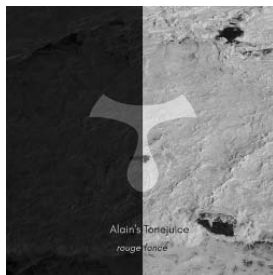


Record Reviews



ALAIN'S TONEJUICE ROUGE FONCÉ

Banfora; Cognito; Lang No Mit Dir; Rouge Foncé; Ginger Juice; Joran; A Dancer's Life; Phonk Yo Phat; Reprise; Vollmond; Choral 42 (54.43)

Brenzikofer (ts); Florian Weiss (tb); Will Powell (g); Matt Jenkins (p, kyb); Alexander Rawlinson (b); Mike Roy (d). Belgium, July 2017.

Calygram 51344, tonejuice.ch
★★★★

Some records grab you by the ears from the first listening while others get a grip that tightens with every play. Alain Brenzikofer's *Rouge Foncé* (or *Deep Red*) is in the latter category. His Anglo-Swiss sextet play smoldering groove-based music with

beguiling modal harmonies that suggest a soundtrack to a late-night drive around a modern European city. I like it more every time I play it, as the snaky melodic hooks of the original compositions insinuate themselves, moved in and out of focus by successive soloists. Up front, Brenzikofer's tenor sound has a mellow but mellifluous tone; but he's the sort of leader that doesn't mind sitting out as other soloists ease into play.

Title track *Rouge Foncé* has the bass bumping up against the horns, the piece eventually arriving at a supper-club sound that's warmed by Will Powell's guitar lines. *Ginger Juice* is a more peppery piece featuring Weiss's sinuous trombone and Matt Jenkins' piano blues-ing it up before handing on to Brenzikofer. *A Dancer's Life* is different again, a collage of Big Easy funk, Knitting Factory nuttiness and Latin heat all pinned down by drummer Mike Roy's strident rhythm. The clue's in the title with *Phonk Yo Phat*, a gangsterish groover that recalls a Bill Laswell production, with Jenkins switching to Rhodes piano and Powell prowling the perimeter of the arrangement. Excuse me while put this disc on repeat.

Garry Booth

TEX BENEKE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

THE GLENN MILLER FORMULA PART SIX

Hermolas; Palladium Patrol; Blue Moon; Unforgettable; Castle Rock; Horses; Cock-A-Doodle-Do; Hop Scotch; I've Got The World On A String; Would I Love You (Love You, Love You); Dimples And Cherry Cheeks; Wonder Why; Maybe It's Because I Love You Too Much; You'll Know; The Day Isn't Long Enough; Easter Parade; Thinking Of You; Here's To Your Illusions;

Show Me The Way To Get Out Of This World; The Wedding Of The Painted Doll; Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man; And So To Sleep Again; Too Marvellous For Words; Love Walked In (67.09)

Beneke (t, v) no personnel listed. New York, September 1951.

Sounds Of Yester Year 2081
★★

If insufficient liner notes were an Olympic event this would be a shoe-in for gold. How does it qualify? Let me count the ways. After listing the 24 titles, Michael Highton sits back, sighs expansively and says "My work here is done, now it's your turn, dear consumer, so you figure out who and how many musicians, who did the charts, who handles the solos, and while you're at it see if you can get a handle on the present whereabouts of Lord Lucan". One thing you have to give him, he has the courage of his ignorance. Take this, for example, "Of the eight instrumentals we know that Mancini scored at least two...", or this, "You'll hear Tex Beneke's tasteful tenor on most of these tracks...".

I was hoping that the music would compensate for the notes but I have to say that it's pedestrian at best. The title, "The Glenn Miller Formula", gives the impression that this is a Miller sound-alike outfit – something for which there is doubtless a market; Miller may have come across as schmalzy to the true jazz buff but the lasting appeal of that unique sound is undeniable. What Beneke gives us here is a ho-hum band playing numbers not associated with Miller in a style light years away from Miller. Far better to go for the original non-genetically modified GM. There is enough of it out there in one form or another.

Leon Nock



BUNNY BERIGAN & HIS BOYS

FEB 1936 – FEB 1937

(1) *It's Been So Long; I'd Rather Lead A Band; Let Yourself Go; Swing, Mister Charlie;* (2) *A Melody From The Sky; I Can't Get Started;* (3) *A Little Bit Later On; Rhythm Saved The World;* (4) *I Nearly Let Love Go Slipping Through My Fingers; But Definitely; If I Had My Way; When I'm With You;* (5) *That Foolish Feeling; Where Are You?; In A Little Spanish Town;* (6) *The Goona Go; Who's Afraid Of Love?; One In A Million; Blue Lou;* (7) *I'm Gonna Kiss Myself Goodbye; Big Boy Blue; Dixieland Shuffle (Version 1); Dixieland Shuffle (Version 2); Let's Do It (Let's Fall In Love) (69.15)*

(1) Berigan (t); Joe Marsala (cl) and/or Bud Freeman (ts); Forest Crawford (ts); Joe Bushkin (p); Dave Barbour (g); Mort Stuhlmaker (b); Dave Tough (d); Chick Bullock (v, all tracks). NYC, 24 February 1936.

(2) Berigan (t, v on *I Can't Get Started*); Artie Shaw (cl); Crawford (ts); Bushkin (p); Eddie Condon (g); Stuhlmaker (b); Cozy Cole (d); Bullock (v on *A Melody From The Sky*) NYC, 13 April 1936.

(3) as (2) except Paul Ricci (cl) repl. Shaw; Bullock (v on both tracks).

(4) Berigan (t); Jack Lacey (tb); Slat's Long (cl); same p, g, b, d as (2); Bullock (v, all tracks). NYC, 9 June 1936.

(5) Berigan (t); Red Jessup (tb); Toots Mondello (as); Babe Russin (ts); same p, g, b; George Wettling

JJ CONTENT

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Record Reviews

(d); Art Gentry (v, except *In A Little Spanish Town*). NYC, 23 November 1936.

(6) Berigan, Harry Greenwald, L. (or Harry) Brown (t); Ford Leary (tb); Maffy Matlock (cl); Hymie Schertzer (as); Art Drelinger (ts); Les Burness (p); Tom Morgan (g); Arnold Fishkind (b); Manny Berger (d); Gentry (v, except *Blue Lou*). NYC, 22 January 1937.

(7) as (6) except Johnny Hauser (v, except *Dixieland Shuffle* (version 2), *Let's Do It (Let's Fall in Love)*). NYC, 17 February 1937.

Retrieval 79083 ★★★

A insurmountable problem with these sessions is that record executives of the day chose to feature three singers, Bullock, Gentry and Hauser, perhaps in keeping with perceived audience needs. Right or wrong back then, none of these singers is likely to appeal to today's listeners, however redolent they might be of the era. Of these singers, Bullock is probably best known to those who like jazz-tinged popular music of the 1930s, Gentry is known more as a member of The Eton Boys vocal quartet, while Hauser is on the radar mainly for his performance of *Gloomy Sunday* with Paul Whiteman. Although a smattering of songs from these three might have been easier for today's listeners, here all but three of the 24 tracks have vocals and apart from Berigan's engaging effort on *I Can't Get Started*, another version of which became a swing era classic, they leave a lot to be desired. All this negativity aside, there was no other choice for the compilers of this reissue and every track is saved by excellent, crisp trumpet from the leader. A master of swing era style, Berigan is always a pleasure to hear. There are also good instrumental solo moments from others, notably Freeman, Shaw, Bushkin and Matlock. Rhythmically, all the groups swing, particularly those with Tough or Cole in the drum chair. Dictated by the preponderance of very ordinary vocals, this was heading for two stars but was rescued by Berigan.

Bruce Crowther

BLANCO Y NEGRO TIMBERO

Something Personal; The Caretaker; Timbero; The Munch; La Aldea; Del Norte; Taa-Daa; No Stalgia De Un Sueño; Tradición; October 6th; Nostalgia De Otro Sueño (58.01)

CRITICS' CHOICE

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

Bunny Berigan	Bunny Berigan & His Boys Feb 1936 - Feb 1937	Retrieval 79083
Miles Davis	Ascenseur Pour L'Echafaud	State Of Art 81213
Kit Downes	Obsidian	ECM 578 2651
Woody Herman	The Wildroot Shows 1946	Sounds Of Yester Year 2083
Lou Levy	I'm Old Fashioned	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 949
Wes Montgomery	In Paris	Resonance HCD-2032
Terry Pollard	A Detroit Jazz Legend	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 954
Andy Sheppard	Romaria	ECM 578 6980
Sons Of Kemet	Your Queen Is A Reptile	Impulse 6736432
Kay Starr	Wheel Of Fortune	Retrospective 4322



Karl-Martin Almqvist (ts); Abel Marcel (p); Yasser Morejon (b); Jonas Johansen (d); Eliel Lazo (pc, v). Copenhagen, August 2016.

Stunt 17142 ★★★★

After a hibernation of some years, the Cuban-Scandinavian outfit Blanco Y Negro returns with a revised line up, replacing Jacob Dinesen (sax) and Tony Rodriguez (piano) with renowned Swedish saxophonist Karl-Martin Almqvist and Holland-based Cuban pianist Abel Marcel respectively. The fresh additions to the ensemble have obviously sparked new life into the quartet, their latest release *Timbero* arriving as a welcome return to their once-heralded mergings of Afro-Cuban and Scandinavian jazz styling.

On *Timbero* the band presents 10 new compositions, with composing credits split between each of the five musicians. A truly international sound resonates throughout the collection with the quartet delivering a spell-binding album brimming with invention. The opener *Something Personal* is a rapid explosion of technical brilliance, the rhythm section providing a frenetic yet positively assured energy to the music of Almqvist and Marcel. It sets the tone for many of the tracks on the album although some gentler introspective works also grace the record. *The Caretaker* allows Almqvist to temper his vitality and impro-

visational proficiency, as does the title track in similar fashion for pianist Marcel. In these instances, the musicianship of both artists demonstrates how less is often more. By the final moments of *Nostalgia De Otro Sueño* the virtuosic brilliance of every player is ultimately established. Showcasing a broad range of expressive techniques and crossover jazz traditions, Blanco Y Negro offers an intelligent masterclass in fusion and *Timbero* is an exciting renaissance for the quartet.

Jason Balzarano



STEFANO BOLLANI TRIO MEDITERRANEO

Toccata; Sinfonia; Amarcord; Chi Mai; The Good, The Bad And The Ugly; Indagine Su Un Cittadino Al Di Sopra Di Ogni Sospetto; Azzurro; O Mio Babbino Caro; Largo Al Factotum; Fortunella (54.54)

Bollani (p); Jesper Bodilsen (b); Morten Lund (d); Vincent Peirani (acc, accordina); Berlin Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra. Berlin, 12 June 2017.

ACT 9849 ★★★★

Not quite channelling Norman Granz's ground-breaking 1940s/50s Jazz At The Philharmonic, this imaginative musical series of live performances takes a more literal interpretation of

JATP by employing the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra on their home turf at the Berliner Philharmoniker. *Mediterraneo* is the eighth in the series of orchestra meets jazz virtuosi and is a far cry from those earlier concerts featuring Charlie Parker, Lester Young and many others. But that doesn't mean it isn't good in its own slightly idiosyncratic way.

Italian pianist Stefano Bollani began studying piano before he was even six years old at the Conservatorio Luigi Cherubini in Florence and started playing piano professionally aged 15. He has recorded scores of albums and worked with the likes of Enrico Rava, Richard Galliano, Bill Frisell, Paul Motian, and Chick Corea.

The orchestra is, in actuality, pared down to 14 members of the Berlin Philharmonic but despite the rather classically clichéd *Toccata* opener, which belies the ensuing content, these musicians are put to good use as a jazz big band with strings. The instrumentation is particularly effective on Ennio Morricone's *Chi Mai*. Guest soloist Vincent Peirani shines on *Indagine Su Un Cittadino Al Di Sopra Di Ogni Sospetto* executing some memorably lithe accordion and Bollani similarly acquits himself on the sprightly *Azzurro*.

There is an undeniably lightweight feel to the album, but this is not, in itself, a bad thing. There's also a suspicion that on occasion Bollani might be a bit of a showman, but at least he has the chops to justify this trait. The album holds the listener's attention throughout thanks to stellar performances and a varied choice of compositions.

Roger Farbey