

Record Reviews

THE 14 JAZZ ORCHESTRA NOTHING HARD IS EVER EASY

U.M.M.G.; Palladium; John And Mary; Black Narcissus; Donna Lee (In Disguise); Pools; Hit The Road Jack; Take My Hand Precious Lord; With A Little Help From My Friends; Windows; You're Under Arrest (76.09)

Dan Bonsanti (cond. syn); Ed Maina (as); Ed Calle (ts, ss); Neal Bonsanti (s); Peter Brewer (bar); Stephen Reid, Cisco Dimas, Ray Chicalo (t); Dante Luciani, Major Bailey (tb); Jim Gasior (p, kyb); Tom Lippincott (g); Matt Bonelli, Will Lee, Mark Egan (b); Jack Ciano, Marko Marcinko (d). Miami, 2015.

14jazzorchestra.com
★★★★

Don't let the title of this album put you off, because this is a very good self-produced, self-released CD by, as you might expect from the band name, a 14-piece jazz orchestra, plus three guests in Will Lee, Mark Egan and Marko Marcinko. The choice of material is excellent, including some pretty rarely played gems by Wayne Shorter, Jaco Pastorius, Joe Henderson, Chick Corea and Don Grondnick, alongside more frequently trod-

den material by Charlie Parker and Paul McCartney, and the arrangements (all by Dan Bonsanti, except for the opener by Clare Fischer) and playing are very tight indeed.

Within these tightly played arrangements, the improvised solos (largely because of their relative brevity) generally seem more about function than feature, but this is after all a large ensemble, and there's less space for musical personality than in a small or medium-sized band. On the back cover, trumpeter and flugelhornist Randy Brecker describes the album thus: "The spirit of Jaco (Pastorius) . . . amazingly inventive arrangements . . . great playing . . . constantly exciting and engaging . . . great choice of tunes", and you'd be hard-pressed to argue with much of that.

However, in the context of this jazz album, the track quality diminishes temporarily around the third quarter, with *Hit The Road Jack*, *Take My Hand Precious Lord* and *With A Little Help From My Friends*, which see the band veering towards territory normally occupied by Jools Holland's Rhythm and Blues Orchestra, who don't have a great deal to do with jazz. Other than that it's well worth a listen.

Dave Jones

CYRILLE AIMÉE LET'S GET LOST

(1) Live Alone And Like It; There's A Lull In My Life; Estrellitas Y Duendes; Lazy Afternoon; Three Little Words; T'es Beau Tu Sais; Let's Get Lost; Samois À Moi; Nine More Minutes; Laverne Walk; That Old Feeling; (2) Each Day; (1) Words (43.27)

(1) Cyrille Aimée (v); Adrien Moignard (g); Michael Valeanu (g); Sam Anning (b); Rajiv Jayaweera (d). (2) add Matt Simons (v). New York, no recording date given.

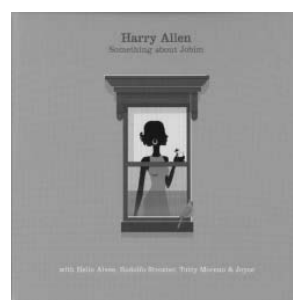
Mack Avenue 1097 ★★★★★

On a cold February morning *Let's Get Lost* warms things up quicker than central heating and a mug of hot chocolate. On a sunny July afternoon these tunes will be the perfect accompaniment to a romantic picnic-for-two. The young French singer – brought up in Samois-sur-Seine, once home to Django Reinhardt – and her extremely talented band join forces for one of the most refreshingly joyful albums in some time.

Live Alone And Like It opens with bluesy voice and acoustic guitar then kicks up a gear as bass and drums begin to swing. It's immediately clear that all five performers are at the top of their game. The instrumental break on *Three Little Words* is filled with energy and verve – the guitar solo is stunning. *Let's Get Lost* highlights Aimée's ability to interpret the happiest and the saddest of songs. *There's A Lull In My Life* is sad, but Aimée's bright, upbeat, vocal, coupled with the fluid musicianship of the quartet, ensures that positivity shines through. On *Laverne Walk* she scats joyfully, weaving in and out of Sam Anning's bass line. Then she sings a languid version of *That Old Feeling* and readily communicates the "old yearning" of the song.

The instrumentalists excel on *Lazy Afternoon*, conjuring an atmosphere that captures the relaxed yet sensual mood of the lyric. Aimée toys with the words, extending the syllables of "lazy" and "afternoon" and investing the idea of a tasty pitcher of tea with a whole host of meanings. Aimée's invitation is one to accept: few places can be as much fun to get lost in as these 43 minutes of jazz.

Bruce Lindsay



HARRY ALLEN SOMETHING ABOUT JOBIM

Dindi; Chovendona Roseira; Captain Bacardi; Sue Ann; Theme For Jobim; Mojave; Falando De Amor; Antigua; Angela; Você Vai Ver; Tema Jazz (56.55)

Harry Allen (ts); Helio Alves (p); Rodolfo Stroeter (b); Tuffy Moreno (d); Joycé (g, v). NYC, 6-7 July 2015.

Stunt 15122 ★★★★★

Not, as you might expect, Allen playing a selection of old favourites from the Jobim songbook – delightful though that would no doubt have been – but a set made up mainly from his later, 1970s compositions. These are more introspective and less easy to grasp than the catchy tunes of the 60s, but they have an elusive charm of their own. This applies particularly to the harmonies, which obviously appeal to Harry Allen. He creates wonderfully fluid lines from them, full of melodic and rhythmic invention. Every time I hear him nowadays he sounds better, with his soft-edged tone and pinpoint articulation.

This album was the idea of Rodolfo Stroeter, the bassist, after hearing Harry Allen for the first time, and it turned out to be a good one. The band is actually the one which tours with the Brazilian singer, Joycé (or Joycé; I've seen it spelt both ways, and it isn't pronounced as would be

JJ CONTENT

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in English anyway). She sings three of the songs and plays typically simple-tricky guitar. There's obviously something in the Brazilian claim to be the most rhythmic nation on earth. And they manage it with so little fuss!

Dave Gelly

MICHEL BENITA

RIVER SILVER

Back From The Moon; River Silver; I See Altitudes; Off The Coast; Yeaveering; Toonari; Hacih Gatsu; Lykken; Snowed In (50.00)

Michel Benita (b); Matthieu Michel (flh); Mieko Miyazaki (koto); Eivind Aarset (g); Philippe Garcia (d). Lugano, April, 2015.

ECM 475 9393

★★★★★

It seems as if Benita, the go-to bassist on the Paris jazz scene for visiting top-shelf players, has been laying the foundations for this beautiful music over the last 30 years. The Algiers-born musicians came to wider attention relatively recently, touring with Andy Sheppard's superb improvising group Trio Libero. To give his Ethics band a studio date as leader was surely a no-brainer for ECM label boss Manfred Eicher. Certainly Benita has delivered on his promise.

Over the last five years, the multi-kulti group has honed an otherworldly sound that draws on Japanese and European folk culture expressed in the language of jazz. Most of the material is written by Benita, much of it reflecting his longstanding love of English and Gaelic folk music. *Yeaveering*, by Kathryn Tickell, is a shimmering paean to the Northumberland village; the ballad *Lykken* is from the book of obscure Norwegian composer Eyvind Alnaes, originally written for piano and voice.

River Silver is an apt title because the music flows thickly, molten, directed by Benita's sonorous bass. Matthieu Michel's mellifluous flugel lines ride the current, notes from Mieko Miyazaki's zither-like koto sparkling on the surface. Norwegian soundscape artist Eivind Aarset doubles on guitar and ethereal electronic textures. Drummer Garcia, whose colourful CV includes a long spell with the Istanbul Symphony Orchestra and dates with Don Cherry, is simultaneously attentive and relaxed. The quintet's sixth member, Manfred Eicher, deliv-

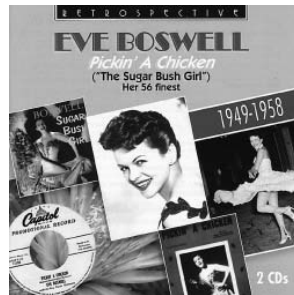
CRITICS' CHOICE

The 10 CDs JJ critics most wanted to hear from this month's review pile

Ray Bryant	Plays The Complete Little Susie	Phoenix 131616
Avishai Cohen	Into The Silence	ECM 475 9435
Al Cohn & Dexter Gordon	True Blue/Silver Blue	Xanadu Master 906080
Bob Cooper	Four Classic Albums	Avid Jazz 1180
Bill Evans	Original Album Series	Rhino/Warner 0081227947712
Paul Gonsalves/Clark Terry Qnt	Complete Recordings	Phono 870240
Jay McShann	Hootie's Blues	Retrospective 4279
André Persiany	International Jazz Group In New York	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 887
Frank Strazzeri	Strazatonic	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 886
Larry Young	In Paris/The ORTF Recordings	Resonance 2022

ers production values that beautifully complement the natural acoustics of the Lugano auditorium.

Garry Booth



EVE BOSWELL

PICKIN' A CHICKEN (HER 56 FINEST)

CD1: (1) *Pickin' A Chicken; Blue Star; (2) Confidentially; Dear Hearts And Gentle People; I Can Dream Can't I; Bewitched, Bothered And Bewildered; Beloved Be Faithful; All My Love; If; I'll Be Around; (3) I'm Yours; Sugar Bush; Here In My Heart; Moon Over Malaya; Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo; Everything I Have Is Yours; I Believe; (4) Playing With Fire; (5) The Bridge Of Sighs; Romany Violin; If You Love Me; (6) The Little Shoemaker; On The Waterfront; Skokiaan; These Are The Things We'll Share; (7) Ready, Willing And Able; (8) Young And Foolish; (9) Tiki Tika Tok (79.21)*

CD2: (10) *Les Feuilles Morte; Cookie; You Go To My Head; Down By The Sugar Cane; As Time Goes By; True Love; Where In The World Is Billy?; Once In A While; The Skye Boat Song; April In Portugal; Saries Marais; Someday I'll Find You; Anna; Santa Lucia; Sentimental Journey; Gypsy Moon; Amor; You'll Never Know; The Mexican Hat Dance; I'll Walk Alone; Besame Mucho; The Gypsy*

In My Soul; It's Been A Long, Long Time; (11) Come Prima; (12) Heat Wave; La Mer; Quizas, Quizas, Quizas; (8) Auf Wiederseh'n, My Dear (79.13)

Boswell (v) with: (1) with Glenn Somers & His Orchestra, 1955. (2) Geraldo & His Orchestra, 1949-1951. (3) Philip Green & His Orchestra, 1952-1953. (4) Ron Goodwin & His Orchestra, 1953. (5) Philip Green & His Orchestra, 1953. (6) Ron Goodwin & His Orchestra, 1954-1955. (7) Jack Parnell & His Orchestra 1956. (8) Reg Owen & His Orchestra, 1956. (9) Jack Parnell & His Orchestra, 1955. (10) Reg Owen & His Orchestra, 1956-1957. (11) Ron Goodwin & His Orchestra, 1958. (12) Tony Osborne & His Orchestra, 1959.

Retrospective 4277

★★★★★

The presence of this review in *Jazz Journal* may be a surprise but it comes from a series of Retrospective CDs by vocalists such as Alma Cogan, Doris Day and Eartha Kitt. Although these ladies have good voices and sing with a fair degree of swing, they are usually ignored by jazz enthusiasts. As can be seen from the artist listing, Boswell was usually accompanied by first-class commercial orchestras playing rhythmic arrangements.

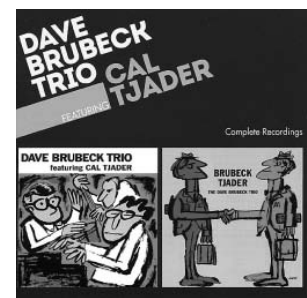
Boswell (1922-1996) was born in Budapest where her parents were performing on stage at the time. Her name was actually Eva Keleti but it was changed to Eve Boswell while she worked in South Africa. She had made a brief visit to Britain in 1938 and appeared on BBC TV. She eventually came to England in 1949 when offered a contract to sing with his orchestra by Geraldo. She left Geraldo in 1952 for a solo career that immediately blossomed and she gained a contract with EMI with recordings issued on the Parlophone and Capitol labels.

Eve became well established as a very versatile solo artist playing

piano and singing in English, Afrikaans and German; these talents are heard in this collection of her work. She toured extensively in Europe as well as elsewhere and when the contract with EMI ended she recorded on several minor labels and eventually moved to South Africa where she set up a coaching school for vocalists.

The recordings on this set of CDs all come from the EMI period and demonstrate her vivaciousness and her wide-ranging vocal ability. Some of her hit recordings are included. If your interest in music extends beyond swing orchestras, you will find some enjoyable performances here. With a good booklet and excellent transfers. Recommended.

George Hulme



DAVE BRUBECK TRIO FEATURING CAL TJADER

COMPLETE RECORDINGS

CD1: (1) *You Stepped Out Of A Dream; Lullaby In Rhythm; Singing In The Rain; I'll Remember April; Body And Soul; Let's Fall In Love; Laura; Indiana; Blue Moon; Tea For Two; Undecided; That Old Black Magic (34.57)*

CD2: *September Song; Sweet Georgia Brown; Spring Is Here; 'S Wonderful; Perfidia; Avalon; I Didn't Know What Time It Was; Always; How High The Moon;; Squeeze Me; Heart And Soul; Too*