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# Gina Southgate

## Tom Herbert, Solo Double Bass

Jazz in the Round, 26th October 2020 (this is available to watch on the [JITR website](#)).

At the end of last month I was stood in the gantry at The Cockpit Theatre for the second time this year, my new Covid safe position for painting at my monthly residency at Jazz in the Round. Also for the second time, I was painting Tom Herbert play solo double bass.

My new position affords me a bird's eye view and, in a way, leaves me freer, less inhibited as I'm separate from the audience, only being watched from afar and not in anyone's face. I dread disturbing people's experience. This is mostly unfounded as people express that they love to watch the paintings come together. It has been said on several occasions that it has paved their way in to the music.

As I stood in the gantry with the first strains of Tom's solo beginning I felt a strong sense of wellbeing and a good feeling of control. I felt emotional, full of love and gratitude at being in this glorious luxurious position with the whole set about to spill out before me.

I work from a suitcase of paint, it isn't orderly and that's all part of the challenge. I use paints with different viscosity, liquid or stiff, glossy or matt, tubed or in pots, with or without water, drawn from a nozzle or washed with a brush. I listen and look and fight the instincts to do what I know. I strive, I doubt, I wrestle with more, in hope of saying less.

This set, this night, this moment,



this year, this Covid, this venue, this person in front of me... I put out my hand and the liquid gloss in auburn hues was right there and with a squeeze I was watching its thick syrupy line take its slow momentum, running down the canvas as Tom was beginning to hold the room.

I worked into the moving line of paint with a wet brush, brushing in every sumptuous curve of the bass in a sepia wash. With a reluctance to add too much colour I pressed black squidge from a fat brush to add Tom's bowed head over the shoulder of the bass. His arms encircling with left hand up the fret board, right arm working the bow around the bridge lower down. One crimson trousered



SOUTHGATE  
2020

leg solid and square on the floor and side of body visible from behind the ginger wooden curves. Back stooped, neck elongated, in the constant embrace.

The double bass, one of my first loves in my quest for capturing the visual beauty of music. Such an exquisite sculptural form, its colours rich as autumn. Bases in red yellow or brown, all warm colours. Burnt sienna, yellow ochre, carmine, iron oxide, rust, flame, jet, ebony. Its scroll and f-holes, its fingerboard, machine tuners. The way its players and it become one, its third dimension.

In another life I was resident artist in North Wales on the site of an old Victorian iron foundry back in my days of being a metalworker, 1989. I'd already become involved in drawing instruments and musicians at this time. My task here was to make cast aluminium sculpture on view to the public. Like the cubists before me I dissected the bass down to only its lines and drew it from every angle overlaying the drawings and making it back into a solid. I cast it in several pieces and suspended the pieces in space on tensile steel wire.

I've drawn it and painted it time and time again, hundreds, possibly thousands of times. I can draw bases with my eyes closed, but I strive, I strive to get the shadow of the interior curves of its waist. I work hard to make sense of the bridge and the strings coming into the tailpiece. I adore the machine head and its tuners and I pleasure in adding them as eccentric squiggles, drawn as afterthought. I love the pin and the way its fragile line takes the weight, both visually and physically, allowing all that movement as it gets

put through its paces. Turning on a sixpence. Swinging back and forth.

The scrape of the bow introducing another line juxtaposed on the curves. Fingers, hands, pressing pushing up and down the silver lines. Crying, wailing, screeching joy and woe. My mum thought the bass a morbid instrument. I see that, but I also hear its spirited joy, its driving pulse and its solid palpable presence. When the rest come down it's there walking through the room.

My bass paintings are the sum of themselves and their players. If a festival bass is played by a succession of players it never will sound the same, as my paintings of it will never look the same.

This painting of Tom's solo is very different to the first painting of the first solo. He said himself how he'd developed this practice through lockdown and was excited about the potential of future solo outcomes. I too love the chance to paint a musician again and again, understanding their form and their ongoing ever changing relationship to their instrument.

Until it is played any instrument is an object, when it is being played it becomes an entity. That's when my painting of a bass player becomes a portrait.

**Gina Southgate**

# Chris Potter

Saxophonist Chris Potter releases his new album *There Is A Tide* in December. Here he talks about the making of the album.



**How would you describe the music on your new album, *There Is A Tide*?**

During such a confusing and challenging time, I wanted to make music that would be uplifting, comforting, and direct, so I started from simple grooves/bass lines and worked from there. The nature of making a solo recording shifted the focus away from the group interplay that is such an important part of my usual output. Instead, I focused on being able to produce it more carefully, having more control over the development of textures than is possible in a live situation. Also the music is more concise, with no really extended solos. I thought of it more like producing a pop album, which is a skill I've always had an enormous respect for, but had never been able to explore much in my own work.

**Of all of the instruments that you play on the new album, what presented the biggest challenge?**

By putting all my performances under a microscope, I learned a great deal about playing all the instruments I used on this album, even the saxophone! The instruments I have the least virtuosity with naturally caused me the most trouble. The drums were particularly challenging, both because of the unfortunate lack of time I have spent developing proficiency on the instrument, and also because of how crucial they are to establishing the vibe of the music as a whole. Using my producer hat, I tried to document performances that would convey the needs of the music most powerfully given my limitations, that was probably the biggest challenge of all. It gets very difficult to judge the quality of your own performances, especially with all these layers of instruments, it was a little like being in a hall of mirrors.

**What have you learnt in the process of making the album?**

I learned lots of micro things, like how to better control the pitch on the flute, what kinds of attack to use on the bass to get the clearest, meatiest sound, etc. But the important things I learned are on a more macro level, about how to organize the materials into a convincing whole. I found that the skills of an improviser are actually very valuable as a producer, in the way that one reacts to things and decides what the next step is. The pieces seemed to take shape as I went along and heard how they were unfolding, and adding one part might mean going back and changing another part, which would lead to an idea for another part, and so on. It was a bit like painting a picture where there are many layers the observer doesn't see, but without those earlier steps the artist can't arrive at the final vision.

**What plans do you have for next year?**

There is another new album coming out in April that I made with the Circuits Trio (with James Francies on keyboards and Eric Harland on drums). I am very excited about that, it was magical to get together and play music again after experiencing such an intense and isolated few months. I've also been writing a number of larger ensemble pieces that I hope someday to get performed. Given the state of the world it's a little hard to predict what's going to happen, but of course I'm hoping to resume some kind of touring and performing schedule by the middle of next year. Fingers crossed!

*There Is A Tide* is released on Edition Records on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2020. Available on [Bandcamp here](#).



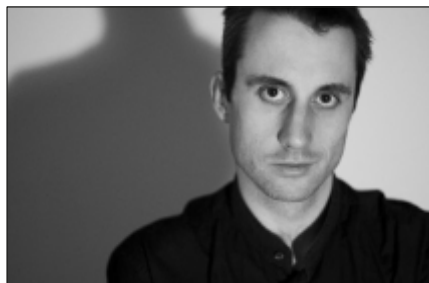


# Jazz News



## [Roxanne Checkley Leaves The Verdict](#)

The manager of Brighton's jazz venue The Verdict has announced that she is stepping down. In a statement she said, "I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in making The Verdict such a success over the last couple of years." In the two and a half years that Roxanne has managed the venue it has been nominated for both a Parliamentary Jazz Award and a Jazz FM Award for best venue.



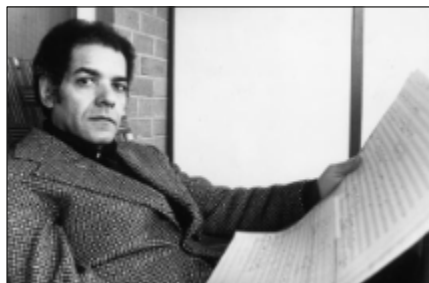
## [Jazz South Radar Sessions](#)

Jazz South's Radar Sessions, their weekly live streamed gigs, continue in December with Randolph Matthews and John Martin on Thursday 3rd December, and Alexander Hawkins (pictured) and Hannah Jacobs on Thursday 10th December. Broadcasts are filmed at various venues in the South of England, including Bexhill's De La Warr Pavilion and can be viewed weekly at 7pm via Jazz South's Facebook and YouTube.



## [Jazz Breakfasts at The Ropetackle](#)

Musician Mike Hatchard returns to The Ropetackle in Shoreham-by-Sea in December with two concerts in his Jazz Breakfasts series. On Sunday 6th December his guest will be vocalist Sarah Jane Morris (pictured) and on Boxing Day Mike will have guests Oz Dechaine on bass and Darren Beckett on drums.



## [George Russell Book Now In Paperback](#)

The book *Stratuspunk: The Life and Works of George Russell* by Duncan Heining has been published in a heavily revised edition as a more affordable paperback. Author Duncan Heining, who has previously written *Mosaics: The Life and Works of Graham Collier*, said about George Russell "His story is a remarkable one and I am very proud that I have been able to tell that story."

# Jazz Essentials

Duke Ellington/Charlie Mingus/Max  
Roach  
*Money Jungle*  
(Blue Note)

I must admit to not really being a great Duke Ellington fan, outstanding composer and bandleader though he was. I find his early Cotton Club sides embarrassing – not least for the fact that that rigorously segregated club employed black musicians to ham up some ‘jungle rhythms’ for its white-only clientele slumming it uptown in Harlem – but his 1940 duets with bassist Jimmy Blanton are revelatory, while anything involving Billy Strayhorn is just sublime. And of course, one must listen to his complete reinvention at the Newport Festival in 1956, where tenor saxophonist Paul Gonsalves’s 27 famed choruses on *Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue* determined the shape of the modern jazz solo.

But one fact stands out about Ellington that one cannot say about, for example, his contemporary Louis Armstrong. Ellington always liked to experiment, to play with the very best musicians of his day. In 1962 Impulse! Records paired him with Coleman Hawkins and then John Coltrane, although neither meeting was that satisfactory, but his one-off meeting with two modernists – bassist Charlie Mingus and drummer Max Roach – later the same year was a complete success.

*Money Jungle* was initially set up by United Artists but is now available on Blue Note. The eleven pieces played are all by Ellington, and he defines them all with a characteristic touch



of stride, some advanced harmonic chords, and that special Ellingtonian display of suave luxury that so runs through all of his prolific output. Yet listen to this set in a blindfold test and you would have problems identifying the pianist, for he sounds so modern, although the presence of such Ellington standards as *Caravan* and *Solitude* would give you a good clue! Drummer Roach is as intelligent as ever, but it is Mingus who steals the show, “playing complicated countermelodies and dizzying, out-of-tempo runs in every register,” as that Bible of our music, Richard Cook’s and Brian Morton’s *Penguin Guide to Jazz Recordings*, helpfully tells us.

Throughout, there is a casual familiarity about this set, just three musicians getting down to play as if in a particularly creative jam session. And that is what makes it all so wonderful. Ellington purists will, I know, look to his undoubted big-band masterpieces for their pleasure, but the very adventurism of this set does make for a stand-out album.

**Simon Adams**

# Big Band Scene

Patrick Billingham



Once again we are at the year's end, when, usually, seasonal songs are brought out of storage and dusted off for their annual outings, and the year's plusses and minuses are reviewed. This year has been one big minus since the arrival of Covid-19.

After a start which promised a flourishing scene for big bands in the county for 2020, lockdown was imposed in late March, although by then some bands and venues had already decided to abandon activity as a precaution. So all in all, there were barely twenty big band gigs in total for the year.

It was particularly disappointing for the newly formed bands, who, after months of preparation, were unable to play a single note in public. And a further disappointment was the inability to use the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War to provide the public with the opportunity to hear and enjoy real live big band music.

At least, during the summer

relaxation of restrictions there was quite a bit of live jazz, but, because it was still necessary to observe spacing, big bands were definitely off the menu.

There is a glimmer of hope. If the recently announced BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine is as effective as suggested, and is available to all, and is not stuck in Brexit queues at the ports, then, by next summer, we could be back to full big band activity.

Otherwise, the prognosis is not good. At the time of writing, the weekly number of positive Coronavirus tests in Sussex seemed to have hit a peak in late October, before Lockdown 2 was imposed. However, there have been several demonstrations against lockdown by misguided unmasked individuals, who seem to regard any sensible attempt at containing the virus as Government policy denying them their rights to do as they like. Perhaps coincidence, perhaps not, the local infection numbers have



since hit a new peak and are still rising.

So the pandemic is still a long way from being under control. The worst case scenario that I have seen so far, suggests that normal activity might not be allowed until well into 2024.

Meanwhile, to cheer us all up, I have included a seasonal picture of pre-pandemic times, and, hopefully a foretaste of what to expect twelve months from now.

Now the public service section, where this column assists bands and musicians.

The drummer of the Happy Days Big Band has gone to music college. The band, which rehearses twice a month on Wednesday evenings in Storrington, seeks a replacement, preferably someone with some jazz/big band experience who can read sheet music. They hope to resume activity in the spring, Covid-19 permitting. Under normal circumstances, the band plays several gigs at various venues around West Sussex, usually at weekends.

If you can help, or would like further details, please contact Chris Merryfield-Day, 07788 190561 or [chrisjday1992@gmail.com](mailto:chrisjday1992@gmail.com).

I have been surprised fairly recently that quite a few of my experienced big band colleagues have been perplexed by what I thought were fairly standard markings on charts. So, as part of this public service, I hope to clear up some uncertainties by including some definitions. Here is the first. More are to follow when space permits

**Accidental** (noun) the note you actually played.

Next month: Details of big bands still active in the county. Anything else, such as behind the scenes big band activity, or feedback on this column, that you would like me to include in Big Band Scene for January 2021, please send it to me by Saturday 12th December. My email address is [g8aac@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:g8aac@yahoo.co.uk). Season's greetings to everyone.

# Live Review



Photo: Peter Chrisp

**Nigel Price Quartet**  
*The Verdict, Brighton*  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020

So here we are, back to nothing like normal, in The Verdict's intimate basement amidst the trappings and paraphernalia of social distancing. A reduced number of tables and chairs are spaced as far as possible, the clientele are masked like a surgeon's convention, and there is an abundance of hand sanitiser. Spirits, however, are high, and the unflaggingly hospitable welcome from venue manager Roxanne Checkley ensures that something approaching a normal atmosphere is maintained even as errant punters are shepherded politely but firmly

back to their seats. Nigel Price's renowned outfit are here, offering a beacon of constancy in an ever-changing sea of restrictions; as promoter Andy Lavender wryly notes, there is at least no loss of musical taste on display. *Stryke One's* bossa-to-swing allows tenor saxist Vasilis Xenopoulos to demonstrate his Turrentine-esque fluency and Price himself to unleash a torrent of octaves and sweep-picking in his full, hot, burnished tone: *Far Wes* showcases new kid Joel Barford who impresses with his energetic, assertive but supremely tasteful drumming, while *Monks' Shop* gives solo space aplenty to Ross Stanley who runs the changes on his Hammond's drawbars to mesmerising

effect as Xenopoulos excels with a joyous Parker-quoting statement of intent. *I'm Just A Lucky So and So* is the closest this high energy outfit get to a ballad and is a high point for all, with Stanley's masterful exploration of the textural possibilities of the instrument taking the honours. *Cariba* is reinvented as a funky shuffle after the manner of Fred Wesley's JBs, and the warhorses *Jeannine* and *Body And Soul* are reinvigorated as contrafacts. *Cherokee* gives everyone the chance to burn *Old Folks* ends with a stunning solo cadenza from Price, and the evening concludes with a convincingly hot and raw take on *Wes' Movin' Along*. It's a rare treat to hear such a thoroughly road-tested unit, even in normal times; under the

current circumstances it's like rain in the desert and the passionate response from the crowd leaves the players beaming. The window of opportunity was to prove all too brief, and The Verdict was compelled to shut its doors again afterwards; tonight was a heartening display of the deep well of talent, and devoted commitment on the part of both players and audience, from which the scene will have to draw if it is to survive.

**Eddie Myer**

*Nigel Price, guitar; Vasilis Xenopoulos, tenor saxophone; Ross Stanley, organ; Joel Barford, drums.*

## Live Stream Review

**New Generation Jazz: Octoberfest - Cinematic Live Sessions (part two)**  
*Every Wednesday in October via NGJ [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)*

New Generation Jazz concluded their streaming of live sets from the Ropetackle Arts Centre via the NGJ Facebook and YouTube channels, with the final two gigs from emerging bands on the last two Wednesdays in October.

October 21st brought the exciting **Yadasofi** led by drummer Nadav Schneerson to the stage bringing with him his London based ensemble who successfully fuse together the diverse genres of Afrobeat, latin and hard bop into their very own heady mix. The leader

himself was influenced by two drumming greats, Elvin Jones and Art Blakey, and it showed, both in his musicianship and leadership qualities. This is a band that brings back fond memories of the famous Blue Note recordings of the Sixties, but uplifted to reflect today's musical tastes. There was a fine edge to things, led from the drums and showcasing a front line of trumpet and trombone, supported by telling interludes on electric keyboards from Sultan Stevenson, following the superb performance from his own piano trio in the previous broadcast. This was all held together by the strong bass lines of George Richardson and the intelligent use of electronics, as subsidiary instruments of trombonist Will Heaton. The 30



Photo: Lisa Wormsley

minute set comprised four original pieces, with each number of sufficient length to allow exploration alongside spine tingling ensemble passages. The compositions were all well crafted and arranged, particularly the opener *Two Step*, but the true highlight of the proceedings had to be the evocative and haunting *Negev*, a number reflecting the desert region of Southern Israel. As the piece progressed the mood became almost hypnotic with trumpet man Tommy Peach outstanding. Things segued into a passage of almost free-form on this one for a time which only added to the impact and originality overall. It was a set of superb jazz that most listeners would not want to have ended and would not have sounded out of place coming from any of the famous clubs in New York's Greenwich Village.

*Nadav Schneerson, drums;*

*Tommy Peach, trumpet; Will Heaton, trombone and electronics; Sultan Stevenson, piano; George Richardson, double bass.*

The final session of The Octoberfest-Cinematic season featured the ever popular **Mark Kavuma & the Banger Factory**. The Ugandan born trumpet player has been a favourite at Brighton's Verdict Jazz Club for some considerable time, both with his own bands and others. His smooth and uncluttered delivery, warm tone and improvisational skills set him firmly among the top echelon of horn players on today's UK scene. The band's self-titled album released last year on the Ubuntu record label, drew at least four star ratings from virtually everywhere it was reviewed. Announced as "a band with some of the most outstanding musicians on





Photo: Lisa Wormsley

the London scene", the octet lived right up to its billing. With two tenor saxophones in the front line, supporting the leader's trumpet, there was certainly a comforting fat sound to the ensemble in a programme of mostly original hard and post bop themes, delivered with the usual virtuosity now expected from this band. The first solo of the brief thirty minute set was however provided by one of the fastest rising stars of jazz piano on the UK scene, Deschanel Gordon, on *Cedar Tree*, a piece written by the leader in homage to the American pianist Cedar Walton. The young pianist's constant flow of ideas and flawless technique seem to reach greater heights with every live performance. As the set progressed, ex Jazz Warriors and Jazz Jamaica tenor man Mussinghi Brian Edwards came to the fore on the wonderfully melodic, self titled piece, *Mussinghi*. He is another player with an inexhaustible range of ideas and the ability to build and release layers of tension into the music, reminiscent of the great

Sonny Rollins. It was pastures new with a stunning rendition of Duke Ellington's *David Danced Before The Lord*, from the maestro's first sacred concert back in 1966, before things closed out with the intriguing *Arashi No Moto* (after the storm) which will feature on the band's highly anticipated new album. With David Mrakpor adding extra colour on vibes, the intricate guitar runs of Artie Zaitz, supported by the excellent rhythm section, this set was a perfect example of the heights that young musicians have risen to on the UK jazz scene in recent years. This gig concluded a series showcasing the best of British jazz, expertly filmed, recorded, streamed and hosted by New Generation Jazz over the past eight weeks.

*Mark Kavuma, trumpet; Ruben Fox, tenor sax; Mussinghi Brian Edwards, tenor sax; Deschanel Gordon, piano; David Mrakpor, vibes; Artie Zaitz, guitar; Michael Shrimpling, double bass; Will Cleasby, drums.*

**Jim Burlong**

# Album Reviews



## Chet Baker

### *Salt Peanuts*

(Sleepy Night Records SNRCD021)

This latest addition to the Sleepy Night jazz catalogue was recorded at The Salt Peanuts Club in Cologne on 23rd and 24th May 1981 and had only previously been available on vinyl and also as a 'bootleg' recording. The gig was part of an extended European tour covering France, Belgium, Austria, Germany and The Netherlands. Chet was fifty at the time, just seven years away from his tragic death in Amsterdam on 13th May 1988. There are nine tracks over the eighty minutes taken from the two weekend gigs. For most of the time Chet seemed to be in very fine and imaginative form on trumpet, but much less so in the vocal department, where on both tracks, a crowd favourite *My Ideal* and the great standard *My Funny Valentine*, both taken at the slowest of tempos, his voice sounds very weak and subdued as if he was suffering from some kind of medical condition or other. Having said that, the recording taken as a whole

includes some jazz of the very finest order.

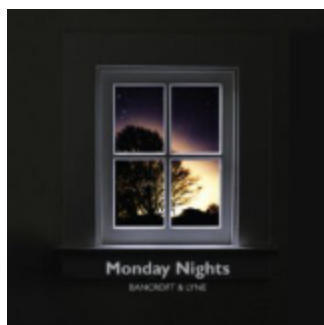
The line-up was slightly unusual with the inclusion of a second horn in the shape of the highly respected Pennsylvanian Jon Eardley on flugelhorn, best known in his later years for his role within the WDR Big Band. The American saxophonist Bob Mover has only two albums credited to him as a leader, but played with Mingus on the very famous Five Spot Cafe performances of the Seventies and regularly gigged with the likes of Kenny Barron and Tom Harrell. On this session he soloed brilliantly on alto and combined superbly with the twin brass instruments in the ensemble passages. For a while the pianist, composer and jazz educator Dennis Luxion, was a mainstay of Chet's bands and here his relaxed and elegant keyboard style contributed significantly to the overall group sound. The two German musicians joining them fitted in very well, with the ex rock and soul man Rocky Knauer, this time playing the acoustic instrument, benefiting greatly from his advanced position in the recording mix, alongside his compatriot the post-bop drummer Burkhard Ruckert.

The set lists were very much along the lines of the band's normal live repertoire of the time with some notable additions, including the opener *Prayer For The Newborn* composed by Monika Lingens and Chet's pianist Dennis Luxion plus a stunning low tempo reading of Monk's classic *Round Midnight*. The leader is magnificent on both of these, but it is also the solo passages from Bob Mover's alto, alongside Jon Eardley's burnished

flugelhorn contributions that take the whole album above the norm. Many listeners may conclude that Ray Brown and Gil Fuller's *Ray's Idea* may be the highlight track of the album with Bob Mover's alto at its most agile, Chet's extremely expansive solo and the vibrant bass of Rocky Knauer all bringing sustained applause from the Cologne crowd. In summary this is a fine retrospective of one of the music's most loved and iconic figures and also benefits from an intriguing interview with Dennis Luxion about life on the road with Chet Baker, included in the twelve page liner notes.

### Jim Burlong

*Chet Baker, trumpet, vocals; Jon Eardley, flugelhorn; Bob Mover, alto and soprano sax; Dennis Luxion, piano; Rocky Knauer, bass; Burkhard Ruckert, drums.*



### Bancroft & Lyne *Monday Nights* (Lisaleo Records 0901)

This is the fine new release from the Scottish/Canadian duo and named after their highly successful home studio broadcasts of recent times. There are five original pieces here and the same number of re-

workings of great standards. The album is a joy from start to finish. Sophie processes a warm and enchanting voice, that she is able to back up with lilting guitar modes over Tom's resonant bass figures. The songs are almost all delivered in a low key, intimate fashion with the occasional foray into the territory of the wordless vocal, which adds contrast without destroying the mood in any way. The vocalist is of course part of the well known Bancroft jazz dynasty, that includes saxophonist Phil and drummer Tom. Bass man Tom Lyne, who emigrated to the UK in 1998, comes from Edmonton, Alberta, is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, audio production specialist and founder of The Pathhead Music Collective. The pair are also making great strides in the USA, with an appearance at The Rochester International Jazz Festival in New York, a favourable review in Downbeat magazine and Sophie's compositions being used in the television series *Six Feet Under*.

If there ever was a jazz orientated album to induce a sense of calm and tranquillity to the listener, this one is surely it. There is total empathy between voice, guitar and bass throughout. The gentle intensity of the original pieces are equal to the renderings of the well known standards in every way. The ethereal and intimate *Fragile Moon* is a good example and sounds at the first playing as if it has been listened to many times before. *Miles Away*, a song about love at a distance, and *Blue Moon* with its gentle romantic lyricism are both capture their relative moods perfectly. Even with the more folksy originals like *Comfort* and the Tom Lyne piece *Far From Mars*, which has recently been released as a single,

there is a sense of total calmness and control. When it comes to well known tunes from The Great American Songbook, and others, the duo make them their own, with the use of unfamiliar tempos and a fresh sounding vocal delivery. The old warhorse *Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby* is a case in point where the easy paced vocal over rhythm guitar provide an ideal showcase for the timeless and intriguing lyric. The precise diction and wordless vocal segment on Cole Porter's *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*, is another example of how a few subtle changes can refresh a tune that has been around for many decades. Even with something as familiar as Fredrick Loewe and Alan. J. Lerner's *On The Street Where You Live*, from the 1956 Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*, there is a freshness and re-birth of this great song. When it comes to something a little more 'hip' and 'cool' such as a piece by the great Tom Waits, there is still no problem, as the duo produce a sensual rendering of the superb *Grapefruit Moon* originally from his 1973 album *Closing Time*.

In its genre, *Monday Nights* is an album of the highest class, superbly produced, and entertaining, that will make an ideal addition to any collection of quality music.

You can learn much more about both musicians and their activities at [www.sophiebancroft.co.uk](http://www.sophiebancroft.co.uk)

## Jim Burlong

*Sophie Bancroft, vocals, guitar; Tom Lyne, double bass, bass guitar.*



## Joshua Jaswon Octet *Silent Sea* (Ubuntu Music UBU0065)

London-born, Guildhall-trained Jaswon took a proactive path amidst the post-Brexit handwringing and decided that if the riches of Europe's jazz scene were to be arbitrarily placed beyond the reach of most UK players, he would become European himself by relocating to Berlin. Here he is now, heading up a band of players from Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam and Copenhagen alongside Dutch vocalist Anna Serierse in a determined display of cross-border unity. Each composition of the album is based on the text of a contemporary British poem, by writers Jackie Kay, Maura Dooley and Rachael Boast. The poems deal with the themes of Brexit and the environment and the album's title originates from Boast's poem: a hushed, introspective environmental lament with Serierse's crystal clear tones soaring high as the subtle rhythm section breaks into a loping 6/8. There's no keyboard and Johannes Mann's carefully precise guitar, leavened with tasteful distortion à la mode leaves plenty of airy space above and below the horns; Jaswon's own alto sax is sweet and full-toned, offset with plenty of

tough boppish phrasing; trumpeter Miguel Gorodi and tenor player Marc Doffey both impress on *Extinction*. Trombonist Jan Landowski has plenty to say on the artfully wrought *Still Life With Sea Pinks And High Tide part 1 - Part 2* introduces some tricky polyrhythmic adventures for a more contemporary fusion feel, but without capsizing the delicate balance of the endeavour. The quality of the playing throughout is exemplary and the band are very well-matched: rhythm team of Sidney Werner and Aarón Castrillo can swing or deliver the contemporary enthusiasm for odd number meters with ease. There's a lyrical precision to the writing, with the occasional echo of folk melody, that ironically recalls the very British sounds of the Johnny Dankworth band, thoroughly updated for our post-Brexit, environmentally challenged times.

### Eddie Myer

*Anna Serierse, vocals; Joshua Jaswon, alto & soprano saxophone; Marc Doffey, tenor and soprano saxophones; Miguel Gorodi, trumpet and flugelhorn; Jan Landowski, trombone; Johannes Mann, electric guitar; Sidney Werner, double bass Aarón Castrillo, drums.*



### Raquel Martins *Real* ([single release](#))

London has been called one of the centres of the world with its numerous inhabitants and an abundance of rich and diverse cultures. This is certainly true for its modern jazz scene which has for the last few years given rise to some of the pioneers of modern jazz and contemporary music so it's always exciting to see new artists emerging and keeping the spirit of modern music alive. This is definitely the case with the new release of singer songwriter and guitarist Raquel Martins' debut single entitled *Real*. Straight from the start the diverse influence is heard, the smooth vocals backed by minimal synth chords really evoke the sound of neo-soul. However the intro is cleverly deceptive as the vocals continue for a few bars, drums and bass enter playing a smooth line to accompany the vocals still very much in the style of soul music. But shortly after the arrival of the rhythm section the piece changes completely as one staccato chord cleanly ends the first section and brings about the next which in contrast to the introduction really bears the sound of Brazilian samba music. This section lasts only

for a short while after which we are reintroduced to the neo-soul sound we first encountered but this time with the inflections of samba. The vocals carry out the next verse, this time accompanied by flute weaving some intimate melodies around the main vocal line as the rhythm section builds the dynamics to take us back to another chorus. After a second chorus the tune is dropped into a bridge section which slowly builds up with the aid of electronic beats which brings an element of hip-hop into the tune's already broad and varied canvas. The bridge leads to one final chorus with the drive and energy cranked up to the max allowing for the final chorus to bring us to the end of the piece. This is a well written track with a lovely mix of musical influences beautifully woven together, the playing of the band is tasteful and fluid and the production is a well balanced mix giving perfect clarity to the overall sound of the music. A big congratulations to Raquel Martins and the wonderful musicians featured on an impressive release and hopefully the first of many.

**George Richardson**



**Judith & Dave O'Higgins**  
*His 'n' Hers*  
 (Ubuntu Music UBU0066)

Here's an unexpected treat - a revamping of the 'tough tenors' format popularised in the 1950s by Johnny Griffin and Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis in particular, but with the added twist that our battling tenors are also husband and wife: their press release makes a comparison to the uxorious hitmen of the movie *Mr and Mrs Smith*; while the O'Higginses are a comely enough couple, they are unlikely to challenge Brad n' Angela for pin-up status, but amply compensate in well-matched musical talent. Mr O'Higgins may be more familiar to UK listeners as a consistently rewarding practitioner of what you might call the modern mainstream, but Mrs O'Higgins is also a published author and practising forensic pathologist and therefore wins the first round before the needle even hits the record. Once the music starts playing, we're struck by the restraint shown by both parties: *Fourth Dimension* is the kind of breezy, bluesy modal offering that might have graced a mid 60s Hank Mobley album and an ideal vehicle for extended side-long blowing, but the tenor solo is carefully structured and concise and there's space made

for the excellent band as well: Graham Harvey's thoughtful, melodic piano solo evokes the post-bop fluidity of Kenny Barron with a touch of the McCoy, while Jeremy Brown's bass is a warm-toned swinging delight and Josh Morrison gets a series of tasteful trades. Part of the fun is in trying to guess who's responsible for which tenor statement and the pair are so well-matched in terms of light, centred tone, graceful deployment of bop language and swinging phrasing that it's truly hard to tell, as when they trade phrases on the waltz-time contrafact *We'll Forget March*. *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most* gets a stately reading with a nice arrangement of the oft-ignored verse; *Los Bandidos Bagnarolles* has some mid-tempo strolling choruses where the contrast between the first, boppishly Rollins solo and the second, marginally more Shorterish one really set the listener guessing, before Jeremy Brown artfully conjures up the spirit of Paul Chambers with a beautifully poised solo. *Save Your Love For Me* gets a mini-Basie type treatment, Dorham's *Soy Califa* rollicks along sounding very close to the original sans Kenny, though perhaps at a slightly lower temperature, and Dexter's amusingly named *Hanky Panky* is the ideal closing statement. Superbly accomplished, impeccably judged (especially in the warmth and clarity of the Van Gelder style audio capture) and highly enjoyable.

**Eddie Myer**



**Oaagaada  
Oag-ada/Swimming Trip  
(We Jazz Records)**

As we all, as a worldwide community, continue to deal with the uncertainties of our current situation we are fortunate enough to still bear witness to some amazing music being created and released, far from being the music industry's downfall, the digital age has proven to be its saviour in the recent crisis. Which brings us to a release by a band whose exciting and heartfelt music is as fresh and mysterious as their unusual name. The Finnish quartet signed to Finnish label We Jazz Records have released a double single bearing two original compositions, *Oa-gada* and *Swimming Trip*. The first tune dives straight into a driving groove with drums edging the music forwards alongside a quick glimpse of bowed double bass scratching out small rapid responses before switching to pizzicato to answer the drums in a different manner. The duet of call and response between bass and drums carries on for a while until the horns enter the picture with a slurred lamentation that feels somewhere between the music of Ornette Coleman and Alice Coltrane. Further on into the piece the horns start to



Photo: Oaagaada by Johanna Hjorth

behave more erratically in their playing, with sharp bursts of bent and mournful notes, a sound that very much conjures up the free jazz explorations of Don Cherry. Riding on top of a strong groove provided by the rhythm section, the frenetic conversation between the horns carries on and slowly builds to an almost chaotic climax as the first track draws to a close. The next piece, titled *Swimming Trip*, is quite the opposite to its free form predecessor, coming straight in with a tightly wound groove complete with melodic statements from the horns; the band evokes a great energy similar in feeling to the sound of modern jazz pioneers, Sons of Kemet. The energy is kept up throughout the tune as horns trade solo statements while the bass thumps out an infectious line that sits perfectly on top of the drums. Both

compositions on this EP are exciting pieces and definitely show the diversity of the band's creative output. Their influence of free jazz is clearly felt in their overall sound and individual musical approach, also the lack of any harmony instruments such as piano or guitar etc. providing chords is another characteristic of free jazz ensembles and the group take full advantage of the melodic freedom available to them. This is a great release from a talented group and we look forward to hearing more from Oaagaada soon.

### **George Richardson**

*Tuure Tammi, trumpet; Sami Pekkola, sax; Tero Kempainen, bass; Simo Laihonen, drums.*



# Listings

## Jazz Breakfasts with Mike Hatchard

*The Ropetackle Arts Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea*

Sunday 6th December with Sarah Jane Morris 11 am (£12)

Boxing Day Jazz Breakfast with Oz Dechaine and Darren Beckett 11am (£15)

## Live Streams

Ronnie Scott's

<https://www.youtube.com/c/RonnieScottsClub>

606 Club

<https://www.606club.co.uk/>

New Generation Jazz

<https://newgenerationjazz.co.uk/>

More details of performances and live streams  
can be found on our listings page:

[www.sussexjazzmag.com/listings](http://www.sussexjazzmag.com/listings)

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# Pete Recommends...

## Tommy Flanagan



From his arrival in New York in 1956 to the end of his life, Tommy can be found on hundreds of recording sessions. With so much music now easily available on stream you are spoilt for choice. During his career it took some time for fans and critics to realise that he was not just a great accompanist, but also a great solo and trio performer. A similar awakening has taken place since his death, with the solo/trio work steadily earning more respect and admiration.

Following my new policy I am going to suggest that you should have a look at several albums which confirm his ability as a great soloist. The first, and most important, of these is:

### *The Tommy Flanagan Trio at Montreux 1977*

I think this is probably the very best of all his trio recordings. On YouTube it is a little tricky to find all the tracks, especially *Blue Bossa*, which is fantastic, but rather elusive. I recommended this album as a CD in 2019.

A strong contrast is provided by: *Theonica* which is his personal selection from Monk's songbook, featuring George Mraz and Art Taylor. I recommend *Panonica*.

Then I recommend one of his very best studio albums: *The Music of Harold Arlen* This makes an interesting contrast with the Monk album. It features George Mraz and Connie Kay. Try *Out of This World*.

Finally, a very strong album, with an interesting mix of tunes: *Misterioso* with outstanding work from Ron Carter and Tony Williams. A beautiful reading of *Angel Eyes*.

To see Tommy on video I suggest *Tin Tin Deo* with George Mraz and Lewis Nash. There is a wonderful session from Ronnie Scott's with Ella, - and Joe Pass on guitar added to the trio. Do not miss it.

**Peter Batten**

Sussex Jazz Magazine is a monthly magazine that covers jazz across the South Coast region.

Issue 107  
December 2020

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