

In brief

3 PLAY+ AMERICAN WALTZ (no label – www.zigglezaggle-music.com). Phil Grenadier (t); Josh Rosen (p); Lello Molinari (b); Marcello Pellitteri (d). 2008. 3 Play+ mix light, tuneful Americana (*American Waltz*) with harmonically abstracted bebop (*Buttah* – a paraphrase of Oleo with a guest appearance by tenorist George Garzone) and even more harmonically untethered almost-time-no-changes work on *Happy Cramping*. There's theatrical whimsy on *Be A Battery*, evolving into sprawling free improvisation, followed by the correctively tuneful and tender *Old Fashioned*, and the slightly skewed township vamp of *Soupy's Comin' Home*. *Bulletrain* is a more reflective improvisation, notable for the presence of guitarist Mick Goodrick, like Garzone a musician associated with Berklee College of Music, where this set was recorded. (Mark Gilbert)

DOMINIC ALLDIS SCENES WE ONCE KNEW (Canzona CANZCD5). Dominic Alldis (v, p); Madeleine Edwards (b); Martin France (d) and others. In contrast to earlier thematic albums, here Dominic Alldis selects a varied programme in tribute to his favourite singer-pianists, including Shirley Horn, Blossom Dearie, Dave Frishberg and Michel Legrand. He sings at the piano, with Iain Ballamy (saxes) and Gerard Presencer (trumpet, flugelhorn) featured on several tracks. Alldis is a genuine interpreter of the lyric – he sings with great clarity and conviction, in a deliberately English accent for the sake of authenticity (his). His piano playing, while equally thoughtful, subserves his singing superbly – he sounds rather like Erroll Garner on *Devil May Care*, while on more lyrical numbers a Bill Evans influence is more apparent. Like all his albums, this is beautifully conceived, and a completely beautiful production. (Andy Hamilton)

JULIAN ARGÜELLES MOMENTA (Basho SRCD 29-2). Argüelles (ts, ss, cond); Gwilym Simcock (p); Frankfurt Radio Big Band. 2008. Argüelles is one of our most

rewarding and adventurous musicians, and "Momenta" – which marks his return to a big band context – is cheering further proof of that. There's nothing especially original about it: during my (deeply appreciative) listenings, I was often reminded of Jones-Lewis, Clarke-Boland and not a few of Lalo Schiffrin's orchestral enterprises. But that's hardly a cause for censure, especially as everyone plays so well and with such palpable enjoyment. Simcock is outstanding in a variety of idioms and milieux, and the leader is constantly invigorating, subtle and vibrant by turns. Very much worth investigating. (Richard Palmer)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG / ELLA FITZGERALD ELLA AND LOUIS (Essential Jazz Albums EJA 033) Louis Armstrong (v, t); Ella Fitzgerald (v); Oscar Peterson (p); Herb Ellis (g) and others. 1956-57. This contains all 11 tracks from Norman Granz's first session with these two and five more selected from the follow-up dates a year later. Because of better material and greater involvement from the protagonists the first session produced significantly better results than the later ones. There's some impressive trumpet to be heard and Ella respects both the material and her partner, rather than exhibiting her virtuosity. The five stars awarded in Downbeat now seem excessive but the quality's certainly high. (Graham Colombé)

COUNT BASIE SWINGS STANDARDS (Pablo 0888072 312401) 1975-83. Count Basie and his orchestra. A dozen favourites from the Basie band at its best, recorded variously in Hollywood, New York and Montreux. Basie died in April 1984. Marking that anniversary comes this re-release, though there is no booklet essay to give the date of Bill Basie's death, or to explain the significance of this CD – which is recommended without reservation. The band's pre-war recordings with Lester Young had been historically significant. This latter-day Basie style, established by "The Atomic Mr Basie" of 1957, was different, but with an unmistakable

thumbprint. Thereafter the Basie band was the epitome of a modern, clean and powerful swing band, before the term "jazz orchestra" entered our vocabulary. (John Robert Brown)

THE BIRD ARCHITECTS GONE (SLAM SLAMCD278): Aaron Standon (f, ss, as, g); Peter Evans (elv); Mark Turner (Buffalo el-b); Marco Anderson (d, kyb, soundscapes) 2006-07. If we were pigeon-holing Bristol-based The Bird Architects, I'd put them alongside Polar Bear, Get The Blessing and Led Bib. "Gone" is a splendid, complex, raucous mélange of funk, fusion, neo-bop and free jazz in which all elements collide and meld into a satisfying whole. It was recorded "as live", but then re-mixed and evidently subjected to other studio tricks, including over-dubbing ... but who minds a bit of cheating when the results are so enjoyable? Dedicated to the late Steve Harris, sometime drummer with Pinski Zoo and leader of ZAUM, this is another jewel in Slam's already glittering crown. (Barry Witherden)

TILL BRÖNNER RIO (Verve 06025 1780680) Till Brönner (t, v) with Kurt Elling, Luciana Souza, Milton Nascimento, Sérgio Mendes and Vanessa da Mata (v). In another Larry Klein produced jazz/pop crossover, German trumpeter and vocalist Brönner is joined by a host of big-name guests for an almost perfect reproduction of 60s bossa nova. The programme consists of well-known classics (though not *Ipanema*) from a clutch of Brazilian composers associated with those breezy days. The overall effect is uplifting, and Elling and Souza are sublime whilst Brönner's laconic trumpet features are typically effective. Session players including Larry Goldings are a measure of Klein's high standards, and if you enjoyed Herbie Hancock's Grammy-winning Joni Mitchell project, this should be right up your strada. (Fred Grand)

GEORGE CABLES WHY NOT (Candid WNCD 79402). George Cables (p); Tony Dumas (b); Carl Burnett (d). 1975. The death of Cables,

aged 63, in June of last year, went almost unnoticed. He was an excellent pianist, valued by Art Blakey, Art Pepper, Dexter Gordon et al, and this earlyish example of his playing, thoughtfully reissued by Candid, while not up to the quality of his later Steeple-Chase CDs, is more than acceptable. In this instance he was performing six of his own compositions, and expounding on them at length with attentive, if occasionally over-busy, support. The most familiar of these pieces is *Quiet Fire* which Cables reprised more than once on record subsequently. It's a tragedy that his life and creativity were curtailed by involvement in narcotics. (Mark Gardner)

LIANE CARROLL & BRIAN KELLOCK LIVE AT THE LAMPIE (Splash Point SPR009CD). Carroll (v); Kellock (p). Aberdeen, 2008. Although Carroll is usually heard singing to her own piano accompaniment, this set has her concentrating on vocals with Kellock providing wholly compatible musical collaboration. Not a weak moment and on some songs, like Carroll's a capella opening to *Lover Come Back To Me*, there are magical moments. Throughout, Kellock strides heroically in support and his solos are richly dynamic. Very much a meeting of minds and talents, this is jazz singing and playing at its best. Carroll's CDs are always very good and this is one of her very best and is strongly recommended. (Bruce Crowther)

STANLEY CLARKE TRIO JAZZ IN THE GARDEN (Heads Up HUCD 3155). Clarke (b); Hiromi (p); Lenny White (d). 2008. Believe it or not, this is the prolific Clarke's first acoustic album, a beautifully recorded and produced trio set that shows off the warm, woody sounds of his bass to best effect. It showcases his writing skills too, the opening *Paradigm Shift* (*Election Day 2008*) living up to its title in its abrupt changes of mood and direction. Pianist Hiromi is a Berklee-trained protégé of Ahmad Jamal with a wide stylistic range yet great consistency, while drummer