



the JAZZ PROJECT

by Jean-Keith Fagon



A critic's choice of new CDs. Check them out online to choose the ones that speak to you.

The Rumba Foundation ●●●

Jesse Cook,

Coach House Music

Intense, melodic Spanish guitar with a bluesy underpinning that sparks visions of afternoon passion. By turns sultry and invigorating, this album has so much depth that you'll discover new delights each time you hear it. Standouts are "Bogata By Bus," "Bombay Dinner," "Afternoon At Satie's," "Gaita," and "Tuesday's Child." The only misstep is a cover of Simon and Garfunkel's "Cecilia" which is jarringly out of place.



Escaping Shadows ●●●

Benny Reid,

Concord Records

Excellent album with Benny Reid in fine, contemplative form on pieces like "Always And Forever," "Escaping Shadows," "Facing The Edge," and "The Most Beautiful Girl I Ever Knew." Supporting Benny Reid (sax) are Pablo Virgara (piano), Daniel Loomis (bass), and Kenny Grobowski (drums).



Roundtrip ●●●

Alex Terrier New York Quartet

Producer Alex Terrier

The music on this album is loosely constructed around some thoughtfull improvisations from Alex Terrier (saxs), Roy Assaf (piano), Francis Moutin (bass), Steve Davis (drums), Akira Ishiguro (guitar), and Edouard Brenneisen (guitar). Check out "The Spirit Will Not Descend Without A Song," "Song For Keli," and "Le Miroir Des Anges Deguises."



Life On Wednesday ●●●

Jonathan Haffner,

Cachuma Records

To enjoy your Life On Wednesday, try to get these three cuts: "Time Time," "Near Mexico," and "New Year." Appearing on the album are Jonathan Haffner (sax), Wayne Krantz (guitar), Elvind Opsvik (bass), and Jochen Rueckert and Kenny Wollesen (drums).

Live At Jazz Standard NYC ●●●

Dafnis Prieto,

Dafnison Music

Given that 70 years of great jazz are amply documented, it's a mystery that musicians as accomplished as those on this album miss the mark by such a wide margin. But worth listening to are Dafnis Prieto's (drums, vocal and clave), "Just Go" and "3 Poems I Song." Featured performers include Peter Apfelbaum (saxs), Manuel Valera (piano), and Charles Flores (bass).



Remembering Things To Come ●●●

Nick Kadajski,

Producer: Nick Kadajski

Introspective sketches of unrequited emotions starting with "Phantom Energy," "2 Is 1," and "On The Corner." Featured artists include Nick Kadajski (sax), Ben Cassoria and Sean Moran (guitars), Brad Maestas (bass), and Brian Adler (drums).



Fortuna ●●●

Roni Ben-Hur,

Motema.com

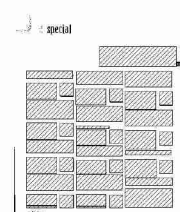
A very intimate and persuasive guitar-driven jazz album that features Roni Ben-Hur (guitar), Ronnie Mathews (piano), Rufus Reid (bass), Lewis Nash (drums), and Steve Kroon (percussion). Highlights include "Fortuna," "Guess Who," "The Intimacy Of The Blues," and "So Timba De Ser Com Voce."



Come Together ●●●

George Colligan,

Sunnyside Communications



Here is music for that relaxing dinner party with friends along with some intimate and spirited conversation. The dinner pieces are "Come Together," "So Sad I Had To Laugh," and "Open Your Heart." The invited musicians are George Colligan (piano), Boris Koslov (bass), and Donald Edwards (drums).

World Music, Imidiwan •••

Tinariwen, World Village

Legendary poet guitarists and soul rebels from the southern Sahara desert of Mali offer a varied collection of spirited music (a fusion of African rhythms and blues) in French and the Berber language Tamashek, the likes of "Chabi-ba," "Ere Tafata Adounia," "Imazeghen n Adagh," and "Tenhert." Chris Martin is quoted as saying this band was greatly influential to the 2008 Coldplay album "Vida la Vida."



Dance Mama! •••

Christine Vaindiris,

Ubuntu World Music

If you're one of those folks who love to watch "Dancing With The Stars" and "So You Think You Can Dance," then this album with "Call To Freedom" and "Down By The River" is for you.



Blu.Black •••

Corey Harris, Telarc

A blend of the blues and reggae is the distinguishing mark of this album with four outstanding songs that include some potent, meditative, reggae-style music ("Babylon Walls" and "Run Around Girl"), and the soulful cries of the blues ("So Good To Me" and the "Blues").



All CDs and DVDS reviewed in this article are heard through Bowers & Wilkens 802D Speakers and ASW 4000 subwoofer, and Rotel Preamp 1070, amplifier 1092 and CD player 1072. CDs are available for purchase through amazon.com. For more information about this column, please email your questions to fagon@hillrag.com. ★

