt Elling: voice, Laurence Hobgood: piano, Clark Sommers: bass, Ulysses Owens: drums, Ernie Watts - tenor saxophone (1,4-7,10,12), Corenlius Dufalo: violin, Ralph Farris: viola, Dorothy Lawson: cello, Mary Rowell: violin

Omar Sosa - *Across the Divide: A Tale of Rhythm & Ancestry* – Half Note 4538

Omar Sosa is a *Grammy*-winning pianist/composer who has Africa, Cuba and America roots. The music here is inspiring and uplifting; it encompasses a "song cycle" that documents the shared rhythms of Tim Eriksen, a New England specializing in native and adopted There are divergent styles here-blending Jazz, folk, song and both acoustic/electronic technologies... The CD embraces celebrates the commonalities and The program musically tells of towards the present; informed of slave ships bound for America to the election of Barack Obama, the United States' first African-American president. It was recorded live at New York's Blue Note (with savvy post production sound sculpting). In this effort Sosa not only plays piano, uses voice and various electronics, he also samples the voices of his children in this epic telling musical experience. It is also exhilarating to hear the actual voice of the great poet Langston Hughes in narration on a couple of cuts.



Sosa's ancestry and ethno-musicologist American music. African sounds spoken word, with instruments and the differences and similarities of cultures. the paths of history the Middle Passage

Marion Meadows - *Secrets* – Heads Up HU CD 3150

This is the fifth album on Heads Up International by Marion Meadows. He continues his joint venture with keyboardist/producer Michael Broening, with whom already collaborated with on his previous three albums. This CD flows in the best vein of smooth-sweet mellow tone sax sounds with good ideas...and impressive vocals featuring lead vocalist Charlie Karp. is a pretty eclectic experience that is truly worth listening to.



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This

Kermit Ruffins - *Living a Tremé Life* – Basin Street Records BSR 0107-2

Living a Tremé Life was named after the neighborhood and lifestyle where Kermit resides today, and greats like called this good music out around of Evan



which has been the epicenter for music with Louis Prima and Louis Armstrong having area home. This CD is filled with the feel of Kermit Ruffins. Ruffins' trumpet licks roll and about and swagger along with the clarinet Christopher. The music throughout is Jazzy,

funky and worthy of dancing and trotting to... this CD is highly recommended for all fans of New Orleans Jazz.

Spyro Gyra - *Down The Wire* – Heads Up HUCD 3154

Down the Wire is a set of 11 new songs by members of the group: Jay saxophones; Julio Fernandez, guitars; keyboards; Scott Ambush, bass; and Bonaparte, drums, percussion and has scored several *Grammy* some say is the “perpetual comes to actually winning. The music genres: straight Jazz, funk, fusion, Brazilian and instrumental pop. This performed music played by one of the most experienced bands in music. Great stuff!



songs, all composed by Beckenstein, Tom Schuman, Bonny "Bonny B" vocals. The group has several nominations, but it here crosses several blues, Latin, is a tapestry of well-

Lori Mechem Quartet - *Plays More- Count Baie- April In Paris* – Cognito Records

Lori is a respected Jazz who has resided in the In addition to directing conducting musical artists such as Dizzy Smith, Cal Collins, Roy Jillian, Edie Gorme' and spotlights the fine Lori's laidback Basie like in its entirety in the best of Basie modes.



pianist, composer and educator Nashville, TN area since 1988. production shows and theatre, she has performed with Gillespie, Red Holloway, Jimmy McCurdy, Terry Gibbs, Ann the McGuire Sisters. This set reedman Pete Chrislieb and piano playing. The CD swings

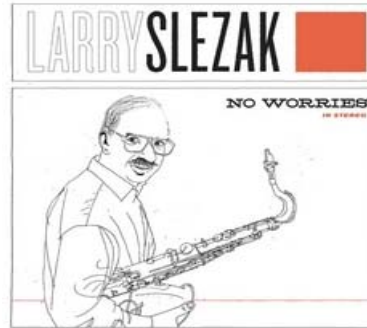
Melissa Morgan - *Until I Met You*- Telarc Jazz - CD83684



Melissa Morgan from Teaneck, N.J. is into the book of standards for this release. The standards here are most fitting for her voice. For this her debut, the 29 year old Morgan is accompanied by the quartet of Gerald Clayton on piano, Randy Napoleon on guitar, Joe Sanders on bass and Kevin Kannar on drums. Trumpeter Christian Scott complements the core quartet nicely. The tendency of new recording artists to cover standards can work against them as they're not giving the audience anything they haven't heard. However, Morgan succeeds with the combination of her vocal style and free-spirited arrangements. *Until I Met You*, named for the Donald Wolf and Freddie Green classic, is an excellent introduction to Morgan.

Larry Slezak - *No Worries* - Tierra

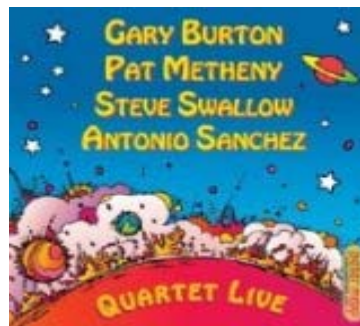
Music from this unfamiliar artist results in a welcome surprise. Wow! Where has this musician been hiding? New York born and bred saxophonist/educator Larry Slezak, who delivers his very first album as leader with *No Worries*, and what an album it is. With a dynamic selection of standards—from oft-recorded "Girl Talk," Carl Fischer's "You've Changed," to a riveting Jose Feliciano's "Chico and the Man," the from the old television series with Jack Freddie Prinze. The vibrant music here, sustains a good measure of swing, bolstered by dicey hard-driving charts performance from the leader and cast. A longtime resident of Houston, Slezak, is the premiere Jazz saxophonist in the Houston Jazz community who also performs with the Houston Symphony and the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, as well as serving as the Director of Jazz Ensembles at Rice University. For this first effort, Slezak records with a core quintet comprised of guitarist Clayton Dyess, bassist Thomas Helton, Jose-Miguel Yamal on Hammond B-3 organ and piano, and son Joe Slezak on drums. There are two orchestral pieces (sixteen-piece string orchestra on four cuts,), straight ahead and some bluesy sounds here. This is an impressive beginning for a truly outstanding musician.



Neal Hefti's love ballad, treatment of theme song Albertson and clearly superbly and a striking extended Texas,

Gary Burton- *Quartet Live* – CJA31303-02

Recorded live at the renowned Oakland, CA, vibraphonist with two original members of guitarist Pat Metheny, and and adds Metheny's long-time Sanchez for a couple of



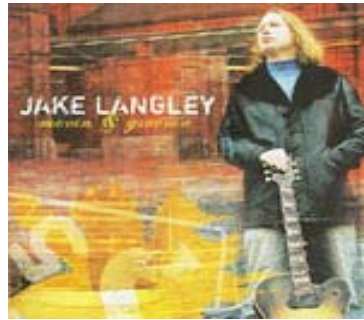
Concord Jazz

Yoshi's Jazz Club in Gary Burton reunites his legendary band, bassist Steve Swallow drummer Antonio evenings of progressive

modern Jazz captured for this release of "Quartet Live." Burton contributes only one original composition with the semi-funk and perky "Walter L" featuring the Jazz/rock riffs from Metheny's vibrant guitar. Though Burton's vib voice is well pronounced throughout, Metheny is well represented through his performance and with his contribution of three compositions starting with the haunting "B and G," "Missouri Uncompromised" and one of his most familiar tunes "Question and Answer" which is given an extended treatment here lasting over thirteen minutes. Great set...this type of Jazz is alive and well...worth having.

Jake Langley - *Here and Now* – Tone PoetProd TPCD2012

Langley is from Canada US. He has played with release Joey (Hammond percussionist Byron release is one of the Jake Langley is in fine end. The musical textures In my estimation there are of the most swinging and imaginative releases out by a bumping, articulate and masterful guitarist.



and not as well known in the Joey DeFrancesco and on this B3 master) and his drummer/ Landham is with him. This exceptional ones out today. form right from beginning to are rich and vivid throughout. no flaws on this release...one

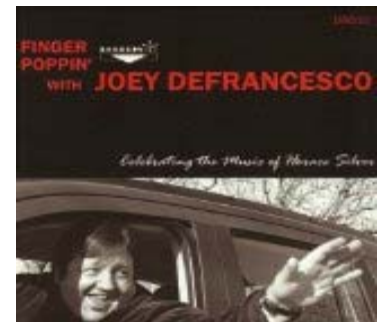
Rick Germanson Trio –*Off The Cuff* - OWL Records 00127

This trio displays fire on up-tempo burners and uncommon grace on ballads. And, the superb sonic quality of the recording brings every nuance of their interaction into crystal clarity. In this his third album, Germanson once again employs that tried-and-true trio format. This group works well since all the musicians have good chops. The bass is Gerald Cannon, a veteran of bands led by McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones, Roy Hargrove and Steve Turre and on drums from the Cannonball Legacy Band, Louis Hayes. There are good compositions available for this sympathetic, strong rhythm section. *Off The Cuff* presents Germanson and his group performing in an outstanding mixed-mood hard bops Jazz set. Germanson comes across as a consummate pianist.



Joey DeFrancesco – *Finger Popin'* - Doodlin

The masterful Hammond B-3 organ player Joey DeFrancesco in a compilation of tunes honoring the music of Horace Silver's "Finger Popin LP from the 1960's. The sounds are funky, swinging and popin' throughout. A must have CD.



Charles Tolliver Big Band - *Emperor March* - Half Note4539

The Charles Tolliver Big Band is one of the most progressive big bands of the Post-War years. energy of the and pianist band that was *Music Inc.* & (Strata-East,



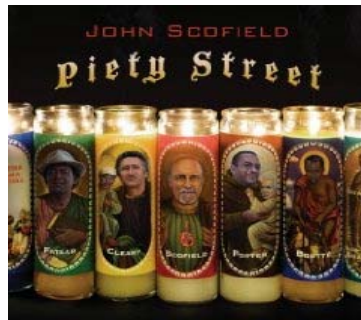
Inspired in part by the vibrant creative burgeoning Loft Scene, trumpeter Tolliver Stanley Cowell's cooperatively led a big immortalized by two landmark records, *Big Band* (Strata-East, 1970) and *Impact* (1975). After a quartet reunion gig with

Cowell in 2002, Tolliver was encouraged by fellow trumpeter David Weiss to reconvene the legendary big band. *Emperor March: Live at the Blue Note* marks the first live recording of the newly revived ensemble, documenting two nights at the famed New York Jazz club of the same name. Charles Tolliver's inspiration for this compilation came while watching the nature documentary *March of the Penguins*. Consisting of new compositions, a vintage cover look, and classics from the Strata-East days, Tolliver's multi-generational band burns with newly generated passion. The writing is dynamic. Great charts that move fluidly... the music is a tightly woven layered-mix with quick tempo shifts, intricate arrangements and dramatic mood changes. The sound is true big band using great muscle with flexibility.

Personnel: Charles Tolliver: trumpet; Michael Williams: lead trumpet; Keyon Harrold: trumpet; Cameron Johnson: trumpet; David Weiss: trumpet; Mike Dease: trombone; Stafford Hunter: trombone; Jason Jackson: trombone; Ernest Stuart: trombone; Aaron Johnson: bass trombone; Bill Saxton: tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, clarinet, flute; Bruce Williams: alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, clarinet, flute; Todd Bashore: alto saxophone, flute, piccolo; Billy Harper: tenor saxophone; Marcus Strickland: tenor saxophone; Jason Marshall: baritone saxophone, bass clarinet; Stanley Cowell: piano; Anthony Wonsey: piano; Reggie Workman: bass; Gene Jackson: drums.

John Scofield - *Piety Street* -

At one time John Scofield was Miles Davis band. Since those a number of surprising twists been suggested that some of his latest gear change — a propelled celebration of the tradition — but there's a ambience here. Scofield is licks with a line-up that includes the singer/pianist Jon Cleary. The sprinkling of old-time religion keeps the mood mellow, the musicians holding hands — metaphorically speaking — on Rev James Cleveland's *Something's Got a Hold on Me* and *The Old Ship of Zion*, composed by that church patriarch Thomas A Dorsey. Good stuff!

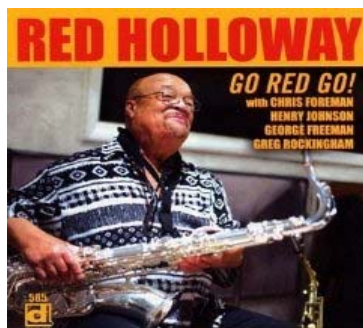


EmArcy – B0012656-02

a member of the elite days the guitarist has taken in his recordings. It has admirers may not approve down-home, organ-New Orleans blues-gospel refreshingly brilliant, plain swapping uncomplicated

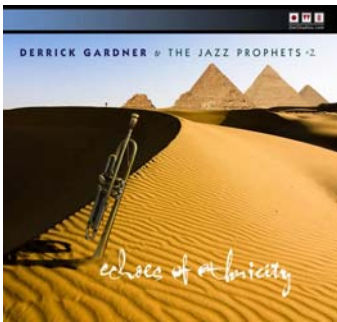
Red Holloway - *Go Red Go!* – Delmark DE585

The veteran both Brother he's still good form release. His the rhythm here, only appropriate



reedman has served time in the bands of Jack McDuff and George Benson, and yet finding new things to say. Holloway is in across the tenor and alto saxes on this straight-ahead, boppish style compliments section well. There is not a wasted note straight ahead Jazz with standard, but moods throughout.

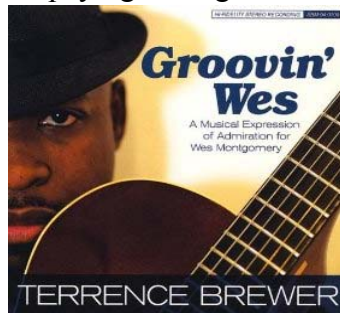
**Derrick Gardner & The Jazz Prophets + 2 - *Echoes Of Ethnicity* – OWL Records
OWL 00129**



This is an outstanding sextet with a firm front line of Gardner at trumpet, his brother Vincent on trombone and Rob Dixon on tenor sax, the lineup has been augmented by Brad Leali's alto sax and Jason Marshall's baritone sax, making this new Owl Studios album, *Echoes of Ethnicity*, by Derrick Gardner & The Jazz Prophets + 2. This release is in the "little big band" tradition that also thrived during the hard-bop era under such leaders and arrangers as Charles Mingus, Gil Evans, Ernie Wilkins and Bob Brookmeyer. It has the sounds of a big band but also the looseness of a small group, so you get a really full sound. The group makes full use of backgrounds and a full range of ensemble strategies and tonal colors." Actually, the octet is the smallest ensemble that has one of every instrument in the standard big band: trumpet, trombone, alto, tenor and baritones saxophones, piano, bass and drums. This group truly moves the listener.

Terrence Brewer - *Groovin' Wes* – Strong Brew SBM 04-0109

No doubt about it, Wes Montgomery set the standard for the modern Jazz guitar. Terrence Brewer moves toward that standard with his warm tone and incredible imitation of the great guitarist paying homage on "Groovin' Wes" his fourth album for the Strong Brew Music label. Brewer states that "Lots of guitarists can imitate to him with my some of guitar voice in crisp firm organ trio for organist Wil navigate the recorded Jazz standards ... firm riffs and shades of Wes throughout. Groovin' Wes provides a special tribute to one of the greats of Jazz who though long gone, has never really left us and is alive and well in the music of Terrence Brewer. If you favor the Jazz guitar and may not be familiar with the music of Wes Montgomery, spin some "Groovin' Wes" and let Brewer's guitar tell you about him. Highly recommended!



Jack DeJohnette - *Music We Are* – Golden Beam KRM-CD 1150

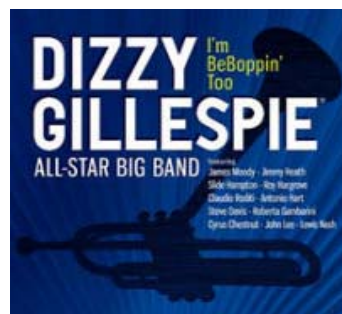
Music We Are – This is not music from your basic Jazz trio. "Music We Are" belongs to the trio team of DeJohnette, pianist Danilo Perez and bassist John Patitucci. The music stretches the boundaries of Jazz. A combination of appealing writing, spare and dark-hued



free-play, and an unmistakable sense of fun saturate this music. There is also a DVD that's included with the CD here. It has been pointed out that music is “ eclectic and esoteric, it's an album that celebrates the cross-pollination of music from the earth's four corners while revering the Jazz tradition that permits music to be made on such fertile ground, with abstract classicism, tinges of Gamelan and folkloric innocence intersecting and driving the music to unexpected and joyous places.” The three have engaged on various projects over the years. The same chemistry that the various permutations have brought to other projects is only magnified when the three are brought together in the same room, at the same time. A combination of original music is performed here. Adventurous!

Dizzy Gillespie All-Star Big Band - *I'm BeBoppin' Too*- Half Note Records 4540

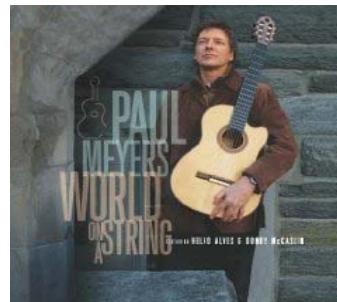
This is a energy of Jazz associates mix it up with Cyrus Chestnut musical Featured tracks "I Can't Get release.



spirited Big Band honoring the spirit and great Dizzy Gillespie. Long-standing James Moody, Jimmy Heath and John Lee next-generation all-stars Roy Hargrove, and Roberta Gambarini, all under the direction of arranger Slide Hampton. include "Round Midnight", "Manteca", and "Started". Greatness is written all over this

Paul Meyers- *World On A String* –Miles High

The eloquent Jazz guitarist and composer Paul performed and/or recorded with Geri Allen, Barron, Ron Carter, Ray Drummond, Eliane Fischer, Sonny Fortune, Eddie Gomez, Jon & Annie Ross, Marc Johnson, Wynton George Mraz, Rufus Reid, David Sanchez, Werner, and the Woody Herman Orchestra in



MHR 8608

Meyers has Kenny Elias, Clare Hendricks Marsalis, Kenny appearances

at the Newport Jazz Festival, Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. He toured for years with two great Jazz singers - Jon Hendricks since 1993, and Andy Bey from 1997 to 2008. International performances include Japan and Hong Kong with the Salute to Duke Ellington Orchestra (featuring Paul along with Bob Brookmeyer, Mel Lewis and Joe Wilder) - Spain with the great percussionist Cafe - France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy with Jon Hendricks - Brazil, England, Macedonia, Greece and the Netherlands with Andy Bey - Japan with Karrin Allison Argentina with Gary Burton. Burton recorded one of Paul's tunes, “Panama,” on his *Reunion* album with Pat Metheny.

**Chip White – *More Dedications*
Dark Colors 103**

Chip White is a drummer/percussionist by his father at age nine. He has been percussion, by Tony Williams along Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, and Elvin performed and/or recorded with a He is well experienced with some of



Volume II –

who was trained influenced on with Max Roach, Jones. Chip has variety of artists. the greats. This is

a well put together set of straight ahead Jazz in tribute to some of the great of Jazz. This recording is essentially Volume II and (or) the extension my previous CD, "Double Dedication" with my compositions for nine more Jazz artists who inspired him, and a corresponding poem on the second disc. "More Dedications" is a two-disc set. The music is on disc 1 (tracks 1-9) and the poems, with the music in the background, are on disc 2 (tracks 10-18).

Kyle Asche - *Organ Trio* - "Blues For Mel"- Tippin' Records Tip 1106

"Blues For Mel" is a straight organ trio that embraces the tradition, with that quintessentially guitar/organ/drums back Jazz. The Rhyne, the organist with guitarist Wes Riverside releases in Asche penned the New York," a composed four of "Killer Ray" and the energy driven sounds of "Nite Vidual." Overall, this is an inspiring set of great sounds.



American mix of evoking images of soulfully laid-release is dedicated to Melvin here who most famously played Montgomery on four stellar the late fifties and early sixties. opener/title tune along with "Forget bluesy wee hours lament. Rhyne the cuts, including the strutting

Personnel: Kyle Asche: guitar; Melvin Rhyne: organ; George Fludas: drums and percussion.