

- [Archive](#)
- [RSS](#)
- [Question?](#)

Mr. Stu's Record Room

"You like it so much, go out and buy the motherfucker"

- Charles Mingus, to wildly applauding audience, Keystone Korner, April, 1976

Pete McCann: Range



Guitarist **Pete McCann** and his quintet tackle ten of McCann's forthright originals on the excellent *Range*. With the vigorous bass and drums team of Matt Clohesy and Mark Ferber anchoring the group's sound, McCann, keyboardist Henry Hey and alto saxophonist John O'Gallagher are free to indulge their improvisational fancies. *Kenny*, for the late Kenny Wheeler, kicks things off in fine style with an uptempo romp, then the music turns a bit introspective with the deliberated paced *Seventh Jar*. The ebb and flow of the rhythm section is impressive on this number, as is McCann's electrifying solo. He combines a jazz player's imagination and flow with the occasional rock riff and careful use of guitar effects. *Realm* is another cooker, with a fluid guitar solo and a wailing high-energy excursion by O'Gallagher. He's a powerhouse alto player with a wide and well-controlled sound who wastes little time getting to the point. On drums, Ferber gets more impressive the more I hear from him; his solo on *Realm* is snappy and dynamically propulsive. Equally striking is his

brush work on *To the Mountains*, a sultry ballad performed at a glacial pace that really shows the mettle of the ensemble. The track features Clohesy playing a moving acoustic bass solo. The band sounds equally at home with the slamming alternative rock sound of *Mustard*, with Henry Hay delivering a triumphant organ solo and McCann a wild one on screaming guitar. *Dyad Changes* spins a web of intrigue with intertwined alto, Rhodes, and guitar lines on the head. There are solos from Hey's outer-space keyboard, McCann's spidery guitar, and a hard charging alto solo by O'Gallagher, plus a finish with the band trading licks with Ferber. McCann wields an acoustic guitar on the soft and gentle *Numinous*, then he and the band roar back on the fractured funk of *Bridge Scandal*. The tricky neo-bop of *Rumble* and the quietly complex *Mine Is Yours* complete this thoroughly enjoyable hour-plus of modern music. *Range* is going to be one of those discs I'll happily be playing for years to come.

Whirlwind WR 4675; John O'Gallagher (as) Pete McCann (ac & el g) Henry Hey (p, Fender Rhodes el p, org) Matt Clohesy (ac & el b) Mark Ferber (d); Brooklyn, NY, May 8, 2014; Kenny/ Seventh Jar/ Realm/ To the Mountains/ Mustard/ Dyad Changes/ Numinous/ Bridge Scandal/ Rumble/ Mine Is Yours; 62:10.

www.whirlwindrecordings.com

- - [#Pete McCann](#)
 - [#Range](#)
 - [#Whirlwind Recordings](#)
- [19 hours ago](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Close

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1w>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Wild Bill Davison: The Jazz Giants



Cornetist **Wild Bill Davison** got together with some like-minded peers for a 1968 club date in Toronto, with musical direction by pianist Claude Hopkins. Everyone seemed to have a good time, so billed as *The Jazz Giants*, this ad hoc sextet went into the studio for two nights after the show, and recorded what turned out to be the very first album of the Sackville label, run by Bill Smith and John Norris. The label might be better known to modernists for releases by Anthony Braxton, Abdullah Ibrahim (as Dollar Brand), and Don Pullen, but they released plenty of traditional and bop-oriented Lps too. With Sackville now owned by the equally broad-minded Delmark Records, that initial release gets a CD reissue, complete with a pair of bonus tracks. The repertoire, with songs like *Dardanella*, *Struttin' With Some Barbecue*, and *I Found a New Baby*, was pretty old-fashioned even then, but that didn't stop Davison, his front line mates Benny Morton on trombone and Edmond Hall on clarinet from blowing their hearts out with the mightily swinging rhythm section of Hopkins, bassist Arvell Shaw, and drummer Buzzy Drootin. Now it seems like a time capsule from another time, one that you won't let you stop tapping your toes with the happy beat.

Sackville SK 3002; Wild Bill Davison (cnt) Benny Morton (tb) Edmond Hall (cl) Claude Hopkins (p) Arvell Shaw (b) Buzzy Drootin (d); Toronto, ON, March 27 & 39, 1968; *Struttin' With Some Barbecue/ Dardanella/ Black and Blue/ I Would Do Anything For You/ I Found a New Baby/ Blue Again/ I Surrender Dear/ Yesterdays/ Them There Eyes/ Three Little Words*/ Black and Blue (alternate)**; 56:52. Tracks marked with an asterisk are previously unissued. www.delmark.com

- [#Wild Bill Davison](#)
- [#The Jazz Giants](#)
- [#Delmark Records](#)

- [1 week ago](#)
- [1](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1w>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Anthony Pirog: Palo Colorado Dream



Armed with a stack of guitars, electronics, synthesizers and a vivid imagination, **Anthony Pirog** delivers some cheerfully deranged music on ***Palo Colorado Dream***. Berklee grad Pirog is active in Washington D.C.'s new-music scene, and frequently records and performs as half of Janel & Anthony with cellist Janel Leppin. Here he's either alone with his noisemakers, or in a trio format with the more than able assistance of bassist Michael Formanek and percussionist Ches Smith, two highly adaptable and enthusiastic participants. From the loping dreamspace of *The Great Northern* to the mid-tempo power trio playing on *Song In 6* to the fractured angularity of the first half of *Heads* which ends up in a swirl of electronic madness, Pirog and friends cover a lot of ground on this LP-length CD. Especially fine is the enchanting *I'm Not Coming Home*, played by Pirog on classical guitar with caressing rhythms by Formanek and Smith. The overall electrification of the sound and proliferation of loops and effects won't be appealing to a lot of tastes, but guitar fans with an interest in the varieties of modern jazz-rock fusion will find this a largely enjoyable excursion. Well worth a listen.

Cuneiform Rune 398; Anthony Pirog (el, baritone, classical & ac g, synths, elec, loops, marimba) Michael Formanek (b) Ches Smith (d, vib, glock, sampler);

Centreville, VA, no dates specified; Palo Colorado Dream/ The Great Northern/ Minimalist/ Song In 6/ Threshold/ The New Electric/ Goodnight Geen/ I'm Not Coming Home/ Motian/ Heads/ Vicious Cricket; 40:25. www.cuneiformrecords.com

- [#Anthony Pirog](#)
- [#Palo Colorado Dream](#)
- [#Cuneiform Records](#)
- [2 weeks ago](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1v>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Soft Machine: Switzerland 1974



By the time of their appearance at the 1974 Montreux Jazz Festival, **Soft Machine** had been through a lot of changes since the band first formed in 1966. Only keyboardist Mike Ratledge was left from the earliest days, now joined by Karl Jenkins on keyboards and reeds, Ray Babbington on 6-string electric bass, John Marshall on drums, and in the most startling development for fans at the time, guitarist Allan Holdsworth. Cuneiform's CD/DVD package *Switzerland 1974* documents their complete Montreux performance. The jazz-rock quintet saunters onstage to applause, Marshall gets things revved up with a furious attack at his snare, and we're off. Holdsworth takes the first solo on the lengthy *Hazard Profile* by Jenkins, as if to emphasize the band's current direction. Before the hour-long set is over, the quintet plays the entirety of *Bundles*, recorded the same month as this performance and released in 1975. There are passages, like most of Jenkins' *The Floating World*, where there isn't very much happening, and the band sounds like

they're waiting for inspiration to strike. The quick-fingered Holdsworth, sounding like a sped-up Jerry Garcia, is often the catalyst for the group rising to the occasion. Everyone in the quintet has a chance in the spotlight, but the guitarist is the most consistently interesting soloist. Listening to a performance and then watching the same show is always an interesting exercise in appreciation, and the DVD in this package as disc 2 is no exception. Taken together, the clothing styles and stage equipment, the musicians' stage presence, and the close-up filming provide a way of more fully appreciating the nuances of the performance. Cuneiform has done their usual heroic job in assembling this material and making it sound and look as good as it could. This particular edition of the band was only together until John Etheridge replaced Holdsworth in 1975, making *Switzerland 1974* a particularly attractive release for devoted fans.

Cuneiform Rune 395/396; Mike Ratledge (Fender Rhodes el p, org, synth) Karl Jenkins (Fender Rhodes el p, Hohner pianet, p, ss, oboe) Allan Holdsworth (g, vcl) Ray Babbington (6-string el b) John Marshall (d); Montreux, Switzerland, July 4, 1974; Disc 1 (CD, 59:49), Disc 2 (DVD): Hazard Profile/ The Floating World/ Ealing Comedy/ Bundles/ Land of the Bag Snake/ Joint/ The Man Who Waved at Trains/ Peff/ The Man Who Waved at Trains (reprise)/ LBO/ Riff II/ Left/ Penny Hitch (coda).
www.cuneiformrecords.com

- [#Soft Machine](#)
- [#Switzerland 1974](#)
- [#Cuneiform Records](#)
- [2 weeks ago](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1vI>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Donny McCaslin: Fast Future



Tenor saxophonist **Donny McCaslin**'s abiding interest in electronic dance music (EDM) finds full expression on ***Fast Future***. Whether it will totally satisfy either modern jazz fans or the legions of EDM enthusiasts is anyone's guess, but the music is a largely enjoyable and danceable showcase for the hard-driving McCaslin. The title track starts things off with a bang, with a typically forceful and pungent tenor solo over drummer Mark Guiliana's firm beat and Jason Linder's swirling electric keyboards. The quartet of McCaslin, Lindner, Guiliana and electric bassist Tim Lefebvre is the core unit, with the other musicians playing smaller roles in the overall sound. *Fast Future* and the relatively low-key but insistent *Underground City* were co-written by McCaslin and producer David Binney. *This Side of Sunrise*, with a typically forceful tenor solo by McCaslin and powerful drumming by Guiliana, is a Binney original. The relentless *No Eyes* is from the repertoire of a solo project by Will Wiesenfeld called Baths, and *99 Cymru Beats*, which here rides on furious beats from the drummer, was originally done by Aphex Twin. The rest are by McCaslin, including the triumphant sounding *Love and Living*, the soulful *Love What Is Mortal* with an oddly appropriate spoken word interlude by Jana Dagdagan, and the reggae-flavored *Squeeze Through*. Not everything works as well as these. *Midnight Light* slows the pace down to a crawl, and while I admire McCaslin's authoritative solo that uses the full range of his horn, the tempo and sparse instrumentation are on the dull side. And the very brief *Blur* sounds like an idea that should either have been expanded or omitted. While it might prove too modern in its production techniques for jazz purists (are there any of those left?) and not high-energy enough for the dance crowd, McCaslin and company are successfully establishing a new variety of fusion that opens plenty of possibilities for investigation. Well worth a listen.

Greenleaf Music GRE-CD-1041; Donny McCaslin (ts) Jason Lindner (el p, p, synth) Tim Lefebvre (el b) Mark Guiliana (d) David Binney (vcl, synth) Nina Geiger (vcl) Nate

Wood (g) Jana Dagdagan (spoken word); Brooklyn, NY, June 2014; Fast Future/ No Eyes/ Love and Living/ Midnight Light/ 54 Cymru Beats/ Love What Is Mortal/ Underground City/ This Side of Sunrise/ Blur/ Squeeze Through; 55:37.
www.greenleafmusic.com

- [#Donny McCaslin](#)
- [#Fast Future](#)
- [#Greenleaf Music](#)
- [2 weeks ago](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1vI>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Matt Lavelle & John Pietaro: Harmolodic Monk



Harmolodic Monk is precisely what the duo of **Matt Lavelle & John Pietaro** conjures on their lengthy program of Thelonious Monk classics. Lavelle, who has performed mostly on brass instruments since his recorded debut in 2001, is one of those rare souls who's proficient on reeds as well. He splits his time here among cornet, flugelhorn, and the less frequently encountered alto clarinet. Percussionist John Pietaro moves easily from vibes to congas to bodhrán, an Irish framedrum, and other miscellaneous sound generators. Bern Nix, who played guitar in Ornette

Coleman's group for a dozen years, talks about harmolodics as "just a way of looking at music ... [You find] direction with the melody. The harmony doesn't dictate the direction, the melody does." That's the attitude that Lavelle and Pietaro bring to this project, and with Monk's melodies proving over time to be malleable and almost infinitely adaptable, the combination is a natural. High points in their interpretations include Lavelle's brusque and close-miked cornet solo on *Let's Cool One*, his Dolphy-esque solo alto performance of *Crepescule With Nellie*, Pietaro's solo vibes dissection of *Ruby, My Dear*, and the extended brass and vibes chase on *Blue Monk*. Not everything works as well: the overdubs on *Monk's Mood* seem unfocused and overly busy. Here's one case where they don't allow the melody to shine. The free-wheeling romp through *In Walked Bud* that closes the set presents the duo at their best, blowing hard and flowing easily on yet another of Monk's timeless themes. There have been countless Monk-only projects shedding new light onto his music since he passed away in 1982, and it's a pleasure to welcome *Harmolodic Monk* onto the shelf. Definitely recommended.

Unseen Rain UR9953; Matt Lavelle (cnt, flgh, alto cl) John Pietaro (vib, bodhrán, cga, perc); Wayne, NJ, January 2014; Epistrophy/ Pannonica/ Green Chimneys/ 'Round Midnight/ Crepescule With Nellie/ Ruby My Dear/ Let's Cool One/ Blue Monk/ Monk's Mood/ In Walked Bud; 73:34. www.unseenrainrecords.com

- [#Matt Lavelle](#)
- [#John Pietaro](#)
- [#Harmolodic Monk](#)
- [#Unseen Rain Records](#)
- [3 weeks ago](#)
- [1](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1vE>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Tomas Fujiwara Trio: Variable Bets



It takes a couple of minutes for the **Tomas Fujiwara Trio** to gather their forces on *Variable Bets*, but when drummer Fujiwara, trumpeter Ralph Alessi, and guitarist Brandon Seabrook really get going, it's time to hold onto your hat for a wild ride. This near hour-long set, recorded live at Barbès in Brooklyn, is really a blast. After drifting in with *Mr. Or in Pivot*, the first of eight Fujiwara originals, there are plenty of electrified rave-ups full of skronk from Seabrook's unhinged guitaristics, trumpet pyrotechnics from Alessi, and Fujiwara's dynamic and actively engaged drums and cymbals. But as the set flows from piece to piece, there are also moments of unexpectedly beautiful melody, like the sweet theme for the first half of *The Comb* played by Alessi with a cracked and vulnerable tone. Seabrook turns up the heat, and the trumpeter reemerges with a bright, clear sound that reaches for the sky. The band can turn from fragile to forthright in a heartbeat. Check out their spirited demolition and recasting of Benny Golson's *Stablemates on A Table's Stem* (*Variations on a Theme by Benny Golson*) for a powerful taste of their unity and aggressive performance style. Amazingly enough, this was the first time that this unit performed together. To these ears, the trio format provides the right environment for the most concentrated and rewarding improvisational music, whatever the instrumentation. *Variable Bets* is another disc that confirms my feelings about trios, and with a big flourish. Happily recommended.

Relative Pitch RPR1028; Ralph Alessi (t) Brandon Seabrook (g) Tomas Fujiwara (d); Brooklyn, NY, September 11, 2013; *Mr. Or in Pivot/ Insomniac's Delight/ November Wept I/ The Comb/ Harp Ran Blond / A Table's Stem* (*Variations on a Theme by Benny Golson*)/ *Lord Sumo/ Nudge Storms*; 58:09. www.relativepitchrecords.com

- [#Tomas Fujiwara Trio](#)
- [#Variable Bets](#)
- [#Relative Pitch Records](#)

- [3 weeks ago](#)
- [1](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1ur>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Jochen Rueckert: We Make The Rules



Drummer **Jochen Rueckert**'s peppy beat, Matt Penman's sturdy bass playing, guitarist Lage Lund's open and friendly sound, and tenor saxophonist Mark Turner's exploratory temperament collide in a truly magical encounter on ***We Make The Rules***. These nine original compositions by Rueckert are full of unexpected twists and turns, but as he says, they make the rules. The opener, *Eggshells*, draws you in from the start and almost before you can register the shift, the pace quickens and Turner is off on the first of his distinctive and enchantingly articulate solos. Lund follows with subdued passion, buoyed by Rueckert's urgent drumming. From there, a blow-by-blow would be nigh unto impossible, as well as pointless. Rueckert generates a tremendous amount of energy with a fairly light touch, but with great musical sense in a constantly varying flow of timbre and accent. He shapes his tunes to fit his drumming style, and it suits an inventive stylist like Mark Turner like a well-tailored suit. Particularly pleasing are the sunny strutting groove of *Pretty From Afar*, the choppy but insistent title track with a inspired solo by Turner and an urgent bass solo by Penman, the gentle beauty of *Alloplasty*, and the mostly slow-paced *Manong Twilight at the Whatever Hotel*, which closes the disc in

a calm and peaceful spirit. An absolute delight, and without a dull moment, *We Make The Rules* gets my highest recommendation.

Whirlwind WR4658; Mark Turner (ts) Lage Lund (g) Matt Penman (b) Jochen Rueckert (d); Brooklyn, NY, no dates specified; Eggshells/ Pretty From Afar/ Saul Goodman/ We Make the Rules/ Bess/ The Cook Strait/ Alloplasty/ Yellow Bottoms/ Manong Twilight at the Whatever Hotel; 63:19. www.whirlwindrecordings.com

- - [#Jochen Rueckert](#)
 - [#We Make The Rules](#)
 - [#whirlwind recordings](#)
- [4 weeks ago](#)
- [Permalink](#)

Share

Short URL

<http://tumblr.co/ZQiRus1ui>

[Twitter](#)[Facebook](#)[Pinterest](#)[Google+](#)

Page 1 of 37

← Newer · [Older](#) →

About



Stuart Kremsky was the San Francisco “Short Takes” correspondent for Cadence magazine from 1979 through 2007. His reviews have appeared in Option, Sound Choice, Cadence, and the Journal of the International Association of Jazz Record Collectors. His gigs include a stint as sound man at the fabled Keystone Korner and over ten years as tape archivist for Fantasy Records, where his production credits include boxed sets of Sonny Stitt, Dexter Gordon, the Modern Jazz Quartet and the Grammy-nominated Sam Cooke With the Soul Stirrers. Email [mrstu \(at\) zanshinart.com](mailto:mrstu@zanshinart.com)

Search

- [RSS](#)
- [Random](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Question?](#)
- [Mobile](#)

copyright 2013 Stuart Kremsky.

Never miss a post!



Effector Theme — [Tumblr themes](#) by Pixel Union

skremsky

Follow