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October 2020



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







25 Listings

26 Pete Recommends...

A Seat at the Table:

Report on Diversity in the Music Industry

SUMMARY OF MAKE UP OF TEAMS ACROSS 12 MUSIC INDUSTRY TRADE BODIES **Women
in
CTRL**

		MEN	WOMEN	BLACK WOMEN
	AIM	54.6%	45.4%	0%
	BPI	50%	50%	16.6%
	FAC	40%	60%	0%
	ISM	25%	75%	1%
	IVORS	38.5%	61.5%	0%
	MMF	57.2%	42.8%	0%
	MPA	54.6%	45.4%	0%
	MPG	28.6%	71.4%	0%
	MVT	62.5%	37.5%	0%
	PPL	70%	30%	0%
	PRS	50%	50%	0%
	UK MUSIC	60%	40%	0%

www.womeninctrl.com

Women in CTRL (WIC), is a not-for-profit organisation set up to ‘empower and inspire women in the entertainment, creative and business sectors of the music industry’.

In their first report they analysed the make up of team, board members, chairperson and CEO positions across 12 UK music industry trade bodies in July 2020. The music industry bodies analysed include AIM, BPI, ISM, PPL and PRS for Music.

Yvette Griffith of Jazz Re:refreshed, and an AIM board member commented:

“While it is shatteringly disappointing to see this data, it would be a lie to say that I am

surprised. The results of WIC’s study is a reflection of the wider industry, where, in the main, not enough is being done to ensure a diversity of thought, diversity of team members and specifically in this instance, inclusion of Black women in positions of seniority and influence. I would like to see trade-bodies ensuring they have more Black Women and diverse voices at every level - no matter how small the company.”

The report, compiled by Nadia Khan the founder of WIC, ends by urging all of the organisations to sign up to the WIC Diversity Pledge.

The full report can be found at the WIC website: <https://womeninctrl.org/>

KEY FINDINGS ON GENDER

Women
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- 27%** of CEOs across 11 music trade body boards are WOMEN
- 9%** of Chairpersons across 11 music trade body boards are WOMEN. There is 1 female Chair across 11 trade bodies in this report
- 34%** of board members across 12 music trade body boards are WOMEN
- 6%** the lowest representation of WOMEN is on the PPL Board

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KEY FINDINGS ON ETHNICITY

Women
in
CTRL

- 0%** of CEOs across 11 music trade body boards are BLACK WOMEN
- 0%** of Chairpersons across 11 music trade body boards are BLACK WOMEN
- 3%** of board members across 12 music trade body boards are BLACK WOMEN, with 5 positions being held on a possible 185 seats
- 2%** employed in team or executive team across 12 music trade body boards are BLACK WOMEN, with 2 positions being held out of a possible 118 positions

www.womeninctrl.com

Jazz News



[Jazz South Radar Commissions](#)

Ten composers from the Jazz South region have been announced. The composers include Hastings residents Josephine Davies (above) and bassist Olie Brice. Each composer will create a 12-15 minute piece for up to 3 performers, which will be filmed and broadcast later this year.



[Tristan Banks Raises Funds for Charity](#)

Drummer and percussionist Tristan Banks recently cycled from London to Nice, and then on to Naples in Italy to raise funds for music charity Help Musicians UK. He cycled a total of 2025 miles in the space of 23 days and has so far raised nearly £4,000.



[QOW Trio Sign To Ubuntu](#)

Ubuntu Records have recently announced the signing of QOW Trio, the band consisting of saxophonist Riley Stone Loneran, bassist Eddie Myer and drummer Spike Wells. Their debut album, recorded at Fish Factory Studio in London will be released on 5th February, 2021.



[New Generation Jazz Octoberfest](#)

New Generation Jazz will be broadcasting a performance every Wednesday in October, beginning with Sudo on Wednesday 7th October. Later broadcasts include Sultan Stevenson Trio (above) on 14th October, Yadasofi (21st) and Mark Kavuma's Banger Factory (28th). Each gig will be live streamed at 6pm via the [New Generation Jazz Facebook page](#).

Jazz Essentials

Louis Armstrong

The Complete Hot Five and Hot Seven Recordings
(Columbia Legacy)

Contradicting George Richardson's review in the SJM August issue of a live set from the 1948 Nice Jazz Festival, I would suggest that trumpeter Louis Armstrong is now a largely overlooked figure in jazz. Remembered perhaps as a singer best known for *Hello Dolly* or *What A Wonderful World* in the mid-1960s, or more unfortunately as an Uncle Tom vaudeville artist hamming up it for the whites, Armstrong has long been downgraded in the jazz firmament. But Armstrong should rightly be acknowledged as the first innovator of jazz, indeed its first revolutionary. For it was largely Armstrong who invented and developed the improvisatory jazz solo that so defines much of what our music is all about.

You can hear how he did it on this four-CD set of his Hot Five and Hot Seven tracks he recorded primarily in Chicago for Okeh Records between November 1925 and March 1929. Hot Fives and Sevens would suggest a numerically fixed group, but *West End Blues* was recorded by a hot six while a 1929 recording of *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* with His Savoy Ballroom Five actually featured 10 musicians. But you've come to hear the music, not count the musicians.

Jazz at its recorded birth in 1917 was basically collective or ensemble improvisation, performed by a small group of musicians simultaneously embellishing the tune while the soloists left the melody largely unadorned. No solos as such were played. Armstrong broke away from

that style in a series of rapid improvisatory leaps, which can be plotted here on four seminal tracks. On *Muskrat Ramble* from February 1926, Armstrong solos around the melody, although still hesitant to break far away from the ensemble. By the time he recorded *Potato Head Blues* in May 1927, his concluding solo was almost unaccompanied and far more confident, taking liberties with both melody and rhythm. In December 1928 he went for broke, his completely improvised solo on *Basin Street Blues* bursting out of a fairly routine number as if from nowhere. But by then he had already recorded in June 1928 what is probably the most famous, if brief, note-perfect solo in jazz. *West End Blues* starts with just Armstrong in flight before he plays the slow melody over the ensemble, followed by a trombone solo, a clarinet accompaniment to his own wordless vocals and a jaunty piano outing from Earl Hines before, finally, that solo, starting with a long-held high-register note that breaks up into a rapid cascade of notes, the entire track lasting just 3:17 minutes but encompassing a lifetime of experience. To hear that trumpet cadenza is to hear heaven. And when he wasn't inventing the role of the soloist, Armstrong developed the jazz duo, his recording of *Weather Bird* with Earl Hines in December 1928 one of the first and finest in the genre. Here as everywhere, Armstrong used the melody as a springboard for his imagination and technique to let fly. And how he flew!

Simon Adams

Rick Simpson



Pianist **Rick Simpson** is best known for his project Klammer and more recently for playing in Leo Richardson's quartet. His latest project sees him covering an entire Radiohead album with his quintet. Here he talks to Charlie Anderson about the whole process and what he aims to achieve.

How did you get into playing piano?

My mom and pop, when I was about 7, bought a little Casio keyboard, just to see how my sister and I would get on. I remember immediately loving it and it had Wham's *Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go* as a demo track. I thought it was so cool and I used to tap along with it and play drums with the drum sounds on it and pick out melodies. After a while my parents realised that me and my sister liked messing

about on the keyboard so they bought a secondhand piano and we started having some piano lessons. My mum told me that my first teacher said that she thought I had something, because I used to mess about improvising and figuring out chords.

When I was a little bit older, on my birthday, we went to see *Phantom of the Opera*. My parents bought me the vocal score by mistake, instead of the piano score, which was actually a good mistake to make

because it made me figure it out and make my own version. It was all good preparation for when the jazz thing came along.

So, how did you get into jazz?

I think I was about 15 when I heard jazz for the first time. I had to play *In The Mood* for a school concert, and I hadn't really played jazz with other people. There was me, a clarinet, drums and no bass, so I found it quite hard.

My dad knew someone at work who liked jazz and he came back with a jazz CD and it was *Bitches Brew*. I remember just thinking 'Oh my God, it's horrible!'. I absolutely hated it. I'd never ever heard music like that before. So *Bitches Brew* was the first thing I ever heard and it scared the hell out of me. Then he came back with *Kind of Blue* about a week later, thinking I might take to that a bit easier, and he was right. It was a lot more accessible. A vocalist near Middlesbrough who used to live in New York came to the house and every week he'd bring amazing cassettes. On one side it would be Bud Powell, then on the other side it might be Django Bates, Paul Bley, Chick Corea or Keith Jarrett. There was a whole mixture of amazing music, and it was really cool that he did that. Django Bates, musically, was a really big influence on me, so I was listening to that along with Bird and Dizzy. Then I went to London when I was 18 but before that I met Nikki Iles and I had a few lessons from her. I still think of Nikki as my teacher. I've been in London ever since.

How did you get the idea for doing the new album?

The Vortex jazz club and I were discussing doing a residency where I would take classic non-jazz albums

and re-write the music as jazz.

Because I was a huge Radiohead fan when I was in my 20s I chose *Kid A*, then *Amnesiac*, which is kind of like a sister-album to that, All of the gigs were sold out, packed full with people. I actually said over the mic, 'who here has never been to a jazz gig before?' and about a third of the audience put their hands up.

For me, I absolutely adore The Vortex and I always do my best to help out in any way that I can, so getting a fresh audience into that room was great. Radiohead are the most important British band since The Beatles, at least in my opinion.

Doing something like that, at The Vortex, where you're playing something that people know, it's a great way of introducing people to jazz. If it was just me playing my own compositions, for people who are quite new to it then it's a lot of new music, it's quite bewildering.

I was thinking that back in the 1930s people played tunes that people knew - the standards - but that dropped away from the 1960s onwards so people stopped playing contemporary tunes. So it's a great way to get an audience interested because it gives them a reference point. Some of the arrangements that we make are very different to the original. On this record, there are only two of the tunes where we play them quite similar to the original.

It doesn't matter if you don't like Radiohead. If you love jazz you're going to love this record. The fact that it's Radiohead shouldn't put any jazz fans off, but also I think the fact that it's a jazz record shouldn't put Radiohead fans off. What we managed to do in the five hours that we had was to make something that was live sounding. Everybody plays amazingly well on it. It sounds like a

live record because the energy is so good. And also the tracks are pretty short. The whole record is 42 minutes long, so it's actually shorter than the original Radiohead album, which is like a miracle with jazz. So it's really lively and it's got that balance between more audience-friendly elements and OMG moments.

Because it's so immediate and varied, when there are bits of more avant-garde stuff it's not going to bewilder anybody. In the context of the whole it's quite an engaging piece.

That's something I've always tried to do with my music. With Klammer for example, I never wanted to have a band which was like 'oh it's gonna come and it's gonna be this one thing all the way through'. I like to hear quite a broad range of things in music, so with Klammer I wanted to do music where this song will be quite weird, but this next song is going to be quite nice. I like variation within a set, and again this record has got the same thing - there's something there for everybody.

How are you going about promoting the album?

We had lots of dates booked this year but they've all been cancelled. We're trying to arrange an album launch at the Jazz Cafe. We do have a PR company, 9PR, who are doing some good stuff for us, and Mojo magazine are running a feature on it in their next issue. So we're trying to promote it via the usual social media channels and a PR campaign. In time there will, hopefully, be lots of nice gigs but it's definitely something that we could do up and down the

country, in non-jazz venues as well, if we get the marketing right. Everybody loves *Kid A* so hopefully we'll have the same response as we did when we did it live previously.

For now it's a PR campaign leading up to the October 23rd release.



What would you like to achieve with this new album?

It's very difficult to get any career traction in jazz, everyone knows that, especially getting any acknowledgement from outside the usual jazz circles, for example. This is a bit more mainstream, probably the most mainstream

release that I'm ever going to do. One of the reasons I've been quite keen to promote it is that I'm hoping that with some visibility in non-traditional jazz circles, it could open some things up. I've always wanted to get into writing music for film, or do some different cross-genre things.

I'm hoping that the visibility from this might open some doors. With anything like that, it only takes one bit of success to get the next bit and then that will bring another thing. So it's just getting the initial bit of success that gets the ball rolling. In jazz, the last ten years have been great. I've had a really good time, I'd just like to open some slightly different doors, and I'm hoping that this might just be the thing that does it.

My main hope with this album is that traditional jazz fans who aren't into Radiohead, rather than saying 'oh, I don't know, this isn't for me', instead it won't matter. The fact that it's Radiohead doesn't take anything

away from the musical content. Anybody who likes jazz will like what we've just done. The fact that it's Radiohead is very relevant in a lot of ways but for jazz fans who maybe don't know that band or might not even like their music, will like it because it's jazz.

Tell us about the musicians on the album.

James Allsopp and Tori Freestone complement each other very well. Tori is very kind of slippery, and very inspired by Wayne Shorter and she's got this amazing talent where she doesn't play any saxophone cliches and creates an amazing textural soundscape which is what I like most. I first met Tori in Andre Canniere's band on a gig up in Cambridge. As soon as she started soloing I was like 'okay, who's this?'. It's great to have someone play so uniquely in the UK.

Everybody in this band brings an amazing vibe both emotionally and in the strength of their playing. Everything they play is strong.

James Allsopp really burns on tenor but I wanted to get him on baritone saxophone for this. I heard him play baritone with Calum Gourlay's big band and again it's like everything he plays makes me listen. It's so strong, there's so much personality. There's no burning through the usual saxophone cliché language. It's all very, very artistic and he's got an amazing sound on the baritone and the two of them together sound great.

Dave Whitford can play the bass like a real kick-ass. He's got an amazing, big beautiful sound. He's extremely tasteful as a musician so he's perfect for this music. It's the same with drummer Will Glaser, he listens intensely, knows exactly what

to do and plays with so much vibe and excellence. It's a joy to play with him.

They all play absolutely fantastically, all the way through. There's not one point where it's not really engaging. So I'm very happy that I get to play with these guys.

I'd like to thank Michael Janisch for being a great supporter of mine. I play in his band and that's very exciting, playing with George Crowley and Shaney Forbes. His record label Whirlwind is home to some amazing people, such as Walter Smith III, Rudresh Mahanthappa and some great UK talent as well. I'm really happy to be on Whirlwind, it's a great family to be part of. Plus the album is coming out on vinyl, which is very, very exciting for me.

Do you have any plans for the future?

I'm hoping we can do a follow up next year. There's another Radiohead album, *Amnesiac*, which is the sister album. But we'd like to do another thing in the future.

I want to do a trio record with Will Glaser and Dave Whitford because I absolutely love playing with those guys.

The album *Everything All of the Time: Kid A Revisited* is released on 23rd October, 2020 on Whirlwind Recordings.

www.ricksimpsonjazz.com/

Live Stream Reviews



New Generation Jazz: The Cinematic Live Weekender

*Thursday 3rd, Friday 4th, Saturday 5th, Sunday 6th September 2020
Via Facebook and YouTube*

Most readers will now be aware of the regular streams of the UK's young jazz talent that were filmed at The Ropetackle Arts Centre in Shoreham, for New Generation Jazz, to replace audience attended gigs during the Covid-19 pandemic. To supplement these sessions with the collaboration of Jazz South, a virtual live weekender, showcasing four superb and diverse bands was organised and broadcast in early September.

Each band played a forty minute set filmed in HD mode, followed by a Q and A session.

First up on the Thursday were Barnacles. This band boasts the unusual line up three saxophones, trombone and drums. They are entertaining in the extreme with tightly constructed ensemble play but enough space for the wild improvisational skills they all possess. Their swinging upfront approach has already wowed crowds at London's

Jazz Cafe, The Vortex and Brighton's Kemp Town Carnival. Formed by their leader, tenor saxophonist Leroy Horns as a conventional ensemble with brass, reeds and a full rhythm section they have evolved to their present line up plus the regular use of dancers to enhance their live performances. We were treated to a set of finely crafted, but mostly unnamed originals by the leader, with many fine solos and conversations between the horns in front of the driving and creative drums of Pete Adam-Hill. Fellow tenor saxophonist Richard Halligan, supplements the leader's horn perfectly, while Laura Impallomeni's trombone and the sonorous sound of Greg Sinclair's baritone add to the overall colour and impact of the music, bringing back memories to some of Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy of the Eighties and Nineties. As striking as the set had been, the emergence of the award winning dancer Eden Burgess-Hayes elevated the visual impact of the performance to another level as she took centre stage for two numbers. All members of this band have other diverse musical interests, and can easily draw from other genres, but

together in this format offer something very different and refreshing to jazz audiences.

Leroy Horn (tenor), Richard Halligan (tenor), Laura Impallomeni (trombone), Greg Sinclair (baritone), Pete Adam-Hill (drums).

Friday brought the highly popular soul inspired singer and songwriter Abi Flynn to the Ropetackle stage alongside her eight-piece ensemble. This lady has gone through a life threatening illness in recent years and to her eternal credit has fully rebuilt her highly promising vocal career. Abi brings hip hop and R&B into her vocal performances, all with a jazz sensibility, is a fan of Esperanza Spalding and Snarky Puppy, and lists Joni Mitchell among her inspirations. Things got off to a crackling start with *Get Deep* from her recent EP and included a fine interlude from keyboard exponent Anthony Jullius, very much in the style of Chick Corea. All of the numbers during this hard-hitting set were composed by Abi and reflected her experiences over recent years. Typical of these was the mid tempo *Testament To Love* subtitled by her as "beauty within the chaos". There was an inherent swing to both the vocal content and band performance throughout, with the two backing vocalists adding depth to the soundscape, typified by the highly energetic *All The Best*, which included some fine trumpet from Tommy Peach. The singer is not



afraid of going to the very darkest of places in her vocal content, and so it proved during *The Storm Before The Calm*, an understandingly heart felt ballad, which made a fitting contrast to the upbeat *To The Son*, in celebration of her newborn baby. Understandably there were many on-

line supportive and positive comments during the set for an artist with a very fine voice, impressive stage presence, and the ability to write songs of real meaning.

Abi Flynn (vocal), Tommy

Peach (trumpet), Dan Cartwright (tenor), Anthony Julius (keyboards), John Wright (electric bass), Luke Campbell (drums), Sylvia Mwenze & Scarlett Fletcher (backing vocals).

It was a complete change of style and vibe on Saturday for dynamic power trio Howes 3. Formed in 2015 and with two successful albums behind them this band is going from strength to strength on both the UK and European music scenes. The leader Oli Howe is a master exponent of multiple keyboard technique and a composer of considerable note. A regular touring musician, he has gigs from The Glastonbury Festival to The Royal Albert Hall already on his CV. Completing the trio were the multi-genre experienced electric bassist Marcus Porter, who possesses one of the most resonant sounds on the instrument you are likely to hear, alongside the fluid and creative drummer Luke Campbell, fresh from the previous night's performance

with Abi Flynn. Their programme consisted of seven original compositions, all created during the recent lockdown period which followed their high profile gig supporting Billy Cobham at London's Jazz Cafe. Shifting rhythmic patterns plus a bright spacious feel and strong melodic lines were the order of the night as the gig progressed towards the introduction of their guest musicians, Will Gardner on saxophones and



New Generation Jazz organiser Jack Kendon on trumpet. It is unusual for this band to be supplemented by reed or brass instruments, but it worked extremely well as we were soon to find out on *Times Change*, a number written in reflection of today's world conditions and featuring a fine solo from Jack Kendon and a broader ensemble sound as Will Gardner's tenor entered the fray. The whole band were oozing class and style, with perhaps the highlight number being the radically titled *Firetruck The System*, the saxophonist turning to alto this time on Oli Howe's fine arrangement. When the low tempo and reflective *Temptation* eventually closed the set, it was more than easy to understand why the band had aptly named their recent album *Moving Ahead*, which is exactly what this forward thinking band are capable of doing.

Oli Howe (keyboards), Marcus Porter (electric bass), Luke Campbell (drums), Guest Artists, Jack Kendon (trumpet), Will Gardner (tenor & alto).

Sunday came and brought with it the almost legendary CloggZ to the Ropetackle stage. Introduced as magical, mystical and musical, Mark Edwards' high-class octet lived up to the billing with consummate ease. To call the band multi-genre is not

enough; they have the virtuosity and power to surprise at every turn, well documented on their 2015 debut album, *Sawdust And Spangles*. One of the most engaging soundscapes that they are able to

produce is the Thirties and Forties styled sepia nostalgia often displayed by the big bands of the time and enhanced here by the imaginative collaborations between violin and accordion. At the same time they are able to make a modern classic their own, such as the performance of American pianist Brad Mehldau's beautiful tune *When It Rains*. Vocalist Imogen Ryall, who contributed to every number of the set either with her own well-crafted lyrics or wordless vocals, wrote some telling lyrics to this piece which also featured fine contributions from guitarist James Osler and the tenor saxophone of multi-reed man Julian Nicholas. Many pieces in CloggZ extensive repertoire come from within the band, on this occasion one of the highlights of the set being a new composition *One January Morning*, a mid-tempo piece, featuring the whole band, written by Julian and Imogen, full of sombre beauty but with a marked edge of optimism. A heart-rending moment from most CloggZ performances is

John Williams' poignant theme from the film *Schindler's List* which, as always, featured a violin masterclass from Richard James, underpinned by the leader's piano, Terry Pack's bass and the sensitive contribution of new recruit, the internationally renowned drummer Darren Beckett, whose musicianship throughout the night was nothing less than outstanding. There was a rousing conclusion to the gig, and indeed the whole weekend with a happy romp through the Spanish-flavoured *El Sabio*, which no doubt wowed the whole of home-based virtual audience. This is a superb band of many diverse talents, superbly led from the front by Mark Edwards and sure of maintaining their prominent place in the music.

Mark Edwards (keyboards), Julian Nicholas (reeds), Neil Corin

(accordion), James Osler (guitar), Richard James (violin), Imogen Ryall (voice), Terry Pack (bass), Darren Beckett (drums). (All players doubling on further miscellaneous instruments).

It had been a great weekend of live music, hosted by the New Generation Jazz pairing of Eddie Myer and Jack Kendon, whose enthusiastic intros and probing examinations in the Question and Answer sessions added a vital extra dimension to the enormous success of the whole project. The Cinematic Live Weekender is still available to watch on the NGJ Facebook and YouTube channels.

Jim Burlong

Pictures from live streamed screenshots.



Big Band Scene

Patrick Billingham



The pandemic prognosis is not good. Even with our chaotic and confusing testing régime, it seems there were at least three times as many positive Covid-19 tests in Sussex in the first half of September as there were in the first half of August. Together, with the recent introduction of the Rule of Six, the prospect of normal big band activity by Christmas is rapidly receding.

Apart from the band all belonging to the same household, there are a few other Rule of Six exemptions. One of which is education. Perhaps advertising the gig as an illustrated lecture would be one way of getting out there and playing. After all, quite a few bandleaders already introduce each chart played with a brief explanation of its background history. Or, by persuading the audience to jump up and down in time with the music, it

might be considered as an organised sport, physical activity or exercise class.

At the time of writing, there is an upper limit of thirty people attending an event. But, on many gigs I have attended, twenty-nine would have been regarded as a pretty good turnout.

But all is not gloom and doom. This statement has appeared on the link to the Visit Eastbourne website.

“Eastbourne Bandstand will reopen next April with a full season of concerts planned, following this year’s unprecedented widespread programme cancellation. Returning with tribute shows, 1812 fireworks, Big Band and much more, the team behind the award-nominated venue are currently finalising a packed programme of shows for music fans young and old, with tickets on sale

from December.”

If the plan is to follow the format of previous years, then interested bands should apply this month. The closing date is much earlier than before: Sunday 4th, for on-line applications to <https://www.eastbournebandstand.co.uk/> submissions..

During July, laboratories in London carried out research into how far wind instruments and singing could spread the Covid-19 virus. The published results were encouraging. They seem to show that side by side two metre spacing was adequate protection, provided that the playing or singing is not too loud. So there we are; the importance of paying attention to dynamics and not playing at maximum volume.

There is news of the first 'world beating' Brexit trade treaty. With Japan. One of the clauses refers to going beyond European Union provisions on protection of intellectual property rights. Including, presumably, copyright.

The current UK law can be changed by statutory instrument, which does not requiring parliamentary debate. At the moment, unless permission has been given by the copyright holder, it is illegal to make a copy if the chart in question has been borrowed, rented or obtained by means of a download enabling no more than temporary access. Or, also, if it is made for ends which are directly or indirectly commercial, in other words, for fully professional bands.

But, if the original chart had been bought or was a gift, copies may be made for private use. Including back-up copies, or for

digital storage such as on a memory stick or on-line in cloud storage controlled by the band librarian.

I don't know, yet, if, or how, these rulings may change. There are major Japanese interests in the world's second largest copyright company, Sony Music. Who are unlikely to take a generous view. For example, a dozen years ago, The Sussex Jazz Orchestra had a guest star scheduled at one of their regular monthly gigs. He said he was under contract to Sony, and would be unable to perform if the planned recording as part of a student project went ahead. The recording had to be cancelled.

It is to be hoped that we shall not have to revert to the earlier, harsher laws, where it was illegal even to make an arrangement of a chart still under copyright. Unless permission, often requiring a fee, had been granted by the holder.

Any clarifications that I can find will appear in future columns. Meanwhile, if the worst comes to the worst, this could be the stimulus for another lockdown activity. As well as making remote recordings, I suggest writing original charts for the band.

Next month: hopefully, reports of, and further suggestions for, lockdown activities. If there is any other information, perhaps about what various bands are planning for the immediate future, or feedback on this column, that you would like me to include in November's Big Band Scene, please send it to me by Sunday October 18th. My email address is g8aac@yahoo.co.uk.

Album Q&A: Rachel Musson

Photo by Peter Gannushkin



Where does the title *I Went This Way* come from?

The title comes from the text that I wrote for the project. In it I explore the process of finding a voice as an improviser, and of shaking off influences and projections of what playing should sound like. I sometimes feel that the innovation and excitement and protest of jazz has been fixed into attainable targets by education institutions. At the same time I recognise the importance of honouring the tradition and generational community of jazz. The title and text explores navigating a personal way through, allowing my own personal voice space within the wider tradition of jazz and improvised music.

How would you describe the music on the album?

I think it's quite eclectic. And it is very much a product of the musicians playing the piece, so each member has a very individual contribution. There are elements of free jazz, a great deal of free improvisation, a touch of what I could maybe describe as contemporary classical. Because there is so much improvisation the

piece has been quite different each time we have played it. On this particular performance we took advantage of having enough time to relax and allow the performance to unfold. My composition drew on elements of notation, graphic score, and using the text as a springboard, and this probably also contributes to the different textures and areas we touch on.

This is your first album mixing original compositions, spoken word and improvisation. What did you learn from the whole process?

I learnt a few things. One is that I would like to explore this way of working more often! I felt hugely privileged to work with such an amazing band, and I found that with musicians like these, often the less is more approach is better in terms of composition because everyone had so much to bring to the process. Using text felt like a bit of a departure for me, but I felt that there was an audience for this, that people responded well to something a little different. I was also reminded that I do enjoy having a little more artistic control over things on occasions - usually I play completely improvised music that is pretty democratic and non-hierarchical. It was quite nice to be able to slow that process down a bit and be a bit more in control to make creative decisions over how the music was ultimately going to sound, although I have to admit the role made me feel quite uneasy a lot of the time - it took some getting used to!

I Went This Way is released on Friday 23rd October, 2020.

Album Review



Rachel Musson
I Went This Way
(577 Records)

This debut release from saxophonist Rachel Musson features a cohesive suite of five pieces recorded live at Cafe Oto in June last year and released by the consistently excellent 577 Records, founded by musicians Federico Ughi and Daniel Carter.

Opening track *Start* puts you inside the mind of a free improviser and the choices that they make as they improvise whilst second track *Matched Up* starts with solo swinging drums and spoken word before the bass and saxophone join in for a bebop-inspired exploration. One feature of the album is the emotional rollercoaster of the overall performance, with third track *Syncope* providing a gentle, calm feel. By contrast, *For Pauline*, explores a number of advanced techniques, with plenty of sliding harmonics from the string section and later on a beautiful flute solo from Xhosa Cole. The fifth and final track, *A Note*, brings things around full circle with a track that echoes the opener.

Both the improvisations and

interactions between the musicians are at an advanced level, particularly noticeable when drummer and percussionist Mark Sanders is involved. Listen to the sax and drums duet four minutes into the fourth track, *For Pauline*, to hear some top level interaction.

Repeated listens reveal the complexity of the combination of notated parts and improvisation, and the soloing throughout is of the highest order. The transitions from one track to another are well executed, giving a unified feel of one continuous piece.

The combination of string trio and saxophone trio accompanied by bass and drums works well, and the improvisations are an excellent combination of intensity and sensitivity. Hopefully this will be the first of many.

Charlie Anderson

Debbie Sanders, voice; Sarah Farmer, violin; Richard Scott, viola; Hannah Marshall, cello; Xhosa Cole, flute and tenor sax; Lee Griffiths, alto sax; Rachel Musson, tenor sax; Chris Mapp, bass; Mark Sanders, drums.

Album Reviews



Maria Chiara Argirò and Jamie Leeming
Flow
(Cavalo Records - CRMCJDG01)

Both protagonists in this collection of audio tales are grounded in jazz but well known for their wide range of diverse musical activities at the boundaries of the genre: Argirò plays with Liran Donin's 1000 Boats and Teotima but has also toured with florid indie-rock gloomsters These New Puritans, and her 2019 release *Hidden Seas* was a crossover stand-out, while Leeming can be found holding down the guitar chair in producer Alfa Mist's super-hip beats-meets-blowing project, as well as producing solo offerings that combine his wide range of musical influences to fascinating effect. There's a host of influences at work here in these ten carefully wrought miniatures - *Flow* has flowing post-boppy guitar lines over moody arpeggios, creating a style and an atmosphere reminiscent of some of Brad Meldhau's post-jazz offerings: *Kosetsu* has Metheny-esque strummed acoustics and organ swells; a cover of introspective

electronica-songwriter James Blake's *Retrograde* preserves the brooding intensity of the original. Piano and electric guitar form the backbone of the sound, but are tastefully augmented with electronic textures, as on the massive reverbs on *Rubik's*, so that the effect is at once very intimate, yet evocative of wide open landscapes: the kind of inner space in which Nils Frahm also likes to operate. The mood is overwhelmingly introspective and sombre but the matching melodic sense and levels of technical and creative accomplishment of both players means that we never descend into musical maundering and sometimes, as on the lovely closing unison passages of *Fables*, the voices combine to gently and unexpectedly elevate the listener, or on *Tune No 1* where Leeming's beautiful solo and Argirò's piano suddenly lock into a fade-out groove. Closer *Boo's Lullaby* is a cinematic tear-jerker. Powerfully atmospheric, musically satisfying and emotionally engaging, this would be a natural fit for indie movies, or artfully shot documentaries, and is every bit as enjoyable if that's your bag.

Eddie Myer

Maria Chiara Argirò, piano, Fender Rhodes, synthesizers; Jamie Leeming, electric guitars, acoustic guitars



Rob Barron Trio
From This Moment On
(Ubuntu UBU0064)

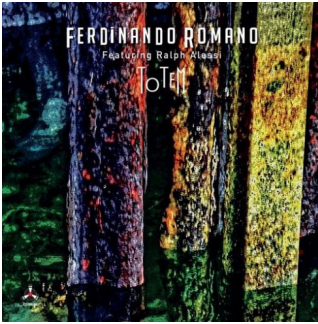
Rob Barron is thoroughly embedded in the UK's jazz mainstream as pianist of choice for the likes of Jacqui Dankworth, Stacey Kent, Claire Martin, Dave O'Higgins, Steve Fishwick, Alliano Neale, Anita Wardell, Georgia Mancio and Jean Toussaint, and his versatility and awesome technique are also evidenced by his parallel career as a film composer, player of jingles and theme tunes and forays into more diverse territory with Kairos 4tet. None of the latter activities have in any way blunted his appetite for the purest swiftest expression of jazz, or reduced his capacity for delivering it with passion and conviction, as evidenced by this latest offering. We're firmly in the territory of the Golden Age piano trio: the clearest antecedent is perhaps the super-hip, fleet-fingered but streamlined bop arrangements of the Sonny Clark (notably the edition of his trio with George Duvivier and Max Roach) or classic Wynton Kelly trios, rather than the florid bluesyness of Oscar Peterson or Phineas Newborn, the introspective modernism of Bill Evans (though there is a poised, bossa version of

the latter's signature *My Foolish Heart*), or the gospel roots of Les McCann or Horace Parlan. There's some evidence of later updatings of the formula by the likes of Kenny Barron (no relation) in the union lick that introduces *Lover Man* for instance, but in general Barron knows exactly what he likes and what he's trying to achieve, and delivers it magnificently without feeling the need to mess with the formula. His choice of accompanists couldn't be more simpatico - Jeremy Brown's full warm tone and light, precise, uncluttered quarter-note swing is a dead ringer for Paul Chambers, beautifully captured in this great-sounding recording, and Josh Morrison knows exactly when to turn up the heat without overcooking the dish. Oliver Nelson's *Butch And Butch* is a masterclass of uptempo swing, Johnny Mandel's *A Time For Love* is a perfectly rendered ballad (while *In A Sentimental Mood* and *As Time Goes By* gently confound expectations by rocking along at pace) and Barron's own originals fit seamlessly into the tracklisting. The sound of masters at work.

Eddie Myer

Rob Barron, piano; Jeremy Brown, bass; Josh Morrison, drums.

From This Moment On is released on Friday 2nd October, 2020.



Ferdinando Romano
feat. Ralph Alessi
Totem
(Losen Records)

The past few months have certainly been a time for self reflection with so much time spent indoors, The lockdown and global crisis has certainly had its effect on every individual throughout the world. However, musicians and artists continue to play, release and create as can be seen and heard on this new release from Italian double bassist and composer Ferdinando Romano. The album bearing the title *Totem* is a meditative journey packed with slow, almost sombre, melodies, with deep and empathetic interplay between the musicians and a sense of mysticism to the music. The title, which varies in translation between numerous cultures and beliefs across the world, is globally united in its base association with spirituality. This is a very fitting title for an album that really does encompass spirituality as its guide through the music. From the very start the atmosphere immediately gives into the mystic and romantic tone set throughout the album. Each track varies in sound, dynamic and structure but all bear a similar resemblance in character, with haunting melodies and gentle musical

interaction between members as each piece slowly unfolds and runs into another. Bold and simple bass notes from the band leader which sit perfectly underneath the soft, almost sombre horn lines, reflect the album's title and meaning. Romano's message of reflection and spirituality definitely hits home in this release along with his unique take on spirituality within jazz. Usually when one thinks of spiritual jazz the first figures to come to mind would be Alice Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders. However, Romano's take on spiritual jazz differs from the Eastern-infused meditations often associated with the style. Instead the sound and feeling have a different setting in mind, closer to the mystic sounds heard in the romanticism of both Nordic and Scandinavian jazz. The imagery, far from being an Eastern one, is one of searching through green forests and misty mountains.



The solos delivered by each member of the band all have a sense of pensiveness and searching about them with each one taking the listener on a micro-journey within the tune itself. The compositions and arrangements of the individual pieces are solidly crafted and yet malleable, proving to be an ideal platform for improvisation and interplay but also have a definite structure and direction. In this his

debut release and hopefully the first of many, Ferdinando Romano has set the bar and established himself as a talented composer, arranger and band leader, and a name that I hope to see more in the near future.

George Richardson

Ferdinando Romano, bass; Ralph Alessi, trumpet; Tommaso Iacoviello, flugelhorn; Simone Alessandrini, saxophone; Nazareno Caputo, vibraphone; Manuel Magrini, piano; Giovanni Paolo Liguori, drums.



Immanuel Wilkins
Omega
(Blue Note Records)

This is the debut album by the 22 year old up and coming saxophonist from Philadelphia, Immanuel Wilkins. The ex-Julliard pupil has been a force for black rights over the last 5 years, as well as developing into a fine musician after moving to New York and sharing stages with the likes of Wynton Marsalis, Aaron Parks, Gerald Clayton and Jason Moran. He is also making a name for himself as a composer and arranger, gaining a commission to write under the banner of The National Jazz Museum In Harlem. He is surrounded by a

very fine trio of equally young musical prodigies. Pianist Micah Thomas from Columbus, Ohio is also a graduate of the prestigious Julliard School Of Music, leads his own groups and has a solo set at the 2018 Newport Jazz Festival on his CV. Daryl Johns is from a professional musical family, his father Steve is a drummer and his mother Debbie a saxophonist. After leaving The Manhattan School of Music, he has quickly become one of the bass men to watch on the U.S. scene. With his roots firmly in West African percussion, drummer Kweke Sumbre has quickly forged his way into the minds of the jazz listening public. Often featured at Smalls Jazz Club in Greenwich Village, he has already performed with "A" listers Kenny Garrett, Cyrus Chestnut, Harish Raghavan and many others. This is a very fine album by four talented musicians, who play in a constantly shifting mode between post bop and a modernistic free form. From beginning to end the leader stamps his own very strong personality on proceedings, the music being strongly influenced by his church background and beliefs. This in no way distracts from the jazz content of the music, in fact it seems to enhance things in a very strong but never dull way. The first thing that grabs the listener is the very tightness of the ensemble playing which somehow allows some very fine solos from all four players to have an even greater impact. The centrepiece of the music is a four-part suite written by Immanuel, simply named by its phases: *The Key, Saudade, Eulogy, and Guarded Heart*. Over the 26 minutes of the composition, all emotions are released, it's profound as you would expect for much of the time, but also



light, melodic and optimistic in others. It conjures up thoughts of Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* in many ways. The standard of musicianship is very high, as it is throughout the album. This group are highly adept at producing atmosphere without any gimmickry or electronic assistance, a somewhat rare quality in much of today's music. The six accompanying pieces are also very well crafted and of no less impact than the suite. Two of the pieces, the opener *Warriors*, with the band in a straight ahead bop mode, and the slow burner *Grace And Mercy* have already been released as singles. It will be very interesting to see if such a move for high quality jazz will enhance the players' careers. Looking for a real album highlight on such a fine recording is

not easy, but some may be drawn to *Composition VIII* with its strong theme, use of time and space plus telepathic conversations between saxophone and piano, along with some of the finest and well conceived bass and drum contributions you are likely to encounter. Overall, this recording should enhance any collection of advanced contemporary music.

Jim Burlong

Immanuel Wilkins, alto sax; Micah Thomas, piano; Daryl Johns, bass; Kweke Sumbre, drums.

Listings

Every Saturday

Paul Richards & Guests
The Level Cafe, Brighton
1pm - 4pm Free

Every Sunday

Elks & Benjamin
The Level Cafe, Brighton
11am - 2pm Free

The Verdict Jazz Bubbles with Julian Nicholas
The Verdict, Brighton
1-3pm £25 with roast

Friday 2nd October

The Magic & Music of Miles Davis
With Brighton Jazz Mafia
Brighton Unitarian Church, 7pm & 9pm

Live Streams

Wednesday 7th October
New Generation Jazz: Sudo

Wednesday 14th October
New Generation Jazz: Sultan Stevenson Trio

Wednesday 21st October
New Generation Jazz: Yadasofi

Wednesday 28th October
New Generation Jazz: Mark Kavuma and The Banger Factory

More details of performances and live streams
can be found on our listings page:
www.sussexjazzmag.com/listings

Pete Recommends...



George Shearing From Battersea to Broadway

This month I will try to make my selections as clear as possible for those readers who will want to listen via the internet. My own first choice is to go to YouTube. I can assure you that all my 'favourite' tracks can be found there very easily.

To explore George's music and career the ideal start would be to buy Properbox 48 *From Battersea to Broadway*. You can trace the start of his success in the USA with his closely harmonised quintet which included Marjorie Hyams on vibes and Chuck Wayne on Guitar.

The tracks which I would recommend are: *Jumping with Symphony Sid*, *East of the Sun*, *Moon Over Miami*. [*Symphony Sid* I played many times about 1955-6]

For a fine example of his later work I recommend a live duo performance in 1980 with the fine Canadian bass player Brian Torff. This was issued as *On a Clear Day* –

Concord CCD-4132.

My selections here are: *Don't Explain* and *Lullaby of Birdland*.

For some rare and very special examples of George as an accompanist go to Peggy Lee's album *Beauty and the Beast*, Capitol CD 7-98454 2. This concert recording is a little disappointing, although Peggy sings a beautiful short version of *All Too Soon*. However the CD includes two rare songs, *Don't Ever Leave Me* by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein, and *Nobody's Heart* by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hart. These are very special examples of jazz singing, featuring just Peggy and George. Please try to give them a listen.

George was a great musician, born in Battersea, London. We should celebrate his achievements.

Peter Batten

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Editor
Charlie Anderson

Sub-Editor & Photography
Lisa Wormsley

Contributors
Simon Adams
Charlie Anderson
Anya Arnold
Peter Batten
Patrick Billingham
Jim Burlong
Sam Carelse
Eddie Myer
Patricia Pascal
George Richardson
Gina Southgate
Simon Spillett
Lisa Wormsley

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