

JAZZ FM ANNOUNCE JAZZ AWARDS

Jazz FM, the national DAB jazz radio station, has announced the Jazz FM Awards, which will take place in central London on the evening of 31 January 2013. Jazz FM has said the awards, which will be sponsored by Klipsch the leading US-based audio technology company, aim to celebrate the work of jazz musicians, composers and contributors from across the globe, and will recognise and commend those who have made exceptional contributions to the jazz industry during the preceding 12 months. They also add that there will be particular emphasis on highlighting new talent as well as saluting jazz legends with a Lifetime Achievement Award. The judging panel will be made up of key figures from the world of jazz, and the winners will be announced at the inaugural awards event.

Richard Wheatly, chief executive of Jazz FM said: "We are delighted to be announcing the Jazz FM Awards, and are thrilled that Klipsch will be sponsoring the event. The awards will celebrate everything that is great about jazz – past, present and future – and is something we are hugely positive about. This annual event will help bring the music to a new audience and will create a focal point for the jazz community." Following the discontinuation of the BBC Jazz Awards in 2008 these new public-facing awards should compliment the annual Parliamentary Jazz Awards, with both events being key highlights in the yearly jazz calendar.

In a separate move Jazz FM has recently made programming changes to its daily schedules. The popular *Dinner Jazz* show, hosted by Helen Mayhew and Sarah Ward, is extended to seven nights a week; the daytime playlist will now concentrate more on vocal jazz and soul; Ian Shaw is the new presenter of the Ronnie Scott's Radio Show; and both Bob Sinfield's Big Band show and Mike Chadwick's Latin Jazz show are taking a break from their weekend slots.



Mike Gibbs celebrates 75th at the Vortex

Distinguished South African-born composer Mike Gibbs celebrates his 75th birthday this year, with two special concerts at the Vortex on 12-13

December. These will feature his stellar 12-piece ensemble led by keyboardist, and protégé, Hans Koller, performing selected pieces by Gil Evans to celebrate the legendary composer/arranger's 100th anniversary, alongside new arrangements of Gibbs' music. Having studied at Boston's Berklee College of Music and Lenox School Of Jazz in the late-1950s and early-60s, under the tutelage of luminaries such as Gunther Schuller and George Russell, Gibbs subsequently moved to the UK in 1964 and collaborated with the key Brit-Jazz figures including Graham Collier, Mike Westbrook, Kenny Wheeler and John Dankworth; while his commercial work at the time included writing the theme to *The Goodies* TV show, for which he was musical director. Gibbs has since composed extensively for films, television, theatre and symphony orchestras while recent projects have included work with Bill Frisell, Gary Burton and the NDR Big Band and orchestra, and various sessions with the likes of Pat Metheny, John McLaughlin, John Scofield, Michael Mantler, Mike Stern and Joni Mitchell. For these birthday concerts Gibbs explores unusual combinations of instruments and a wide range of contemporary soundscapes and dynamics. The 12-piece band is comprised of a strong cast of London-based players such as flautist Finn Peters, multi-reedist Julian Siegel, drummer Jeff Williams, trumpeters Percy Pursglove and Robbie Robson, and bassist Michael Janisch whose Whirlwind Recordings label will release a live album of these concerts in 2013.



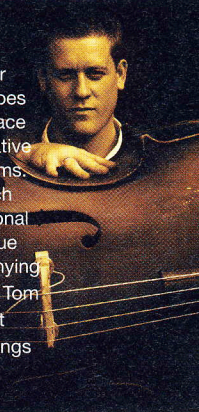
Gregory Porter signs to Universal France

Powerful soul jazz vocalist Gregory Porter has signed a major new record deal with Universal France, in a move capping off a brilliant year in which he released his acclaimed second album *Be Good*, took the European jazz festival circuit by storm, and made an emphatic return to the ReVoice! Festival last month at London's Pizza Express Jazz Club; the very venue which first helped him break into the UK, and subsequently, the rest of the world. Porter has appeared on Universal France already when he contributed vocals to producer Nicola Conte's 2011 album *Love & Revolution*, and his signing to this particular label could hint at a move into more soul and funk territory, although when Gregory commented on any major label moves earlier this summer, he reassured *Jazzwise*: "the music comes first," hinting his move to any major label would not affect his trademark authenticity. Fans keen to get their ears around yet more new material from Gregory in the meantime should also check out the first two superb cuts on The Rongetz Foundation's new *Brooklyn Butterfly Session* album, including the lead-off track 'Gogo Soul', on a strong set of material written and produced by trumpeter Stéphane Ronget. Porter is also featured on three songs on saxophonist David Murray's forthcoming new album, alongside Macy Gray, which is due for release early next year. His gift for adding political bite to his soulful appeal also gets an added boost on the latter session, that was recorded in New Orleans, New York and Washington DC, as he sings lyrics penned by poet Ishmael Reed and Abiodun Oyewole of The Last Poets.

MICHAEL JANISCH BLOWS HOT WITH WHIRLWIND

Bassist/composer Michael Janisch is gearing up for a busy 2013 with two new album releases under his own name and tour dates with his band (as well as a Jan/Feb UK tour with saxophonist Walter Smith III), while his burgeoning Whirlwind Recordings imprint goes from strength to strength with a raft of new releases and a three-day festival at Kings Place in May. The Wisconsin-born, UK-resident bassist's two solo projects include a collaborative live album with saxophone great Lee Konitz, pianist Dan Tepter and drummer Jeff Williams. The second project is his second solo album, *Paradigm Shift*, a new suite of music which Janisch describes as: "some interestingly organic odd metered mayhem, mixed with atonal and poly-harmony, with adventurous post-production effects." Meanwhile things continue apace with Whirlwind who have signed legendary composer Mike Gibbs (see accompanying story below left), while there will be new albums in 2013 from rising star Scottish pianist Tom Gibbs, as well as Andre Canniere and Jeff Williams, and exciting young alto saxophonist Rachael Cohen. Bringing all this together will be the Whirlwind Recordings Festival at Kings Place, that runs 9-11 May 2013, and will see many of the label's artists perform.

For more info go to www.whirlwindrecordings.com



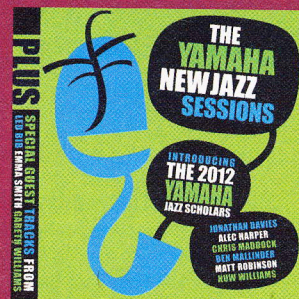
José James Signs to Blue Note

Brooklyn-based, Minneapolis-born singer José James makes his debut for Blue Note, with *No Beginning No End*, released 21 January 2013. With two well-received solo albums on Brownswood, *The Dreamer* and *Blackmagic*, and *For All We Know* on Verve, his latest album features a more acoustic soul-meets-funk sound, working alongside labelmate Robert Glasper, legendary session bassist/songwriter Pino Palladino, R&B singer/songwriter/guitarist Emily King, French-Moroccan vocalist Hindi Zahra, and the 2011 Thelonious

Monk International Piano Competition winner Kris Bowers. Emphasising James' love of D'Angelo-esque soul jazz, Afrobeat grooves and sultry acoustic balladry, the album simmers with a raw yet contemporary blend of sophistication and simplicity. While the album certainly sees him strike out into more mainstream territory, James has earned his jazz stripes through memorable performances such as his celebration of the Impulse label alongside McCoy Tyner and Chris Potter at last year's LJJ, and his stunning Coltrane/Johnny Hartman-inspired project with brilliant Belgian pianist Jef Neve.

FANTASTIC YAMAHA NEW JAZZ SESSIONS CD FREE WITH JAZZWISE DECEMBER/JANUARY DOUBLE ISSUE

Don't miss the special December/January double edition of *Jazzwise*, out on 22 November, which comes with a fantastic free nine-track covermount CD, *The Yamaha New Jazz Sessions*. The disc features the seven rising star finalists of the 2012 Yamaha Jazz Scholars initiative with newly recorded tracks by the bands of saxophonists Ben Mallinder, Alec Harper, and Chris Maddock; pianist Matt Robinson; bassist Huw Williams; drummer Jonathan Davis and singer Emma Smith, as well as tracks by guest stars, the Gareth Williams Power Trio and Led Bib. Demand will be big for this special double issue that includes albums of the year poll results, a look ahead to the hot tips for next year, a major retrospective on Evan Parker plus features on New York saxophonist Steve Lehman, Neon Quartet and Food, featuring Iain Ballamy. So be sure to place an order at your local newsagent, or subscribe on page 64, save money on a year's issues and get a great CD free and don't forget to download the *Jazzwise* app from the Apple iTunes store now!





Fred Hersch Trio Alive at the Vanguard

Palmetto PM2159 (2 CDs) | ★★★★★

Fred Hersch (p), John Hébert (b), and Eric McPherson (d).
Rec. 7-12 February 2012

While some jazz fans may live in a particular place in the past – say 1961 at the Village Vanguard when Bill Evans recorded at the New York club of clubs – most musicians prefer the present, and none more so than Fred Hersch. It just shouts out from his playing, even though he's back at the Vanguard with all its ghosts (friendly or otherwise), but it's not 1961 any more. There's enough here on these two CDs to keep an attentive listener busy for days on end and still the hugeness of Hersch's achievement would not be charted. It's like diving into the Mariana Trench, as deep as you'll know. For my money the second CD is where all the beautiful little moments ease themselves out and multiply, whether on 'I Fall in Love Too Easily' or 'Sartorial (for Ornette)'; but 'Softly as In A Morning Sunrise' near the end of the first disc is just genius as well. A wonderful album, just wonderful.

Stephen Graham

Joe Hertenstein Future Drone

Jazzwerkstatt 126 | ★★★★★

Jon Irabagon (ts), Achim Tang (b), and Joe Hertenstein (d).
Rec. 13 June 2011

The genesis of this first-meeting free jazz power trio is in the 2011 Moers festival. Hertenstein and Tang performed there together with the group Torn and the much recorded saxophonist Jon Irabagon played a trio gig with Peter Brendler and Barry Altschul on bass and drums – their album *Doxy* was a 70-minute blast on the Sonny Rollins tune of the same name. A week later, Hertenstein, Tang and Irabagon recorded this largely through-improvised set – the bustling 'Panic Ballad', and spacious 'Ballad for Paul and Poo', were pre-composed sketches by drummer Hertenstein. Bass and drums have a good working relationship and set up assorted well-worked rattles, riffs and moods, and Irabagon comes up with a nice angular line on 'Rotten Strawberry'. Elsewhere, the saxophonist delivers high-energy rampage, adds a broad palette of breaths, phonics and firmly struck pads and keeps his impressive conventional technique firmly in check – he plays both with Kenny Wheeler and The Hot Club of Chicago. A solid release, that

occasionally catches fire, but is well within the routines of European free jazz. Mike Hobart

Yuri Honing Acoustic Quartet

True

Challenge CR73336 | ★★★★★

Yuri Honing (s), Wolfert Brederode (p, harmonium), Ruben Samama (b), and Joost Lijbaart (d).
Rec. July 2011

This leading Dutch saxophonist still has the look and aura of a rock star who prefers to walk on the wild side. This is borne out in his music too. Since the early 1990s, his band Wired Paradise has been deconstructing an obscure rock repertoire for a young jazz generation seeking new kinds of standards. He was doing Abba and the Police before The Bad Plus even existed. Honing's new recording *True* is only sparingly littered with the rock-pop songs he likes to explore from Bowie ('Bring me the Disco King') and Goldfrapp (the John Barry-like 'Paper Bag'), and as usual Honing gets to the heart of the songs' melancholy and underlying musicality extremely well. The rest are the saxophonist's originals and also preach simple song melodies, an approach that some contemporary jazz artists might be able to learn something from. There is a mellower acoustic ambience to his group than usual, fellow Dutch pianist Wolfert Brederode is here instead of electric guitar, his usual preference. Previous release *White Tiger* with the band Wired Paradise, benefitted from being a live recording and a contribution from the Der Rote Bereich German guitarist Frank Möbus. Some of the rhythmically infectious dynamics that were key to the excellence of that session might have broken up some of the spacious soundscapes and air of subdued reflection that looms heavily over this new one. Selwyn Harris

Barb Jung Stockport To Memphis

Naim Jazz naimcd179 | ★★★★★

Barb Jung (v, harm), plus various personnel including Simon Wallace (p, org), Natalie Rozario (clo), Neville Malcolm (b), and Rod Youngs (d).
Rec. date not stated

Barb Jung's second album for Naim continues where her 2010 album *The Men I Love: The New American Songbook* left off, but with an intriguing twist. While the singer continues to document her dramatic reworkings of classic songwriters – Dylan, Mitchell, Waits all feature in this new 13-track collection – here she contributes five self-penned songs. And rather fine they are too, especially 'Till My Broken Heart Begins To Mend'. Once again featuring the estimable Simon Wallace in the piano chair (Wallace also takes on producing, recording and co-writing duties) the rollicking title track sets the magnificently high benchmark. Jung's recasting of Joni Mitchell's 'River' perfectly illustrates her gift for confounding expectations. While the opening bars sound for all the world like a gently chiming music box, once the seraphic chorus of Mari Wilson, Ian Shaw and Sarah Moule kicks in the song gradually transforms into a *Glee*-style show stopper. By contrast, the singer brings a moving delicacy to Sam Cooke's 'A Change Is Gonna Come'

and Neil Young's 'Old Man'. Continuing with the river theme, the singer's reworking of Hank Williams' 'Lost On The River' calls to mind her treatment of 'Wichita Lineman' on *The Men I Love*, conjuring up similarly wide-open spaces, in an arrangement of enormous restraint. Fans of *The Wire* will definitely want to head straight for Jung's take on 'Way Down In The Hole'. Peter Quinn

Sekou Keita

Miro

Astar Music | ★★★★★

Sekou Keita (v, perc, kora), Adama Bilorou Dembele (balafon, perc), Binta Suso (v), Moustapha Gaye (g), Suntu Susso (perc), Mariama Kouyate (v), and Michel 'Pata' Salazar (b).
Rec. date 2012

Seckou Keita is a gifted singer, percussionist and kora player; a Senegalese griot literally born to play music, a man who learned his craft so expertly from his father and grandfather that he formed his first band at the age of 12.

The thirtysomething Keita has released a series of albums since relocating to the UK, all of them notable for his technical virtuosity and willingness to experiment; his cross-cultural bass-kora-percussion quartet and later, quintet, saw him improvising on the 22-string kora of Casamance in southern Senegal, adding new tunings, discovering new possibilities. There have been WOMADs, international tours, creative partnerships with the Red Cross; a song, 'Rewmi (Country)', the opener on this new excellent release, was ubiquitous during the presidential elections in Senegal earlier this year.

Were the hard working Keita still based in Africa he'd undoubtedly be a massive star by now; *Miro* should at least command further international attention. Recorded everywhere from London and Paris to Bogota and Havana, with a seven-piece band featuring the likes of Malagasy guitarist Modeste Hughes and Keita's golden-voiced sister Binta Suso, it shimmers with new ideas and moments of genuine brilliance. Jane Cornwell

Bettye LaVette Thankful N' Thoughtful

ANTI-Records | ★★★★★

Bettye LaVette (v); plus various personnel.
Rec. date not stated

Featuring the brilliant production of Craig Street, *Thankful N' Thoughtful* marks 50 years in music for the Detroit-reared R&B legend and survivor, Bettye LaVette. The singer's remarkable comeback dates back to her 2003 album, *A Woman Like Me*, since when she's been steadily on the rise. Two notable milestones, her acclaimed version of 'Love Reign O'er Me' at the 2008 Kennedy Center Honors (a tribute to The Who) and her duet performance of 'A Change Is Gonna Come' with Jon Bon Jovi at Barack Obama's celebratory Inauguration concert in January 2009, have helped bring her the recognition she deserves.

Passion, grit and pathos are the poles around which LaVette's potent storytelling revolves, as heard in her remarkable interpretation of Dylan's scene-setting 'Everything's Broken'. In addition to the Sly & The Family Stone

title track, a 1930s-style take on Tom Waits' 'Yesterday Is Here' and a blues reworking of Gnarls Barkley's 'Crazy', LaVette also offers a highly personal take on Ewan MacColl's 'Dirty Old Town', in which she references the 1960s riots in her home town of Detroit. Best of all is LaVette's interpretation of Kim McLean's 'The More I Search (The More I Die)', in which the singer makes every line ('In my vain humiliation I've wandered through shame's dark halls') sound autobiographical. Peter Quinn

Gareth Lockrane's Grooveyard

The Strut

Whirlwind WR4627 | ★★★★★

Gareth Lockrane (f, af, bf, comp), Alex Garnett (ts, bs, ss, bcl), Mike Outram (g), Ross Stanley (Hammond organ), Nick Smalley (d), and Nia Lynn (v, tracks 2, 3 and 6).
Rec. date 2012

There's been ten years between *The Strut* and its predecessor, *Put The Cat Out*. The format – horns plus organ trio – may be the same but this new album is a distinct advance. The playing is as strong as before but there's now a lightness of touch there as well, a greater sense perhaps of the value of dynamic contrast. Nothing's wasted, no matter which of these five musicians catches the attention – Nick Smalley's drums, for example, create subtle, unexpected patterns behind the soloists, while guitarist Mike Outram's comping provides both texture and energy. The writing, however, is the major advance here. His film school studies have served Lockrane well, giving the music a greater economy that increases its emotional impact. It's easy on the ear without ever seeming twee or lightweight. Indeed, if anything, the writing now allows the solos more space, allowing them to assume their place in the music as a whole rather than as an adjunct to it. Whether it's Nia Lynn's occasional vocal contributions, Alex Garnett's muscular saxophone, Ross Stanley's organ playing or the leader's strong, lyrical flute, *The Strut* proves from beginning to end that you can make music that is good for both the body and the mind. Duncan Heining

Bettye LaVette

