

SJM

May 2021



EMERGENCE 2021
FESTIVAL GUIDE

Derek Nash's Latin Band



PICANTE

Paul Malsom, guitar — support

Sunday 30 May 2pm - 5pm

Flavours of Buena Vista Social Club
Sergio Mendes, Astrid Gilberto
Gypsy Kings, Stan Getz
Mambo, Salsa
Samba
Bossanova



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JAZZNEWBLOOD

by Patricia Pascal

Nov 10 - 20th
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X  



Monthly



JAZZNEWBLOOD

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**BRIGATON
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QOW TRIO

"The trio initially got together through their mutual love of Sonny Rollins' classic post-bop trio of the 1950s, but soon found themselves expanding their repertoire to explore the rich and varied territory led not by the great holdovers of big band tenor players over the generations."

Riley Stone-Lorenzgan | Spike Wells | Eddie Myer



"I love playing with this band because it combines both my love of the wonderful tradition of our jazz forebears with my love of absolute freedom and the feeling that anything could happen." says Lorenzgan.

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Jazz News



[Jazz South](#)

Jazz South's online festival in April featured Olie Brice's Radar Sessions, which was rescheduled from earlier in the year. The session was the debut performance of Olie Brice's *Fire Hills*, a new composition for three free improvisors which included Olie Brice on double bass, Jason Yarde on alto sax and Nick Malcolm on trumpet. The piece is available to watch on Jazz South's YouTube channel.



[The Verdict Live Streaming](#)

Musician and video producer Tristan Banks is continuing his curation of live streamed music from The Verdict every Friday in May. Friday 7th May will be Greg Heath/Nick Meier Quartet, Friday 14th May will be Paul Booth, Ross Stanley and Tristan Banks, and Friday 21st May is Ahmed/Darwish/Osborn/Rahman. All live streams start at 8:30pm and tickets are £8.



[New Generation Jazz](#)

New Generation Jazz have announced the return of their Cinematic Live Sessions, a series of online gigs filmed at Shoreham's Ropetackle. Artists to perform include Emma Rawicz, Roella Oloro, Kianja, Quinn Oulton, Cherise Adams-Burnett and J-Felix. The series begins on Wednesday 19th May and will be available on the New Generation Jazz YouTube channel and Facebook page. The series is accompanied by the Jazz Forum, a set of short educational videos by the performers.



[Live Gigs in May](#)

With indoor hospitality re-opening on 17th May, venues such as The Brunswick and Ropetackle Arts Centre are putting on live jazz. [The Ropetackle](#) in Shoreham will feature QOW Trio (pictured) on 22nd May. [The Brunswick](#) are hosting a guest quartet every Thursday starting with Jack Kendon on 18th May and Will Gardner on 25th May. They will also be putting on a jazz brunch every Saturday from 22nd May.

EMERGENCE 2021

De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill
Thursday 27th May - Sunday 30th May



[TICKETS: £5 - £15](#)

[FESTIVAL PASS £40](#)

Co-created, co-curated and collective. For musicians, sonic artists, producers, cross-arts collaborators, spoken word artists and audiences.

Emergence offers a time and a space for players, artists and audiences to come together for a weekend of events where people can meet, experiment and make the right mistakes.

Thursday 27th May
Doors 7:30pm Start 8pm

RESONATE

A free flowing collaboration of spoken word artists and musicians - from beatboxing to double bass to harp, diversity is the word.

EMERGENCE 2021

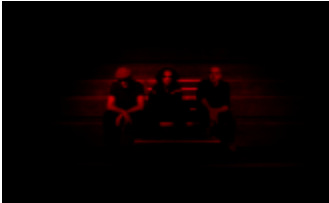
Friday 28th May

Doors 6:30pm Start 7pm



HEXAGONAL

A high energy sextet, with African and jazz influences.



ILL CONSIDERED

A band comprising of musicians interacting with each other to create freely improvised music, based loosely around simple pre-written themes or composed on the spot.



SPIELZEUG

An instrumental trio playing a fusion of jazz, funk, reggae and electronica

Saturday 29th May

Doors 7pm Start 7:40pm

STEAM DOWN

An artist collective, weekly event and music community based in Deptford, South-East London and created to connect London based musicians and producers.



EMERGENCE 2021

Sunday 30th May

Doors 6pm Start 6:30pm



LIONESS

A UK MC breaking all the stereotypes associated with female artists in the grime game today. Lioness recently collaborated with Royal Ballet choreographer Alex Whitley for the first-ever ballet choreographed to grime music.

QUEENIE

A grime MC from London who was active in the early era of grime, and steadily gaining recognition for her unique style and lyricism.

LAUGHTA

UK grime MC, born in Nigeria and of Lebanese descent, her multi-cultural background paints her unique style, however it's her wordplay and flow levels that's got the scene pushing for her.

DJ LIONESS

One of the first female grime DJs on Rinse FM. The mission has always been to discover new talent, showcase new music and champion the 'roar' sound of grime.



Ife Ogunjobi and Chelsea Carmichael will be improvising with Laughta, Lioness and Queenie.

MRISI

A UK based South African spoken word artist, hip hop artist, jazz pianist, producer and MC.



YADASOFI

A high octane sextet with compositions reminiscent of the post-bop era, an essence of free jazz, Middle Eastern/Jewish music, West/North African music and Cuban music.

Chelsea Carmichael

Saxophonist **Chelsea Carmichael** answers questions from artist Gina Southgate, ahead of Chelsea's appearance at Emergence 2021.



Chelsea Carmichael with Arthur O'Hara Trio at Emergence, Hastings, 2018

When did you realise you were a saxophone player? What/who played a part in the start of the journey?

I started off playing piano and I thought that I was going to be a piano player initially. I had visions of being a concert pianist - I really enjoyed playing classical piano and I

was good at it too. The saxophone came into my life at the age of 12, purely as a second instrument as I was thinking about going to Chetham's School of Music for the rest of my high school education to be a classical pianist, and at the time you had to play a second instrument. Through recommendations I ended

up with an incredible saxophone teacher - Dean Masser - based up in Wigan, who taught me from the beginning up until I left Warrington, and it quite quickly became my first instrument. Dean is an incredible jazz saxophonist, and it's through his teaching that I was able to get into Trinity. I didn't end up going to Chet's in the end, but throughout my formative music education my father was the one supporting the journey - to this day he is still my biggest critic.

In my mind's eye your saxophone is a silver tenor, am I right? Tell us about it.

Yes - it's a Silver Selmer Mark 7, and it's the second tenor saxophone that I ever got - quite a few years ago now. I have others - but it's my favourite horn and just feels like me when I play, and I don't see that changing any time soon. I think it's a horn I will have for the rest of my life, regardless as to whether it stays my first choice or not. For the proper gear heads out there - I also play a metal Otto Link size 10 that I am currently trying out - which I'm really enjoying, but I'll definitely be going bigger still... so if anyone has any leads please let me know because they are hard to find...

Tell us a bit about your life in Manchester.

I am initially from Manchester, but my parents moved out to Culcheth, Warrington when I was really young. I had a super normal upbringing - Culcheth is a village, and when it came time to leave I was definitely ready for somewhere different with more going on. I played in Wigan Youth Jazz Orchestra for a number of years which really gave me my love of big band and large ensembles,

and still now I love doing that kind of work. I used to go to jam sessions every now and again in Manchester at the Indigo Bar and Matt & Phred's pre-Trinity, and Band on the Wall is still one of my favourite venues to play/watch gigs. I love Manchester, and usually spend some time there whenever I go back up north checking out the record shops and just generally taking in the vibe. I can't see myself living anywhere else in the UK but London, but I do miss how life moves just that bit slower up north.

Did you move to London to study at Trinity? What hit you when you arrived?

I moved to London to study at Trinity - which was the best decision for me. There is a lot of conversations around whether it is actually necessary to go to a conservatoire to get an education in jazz when everything you need to know is in the records and in people - but I felt that London was where I needed to be and I wouldn't have seen a way to get here at the time that I did without going to an institution. There also wasn't organisations like Tomorrow's Warriors or the like near me, who can give you all you need getting into jazz growing up, which I really hope to see something like that up north in the near future - I think it would really help in making the UK scene more open, as opposed to very London-centric. However, I loved my time at Trinity - I honestly didn't know that much about jazz when I got there - not compared to a lot of people in my year who had already been immersed in this world from such a young age. I also met some truly incredible people that I really hope to be playing with for as long as I can.



Chelsea Carmichael with Theon Cross at We Out Here Festival, 2019

I didn't necessarily have any sudden realisations when I first moved to London, but I definitely had gradual ones which were quite life changing for me. Growing up where I did - it was a very white area, and I didn't have any friends that were not white throughout my upbringing. Moving to London and meeting the people that I have met really allowed me to understand that there is incredible meaning in being a Black Woman, and really allowed me to explore my identity in a way that I had never done before. I realised that growing up I was trying to assimilate to whiteness, as opposed to just being exactly who I needed to be. I'm still on that journey of learning - or unlearning - depending on how you want to see it. Outside of music, that has been one of my greatest gifts from moving here.

You've had a busy few years with great projects like the Arthur O'Hara Trio, Cassie Kinoshi's Seed Ensemble, and Theon Cross's Fyah, to name a few. Are you a side-woman in these instances or is the process collaborative?

Most of my involvement with the scene has been as a side-woman so far - and I love being a side-woman. I am always incredibly grateful when I am asked to be part of someone's project - knowing how personal music is, I am always honoured to be asked to be part of the vision. I am continuously learning so much from being in the bands of others - and I really do count my blessings being able to play with the people that I do - and it has prepared me for taking this next stage in my career. Developing my own personal projects has been on the back-burner this past year - I have used this year

of relative musical inactivity to really decide what I want for myself musically, as I have found that my music tastes have changed a lot recently, and the music that I was writing doesn't represent me anymore. So, I have been taking my time. I definitely have felt the pressure of having to get a band/project together ASAP, but have taken the advice of a dear friend of mine who told me that taking my time with it will produce the results I want. I'm now starting to take the next steps now as the end of this madness is in sight - keep your eyes peeled!

At Emergence Festival you're on stage with trumpeter Ife Ogunjobi, and grime MCs Queenie, Lioness and Laughta. What can we expect?

Is this a one off or an ongoing project?

In all honesty, I don't know what to expect as of yet! The initial logistics are being worked on at the moment - and rehearsals are coming towards the end of this month. I know there is a solid vision and I'm looking forward to seeing how I can help bring that to life. However, with the people involved, I'm really excited for this one. I am unsure whether it will be ongoing or a one-off - but if all goes well, I can't see any reason to not do it again!

www.chelseacarmichael.com



Dave Wybrow



Director of The Cockpit theatre in London's Marylebone for more than 20 years, Dave Wybrow explains what Emergence is all about.

At its centre is new wave jazz. The sort of jazz that's been coming out of South East London for one, and around the South Coast for a decade or two. While we've had Jazz In The Round we've had Nubya Garcia, Ezra Collective, Tri-Force and more established players like Jason Yarde, Pat Thomas and Orphy Robinson. All of these people have been through. I think Shabaka Hutchings was one of the first people we put on ten years ago. So all that new wave of jazz has inspired a lot of young people, including young women rather than just blokes, and it's just broken out of its Blue Note box.

But also what we try to do with Emergence is not to look at it so much as a musical genre but as a kind of social movement. In the same way that punk is looked on as a social movement. It had a politics, it had a design, it had a photography. It had a music, certainly, but it also had lyrical content, it also had its moral certainties and moral objections. The idea of Emergence is just to give a space to new wave jazz to see what it connects to outside of itself, in so far as it does and in so far as it might do. That's why there's arts. The strapline is "Jazz, Arts, Mob", and 'Mob' is short for mobilisation. So what we're looking at is what's being mobilised by this new music and the fact that it's recruited so many people to it, who have reached for jazz at a time when popular music in the mainstream in this country might

have lost its voice, so people were going for quality, musicianship, lineage that they could identify with, but also trying to reach for the now and reach for new understandings and community. What we're trying to do is find where that connects and if it connects then what does it connect to? So there's spoken word, a bit of dance. There's not as much cross-arts in Emergence as we would want, because of social distancing and the constraints of doing it under the situation that we're in. Generally, we would work outwards from new wave and see what it connects to in terms of design, clothes, fashion, photography, politics, you name it.

“We have to hold it lightly, and see where it leads us.”

The first thing you find is that one of the links is afrofuturism, as much as it's any of the Blue Note back catalogue. It also links to the Middle East.

This whole thing with connectivity. It's not just afrofuturism, it's also things like English chamber music and the English classical tradition. If you look at Spielzeug, they're nothing to do with that. What that says is that whereas jazz used to be a very precious specialism, it's now become a meeting place. That's a real change. Jazz is now a global crossroads and it's tremendously exciting. The grime crossover. That's a really nice crossover to add.

We're assuming that we can still go ahead and do this but we have to hold it lightly. We have to hold it lightly, and see where it leads us.

www.thecockpit.org.uk/

Jason Yarde

Artist Gina Southgate talks to musician **Jason Yarde** who appears at Emergence Festival with Hexagonal.

What led you to being a reeds player - what are your main instruments?

I grew up in an era where it seemed every kid in a UK school had to play the recorder. While I had fun with it musically and socially I didn't really master it but it certainly planted the desire to play a wind instrument, otherwise I'd always dabbled with different instruments whenever I'd get the opportunity. After a little research and the move to secondary school it was all a bit of a numbers game... I didn't really like the odds of 3 valves on a trumpet and the 7 positions on the trombone and even the clarinet overblowing at a 12th seemed like potential headaches so I took the option with all the notes under the fingers.

In practical terms, my school only had two saxophones available at the time, versus 27 clarinets so I felt lucky to land the sax. With hindsight I wished I played the clarinet first as it's harder going back the other way. My main saxes are a Yanii soprano, Selmer alto and a Jupiter baritone.

How did you prepare for the road to professionalism?

There's a question!... Well, of course there's the obvious things like practice, listening to as much music as I could manage, transcribing, reading and writing words and music, observing gigs and the behaviours, mostly of those who would inspire me. Still, regardless of all the preparations you might make, there comes a point where you just have to

decide and go for it!

I was in my mid-teens and started attending workshops run by the Jazz Warriors; by the time I started my degree course at Middlesex University I'd already had some professional work under my belt - things overlap. I'd done enough research at an early age to learn that deciding to play the music that I really wanted to play wasn't necessarily going to be the best thing for my bank balance and I've been dealing with this particular equation with varying degrees of success ever since.

Preparing for professionalism is ultimately an ongoing concern especially when coming up in particular; you can meet people even within the industry who don't necessarily want to pay you properly and certainly nowadays with the developments in how music is consumed, we find ourselves in a world where many folks expect to get their recorded music for free or at most very cheaply.

As such, I've felt the importance pretty much from the beginning of my career of being able to call upon a body such as the Musicians' Union and in more recent years I've been involved with the Ivors Academy, championing the rights and writing of UK composers. (Rant over)

Did you have an epiphany on this journey?

I'm not sure any of the above would be classed as an epiphany but certainly I guess if I ever had one it



would be finding a Sidney Bechet album cover in the local record store when I was still attending primary school. It pictured him in a white suit holding a soprano next to a rainbow - another seed.

I've seen you working with large ensembles, first at Gateshead International Jazz

Festival in 2010 and more recently with Acoutastic Bombastic - tell us a bit about your relationship to working with large groups?

Wow, I'm impressed you can even remember that Gateshead show! I've always been into music with a wide palette and the sense of community it can afford. This comes from being into orchestral music, mass bands and particularly getting into the big bands of Duke Ellington and then Count Basie at an early age. I've also been extremely fortunate in working in various big bands lead by some of my absolute musical heroes including Andrew Hill, Hermeto Pascoal, Mano Dibango and McCoy Tyner as well as helping community projects that involve large numbers of participants of all ages and stages. Even now I still try and join in whenever I'm able with the LIO (London Improvisers Orchestra) and I'm also part of the Bansangu Orchestra helmed by Paul Booth.

ACOUTASTIC BOMBASTIC is certainly my personal palette of choice as a composer as it incorporates so much of the instrumentation I like to explore, shifting from a strings, saxes, choir, brass or percussion group and I get to hear and play with some of my favourite musicians in the



Jason Yarde performing at Gateshead Jazz Festival, 2011
by Gina Southgate

process. As the name suggests, it's essentially an acoustic ensemble but I already have a strong plan for maybe the 3rd or 4th album to be electric. (I'm getting ahead of myself!) I should be concentrating on finishing the first album which has already been greatly delayed over the past year (and more) for all manner of reasons. If all goes to plan it will be released via Jazz Re:freshed before 2021 is over.

As well as your groups you have your BlueBox Diaries project where you combine electronics with improvised sax - tell us what excites you about that?

I love exploring how you can totally transform a sound using effects pedals. Whether it be sax, my voice or some miscellaneous objects or instrument, there's something quite satisfying about pushing and pulling, looping and layering the sounds to a point you might not recognise the original source. In more practical applications I use this setup quite a lot when working with poets and with a bit of imagination I'm able to sonically follow wherever their words might suggest whether it be a rainforest, underwater, a cityscape or indeed a more abstract space.

I was able to explore this project at first thanks to a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship in 2008, essentially living in a studio apartment with gear! Whenever I do a set with this project I make a point of doing at least one piece completely from scratch which often acts as a soundcheck. I also like to ask for direct impetus from the audience whether it be a number, colour, place name, object, random words or a phrase. These impromptu snippets allow the audience an extra entry point into the madness and myself, another way in from outside my head. As a frustrated guitarist I really like all the lights too.

Your group with Louis Moholo-Moholo 4 Blokes (sometimes augmented by Shabaka Hutchings as 5 Blokes) plays a lot of South African based tunes and you also worked with the late great Pinise Saul in Township Comets. What attracts you to working with this music?

Put plainly there is so much heart and spirit in South African Township music and I feel particularly blessed to have witnessed this directly at source on many occasions. Louis has actually been my longest standing employer at nearly 30 years and post a few gigs in the UK, I first went to SA with him towards the end of 1992. I stayed for some 6 weeks and met some amazing characters, returning in the new year with lots of ideas, photos, an additional 3 Mothers and a much better understanding of the still very recent history of this beautiful country and the wretched apartheid system. There was a definite sense of hope in the air, which was partly why we were able to make the trip in the first place but you'd go to certain places and the old signs would still be up.



Jason Yarde's Acoustic Bombastic at Jazz in the Round by Gina Southgate

There are so many other fantastic South African musicians from across the generations I've had the privilege to both play music and break bread with but it would certainly be remiss of me not to add at least two other unquestionable greats now sadly departed to the list you mention - Hugh Masekela whom I was fortunate enough to write a number of big band and orchestral arrangements for, in addition to a Flugel Horn Concerto for the LSO, and Sibongile Khumalo, the jazz and opera singer of whom I had the good fortune of touring with her UK band and later went on to tour further afield in the band she co-led with Jack DeJohnette named 'Intercontinental'. Sadly none of these things were officially recorded.

My understanding of your playing is that you are a tunesmith and an improviser. Are you equally comfortable in both places?

Another very good question... I've developed deep love and appreciation for all types of music from noise and abstraction to a good tune (or vice versa). It's music to me and you try and seek out the good

stuff regardless.

I guess if you look at the context of any of these approaches then there is always something I could do with learning or revising at any given point to make me feel more comfortable as a performer. This I guess goes back to the thing of always trying to develop your practise and abilities so you can always make musical contributions you're happy with.

The ultimate 'trick' for me is being able to mix all manner of approaches into one holistic music. This is an ongoing quest for me and the purist inside me has at times held me back. It's all about the context in that respect, and this increasingly comes down to my efforts.

One of the best things about playing in bands with Louis is no matter how crazy and intense it gets, you are never too far away from a melody. If it's all about balancing tension and release, then I think the more ammunition you have in your arsenal the better. All that said, I never want to get too comfortable.

You relocated to Hastings several years ago. What impact has this had?

Yes, we quietly slipped away to the coast (a while ago - my daughter was not long 1 and she's now soon to be 9!), generally it's been amazing every time I have to go to the bank I get to see the sea!

Even pre-pandemic and pre-moving, much of my work was online, such as arranging and orchestrating and I've always worked to have a space where I can record myself well and send files to people so in that respect it hasn't necessarily mattered where I live. I will always love London but I'm at a stage where I'm quite happy to take things at an altogether easier pace - this doesn't really have

to do with work itself but more the getting to and from work. I actually regained some time just to listen to music for pleasure which I was missing in London - everything was work and running around; I can now generally relax on a train knowing I'll get a seat all the way.

There is a great wealth of artistic and musical talent in Hastings (and St Leonards On Sea, which is the area I'm in now) and I'm still making connections. One of the guys who reached out very early on was pianist John Donaldson. He subsequently introduced me to a few like-minded jazz musicians in the area, and different blowing situations. Along with Greg Heath and a handful of locals we started a semi-regular gig at the First In Last Out (one of the all important watering holes in town) under the name of the FILO Allstars. This eventually morphed into a regular band named Hexagonal and we were just getting ready to record our second album and make quite an extensive national tour before plans had to change with the first lockdown.

We did manage to do some recording remotely with a new commission for Greg through Jazz South and we are now very much looking forward to being back in a room together and playing as part of the Emergence Festival. Of course we were very much looking forward to the event originally being held at St Mary's in the Castle (walking distance for most of the band) but it's great that the festival team has been able to make things work just around the coast at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill.

<http://hexagonal.org.uk>

QOW TRIO

The trio initially got together through their mutual love of Sonny Rollins' classic pianoless trios of the 1950s, but soon found themselves expanding their repertoire to explore the rich and varied territory laid out by the great tradition of big-toned tenor players over the generations.

Riley Stone-Lonergan | Spike Wells | Eddie Myer



"I love playing with this band because it combines both my love of the wonderful tradition of our jazz forebearers with my love of absolute freedom and the feeling that anything could happen," says Lonergan.

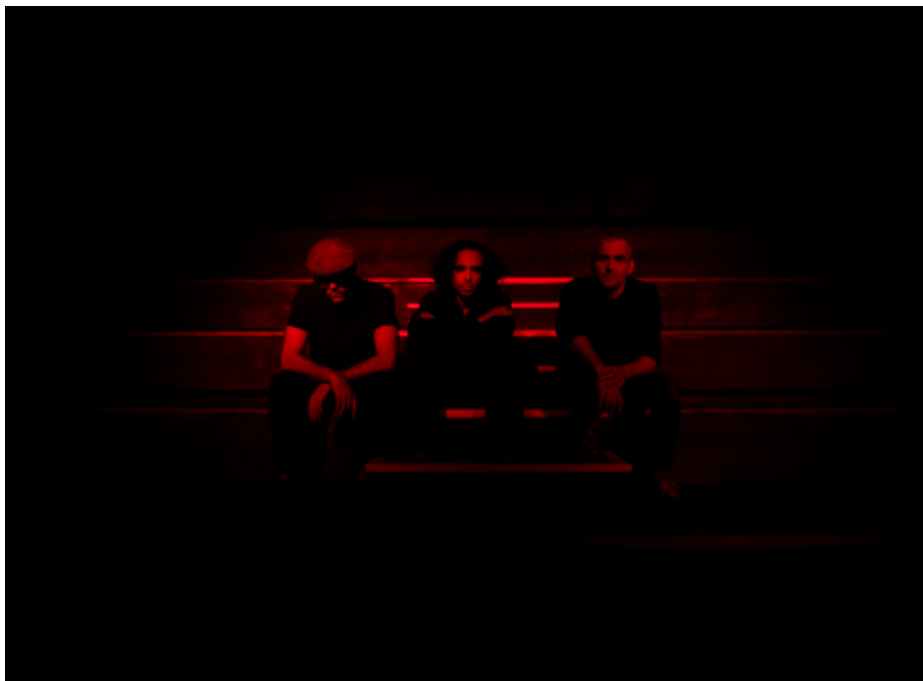
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III Considered



III Considered by Lisa Wormsley

SJM: Could you please tell us a little about how you first started the project?

IC: We all knew each other from sessions and the band genuinely did just spring up from a jam session. There have been players coming and going, but the core remains Idris and Emre and we're really delighted that Liran Donin has joined us as a new permanent member. It's been a really surprisingly and eventful journey over the past three years or so and we're very happy in our new partnership with New Soil to launch this next chapter of III Considered.

SJM: There is a new album coming?

Has that been approached differently with your new lineup?

IC: Yes, this new album has been a very different experience. It's still been based around fully improvised sessions but now we've taken time to construct arrangements over and around the improvisations and invite guests to join us. We've even had a session with 9 guests jamming freely from the start which led to some amazing new places for us. We're really excited to release this one!

SJM: Is there much discussion about what you're going to play or even direction before a session?

IC: None at all! We do have a lot of

tunes now, so sometimes at shows we can call one up if one of us really feels it, but for the recordings we just play. The two Christmas recordings we've done are loosely based on famous carols or Christmas tunes, but there's still no discussion about how to approach them before recording. It's a hugely liberating project and allows us to access many artistic situations that would be very difficult or costly to do with more arranged music.

SJM: How do you think this totally free composition works with you and your collaborators?

IC: It's all about shared respect and extraordinary amounts of listening and trust! We've found the Ill

Considered 'sound' seems to permeate the sessions, and I guess that it's the intention we approach everything with that allows other players to feel the same freedom we do?

SJM: You recently unveiled a collaboration with artist Vincent de Boer called *The Stroke*. Can you tell us a little about that project?

IC: *The Stroke* was an idea Vincent had a few years ago and ended up dedicating over a year of his life to hand drawing and animating. We all met in a London studio and improvised to a huge projection of the animation. That first take made it to the final video release of *The Stroke*. It was a huge honour to work with him on this and it's quite an impressive final result.



SJM: How has lockdown affected Ill Considered?

IC: Really the most profound thing has been the loss of gigs, we had so many bookings for 2020 and it was disheartening to see them all fade from the calendar one after another.

The surprising upside of all this was that it was possible to get all the guests we wanted on the album at the same time in one session! That would never have been possible if normal touring schedules were in operation!

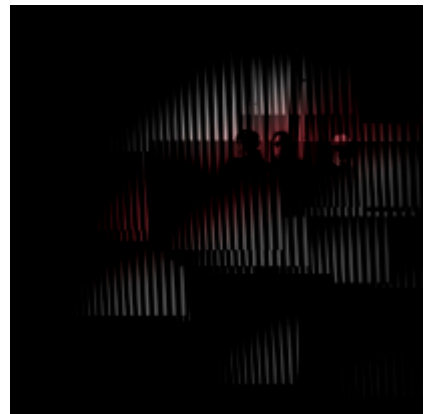
SJM: When can we see you live again?

IC: Our first live booking is Emergence Festival on the 28th May, but we have four concerts online which

you can view on youtube on the New Soil channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkuHzAiRHMJ_YaOMfkqB79g

Image above: Ill Considered 8 album cover by Vincent de Boer

Image below: by Lisa Wormsley



Words...Nadav Schneerson



"I was born in Tooting, London while my parents were living in Dollis Hill at the time. That's where I spent my first 2-3 years of my life and then moved to Brighton. My parents wanted a bit more peace, less chaos than London.

We've pretty much been in the same place since I was a kid. I grew up as a second generation immigrant to Israeli parents, the culture was a big part of my upbringing and my parents definitely did a good job of keeping that up. I think it can be hard being surrounded by such a different culture and staying true to yourself. I would mainly speak Hebrew at home and English at school, that way I naturally became fluent in both. I always felt a bit different in school, I would float between friends a lot. I could get along with people but I've always been my own person, I think I can thank my parents for that. They taught me how to stay true to myself. I got into drumming properly when I was around 7 and had lessons in school, wasn't til I was 13 I got an electric drum kit. I used to play drums in assembly through primary school, I always looked forward to that and I'd come back week after week, playing the same damn thing! In front of the whole school, every time! I think I only knew one groove at the time and thought I was the top dog. That arrogance lasted a while, til I saw other kids stepping up, I was doing my thing but I didn't focus so much through my mid teens, I was more troublesome through secondary school. It wasn't until I was 16 I decided to fix up and take music seriously, I started getting Jazz lessons, I made sure I got the GCSEs to get into college and that's when the vision was becoming more clear. I went on to do music in college which definitely helped me learn a lot, less about music but about people, behaviour and what I want in life. I was more active outside of college though. I always knew music was for me but going to college also made me realise what I want won't be handed to me. I realised I had to go out and just do it. There's a lot of trial and error, but it gets you there. I was lucky to have so many mentors. There were so many people supporting me and it gave me a lot of strength to go and take a shot. I hope

those that helped me know they were a big part of where I am now and I hope to thank them all properly one day. I was going to a lot of jazz jams through my college years and honestly, I didn't know shit when I started coming. But I'm very glad I was welcomed the way I was and the platform for me to grow was there.

After college I took a year out and spent that year living my life, going to jams, drinking, hanging out and all that. Summer was over and I had my uni auditions in the winter. I only applied for two places and got tonsillitis just before my audition for one of them, but I didn't even know it was that yet. I went up to London in the cold early hours and braved that audition. I'll tell you, it was not nice. I felt terrible, the fear of an audition is already a lot but being that unwell made it so much worse. Ha yeah we can guess I didn't get into that one. So I had the other audition a month later and got into that, where I'm currently in second year.

I moved up to London in September 2019 and was 19 at the time, now I'm 21. Looking back an awful lot has changed since I was in my teens. I'd say moving to London has been the biggest change and most impactful as well. I took everything I was doing back in college and started doing it here, it's been a lot of building and it's been building really nicely. I'm very happy with where I am now and my eyes are on the future.

Getting into my 20s now has been worrying. Mainly financially, so far I've been okay but very soon I'll be leaving uni and will no longer have a student loan. I rely on that a lot! At this moment everything's pretty stable but I have no clue what's coming up. I've never really had a proper job, so I can tell it's gonna be a struggle to find something suitable for when I finish uni. The way I see it, if I grind hard enough, hopefully I'll be able to survive off music at that point. But I know that's hard. Ideally I'd have a job in a music shop, record shop, music studio or something like that as well as sessions. I believe it will fall into place."

Words: Nadav Schneerson

Photos: Lisa Wormsley

<https://www.facebook.com/Yadasofi>

Big Band Scene

Patrick Billingham



By now, a truncated Brighton Festival should be under way, with the usual lack of any big band events. The Fringe is scheduled to run from Friday 28th to Sunday 27th June, also without, as far as I can see, any big bands.

Trumpeter Rod Burrows runs the Ronnie Smith Big Band who, in better times, rehearse and play at Shoreham Airport. He worked for the NHS for 40 years as a laboratory scientist. I asked him about his musical career.

How did you first get into music?

As a child I had a good treble voice and sang in a church choir, had piano lessons from about seven to nine years of age, so learned to read music. My teacher said there was music in there somewhere but it wasn't on piano! (How right she was.) In junior school I won a talent competition playing the national anthem on the harmonica.

How did you take up the trumpet?

When I was about 13 and at the Brighton (then) Grammar School, the CCF had no buglers so to get out of wearing uniform too much I volunteered. I found that it felt natural to produce the notes. That got me started on brass.

I was in the Sea Scouts, one of whom had a trumpet which he let me have a go at and I also found that straightforward, mentioned it at home and to my surprise my father got a second hand instrument from the retiring pit player at the Brighton Hippodrome.

I saw an advert for players wanted for Brighton Silver Band and played soprano cornet for about a year. (Won a cup for best beginner).

What got you into jazz and big band music in particular?

Up to this point I was into classical music and trad jazz. Then one memorable day a new young man started at work, discovered that I had a trumpet and said the Worthing Youth Swing Orchestra was looking



Rod Burrows with the Ronnie Smith Big Band

for players. Off I went, fell in love with big band music and have never looked back.

How did you become involved with the Ronnie Smith Big Band?

I first met Ronnie whilst playing with the WYSO. He had a commercial band at the time (7 to 10 pieces) and held Sunday lunchtime blows in a big band format for union members. We, from WYSO, used to go along and sit in for the odd number. One snowy New Year's Eve Ronnie rang me to say his lead trumpet was snowbound and could I help out, so I hopped on my scooter and went from Brighton to Worthing pier in the snow. After that I became part of the set up whenever he had a bigger line up. I did quite a number of New Year's Eve gigs until disco took over. During the Sixties Ronnie decided to concentrate on big band, giving up his small group. That is when the big band really started. I was mostly on third but would do any chair if needed. We had a regular Sunday evening at the Tudor Close in Ferring for years until the landlord retired and the new man was not a fan. That was when we moved to

Shoreham Airport.

Has there been any activity involving the band during lockdown?

For the last year during lockdown we have not met at all, with an occasional mail shot to remind people of what's happening.

Have you anything planned for after lockdown?

The Airport wants us back as soon as we are able, which I guess will be when all restrictions are lifted. We are not a formal band, rather a group of players with a love of music. We do no commercial gigs but are always willing to play for charity if asked. At the Airport we just send the hat round and leave it up to the crowd to donate. It pays for the cost of rehearsal room.

If there is anything such as feedback on this column, that you would like me to include in June's Big Band Scene, please send it to me by Wednesday May 12th. My email address is g8aac@yahoo.co.uk.

Ahnansé



Ahnansé by Lisa Wormsley

What is Steam Down? Who are you and what do you do?

Steam Down is a music project that started in 2017. It's got three main areas. We've got a weekly event, which most people know, called SD Weekly now (it was previously called Steam Down). We also have a touring band, and we also have a writing side to the project. The touring band is who you'll see out on the road, comprised of regular artists. The regular artists at the moment, who are on the EP, are Afronaut Zu and Tinyman, and there are many other members, which is quite a few names!

Those are the two core artists on the EP at this particular point in time. Outside of that we have a band

internally as part of the project, as well as producers and writers that work on sculpting and bringing together the EP.

The last time we spoke was back in 2019. How do you think Steam Down has developed since then?

In 2019 I don't think we'd even released anything until the end of the year. We were touring a lot and we hadn't had any recorded music out so we were growing off the back of the reputation of the night, but at the end of 2019 we released our first single, then we went into lockdown. Everything was put on pause, we had some members leave and some new members join the project. 2020 was mainly spent working on the EP so

that was kind of what happened, putting that all together and preparing everything for 2021. At the beginning of 2020 we released a track called *Etcetera* on the *Blue Note Reimagined* compilation. People might know it from the *FIFA21* video game as it's one of the tracks on that playlist. A lot of people now know that track from there.

In March 2020 we were supposed to go to SXSW but then the pandemic hit. We ran to get our visas the day before and the day afterwards it was like 'all international travel is banned and the nation is going into lockdown'. I guess everybody had this big pivot to do because we didn't get to go to SXSW.

At the end of the year around October we did a week and a half of socially-distanced shows. That was really interesting playing to a limited audience and having people seated because most of the time we play to people standing up, especially our weekly event. It was quite interesting, and I thought the response was really great and there was still a really beautiful energy. To perform all together after six months or so was a joy. The musicians missed it as much as the audience did. Now, up to 2021, we're getting ready to release our debut EP.

Where do you see Steam Down going in the future?

What the pandemic did was it made me reflect quite a lot on how dependent Steam Down was on physical spaces and physical events. It was something I was conscious of before the pandemic but even more so now. After releasing the EP I'm also looking at what I'm going to call 'the village' essentially. It's something new that I'm working on. It's a space

for people to get more into the experience of Steam Down in a virtual space. I find social media and other spaces can be limiting in terms of the format or in terms of how much focus you give, the distractions and what an algorithm will curate and show you. A lot of people are really interested now, the core fanbase, so I want to create a space for them to have a more intimate connection. So we're partnering with a company and we're looking at doing conversations and interviews with different members that are part of the group, and different little musical clips and treats that might not be on the EP but are maybe things that are a work in progress or improvisations, or things that are spontaneous and more about our story and our journey on a more week-to-week basis.

The primary thing, looking forward, is putting out the EP, for the first time documenting what Steam Down does publicly.

Everybody is able to listen to their body of work on the streaming services. It's the first time that the public are going to see some of the musicians and artists that are part of the group. And also they get to hear our message, outside of coming to our event and experiencing it from a live perspective.

When you release records you get to revisit it, but every time you revisit that song you're getting another experience of it, another feeling from it, or maybe a deeper sense of connection with the band the artist or the music.

How has lockdown changed things?

I think there are some other angles on lockdown. Speaking to other members who are part of the group, a lot of us were like really eager to



get back out playing. A lot of us were eager to perform to audiences again, a lot of us were eager to connect. Musicians generally like connecting with other musicians and also with audiences. Having a renewed appreciation for the ability to play in physical spaces and the magic of live music and performing in front of an audience and the connection that you share with each other. A lot of us, internally in the group, were missing that and having to almost re-think where we were and what we were doing. That left a lot of room for reflection. More than that it also allowed a lot of room for people to write music. In 2021 and 2022 we're going to see a lot of interesting and great music. A lot of people in the project have been working on their solo bits as well as working on

the EP, so I think there's lots of great music to look forward to as a result of it. And looking to 2021/22 I think we'll have a lot more appreciation of physical spaces and the ability to come to shows and concerts and how much it nourishes us, when we listen to music and meet together and share moments.

<https://www.steamdown.co.uk/>

Rosie Frater-Taylor

Interviewed by Patricia Pascal

Rosie Frater-Taylor is a multi-talented artist that goes from strength to strength with every new release. She seems to craft every song showcasing just the perfectly balanced amount of skill in each one of her talents. Her unique signature sound tying her luxurious sweet vocals with her virtuoso guitar playing displays artistry reminiscent of artists like Becca Stevens, Lianne La Havas, or even Joni Mitchell. At 19, *On My Mind*, her debut album, explored a more folksy approach. At 21, her second album - *Bloom* - reflects her growth, and sounds like a more mature version of Rosie's gorgeous musical storytelling seamlessly blending folk, pop and jazz.

Rosie, for those who haven't been introduced to your music can you tell us a bit about your background and relationship with your instrument? Was guitar your first choice?

I was raised in a very musical household - both my parents are professional musicians - we'd have super eclectic music about the house: Al Jarreau, Lewis Taylor, Tania Maria, George Duke, which opened my young ear to jazz music and beyond. My dad started teaching me drums first at about the age of 8, which I'd say created some strong rhythmic foundations for my future writing and guitar playing. Soon after this, I picked up one of my mum's guitars. I was very into acoustic guitar (Ben Howard, Tom Odell) initially, in fact, I first found my roots in jazz studying

at Tomorrow's Warriors, NYJO and the Royal Academy of Music. At this time, I was also avidly checking out some awesomely unique songwriters: Becca Stevens, Gretchen Parlato & Emily King.

I was 16 when I started laying out multi-layered guitar-based demos on Cubase, ultimately combining all of these influences into my own songwriting - that eventually became my debut self-produced album *On My Mind*, which I released in 2018.

One of the unique characteristics of your sound is the way you wrap your vocals around your guitar especially when you improvise. What inspiration do you draw for that approach?

I draw a lot of inspiration from George Benson in regard to the 'scatting' my solos of course. That connection to the human voice is a beautiful, seriously cool sound and you're right it draws people in for sure! But, I do try to work it into my style of writing and playing in a personal way. I draw a lot on rhythmic ideas and a 'poppier' / 'singer-songwriter' style of guitar playing as much as jazz.

I presume you compose all your songs on the guitar? What is your songwriting process?

For *On My Mind* and *Bloom* all the tracks were written at the guitar. In terms of blurring genre lines (jazz/ folk/pop/soul) and layering up stringed parts/harmonies, guitar consistently gives me the most inspiration and scope.

My process normally begins at the



guitar with chords, riffs, parts or lines followed by or in conjunction with melodies and lyrics. I love to layer my tracks with ukuleles, vocals or different guitar textures; I actively search for unusual or moving harmonies and qualities but really yes, guitar is the foundation of it all.

Why the name *Bloom* for the album?

This project really has a 'coming of age' feel to it in terms of the musicality, production and playing as well as the songwriting and lyrical content. Those three years between 18-21 are super formative and they happen to encompass the period in which I've created this album (I'll be 22 about the time of release!). I've grown in a variety of ways.

You said to me yourself the other day how the new tracks sound 'polished' in comparison to *On My Mind* which has a younger, self-made quality to it, which I like too, as a totally viable snapshot of my sound at the time. This album was really a journey to solidifying 'my sound', realising what that is, why I write the way I do and am drawn to certain sounds and genres, and then doing it with as much intention as I can. In a similar vein, I'm also relinquishing a little bit of control this time in terms of the mixing and marketing of the album, working with a manager and a gradually expanding team to try and get it into as many ears as possible.

I also think it's a cool word, a big part of my writing is in its development or 'growth', how it

ebbs, flows and grows, if that makes sense.

If you could choose one song from *Bloom* that best defines the sound you were going for in this second album, which one would it be?

That's a difficult question. I tap into lots of different styles and influences on the record, some go off on a 'folk' tangent or a 'pop' tangent more so than others - depends on the track.

The intention for *Bloom* was to blur those lines whilst maintaining the consistency of my style and process. In terms of combining groove, my harmonic taste, layering, lyrical content and improvising, the first single *Better Days* gives a good snapshot of all of those.



Can you introduce the musicians you have chosen to record in the album?

Of course! Mostly I worked solely with my band and friends / colleagues from the Royal Academy. Matt Carter (piano), Seth Tackaberry, Hugo Piper (bass) and my dad Steve Taylor (drums, percussion) – I play all of the guitars, ukuleles & vocals on the album.

I was also fortunate enough to collaborate with Snowpoet's Chris Hyson on two of the tracks; he brings some very beautiful piano and sonic vibes to the record.

You were 19 when you released your debut album - *On My Mind* - to great feedback.

What advice would you give to other young musicians dreading



that first release?

Even if you're not completely happy with it, your music is going to be a much greater asset to you out in the world where people can connect with it, review it, become fans of it, come to gigs based on it etc. etc.

Growth is the most normal thing, accept that you can release something and learn /

grow from it and accept that growth is impossible if you do not start

somewhere. Artists that take their earliest projects down are just playing into this toxic, social-media led culture of 'how it seems' matters most (here's the best 15 seconds of my 5 minute take...), in reality

EVERYONE dislikes things about their earliest releases and EVERYONE grows and improves.

It is a very real possibility that you will never be 100% happy with the music you release but my advice would be to make peace with that because creativity works in damn mysterious ways.

It's natural that by the time it comes to releasing something you've been sitting on for months you're already onto the next sound, you're already a better player, but that does not invalidate it; in my experience, that's just your brain messing with you! I suppose I'd ask you to consider what the reasons are for holding back and suggest that you get some objective opinions of people you respect in regard to your release and genuinely listen to them.

I am consistently unsure about releasing my music babies into this harsh industry – my manager even

has a lovely spreadsheet of all the rejection comments! I often hate aspects of the music but with time I learn to listen to it innocently and love it again. Playing your music live is also a great way to carry those tracks/songs forward with you as you grow as a musician. I mean, you can also re-record, re-release, re-mix, re-master. It's just part of the process.



What are you listening to at the moment? Any new artist you recommend to our readers?

Right now I'm listening to Snowpoet's latest album a bunch as well as Brotherly's *One Sweet Life* and Rickie Lee Jones' and Little Dragon's self-titled projects.

In terms of a new artist I've been checking out, there's this awesome crossover, hard-rock duo called Nova Twins. If you want to learn a bit about them, they recorded a *Tape Notes* podcast, which is a conversation about the production and writing process.

Any LIVE DATES on the horizon?

Live dates, yes! The 24th May I'm playing my album launch show at the Jazz Café as a double headliner with awesome trumpeter Jackson Method. Aside from that, *Bloom* will be released on June 4th and you can pre-order vinyl for that now.

<https://rosiefratertaylor.com/>

All photographs by Patricia Pascal

Live Stream Review



Julian Nicholas by Lisa Wormsley

The Verdict Revival Lockdown Sessions: Darren Beckett Trio, Triptych, Josephine Davies Trio, Quinto

The Verdict, Brighton

As live events make a very cautious and conditional return, there's still a big hole in the local scene left by the closure of the local club circuit. While there's an abundance of international livestream material available from the likes of Emmet Cohen, much of it very good indeed, the pandemic has also highlighted the importance of the kind of audience-artist connection that can only really thrive on the grassroots circuit. It's therefore very welcome indeed to see Brighton's

Verdict club back in action again, under the directorship of drummer/percussionist Tristan Banks, offering a regular weekly programme of ticketed livestream gigs from the roster of locally based, international quality artists who would have filled it back in the long-ago days of normal.

First up is the Darren Beckett Trio, with Belfast-to-NYC-to-Brighton drummer Beckett joined by keyboard supremo Mark Edwards and bassist/composer Terry Pack. All three are bandleaders in their own right and operate across a wide range of genres so it's no surprise that the programme is as diverse and well-balanced as the trio themselves. The set opens with the hypnotic, motorik

pulse of Edwards' *No Snow*, moves on through the rollicking backbeat of Larry Goldings' *Solidity* and a light-as-air take on *We'll Be Together Again* and thence from Fauré to funk via a synth-spiced workout on *All Blues*, further originals from Charlie Haden and the Cloggz project in which all three participate, and finishes with an uplifting *Amazing Grace*. There's a superb level of interplay between all three and the the sound quality really allows the subtleties of Beckett's drumming to come through.

Triptych is a trio specially constituted for this series, showing what an important role the localised club circuit plays in the development of new material and new projects. Loose Tuber Julian Nicholas and bass virtuoso Nigel Thomas are joined by the series director Tristan Banks himself - as Tristan is also acting as cinematographer and sound mixer we can only marvel at his range of accomplishments. The setlist showcases Nicholas' particular take on the tradition, with material ranging from the classic, format-defining Sonny Rollins (his *Bluesongo*, spiced with congas) to Kenny Garrett's *Sing A Song Of Songs* but also encompassing a riveting free-form take on the Wesleyan hymn *All Mankind Shall Dwell In Harmony*, a soprano-led Irish traditional melody, and Joe Henderson's compelling groove workout *Tress-cun-deo-la*. Everyone's playing is on top form, with Thomas contributing some fast-fingered solos and Nicholas' robust tenor sound and distinctive melodic sensibility shown to great advantage in the stripped back setting.

Parliamentary Award winner Josephine Davies is a recent addition to the burgeoning Hastings jazz community, and her trio with fellow residents Ben Somers on double

bass and Rob Updegraff on guitar presents an exciting next stage in the development of her truly original voice. There's a set of original compositions by all three members plus some choice standards; the delicate melodicism of the writing is well suited to the chamber music ensemble feel, but this is no lightweight exercise: all sorts of subtle metric shifts and intricate harmonic developments give the pieces considerable depth underneath their placid surface. This is a powerful display of skill and originality from a group to watch out for.

By contrast, Raoul D'Oliveira and Terry Seabrook's Quinto present a pure feelgood evening of Latin jazz favourites, with Tristan multi-tasking again from behind the kit and latin-jazz veteran Andres Lafone on bass. D'Oliveira is an irrepressible showman, alternating between trumpet, flugelhorn and singing, sometimes all in the same chorus, and the rhythm section cooking up a storm.

There's a full programme of weekly livestreams to come all through the summer. The live broadcasts are all ticketed - an important statement that musicians need revenue to survive, and that the free livestream or tipping model is not universally applicable. The return of The Verdict to its role as a focus and hub for the local scene, and the musicians and audiences that make it up, is very welcome and deserves all the support that we can give it.

Eddie Myer

Album Reviews



Arbenz/Mehari/Veras *Conversation #1: Condensed* (Hammer Recordings)

Hard on the heels of the recent critically acclaimed duo album *Reflections of the Eternal Line* by Swiss drummer and percussionist Florian Arbenz and American saxophone legend Greg Osby comes the first album in an ambitious 12 album project under the collective title of *Conversation* which will match the forward looking and dynamic skills of Arbenz with musicians having a similar outlook and mindset. He has certainly made two very fine choices. On trumpet is Herman Mehari, from the U.S.A. but now living in Paris. On the scene since 2007 he can boast two fine albums of his own, his excellent debut *Bleu* in 2017 and the recent *A Change for the Dreamlike*. He has also recorded with pianist Aaron Parks on the E.C.M. label and one with the up and coming saxophonist Logan Richardson on Blue Note. The third member of the trio is the Brazilian guitarist Nelson Veras, a seasoned performer he has appeared on over fifty recordings to date including five as a leader. At fourteen

years of age, he was part of Michel Petrucciani's 'Young Lions' band before going on to play with ensembles led by Brad Mehldau and Lee Konitz, before later splitting his time between performing and teaching at the American School of Modern Music, also based in Paris.

Trumpet, guitar and drums may seem a very unlikely trio set-up to many, I can think of no other example, but this one works extremely well. It all starts here with the composing, the leader Florian Arbenz contributing six of the ten pieces on the album, all of which have strong melodic themes but at the same time are formed to accommodate enough space for creative improvisation, which coupled with an inbuilt sense of adventure add up to what this album is all about. Most of the compositions go down intriguing pathways, sometimes stretching the listeners mind, but never becoming a chore due to the very relaxed nature of the music generally. The original opener *Boarding the Beat*, plus a tune by the trumpet player Hermon Mehari, *Let's Try This Again*, are very good examples. Each player has a defining role to play on the album with the American trumpet player precise, articulate and sparing in his delivery, Nelson Veras with his Metheny-like magical interludes and the almost overwhelming and absorbing variety of the leader's drums and percussion, but most importantly all three are in total harmony throughout. There are many things to enjoy over the forty two minutes of music, but the 'tribute' pieces *Vibing with Mr. Feldman* and *Dedicated to the Quintessence*

are among the most striking for their total success in portraying their subject matter so accurately. In summary, a very fine recording of creative but accessible contemporary jazz that has set the bar very high for the forthcoming albums in the series.

Jim Burlong

*Florian Arbenz, drums & percussion;
Hermon Mehari, trumpet; Nelson
Veras, guitar.*



Nik Bärtsch *Entendre* (ECM)

Every so often an artist emerges with such a distinct and clear vision of what he or she wants to achieve through their creative output that they end up creating something entirely new and uniquely their own. The names of Charlie Parker, Ornette Coleman and Charles Mingus would be just a few of the legendary figures who, through their musical output, changed the world of jazz music. Likewise in the field of classical music the composers Béla Bartók,

Arvo Pärt and Steve Reich are fine examples of composers whose musical genius would change the course of classical music. Much like the names mentioned, the title of visionary in the realms of modern jazz and contemporary music has definitely been earned by Swiss pianist and composer Nik Bärtsch and his groundbreaking work in the fields of modern music. Bärtsch, being a well known name on the international jazz stage, whether leading his quartet Ronin or the ensemble Mobile has for some time now been dazzling listeners with his meditative approach to music and his lengthy spiritual performances. Now, for his latest release entitled *Entendre* we are treated to a performance of solo piano pieces, a rare feature in Bärtsch's recording output. Instead of the usual ensemble, the pieces are rearranged and performed to great effect by Bärtsch alone. The pieces which appear on the album all bear Bärtsch's signature musical approach and sound, made up of a rich mix of groove accompanied by space and deep thought. The term coined by Bärtsch himself for this musical approach to composition and improvisation is Zen Funk or 'Ritual Groove music'. This is a style of music that delves into the deepest realms of minimalistic simplicity and the use of space and silence. Much like Arvo Pärt and his *Tintinnabuli*, the emphasis lies in the mastery of simplicity. All pieces except the closing track bear no title of significance; like the majority of Bärtsch's work the tunes are simply titled *Modul* followed by a numeral. The journey taken through the performance of these pieces is indeed a strong and thoughtful one. Moments of sheer ecstasy are juxtaposed with romantic melancholic

motifs that dissolve into long moments of silence broken only by a single note or percussive statement from the piano. There is also a real sense of meditative groove laid out in the pieces, especially in the opening track *Modul 58-12* and others most notably *Modul 26* bring to mind the piano works of Philip Glass with their layered shifting repetitions. A very exciting release indeed. Bärtsch is a great example of the high priest of Zen Funk, giving us an intimate glimpse into his musical world.

George Richardson

Nik Bärtsch, piano.



Gary Bartz *Jazz Is Dead No. 6* (Jazz Is Dead Records)

This is the second release in just over a year from the evergreen American saxophonist Gary Bartz who has recently celebrated his eightieth birthday. Back in the late Fifties, having studied at The Julliard Conservatory he was soon part of the famous Mingus Jazz Workshop, rubbing shoulders with the likes of Eric Dolphy and McCoy Tyner. He

also spent a short time with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and recorded five times with Miles Davis as well as re-kindling his partnership with Tyner with whom he made ten highly successful albums. The saxophonist was at the peak of his powers and popularity during the fusion period of the Seventies and these days shares his time between performing, recording and his position as Jazz Professor at Oberlin College.

For this the second album by Gary Bartz's new group he has stayed with the rather unusual line-up of two multi-instrumentalists, a drummer, plus on some tracks a four person vocal choir. Adrain Younge, from Los Angeles, is also a composer, arranger, film editor and entertainment industry law professor and partners Ali Shaheed Muhammad, who is a record producer, hip hop DJ and radio show host. Drummer Greg Paul, from Buffalo, is from the acid jazz and funk world and well known for his work with the British artist Kamaal Williams. All eight pieces on the brief twenty seven minute album are co-written by the band members, excluding the leader. The first thing to note across the whole album is that the leader's performance is superb and takes up the most of the playing time on each number. The sound from his horn is fluid, inventive with a logical and lucid delivery that sits easily alongside alto giants such as Art Pepper and Cannonball Adderley in both style and impact. Not far behind is the excellent performance from drummer Greg Paul, whose punctuation behind the saxophonist is both inventive and faultless. The two multi-instrumentalists make good use of their vast array of instruments and

create a shifting panorama of sound providing an excellent background that allows both alto and drums the freedom to fully express themselves. Overall, the compositions are both melodic and calming, almost like a sea of tranquillity, from the opener *Spiritual Ideation* through to the mysterious *Blue Jungles* to the slightly funky *Visions of Love* and the strongly themed *Day by Day*, both of which are given extra atmosphere from the vocal ensemble. The most important question is of course "Does it all work". The answer is a firm "Yes, it does", partly because it has a modernistic sound that should attract both new and seasoned jazz enthusiasts, but also because the brilliance of the leader's stunning alto saxophone is on show from start to finish.

Jim Burlong

Gary Bartz, alto sax; Adrian Younge and Ali Shaheed Muhammad, piano, Hammond organ, electric bass, monophonic synthesizers, mellotron, vibes, guitars, flutes, tubular bells, auto-harp, percussion; Greg Paul, drums.

Elgin Clark, Anitra Castleberry, Loren Oden, Saudia Yasmein, vocals.



Roy Mor

After The Real Thing
(Ubuntu)

The Israeli jazz scene has for many years now been a diverse and thriving musical scene that has brought forth some of the biggest names in modern jazz, with musicians like Avishai Cohen, Omer Avital, Shai Maestro and Anat Cohen all being household names on the international jazz front. Also hailing from this rich musical scene is Israeli-New York based pianist and composer Rory Mor whose debut release entitled *After the Real Thing* showcases yet another unique talent to emerge from Israel's music scene. After spending some time in New York developing his craft Mor has taken the step of releasing his first album as leader with a lengthy release consisting of eleven recorded pieces. The album definitely shows the diversity of Mor as both composer and arranger, with a mix of original compositions and reworkings of classic jazz standards. The influence of Israeli and Middle Eastern music is deeply felt throughout the album's duration and the feature of the oud played by Amos Hoffman on multiple tracks does all the more to bring the feeling of Eastern traditions into the music. This, along with Mor and his ensemble's unique sense of rhythm is what really gives the music its own



Gary Bartz by Lisa Wormsley



Roy Mor by Ronen Goldman

identifiable sound. The tune *Jerusalem Mezcla* is a particular standout track packed with strong melodic hooks and a great sense of build and forward motion. Starting with a thumping bass introduction which is quickly joined by piano and drums before the oud jumps in picking its way around a deep set melodic motif. The mood is left to simmer for a little while before the band kicks it up a gear and goes straight into another section of the tune, which compared to the more refined atmosphere heard before is more energetic and carries a feeling of celebration and dance. This uptempo change is only present for a short while before the group slides back down to the previous section which is then used as a vehicle for a fiery oud solo. The piano has a round of soloing over the dance section before the band returns to take the tune to a slow organic fade out until only oud and piano are left to strike the last notes. Mor's approach to the

playing of standards is also present on the album, most notably his arrangement of Miles Davis's *Solar*. The performance of this tune is far from the usual uptempo swing so familiar to us on the classic 1954 recording; instead Mor gives the tune a complete reworking in his own style and features a soulful solo from Hoffman, this time on the guitar. *After The Real Thing* is a solid release showing Mor to be a more than competent composer, arranger and leader. The playing of the group as a unit is strong and we look forward to hearing more from Mor and his band.

George Richardson

Roy Mor, piano, Fender Rhodes; Amos Hoffman, oud, guitar; Myles Sloniker, bass; Itay Morchi, drums. Guests: Davy Lazar, flugelhorn; Marty Kenney, bass; Peter Traunmueller, drums; Joel Kruzic, bass; Jeremy Dutton, drums.

Listings

Tuesday Evenings at The Brunswick, Hove

18th May: Jack Kendon 4tet
25th May: Will Gardner 4tet
Doors 7pm Starts 7:30pm
Tickets £10 per person (tables for 2, 4 or 6)

Jazz Brunch at The Brunswick

22nd May: Sarah Harris
29th May: Andy Williams & Paul Richards
Doors 11am £5 per person (tables for 2, 4 or 6)

Emergence 2021

De La Warr Pavillion, Bexhill
27th - 30th May
Resonate, Spielzeug, Hexagonal, III
Considered, Steam Down, Yadasofi,
Mrisi, Laughta, Queenie, Lioness
Tickets £5-£15 Festival Pass £40

Three Horseshoes

Knockholt, Kent
18th May: Paul Higgs Qt 'Shades of Miles'
Tuesday 25th May: Simon Bates Qt
Music of Paul Desmond
Lunchtime Free entry with donation.

Chiddingstone Castle

Edenbridge, Kent
Sunday 30th May: Derek Nash's Picante
2pm £15

Rye Creative Centre

Claire Martin & Nikki Iles
Friday 28th May
Doors 7pm Concert 7:30am £40



Live Streams

Lockdown Sessions Live From The Verdict

Tickets £8

Details at <https://verdictjazz.co.uk>

Friday 7th May, 8.30pm Greg Heath / Nick Meier Quartet
Friday 14th May, 8.30pm Paul Booth / Ross Stanley / Tristan Banks
Friday 21st May, 8:30pm Ahmed/Darwish/Osborn/Rahman

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

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Details are assumed to be correct at the time of publication.

Jazz Essentials

Oscar Peterson Trio *Night Train* (Verve)

I must be honest and admit that I don't like the music of pianist Oscar Peterson. Too many notes, and all of them in the right order, as Eric Morecambe did not quite say about André Previn. To me his playing is too facile, too easy on the ear. True, he swings like hell and has a wonderful way with melody, but because it all sounds so effortless, it also sounds too glib. Which makes *Night Train* an exception to my own rule, which I am more than happy to break on this occasion.

Montreal-born Peterson – a rare Canadian in modern jazz – began his recording career in 1945 and was highly regarded when, in December 1962, he took his regular trio of Ray Brown on bass and Ed Thigpen on drums into a Hollywood studio to record *Night Train*. The producer was the famed Norman Granz, former owner of Verve Records who was now Peterson's manager. It was his decision to keep each track to around three minutes to ensure radio play. Peterson's own father had been a sleeping-car attendant on the Canadian Pacific Railway – the album is dedicated to him – but *Night Train* is decidedly not a concept album. Rather, it is a well-planned suite of eleven well-known songs, plus six alternatives and unreleased songs on the remastered reissue, that together made up a perfectly structured album.

Every song is played by Peterson in an uncharacteristically reserved



way. The title track, in reality a Duke Ellington song named *Happy-Go-Lucky Local* – is a minimal vamp over an ever-so-slow walking bass, while Hoagy Carmichael's *Georgia On My Mind* finds Peterson in contemplative mood, as he also is on Milt Jackson's *Bag's Groove* and on Mercer Ellington's *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, where Ray Brown evokes the original bass line of bass legend Jimmy Blanton. *C-Jam Blues* is more effusive, *The Honeydripper* a fast-tempo r'n'b number, but whatever the song, Peterson is restraint personified, sounding more like the minimalist Count Basie than the over-indulgent Art Tatum he usually became. And it is this sense of calm and quiet attention that wins the day.

I still don't like Peterson, but I can't recommend this album highly enough.

Simon Adams

SJM

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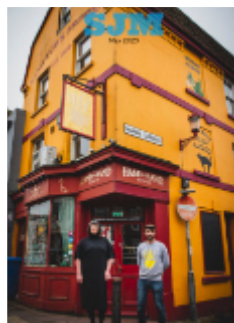
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