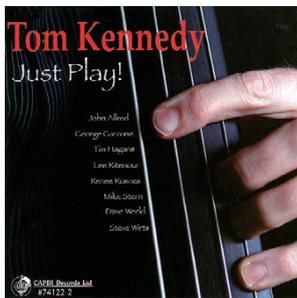


Record Reviews

Felder on the up-tempo *Penny Blue*, and there are good improvised offerings from the agile Henderson, the bluesy and sometimes wailing Felder, and in this context the Kellyesque Sample. The solos seem less effective on the very high-tempo *Boopie*, with the exception of Hooper's only drum solo of the set. Overall, it's an enjoyable CD that would have benefited further from a little more variety among the compositions.

Dave Jones



TOM KENNEDY JUST PLAY!

Airegin; *Moanin'*; *The Night Has A Thousand Eyes*; *Ceora*; *One Liners*; *In A Sentimental Mood*; *Bolivia*; *In Your Own Sweet Way*; *What Is This Thing Called Love* (72.00)

Tim Hagans (t); George Garzone (fs); Steve Wirts (ts); John Allred (tb); Renée Rosnes (p); Mike Stern (g); Lee Ritenour (g); Tom Kennedy (b); Dave Weckl (d). 25th September 2012, NYC

Capri 74122-2
★★★★

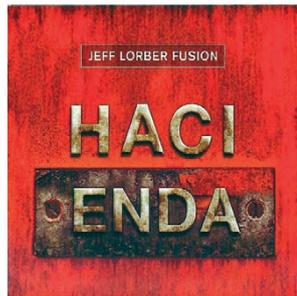
Renowned for his conspicuous chops on the five-string electric bass, heard in the company of Mike Stern, Al DiMeola, David Sanborn and Steps Ahead amongst many others, Tom Kennedy takes a convincing tilt at the post-bop mainstream on *Just Play!*. It was recorded at the legendary Nola Studios in a single day, and many will be surprised to hear such a star-studded cast of neo-progressives resisting the temptation to radically overhaul such classic material.

Kennedy's vintage Bohemian upright not only provides a deliciously fat and velvety voice for his horn-like solos, but it runs through the ensemble like a living pulse. Garzone is the most forceful of the guests – his Transish wail ignites *Airegin*, a tender reading of *In A Sentimental Mood* slowly smoulders and he

pulls few punches as he spars with Stern on the guitarist's boppish *One Liners*. A soulful Ritenour really digs in on Bobby Timmons's classic *Moanin'*, whilst the perennially underrated Hagans delivers a scintillating solo on *The Night Has A Thousand Eyes*. Rosnes is perhaps Kennedy's most introverted band-mate, her post-Evans lyricism gracefully animating Brubeck's *In Your Own Sweet Way*. Only Weckl's multi-limbed gymnastics are in any way incongruous with Kennedy's relatively good-natured milieu, and his fiendishly complex meters coax some searing multi-phonics from Garzone on the closing *What Is This Thing Called Love*.

An old-fashioned blowing session liberally sprinkled with magic, *Just Play!* is an absolute must for fans of the post-bop mainstream.

Fred Grand



JEFF LORBER HACIENDA

Corinaldo; *Solar Wind*; *King Kong*; *The Steppe*; *Hacienda*; *Fab Gear*; *Raptor*; *Everlast*; *Playa Del Falco*; *Escapade*; *Dragonfly* (56.09)

Eric Marienthal (s); David Mann (s, f, horn arr); Jean-Luc Ponty (elvn); Lorber (kyb, g, arr); Larry Koonse, Michael Thompson, Paul Jackson, Jr (g, elg); Jimmy Haslip (elb, kyb); Vinnie Colaiuta, Gary Novak (d); Lenny Castro (pc). Los Angeles, 2013.

Heads Up HUI-34476-02
★★★★

Lorber steps back from the sleek funk of the Pacific Palisades for a moment here, namely in a reprise of the Frank Zappa tune *King Kong* complete with guest Jean-Luc Ponty revisiting his role on his 1970 album of Zappa tunes. The four-square rhythm and modal harmony sound unsurprisingly antique by the standards of Lorber's key 80s-90s work, and the opener *Corinaldo* too is less trim than one might expect from Lorber. The title track, *Playa Del Falco* and

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Corinaldo take Hispanic titles, yet none of them, nor much else on the record, references Spanish music, unless one counts the clave idea that pervades much funk anyway; but no characteristic Iberian harmony is heard.

The majority of the pieces here are deep in the Lorber pocket – nimble-footed, pulsing, harmonically rich, intricately detailed jazz-funk of the not-so lite variety pervaded by Lorber's Rhodes/Yamaha DX7 sound. Whoever suggested the electric piano defeats individual expression was well wide of the mark: Lorber's tonal and arranging signature is immediately identifiable on numberless funk and soul productions of the past few decades. There's no denying the formulaic nature of much of the playing and writing but it's hard to name any musician who exhibits neither style nor cliché. There are, however, many who lack individuality – one thing Lorber is not short of. Excellent improvisations within the through-composed frameworks from the leader (frequently), Eric Marienthal (*Raptor*, in trades with Lorber) and Larry Koonse (*Solar Wind*) round off a buoyant and engaging set.

Mark Gilbert

JAN LUNDGREN

PIANO SOLO – THE MAN IN THE FOG

The Maids Of Cadiz; *View Of P*; *Après Un Rêve*; *I Don't Want To Cry Anymore*; *En Lång Vântan For Vântans Skull*; *Man in The Fog*; *Twenty-Five Years*; *Theme From 'Chinatown'*; *As Vitriines*; *Tack För Allt* (49.09)

Jan Lundgren (p). Oslo, September 2011.

Bee Jazz 069
★★★★★

One of my favourite pieces from Lundgren's 1997 Swedish Standards trio album is the concluding solo rubato rendition of Olle Adolphson's lovely, deeply reflective song *Nu Har Jag Fått Den Jag Vill Ha*. I've long hoped that Lundgren would record a solo album in this vein. Recorded on an excellent Steinway at Oslo's fabled Rainbow Studio, *Man In The Fog* is the ultra-reflective album I've been waiting for all these years.

It's an album which caresses, rather than grabs, one's attention, with repeated listenings revealing many an affecting nuance. Famous in jazz circles for the Davis/Evans version on *Miles Ahead*, the opening *Maids* sets the intimate tone of a

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Record Reviews

recital as patient as it is graceful – and, in its own distinctive way, emotionally compelling: hear the concluding threnody that is Jacques Werup's *Tack*. Tempered folk and blues elements are most apparent in (respectively) *En Lång Våntan* by Bo Nilsson (the Swedish composer known for his avant-garde "serious" music, but shown in very different light here) and Lundgren's own, ultra-meditative yet rhythmically enticing title track. Both are delicious examples of this wide-ranging pianist's clarity of ideas and phrasing and simultaneous delicacy and purposiveness of touch. Such factors are apparent throughout, but hear also, especially, *I Don't Want, Twenty-Five Years, Chinatown* and *View Of P* (Prokofiev, as Lundgren informed the audience during his concert at this year's Ystad festival).

Harmonically subtle, but never overburdened, the music is shorn of any too-overt jazz rhythmic impetus, offering instead passage after passage of jazz-inflected limpidity in the Impressionist manner of *Maids*. Fauré's *Rêve* is accorded the sort of reading which would seem to suggest that, following Lester Young's advice, Lundgren has paid due attention to its lyric of "unknown splendours" and "mysterious night": beauty might not yet have saved the world, as Dostoevsky hoped it would, but it would be a poorer world without such luminously intelligent and poetically wrought albums as this.

Michael Tucker

TINA MAY DIVAS

Why Don't You Do It Right; There's A Lull In My Life; Forgetful; Can't Get Out Of This Mood; When The World Was Young; Where You At?; Surabaya Johnny; Baltimore Oriole; Let's Get Lost; I Will Wait For You; You Don't Know What Love Is; All Through The Night (60.56)

Collective personnel: May (v); Freddie Gavita (f); Adrian Fry (tb); Bob Martin (as); Dave Cliff (g); John Pearce (p); Andy Cleynndert (b); Bobby Worth (d); Winston Clifford (v on Where You At). London, June 2013.

Hep CD 2099 ★★★★

After including Tina's Ray Bryant Songbook in the most recent (selective) edition of the



Penguin Guide To Jazz, I received the most unpleasant and abusive letter I've ever had as a music writer. The laboured message was that the inclusion proved that my critical acumen was either shot or non-existent. The writer cast some pretty vicious and misogynistic aspersions Tina's way as well. Not that she'd care. This is a singer who is above all about affirmation and life. If that means she doesn't deliver a hard-times, hedone-me-wrong song with quite the wrenching authority of some of the older divas, well, that's not her chosen territory.

May brings a familiar conversational immediacy to this well-trodden but by no means hackneyed repertoire. Take her version of *You Don't Know What Love Is*. If Billie Holiday's late-period interpretation is your paradigm (which would be unfortunate), then Tina's reading and Frank Griffith's arrangement might seem featherlight. In practice, they reinvent the song and find a new truth in the lyric. Likewise *When The World Was Young*, which Edith Piaf sang as if she was as old as the rocks and Tina sings as if the world really were still waiting for the sunrise. She's not blind to subtlety and mystery, though, as *Baltimore Oriole* confirms. It's an odder song than anyone has previously recognised and this is immediately my favourite version, even more than Hoagy's own in (was it?) *To Have And Have Not*.

The Hemingway reference neatly invites the comment that only a little of May's artistry is above the surface. She's harmonically subtle, phrases with the kind of irony that's only possible in English – this despite flirtations with French material here – and she always sings for the group. A good group it is, too, cleverly deployed to suit the song. It's a lovely, lovely record. The last word I'd use of Tina May is "diva", which

always implies an unwelcome wilfulness. Better say that she's a mother, and let them take what they like out of that. (And if my charming correspondent Mr G— wants to settle this one on the field of honour, I'm right here, pal.)

Brian Morton

CHARLES MINGUS PASSIONS OF A MAN: THE COMPLETE ATLANTIC RECORDINGS 1956-1961

CD1: [*Pithecanthropus Erectus*] (1) *Pithecanthropus Erectus; A Foggy Day; Love Chant; Portrait Of Jackie; [Word From Bird]* (2) *Laura; When Your Lover Has Gone; Just One Of Those Things; Blue Greens (62.12)*

CD2: [*The Clown*] (3) *The Clown; (4) Passions Of A Woman Loved; Blue Cee; Tonight At Noon; Reincarnation Of A Lovebird; Haitian Fight Song (56.42)*

CD3: [*Blues & Roots*] (6) *E's Flat Ah's Flat Too; (5) My Jelly Roll Soul; Tensions; Moanin'; Cryin' Blues; Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting; (6) E's Flat Ah's Flat Too (alternate); (5) My Jelly Roll Soul; Tensions; Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting (69.45)*

CD4: [*Mingus At Antibes*] (7) *Prayer For Passive Resistance; Better Git Hit In Your Soul; Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting; Folk Forms I; What Love?; (8) I Remember April (71.56)*

CD5: [*Oh Yeah*] (9) *Devil Woman; Ecclesiastics; 'Old Blues' For Walt's Torin; Peggy's Blue Skylight; Hog Callin' Blues; Oh Lord, Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On Me; Passions Of A Man; Wham Bam Thank You Ma'am; Invisible Lady; Eat That Chicken (67.13)*

CD6: [*Charles Mingus interviewed by Nesuhi Ertegun – (10)*] (66.19) Charles Mingus (b, p, v), with:

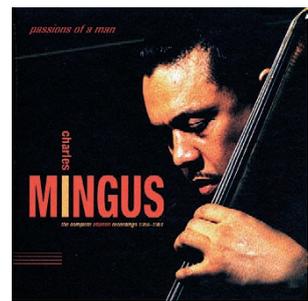
(1) Jackie McLean (as); J. R. Monterose (ts); Mal Waldron (p); Willie Jones (d). NYC, January 1956.

(2) Teddy Charles (vib); Hall Overton (g); Ed Shaughnessy (d). NYC, November 1956.

(3) Jimmy Knepper (tb); Shafi Hadi (as); Wade Legge (p); Dannie Richmond (d); Jean Shepherd (v). NYC, February 1957.

(4) as above, omit Shepherd. (5) Willie Dennis, Jimmy Knepper (tb); John Handy, Jackie McLean (as); Booker Ervin (ts); Pepper Adams (bar); Horace Parlan (p); Dannie Richmond (d). NYC, February 1959.

(6) as above, omit Parlan.



(7) Ted Curson (f); Eric Dolphy (as, bcl); Booker Ervin (ts); Dannie Richmond (d). Juan-les-Pins, July 1960.

(8) as above, omit Ervin, add Bud Powell (p).

(9) Jimmy Knepper (tb); Roland Kirk (ts, manzello, stritch, f, siren); Booker Ervin (ts); Doug Watkins (b); Dannie Richmond (d). NYC, November 1961.

(10) Mingus (v, p); Nesuhi Ertegun (v). late 1961.

Warner/Rhino 812279652 ★★★★★

"Passion" has two meanings, of course, and if ever a creative career combined deep suffering and eruptive joy in equal measure, it was Mingus's. It's a mark of the very great artist that every time one approaches the work, the canon shifts and repositions. I've always retained the deepest affection for *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, the first Mingus record I owned, bought on the strength of the title, but have always argued that *The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*, made for Impulse! is his greatest single achievement. Listening again to these records, some very familiar, some (like the *Teddy Charles set*) not so much so, it's equally possible to argue that this half-decade of recording for the Erteguns is his zenith.

The real plus of buying them in this form – quite apart from a few semi-revealing "alternates" – is the detailed, informative booklet that accompanies the box; that and the interview with Nesuhi Ertegun which occupies the sixth disc. Sue Mingus has always been good at suggesting how relatively arbitrary critical enthusiasms have gelled into a consensus about Mingus's work, and how revelatory it can be to take down a set like, say, *The Clown* or *Blues And Roots* and ask is *Ah Um* really greater than this? Would I swap this for *Tijuana Moods*? I find it's invariably no. There might seem to be a Mingus canon or hierarchy, but it rarely survives the listening test.