

# Record Reviews



## ALMA BRASILEIRA VIAGEM NOVA

(1) *Casa Forte*; *Qué Te Voy A Cantar*; (3) *Chão De Esmeraldas*; (4) *Mojave*; (1) *La Única*; (3) *Samba De Pergunta*; (5) *Amphibious*; (6) *Se É Tarde Me Perdoa*; (7) *Viagem Nova* (43.30)  
(1) Alvar Monfort (f); Piero Cozzi (as); Jaume Vilaseca (p); Ramiro Pinheiro (g); Rodrigo Balduino (b); Pedrinho Augusto (d, pc). Possibly Barcelona, probably 2017. (2) same except Monfort (flh). (3) as (1) except Pinheiro (v, g); add Pablo Giménez (f). (4) as (1) except Cozzi (bar); add Giménez (f). (5) omit Giménez. (6) as (3) but omit Giménez. (7) as (4) but omit Monfort.

## Fresh Sound World Jazz FSWJ 049

This is mostly very enjoyable

### JJ CONTENT

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music but I have two reservations which I'll get out of the way at once. The first concerns Pinheiro, the singer on three tracks, who is no Joao Gilberto and whose wayward pitching is at times disturbing. The second concerns the LP-length playing time. The music without the singer is so good that a few more instrumental tracks would have been much appreciated.

The three main soloists, Monfort, Cozzi and Vilaseca, are all excellent. Over the lively Brazilian rhythms (I assume bass player and drummer are from that country) they offer solos which have feeling and welcome variety of phrasing. Monfort's clear tone contrasts with the cloudier textures of Cozzi's alto and baritone and some arrangements allow them exchanges of four bars or more in which the contrast is underlined. The flute of Giménez is heard on four tracks (not three as stated in the details provided) and is effective in both solo and ensembles. Five of the arrangements are by Cozzi, two more by Monfort and *Amphibious* was arranged by Balduino to allow his bass a theme statement in unison with the baritone. (Given the words sung on the *Samba* listed as track six, I suspect that's actually the title track, *Viagem Nova*, and that the real *Samba* is the concluding track nine.)

This CD is issued in Fresh Sound's new World Jazz series and appropriately enough the names of the musicians suggest the group contains an Italian, Spaniards who include at least one Catalan, and up to three Brazilians. The brief notes could have confirmed this but instead follow a more poetic path and also fail to tell us anything about the group's genesis and where it can be heard in performance. Nevertheless I hope to be hearing more of their music.

Graham Colomé

## YUVAL AMIHAI

### I AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES

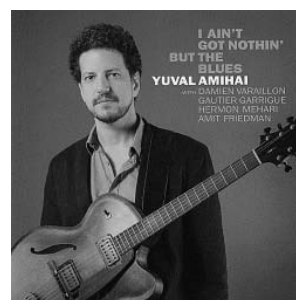
(1) *De Delphine A Lancien*; *I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues*; (2) *Love For Sale*; (1) *Old New Song*; *Pizmon La Yakinton*; (2) *Eviatar*; (1) *Abide With Me*; *Stolen Moments*; *Polka Dots And Moonbeams*; *So Tender*; (2) *Yuli*; (1) *You Are Too Beautiful* (60.11)

(1) Amihai (g); Damien Varailon (b); Gautier Garrigue (d). Pompignan, France, 1-3 May 2017. (2) Add Hermon Mehari (f); Amit Friedman (ts).

## Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT 551

Fresh Sound boss Jordi Pujol must have been pleased to see his latest protégé, the guitarist Yuval Amihai, refer to the company's "many beautiful and timeless albums" which have influenced him deeply. Other influences are Pat Metheny, Keith Jarrett of the trios, the sounds of different musical cultures and the blues of America. It's a reasonable trawl for a guitarist, and he can surely be forgiven the in-house effusiveness. Israeli Amihai, now living in Paris, plays with sensitivity and elegance. It's said that Europe's take on jazz has increasingly drawn the music's teeth. Amihai's velvet wrapping is nothing if not consistent but on the title track, though straightforward and barely ornamented, earthiness seems to be miles away.

Trio inspiration refers to the successful threesome Amihai has forged with bassist Varailon and drummer Garrigue. The three are joined on a few tracks by American trumpeter Mehari and Israeli saxophonist Friedman, partly in order to acknowledge a further Amihai influence: harmony. On the evidence of, say, *De Delphine A Lancien*, Amihai is strongest at reeling off single-note lines, sometimes of decent complexity. The quintet numbers probably



satisfy this acknowledgement, even though the arrangements do as much for the guests as soloists as they do for the charts as texture thickeners. Busy Garrigue ends a couple of numbers with rapid-fire playing and there's evidence of Varailon wanting to step forward. He does on *Pizmon La Yakinton*, virtually a duet with Amihai against background cymbal shimmer. Interesting is the three-in-a-bar working against common time in *Abide With Me*, and the way Amihai juggles successfully the roles of leader and prominent ensemble player.

Nigel Jarrett

## GABRIEL AMARGANT TRIO AIRE

*Hey Little Maurels*; *Yo Sueño*; *Zarabanda*; *L'Oiseau*; *Sonatina*; *Céret*; *Ojzarca*; *Goodbye My Love* (47.04)

Amargant (ts, ss, cl); Martin Leiton (b); Ramon Prats (d). Girona, 29 August 2017.

## Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT 546

Fresh Sound's commitment to the Argentinian saxophonist Gabriel Amargant has resulted in a third album. It represents a further reduction of personnel following his other recordings as a leader of bands under his own name with a quartet (First Station) and his second (And Now For Something Completely Different) with a quintet. The trio format on this one finds him not

so much making up for loss of numbers as relishing the opportunities to choose from three instruments.

He's equally irrepensible on tenor saxophone and clarinet (three tracks each) and soprano sax (two) as the advocate for his own compositions, which sound as though they were written for the one of his choice. Despite being never far away, they are not anchored to a Latin vibe and its predictable sentiments. In the final, aptly titled *Goodbye My Love* there's a swagger to the farewell, a walk in brisk common time piped by soprano sax as though regret is not much of a factor.

The clarinet is particularly well chosen for its versatility of character. On *L'Oiseau* it doesn't mimic birdsong but trails a plaintive melody that connotes lightness and fragility, back-dropped by tom-toms and cymbals; *Céret* is a charming waltz with Parisian overtones. The tenor sax is never content to rest for long in the introductory *Hey Little Maurels*, and is equally lively on *Zarabanda*, even murmuring persistently behind the bass solo. On the dirge-like *Ojizarca*, by contrast, it processes funereally, ending in repose.

Piano-less jazz trios are being investigated more frequently for their integrity rather than their want of plenitude. Bassist Leiton and drummer Prats worked themselves up to make the Armargant trio self-sufficient, albeit restricted in orchestral scope.

Nigel Jarrett



## PATTI AUSTIN & JAMES MORRISON

### ELLA & LOUIS

CD1: *Hello Dolly; Up A Lazy River; Too Close For Comfort; Let's Do It; Mr Paganini; Our Love Is Here To Stay; A Tisket, A Tasket; Satin Doll; Lullaby Of Birdland* (37.09)

CD2: *Basin Street Blues; Miss Otis Regrets; Hard-Hearted Hannah;*

## CRITICS' CHOICE

The 10 CDs JJ critics most wanted to hear from this month's review pile

Alma Brasileira	Viagem Nova	Fresh Sound World Jazz FSWJ 049
Bruno Calvo	Outlines	Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT 548
Lluís Coloma/Carl Sonny Leyland	Telling Our Stories	Swing Alley 034
Dr. John	Remedies/Desitively Bonnaroo	Beat Goes On 1326
Espen Eriksen/Andy Sheppard	Perfectly Unhappy	Rune Grammfon 2199
Bill Hitz/Greig McRitchie	West Coast Series	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 959
Hum!	Live At Club St-Germain-Des-Prés	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 957
Sonar/David Torn	Vortex	RareNoise 087
Sam Trippe/Bob Rogers	West Coast Series	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 958
Lee Wiley	West Of The Moon	Jackpot 48772

*Honeysuckle Rose; I've Got The World On A String; Struttin' With Some BBQ; But Not For Me; Mack The Knife; How High The Moon; Get Happy* (44.57)

Austin (v); Morrison (t, tb); and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Melbourne, 2 and 3 June 2017.

ABC Jazz 481 6483

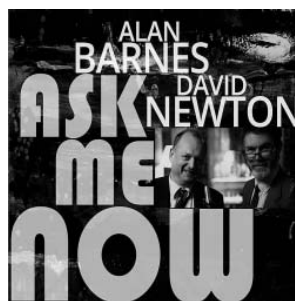
Recorded at the 2017 Melbourne International Jazz Festival, this set is particularly effective in showcasing James Morrison, whose razzmatazz on trumpet pays fitting tribute to Louis Armstrong. Patti Austin as Ella is somewhat less satisfying, and no Ella soundalike – but perhaps this is no bad thing. She tackles these standards with flair, and the extra notes she gets, for example, out of lines like “people say in Boston even beans do it”, recall Ella's creativity.

Though this is billed as “Ella & Louis”, it doesn't feature Austin and Morrison duetting in the sense you might expect (i.e. as in the Granz studio sessions). They are given the spotlight in turn, though perhaps it's trained slightly more often on Austin. *How High The Moon* doesn't have the zip of an Ella version, but nevertheless skips along pacily. There's something bizarre about hearing *A Tisket* with a full contemporary orchestra and earnest lyrical delivery; Ella may have loved its nursery novelty but some might argue it should have faded into obscurity long ago.

This is a live set, but with much of the applause/patter edited out, as Norman Granz preferred to do on some live Ella albums (“people who buy records want the artist to get on with it and go from one number to the next as quickly as possible”, he says on the sleeve notes to *Sunshine Of Your Love* (1969)). This harnesses all the crackling energy of a live

performance in what sound like near studio conditions.

Sally Evans-Darby



## ALAN BARNES & DAVID NEWTON

### ASK ME NOW

*I Won't Dance; The Gentle Rain; The Sun, The Sea, The Stars And Me; Ballad For Very Sad And Very Tired Lotus Eaters; Looking At You; Angel Face; Ask Me Now; Detour Ahead; The Mooche; You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me; Little Man, You've Had A Busy Day* (53.31)

Barnes (cl, as, ss, bar); Newton (p). Watford, England, 12 & 13 July, 2017

### Woodville 150

Barnes and Newton have been musical comrades for many years and in a wealth of situations. Knowing each other's work so well, it isn't surprising that they make such a telling twosome, supportively combining and interacting with mellow ease. They picked nine shimmering melodies and added a brace of their own, Alan's *The Sun, The Sea...* and David's *Looking At You*.

Barnes rings the instrumental changes, seemingly picking the right axe for every performance. For example, his baritone expresses the vigour one expects on Monk's title track. Hank Jones's *Angel Face*, on the other hand,

sits nicely for the soprano. Barnes is a master of all four horns. Newton's accompaniment, incisive but never over-egged, amounts to dream support, and when he steps out alone he is in full command enhancing the mood. Solo piano can become florid in the wrong hands. Newton avoids that pitfall with concise and thoughtful elaborations.

In short this duo is ever alert and responsive while showing great respect and admiration for the well-chosen material. A delectable duo, indeed, providing an intimate musical repast to savour.

Mark Gardner

## JIMMY BENNINGTON & STEVE COHN

### ALBANY PARK

*Nepalese Suite; Blue In Green; Cut Down; Quiet Now; A Time When I Can Get Back To You* (47.40)

Cohn (p, shakuhachi, v); Bennington (d). Chicago, June 2017.

### Slam 587

I seem to remember that Delfeayo Marsalis wrote the notes for Bennington's first CD, which was called *Contemplation*. He's worked in duo formats before, with David Haney, Julian Priester and others. This new release seems to come from under the umbrella of his *Colour And Sound* project, a title that sometimes seems to mean a

