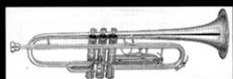


HOT HOUSE



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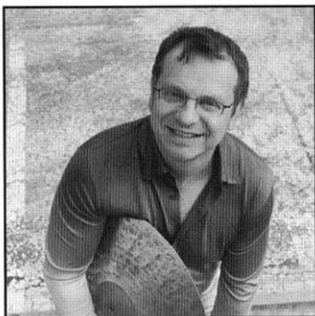


S P O T L I G H T



KLAUS SUONSAARI COBI'S PLACE/MAY 13

This master percussionist's journey, begun in Helsinki, has taken him through Boston (Berklee) and Rochester (Eastman) to residence in New Jersey - and increased prominence on the NYC scene, in company with the likes of Tom Harrell, Bob Berg, Geri Allen, Bobby Short and Diana Krall. For aural evidence of his skills, check the Radio Station link on www.klaussuonsaari.com, offering full tracks from CDs on his own KS label, many of which introduce other Finnish talents. These sets will co-feature pianist Frank Carlberg, heard dueting with Klaus on an exquisite new KSjazz disc called *Fallingwater*. **PB**



ENRICO GRANAFEI B.B. KING'S/MAY 4

At Manhattan School of Music in the early 90s, he was Toots Theilemans' sole student. Although Enrico's masterful on both classical guitar and chromatic harmonica (sometimes even simultaneously), he's devoted much of his time over the past six years to running Trumpets in Montclair and performed more frequently abroad than closer to home. But he'll play at this Jazz ItaloAmericano gala at which selected musicians being honored - Joe Lovano, Bucky Pizzarelli, Gap Mangione among them - may well be heard, too. The evening's featured band is Mark Morganelli's Jazz Forum All-Stars. Phone: 732-229-5877. **PB**

VINCENT GARDNER DIZZY'S/MAY 9-14

In an ideal jazz world, great trombonists would garner as much ink and acclaim as tenor giants. Gardner - these days, a member of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra - is worthy of such attention now. On his latest quintet CD, *Elbow Room* (Steeplechase), he shares the front line with fellow LCJO guy Walter Blandings Jr., who'll join him on tenor at Dizzy's to recall music from *Blue Train*, that splendid Coltrane date for Blue Note on which Curtis Fuller played. Also on hand for this look back - and forward: trumpeter Nicholas Payton, pianist Marc Cary, bassist Greg Williams and drummer Quincy Davis. **PB**

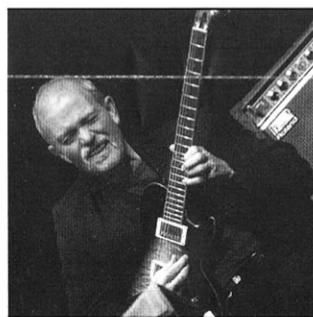


SCOTT FEINER SMOKE/MAY 6

Feiner calls his group "Pandeiro Jazz" because it provides a vehicle through which he can introduce the distinctive sound of that Brazilian hand drum into a jazz context. It's also the title of his disc, just released on the Delira Musica label. Joining him at Smoke will be guitarist Freddie Bryant, saxophonist Joel Frahm (both heard on the CD) and bassist Ugonna Okegwo. It's a homecoming of sorts for Scott, who now resides in Rio. When he last played at this Upper West Side hot spot in the early 90s, it was called Augie's - and he was then an up-and-coming guitarist. **PB**

BOB MINTZER SWEET RHYTHM/MAY 10 AND 17

Saxist Mintzer (a thirteen-time Grammy nominee) emerged onto the New York scene in the 70s, playing fusion early on but later gaining wide exposure as a tenor/soprano player and arranger with bands led by Buddy Rich, Mel Lewis, Sam Jones and Jaco Pastorius and eventually forming his own large ensemble in 1984. Six years later, he joined the contemporary jazz band called the Yellowjackets. Mintzer has written loads of new material for his popular big band - much of it presented on *Old School, New Lessons*, his new MCG Jazz label release that features not only his Yellowjackets colleagues but also vocalist Kurt Elling. **KD**

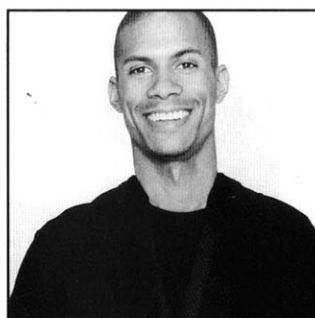


JOHN ABERCROMBIE BIRDLAND/MAY 24-27

Guitarist Abercrombie is a welcome addition to any recording session or concert date, because of his creativity as an improviser and his ability to shift among many different jazz styles. A Berklee student in the early 1960s, Abercrombie worked with Johnny Hammond Smith, Chico Hamilton, Gil Evans and Gato Barbieri during his first decade as a performer, though he'd become best known for leading his own trios or playing in lyrical duo settings with either Ralph Towner or Andy LaVerne. He's equally accomplished playing electric or acoustic guitar and guitar synth. For this outing, his quartet also includes Don Byron, Eddie Gomez and Lenny White. **KD**

MARK TURNER VILLAGE VANGUARD/MAY 9-14

The collective trio called Fly brings a contemporary, post-modern approach to a format once explored by Sonny Rollins and Joe Henderson. Tenor saxophonist Mark Turner, bassist Reid Anderson and drummer Jeff Ballard bring a new dimension of group interaction - definitely structured, not avant-garde free - to this bare bones, but hardly ascetic, jazz setting. Add to the subtle interplay and rhythmic variety of Fly an adventurous sense of repertoire: Their book includes Jimi Hendrix's "Spanish Castle Magic" as well as a tribute to Motown bassist Jerry Jemmott and another piece featuring a Ghanaian rhythm. *Fly* is also the title of their debut CD on the Savoy label. **GK**

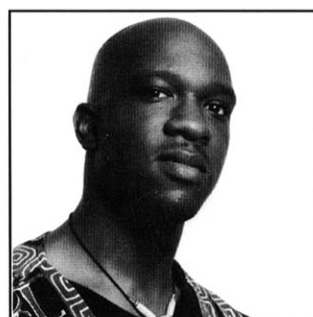


PLANET JAZZ SMALL'S/MAY 27 AND 28

This sextet originated almost twenty years ago under drummer Johnny Ellis as an outlet for his composing and arranging concepts - ideas rooted in Swing Era recordings by Ellingtonian small-groups and John Kirby's Sextet. Though Ellis died in 1999, the group's 1991 formulation (Grant Stewart, tenor; Joe Magnarelli, trumpet; Peter Bernstein, guitar; Spike Wilner, piano; and Neal Miner, bass; but with Joe Strasser now on drums) has been revived and will preside over this CD release party. *In Orbit* (Sharp Nine) features five appealing Ellis originals, as well as tunes from the Ellington and Kirby books and a Wilner arrangement of Hampton Hawes' "Sonora." **GK**

NEW JAZZ COMPOSERS OCTET AMNH/MAY 5

These are guys you've heard - or should: trumpeter and leader David Weiss, trombonist Steve Davis and reedmen Myron Walden, Jimmy Greene and Norbert Stachel, with Xavier Davis, Dwayne Burno and E.J. Strickland as the rhythm section. At this concert they'll perform compositions by Weiss and pianist Davis from the next octet CD, *The Turning Game* - including some commissioned by Chamber Music America's Doris Duke Jazz Ensembles Project. Formed ten years ago and growing (in renown, if not numbers) ever since, this is a group worth catching anytime they appear locally. **PB**



ORRIN EVANS ZINC BAR/MAY 16 AND 17

It's two different ensembles: Luv Park, Evans electric band, on Tuesday; then Orrin & Friends, a generally acoustic outfit, on Wednesday. Though pianist Evans has moved back to the Philly of his youth, he's still heard at New York venues like Kitano and the Zinc. Over the years, he's been part of various Bobby Watson groups and the Mings Big Band. He's now running Imani, a record and production company of his own that captures both his electronic and more hard-boppish sides. His most recent on Criss Cross is *Easy Now*. But there'll soon be an Imani disc documenting a recent live gig. **PB**

By Paul Blair, Ken Dryden & George Kanzler