

two albums. Leaders and co-founders John Tchicai (alto sax) and Roswell Rudd (trombone) remain, but are joined by a new bassist and drummer, Tchicai's fellow Dane, Finn von Eyben, and South African Louis Moholo, respectively. Culled from two shows the band played in Copenhagen in October 1965, the album offers a listen to some of the last music Tchicai and Rudd would make together.

Firmly planted within the avant-garde, the group's music nevertheless retains tuneful underpinnings. Von Eyben, especially, delights with highly melodic solos throughout. And the approach of both horn players bears an affinity for Dixieland, their music waltzing, moping, dancing with a distinct New Orleans flavor. Tchicai often favors a repeated honking of single notes, much in the vein of his contemporary, Albert Ayler (whose music, also, was deeply involved with New Orleans' anthems).

The title track, which is offered up twice – once from each show – opens with a delightful “falling” horn duet – a swooping fanfare that melts into a punching hard-bop theme, before the free improvisation begins. Moholo's drumming is prominent on both renditions, his cymbals releasing a steady sheet of shimmering metal, while his snare snaps out instructions.

The only cover tune on the record is a take at Thelonious Monk's “Pannonica,” which moves the quartet into its most melodic space, resettling them into a 1940s club atmosphere. From here, they work their way back – out – to freedom, coursing a Miles Davis / Wayne Shorter path in “Kvintus T,” before closing the first show with an all-out free-for-all in “Pá Tirsdag.”

Kicking off with “Old Stuff,” the second show, recorded ten days after the first, while certainly experimental, plays out in a rather more mournful, bluesy fashion. The New Wave New Orleans funeral march. “Karin's Blues” finds the band once again touching on the more traditional hard-bop form, if in a more ragged, stretched and pulled manner. “Kirsten” closes the record with a stirring, desperate cry for love (or some other primal, perhaps drug-addled, need).

*Old Stuff* reminds us just how inventive was the experimental music that emerged in the 60s. And its 45-year-old music challenges by still sounding fresh and illuminating today.



## ONE FOR ALL

**INCORRIGIBLE** – Jazz Legacy Productions, LLC, www.jazzlegacyproductions.com. *Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered; Petite Ange; Voice; Incorrigible; Blues for Jose; Spirit Waltz; Back to Back; So Soon.*

**PERSONNEL:** Jim Rotondi, trumpet and Flue-

gelhorn; Eric Alexander, tenor sax; Steve Davis, trombone; David Hazeltine, piano; John Weber, bass; Joe Farnsworth, drums.

By Bob Gish

A six-pack of musketeers who have years of togetherness behind them can come up with a very big, boisterous sound. And so it is with *One For All* and *Incorrigible*. “All for one!” is the companion phrase, of course, and the entire recording is a kind of, “You take the baton, Renaldo!” in that all solos take on the needed interdependent turns of a relay race – for some considerable distance, one might add, demanding both endurance and speed.

Other than “Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered,” which gets the CD off to a flying start, all the tunes are original, composed by respective band members, each projecting their own individuality under the canopy of the group's special sound.

“Petite Ange,” composed by Hazeltine is a spicy Latin tune that features the nimble trumpeting of Jim Rotondi and the equally facile abilities of Eric Alexander's sax. “Voice” is a plangent compositional tribute to Freddy Hubbard with Rotondi again doing the honors, both as composer and main soloist – here on flugelhorn. John Webber more than carries his weight on this piece, as he does throughout.

The title track, composed by Alexander, is a tour de force of unison playing, featuring Rotondi and Alexander but with the forceful walking bass of Webber and the chording of David Hazeltine, companions who in many ways are the super glue of the assembly.

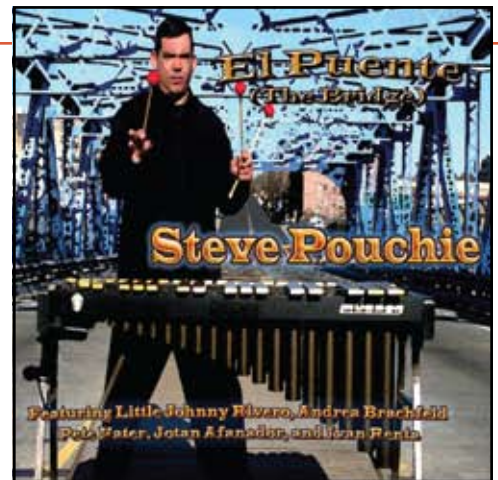
“Blues for Jose” is a personal favorite, with just the right groove, and just the right spirit of collegiality. Steve Davis claims ownership of a couple of the compositions, including “Spirit Walk” and “So Soon.” Davis, however, shines equally on “Blues for Jose,” bringing forth all the quirky and indispensable legacy of the trombone in the history of jazz past, passing, and we hope, to come.

It takes more than one star to make up a constellation, more than one sidekick to force a victory. Here the victory is claimed by all – and deservedly so!



## JEAN-MICHEL PILC

**TRUE STORY** – Dreyfus Jazz FDM 46050 369502. www.disquesdreyfus.com. *The Other Night; Relic; PBH Factor; A Brief History of Time; High Sky – The Elegant Universe; Mornings With Franz; Kingston, NY; Try To Remember; B.B.B.; My Heart Belongs To Daddy; True Story – Scene 1; True Story – Scene 2; True Story – Scene 3; True Story – Scene 4; True Story – Scene 5.*



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**PERSONNEL:** Jean-Michel Pilc, piano; Billy Hart, drums; Boris Kozlov, bass.

By Matt Marshall

Fueled by a classical sensibility and skill, pianist Jean-Michel Pilc tells a story here (many of them, actually) that's not only true, but steeped in a time-honored wisdom and grace. How appropriate, then, for Pilc to include on the album a piece entitled "A Brief History of Time." Surely, there's a nod in that to the cosmology of Stephen Hawking and his wonderful book that shares the title with Pilc's tune. (And how nice for a musician to honor and delve into a work of science as opposed to falling into the easy, seemingly automatic trap of equating music with spiritualism and religion.) Pilc enforces his outlook by following that piece with "High Sky – The Elegant Universe." But "A Brief History of Time" seems a fine summation of Pilc's playing on the album as a whole, as if the pianist were evolving before our very ears, hitting the notes, the phrases, of Bach next to those of Monk in a deeply satisfying and affecting amalgamation to rattle time.

He channels Andrew Hill on the standout "PBH Factor," tapping into Hill's *Time Lines* explorations that have been begging – musically, dramatically and, okay, spiritually – for continuance since Hill's passing. Like "Time Lines," "PBH Factor" is a highly intelligent piece – a bit like audible mathematics – that nevertheless boogies with a quick step. It satisfies on all levels.

"High Sky – The Elegant Universe" opens in turbulence – the force of leaving the atmosphere, perhaps? Drummer Billy Hart taps steadily, clock-like, a feeling enforced by bassist Boris Kozlov. All along, Pilc scatters and pounds notes, restless. Things settle then. And the pianist enters a soft, melancholy space recalling the *Gymnopédie* trilogy of his countryman, Erik Satie, before fright enters with a jarring pounding of the keys.

The shift is always on – from track to track, to be sure – but often within a single piece, as well. Whether in a hard, jumping piece like "B.B.B." or a lilting ballad like "Mornings With Franz," Pilc and his trio are never satisfied with staying put, but stick and jab and move, making quick alterations or building a change, say, through aggressive classical rolls (again, melding the classical with the new).

The various pieces lead up to the five-part suite, "True Story." (Or, since Pilc has designated these parts "scenes," perhaps it is more appropriate to speak of the whole as a "play.") The opening scene is dark, driven by a biting, terror-inducing repetition of a single piano note, followed by deep-end figures. With a creepy bass and drum webbing, the tune recalls that most pop of fright fest anthems, the theme from the horror flick, *Halloween*. Scene 2 bespeaks quiet meditation, yet with a simmering heart of anxiety that emerges as full-on suspense and a tangling jungle of fear in Scene 3. In Scene 4, we're thrust back to sharply chiseled marble, its base, however, shaken by a deep rumbling. Scene 5 offers a resolution, then, in a cyclical theme that crescendos, before fading uneventfully. It's a brief, 15-minute play that roots time

and existence in horror and carnal, if often thought-driven, anxiety. And it presents a stirring close to a wondrous album.



## AVERY SHARPE

**AVERY SHARPE TRIO LIVE** – JKNM Records 89898. P.O. Box 177, Amherst, MA 01004. Web: [www.jknmrecords.com](http://www.jknmrecords.com), [www.averysharpe.com](http://www.averysharpe.com). *Blues on the Corner; Morning Glow; Oh No!; Morning; I Understand; Dragon Fly; My Favorite Things.*  
**PERSONNEL:** Avery Sharpe, acoustic bass, executive producer, mastering; Onaje Allan Gumbs, piano; Winard Harper, drums, percussion; Steve Schwartz, producer; Alan Mattes, engineer, mastering; Maurice Robertson, photography

By Alex Henderson

Some jazz musicians are so highly regarded and in such demand as sidemen that they end up neglecting their recording careers as leaders; Avery Sharpe is a perfect example. Anyone who has spent a lot of time listening to McCoy Tyner's post-1970s output has no doubt heard the upright bass playing of Sharpe, who played with that acoustic piano icon extensively in the 1980s and 1990s and is also known for his productive associations with tenor saxophonists Yusef Lateef and Archie Shepp. But as impressive a résumé as Sharpe (who turns 55 in 2010) has as a sideman/accompanist, one cannot help but wish that over the years, he had done a lot more recording as a leader – and those who enjoy seeing Sharpe in the driver's seat will welcome the arrival of *Avery Sharpe Trio Live*, which was recorded in October 2008 in the Fraser Performance Studio of Boston's WGBH-FM. On this live-in-the-studio CD, Sharpe leads the same cohesive post-bop trio he led on his November 2008 recording *Autumn Moonlight*; Onaje Allan Gumbs is on acoustic piano, and Winard Harper (brother of trumpeter Philip Harper) is on drums and percussion. Actually, Gumbs and Harper were playing on Sharpe's albums before 2008; both of them appeared on 2003's *Dragon Fly* and 2007's *Legends and Mentors* (a fine tribute to Tyner, Shepp and Lateef – the three heavyweights who have given Sharpe the most exposure as a sideman). So Sharpe, Gumbs and Harper have a lot of experience playing together, and it shows; the trio never fails to sound cohesive on this release. It is evident that Sharpe, Gumbs and Harper enjoy a strong musical bond whether they are turning their attention to the Tyner standard "Blues on the Corner," Lateef's "Morning" (which the tenor man first recorded for his *Jazz Mood* album on Savoy back in 1957) or Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein's "My Favorite Things" (which is performed in an impressionistic fashion and avoids sounding

like John Coltrane's famous 1960 recording of that *Sound of Music* standard). The disc also contains one of Gumbs' compositions (the contemplative "Morning Glow") and three pieces by Sharpe: the cerebral "Dragon Fly," the angular "Oh, No!" and the hypnotic solo-bass offering "I Understand," which finds Gumbs and Harper laying out and Sharpe playing unaccompanied for almost six minutes. But the absence of piano and drums on "I Understand" is the exception rather than the rule for *Avery Sharpe Trio Live*; this is a trio album more often than not, and it is an obvious example of good, insightful teamwork – the sort of teamwork that comes about when musicians really understand one another on a musical level. Like *Autumn Moonlight*, *Avery Sharpe Trio Live* isn't quite as essential as the excellent *Legends and Mentors* – which is easily one of Sharpe's best and most interesting albums – but it's still an enjoyable addition to the veteran bassist's catalogue, which one hopes will become much larger in the future. – Alex Henderson



## CAROL SLOANE

**WE'LL MEET AGAIN** – Arbors Records, 2009. ARCD 19400. *Exactly Like You; Something to Remember You By; Anytime, Anyday, Anywhere; I Haven't Got Anything Better to Do; If You Could Love Me; Why Don't You Do Right; The Meaning of the Blues; Zoot Walks In; Where Are You?; Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year; A Cottage for Sale; I Never Loved Anyone; We'll Meet Again.*

**PERSONNEL:** Carol Sloane, vocals; Ken Pellowski, clarinet and sax; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Steve LaSpinna, bass.

By Bob Gish

What to expect from Carol Sloane at this stage of her long and illustrious career?

Quality, yes. Expertise, sure. Mellifluous beauty, oh, yes. Ms. Sloane has much to be proud of over the years of her singing and recording with most of the jazz greats of the last half century – this being her thirty-seventh CD!

Tradition can be heard on each and every track of this more or less nostalgic collection of standards that just about everyone will recognize. Listeners too will recognize her stalwart accompanists in the work of other legendary veterans, to wit Bucky Pizzarelli who still has the chops, whether as soloist or when providing soft chording behind Sloane's vocals. (The ubiquitous, "Senor Siete," guitarist, Howard Alden may be heard as well, most notably wonderful version of "Something to Remember You By.")

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