

the **JAZZ** PROJECT
by Jean-Keith Fagon

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Stone In The Water •••

Stefano Bollani Trio, ECM

This is Stefano Bollani's first release with his Danish Trio, a well-established group whose latest album offers a hybrid music that is technically flawless, structurally solid, beautifully shaded, and thoroughly enjoyable with plenty space around and impressive definition. On the piano Mr. Bollani's performance is one of crystalline clarity, his coloration alive with myriad tints and hues. We find delightful surprises on "Brigas Nunca Mais," "Dom de Iludir," "Edith," and "Orvieto." Other performers include Jesper Bodilsen (double-bass) and Morten Lund (drum).



Dresden •••

Jan Garbarek Group, ECM

As a performer, the music of Mr. Garbarek (soprano and tenor saxophones) is masterly, played with relish and richly endowed. His liquid tone and artful phrasing ensure that listening to him is a continuous pleasure. But life seems to have gotten better for Mr. Garbarek, for the fun has gotten better. With his new approach on his latest release, the music mingles a new-found reach in the musical architecture with vocal and instrumental sonority of wonderment and beauty. This is an almost unqualified success, one of the finest compilations he has made to date. Listen to the glorious illumination of "Twelve Moons," "Milagre Dos Peixes," and "There Were Swallows"; the poignant slow movement and the blazing triumph of "The Reluctant Saxophonist," and "Fugl" which also presents an elaborate web of counterpoints with the utmost lucidity. Other highlights include the genesis of "Transformations" from pianist Rainer Bruninghaus, and the sensational and mercurial drummer Manu Katche



on "Grooving Out!" and "Nu Bein'." Also appearing is Yuri Daniel on bass.

The Astounding Eyes Of Rita •••

Anouar Brahem, ECM

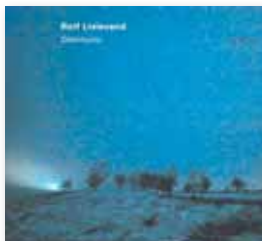
Anouar Brahem, a native of Tunisia plays for a jazz audience, fusing Arab classical music, folk music and jazz. His interpretation of the oud is one of the finest in the world, and is particularly notable for its beautifully shaped detail and crisp articulation. The oud is as old as history, but the limitless passion that Brahem brings to his idiosyncratic music, makes it fresh for today's listener. Mr. Brahem deserves a standing ovation for a musical masterpiece. Standouts include "The Astounding Eyes Of Rita," "For No Apparent Reason," and "Waking State." Other performers include Klaus Gesing (bass clarinet), Bjorn Meyer (bass), and Khaled Yassine (darbouka bendir).



Diminuito •••

Rolf Lislevand Ensemble, ECM

This recording is about the Italian renaissance, a period during the 16th century when European's music history was as contemporary with itself as was the renaissance. According to the liner notes, "during the 16th century, humanistic inspiration had led to the most equilibristic levels in all arts and had stretched the human mind to the highest achievements. Diminutions, divisions, or glosas were one of the renaissance's unique inventions, which means embellishing a melody into a much more flavored and elaborated melody in faster movement and shorter rhythmical values." The music leaves us curiously standing yet, amazingly, still allows fleeting glimpses



of a life long past but still with us. Even by today's high standards this album is outstanding, perfectly recorded. The playing has great subtlety and there can be nothing but praise for the Rolf Lislevand Ensemble's acutely judged sonority as well as the actual beauty of its tone. Highlights include "Ricercate," "Piva," "La Perra Mora," "Petit Jacquet, Quinta Pars," "Susanne un jour," "Recercada Settima," and "Tourdion." Performers include Rolf Lislevand (lutes), vocalists Linn Andrea Fugiseth and Anna Maria Friman, Giovanna Pessi (triple harp), and Michael Behringer (clavichord and organ).

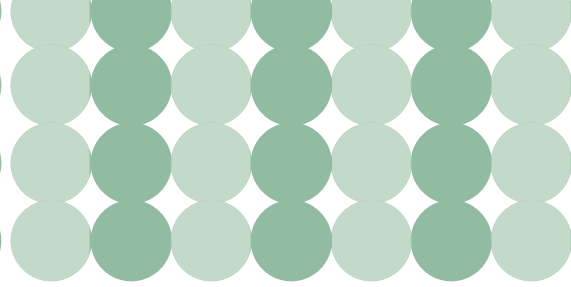
Testament •••

Paris/London

Keith Jarrett, ECM

This three-CD collection came about at the end of 2008 when Keith Jarrett added two concerts to his schedule at short notice — one at Paris's Salle Pleyel (November 26), one at London's Royal Festival Hall (December 1). The music on Testament is from these concerts. Mr. Jarrett is one of the most difficult and cerebral musicians I've enjoyed over the years. Here is what the man had to say about his own music and its creation: "It is not natural to sit at a piano, bring no material, clear your mind completely of musical ideas and play something that is of lasting value and brand new." That's what one hell of a job for any musician. Moreover, the challenge is even greater when one considers that a work of music takes shape only in the mind of the listener. Not surprisingly, it takes patience and openness to understand and appreciate the creative majesty and stunning beauty of Mr. Jarrett's music. This latest collection will satisfy all but those with the most demanding taste in his or her long experience in Mr. Jarrett's interpretative improvisation. To say that Mr. Jarrett plays as if his life depends on it is an understatement, and those who are waiting for another repeat of his Koln concerts should sit down in their home (preferably early morning or late afternoon) with this collection, a solid digital sound system and a mouthful of accolades (psst...take a sneak spin





disc 3). Am I getting ahead of myself? Yes, but so what. For starters, listen to tracks 3, 5 and 7 from the Paris concert; tracks 3 and 6 from the London concert Part 1-V1; and tracks 1, 2, 4 and 5 from the London concert Part V11-X11.



World Music

Nha Sentimento •••

Cesaria Evora, lusafrika.com

Ms. Evora, a singer with a consistent interpretation of Arabic musical traditions from some of her native Cape Verde's best cultural songwriters, offers a kind of neo-global hybrid blues of afro-cuban/latin/jazz mixture. The music of Cape Verde is diverse and globally contemporary, incorporating guitar, violin, and the soprano saxophone into its Latin scales and rhythms. Throughout the album there is a rich vein of melody, and an elegance and grace of orchestration that makes this music to listen to over and over again. Stand-outs include "Serpentina," "Verde Cabo di Nhas Odjos," "Vente de Sueste," "Zinha," "Fatalidade," "Resposta Meninhas de Monte Sossego."

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



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