

# REISSUES/ARCHIVE //A-Z

## Count Basie

Sinatra-Basie/Kansas  
City 7/Atomic Basie/  
Basie Plays Hefti

Avid Jazz AMSC1160 2CD | ★★ ★

Count Basie (p/org) with 15-piece bands incl. Thad Jones, Joe Newman (t), Al Grey (tb), Marshall Royal (as), Frank Wess (as, ts, fl), Lockjaw Davis, Frank Foster (ts), Eric Dixon (fl, cl, ts), Sonny Payne (d), Neal Hefti (arr) and Frank Sinatra and Joe Williams (v).

Rec. 5 July 1956 – 3 October 1962

A slightly disparate group of albums, all arranged by Hefti except for the lightweight 1962 septet that, apart from covering 'Shoe Shine Boy' and 'Lady Be Good', had precious little in common with the early 'Kansas City 7'. The big band material combines Basie's first recorded meeting with Sinatra, still just about in prime condition, with the iconic *Atomic* (including seven 12-bar blues at seven different tempos!) and its less exciting, Lockjaw-less follow-up *Plays Hefti*. There have been mutterings in the past about Avid's reissue sound, but their new 'Phase Compensated Stereo' is something else – comparing the recent Warner *Original Album Series* (reviewed in *Jazzwise* 194) and its reproduction of *Atomic* (the only set they have in common), this version sets the teeth on edge like the fake stereo of 50 years ago. By contrast, the five bonus tracks from VOA's mono recording of the 1956 Newport Festival sound gloriously natural.

Brian Priestley

## Sidney Bechet

In Switzerland

United Music Foundation  
7640160390103 4CD and book |  
★★★★

Sidney Bechet (ss), with (coll. pers.) Sidney DeParis, Pierre Dervaux, Roland Hug, Jack Butler (t), Bernard Zacharias, Claude Jones, Christian Viénot, Pierre Dervaux, Jean-Louis Durand, Guy Lognon, Eric Dufour, Raymond Droz (tb), René Franc, Albert Nicholas, Claude Luter, André Réwéliotty, Wally Fawkes (cl), Pierre Braslavsky, Claude Aubert (ss),

Happy Cauldwell (ts), Eddie Bernard, Jelly Roll Morton, Henri Chaix, Christian Azzi, Charles Lewis, Yannick Singéry (p), Roger Kara, Laurence Lucie, Eric Brooke (g), Alf Masselier, Wellman Braud, Roger Benz, Roland Bianchini, Georges D'Halluin, Jean-Marie Ingrand (b), Michael Pacout, Zutty Singleton, Raymond Thévenoz, Roger Paraboschi, 'Moustache' Galépidès, Kansas Fields and René Marthaler (d).  
Rec 1939-1958

For many years after his death Sidney Bechet continued to be regarded as a demi-god in the French-speaking world. This simply excellent 4CD and lavishly produced book set of Bechet's collected work in Switzerland suggests that it's still the case. Indeed, when I was playing Bechet's music there with Bob Wilber's band in the 1980s, our hotelier showed us where Sidney and his band had signed the register in 1951. The man told us how impressed he had been to hear them perform, and coincidentally that same band with the pianist Christian Azzi (now 88 and still playing) is beautifully represented on these CDs. A single 1939 Jelly Roll Morton track is played during an interview with Bechet for the Geneva *Jazz Hot* programme, but otherwise the collection presents French or Swiss bands, with the occasional American or (in the case of Wally Fawkes) British guest. We hear what compère Loys Choquart assures us is Bechet's first-ever Swiss concert, and then a series of aural snapshots until the year before his death, including a series of piano sketches for his classical ballet 'La Nuit Est Une Sorcière'. For the most part, the recordings are in excellent quality by Swiss Radio, but by the mid-1950s we are in the era of the private tape recorder and pianist Henri Chaix and enthusiast Emile Vadi captured two great live sets for posterity. The radio interviews make clear that Bechet is one of the 'plus célébré' American jazz musicians in Europe, and the recordings demonstrate that he plays that little bit more

adventurously with his expatriate American colleagues, the drummer Kansas Fields and trumpeter Jack Butler. The studio and concert sessions with his frequent Parisian accompanists Claude Luter and André Réwéliotty are by contrast much tighter as one would expect from regular working bands, and the soprano sax routines are clearly worked out for maximum impact on the audiences – the screaming and shouting of the crowd in Lausanne rivals Beatlemania! And there are surprises in those bands, too, including the French 'Ragtime King' Yannick Singéry, who produces some authentic stride. Hearing what are for most of us hitherto unknown recordings of Bechet at the height of his European fame is a treat indeed, but what makes this a truly exceptional production is the book: 200 pages of LP format text, with an informative commentary in French and English, and an unparalleled collection of photos and memorabilia. It builds on Roland Hippenmeyer's pioneering 1980 book on Bechet, but with excellent reproductions of concert photos, tickets, programmes, contracts, reviews and more. It is a true portrait of Francophone Switzerland's love affair with the grand old man of New Orleans Jazz, put together with fitting attention to every detail. **Alyn Shipton**

## Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers

At The Free  
Trade Hall 1961

Solar 4569958 | ★★ ★ ★

Recommended

Art Blakey (d), Lee Morgan (t), Wayne Shorter (ts), Bobby Timmons (p) and Jymie Merritt (b). Rec. 6 May 1961

Another dip into the now legendary cache of unreleased tapes recorded by the Free Trade Hall's in-house sound engineers. Truly this was a magic evening in Manchester when the Messengers supported the Thelonious Monk Quartet – at around a couple of quid a ticket! As to be expected, the Messengers performed a carefully thought out crowd-pleasing programme of seven finely arranged selections which kicked off with 'It's Only A Paper Moon' and included 'Dat Dere', 'Are You Real', 'The Summit' plus three from their Blue Note album *A Night In Tunisia* that took in the thunderous title track plus 'Like Someone In Love' and concluded with 'Kozo's Waltz'. As other recordings from this memorable European tour substantiate, this



Art Blakey

much recorded edition of the Messengers was consistently on the money especially Lee Morgan who was in complete command of his considerable abilities. His reasoning is beyond question as he virtually sizzles throughout solo after solo. Meanwhile, the ever-adventurous Wayne Shorter plays things close to his chest leaving Bobby Timmons to deliver 'Dat Dere' to the delight of a packed house. I've written at length about the Messengers within these pages and on each occasion I've lauded them (along with Horace Silver's bands, arguably the most accomplished of hard bop purveyors). This marvellous release hasn't altered that opinion. **Roy Carr**

## Terri Lyne Carrington

The ACT Years

ACT 9588-2 | ★★ ★

Terri Lyne Carrington (d), (v), Wallace Roney, Terence Blanchard (t), Greg Osby (as), Gary Thomas (ts), Herbie Hancock (p), Greg Kurstin, Bojan Z (kys), Nguyễn Lê, Kevin Eubanks, Danny Robinson, Adam Rogers, Jeff Richman (g), Malcolm-Jamal Warner (v, b), Meshell Ndegeocello, Jimmy Haslip, Bob Hurst, Michel Aliibo (b), Darryl Jackson, Ed Bargauiarena, Karim Ziad (perc) and Aida Khann (v). Rec. 2002-2004

A curious compilation in that Carrington only recorded two albums as leader for ACT, *Jazz Is A Spirit* and *Structure*. So the release is beefed up by Carrington's work on Nguyễn Lê's Hendrix tribute, *Purple*. Which actually works, as Lê's highly eclectic take on The Great Man not only pitches Carrington in a different context to her own rather earnest projects, but also gives her space to rock out in a way that Carrington as leader might not readily do. However it's hard not to be distracted by the Hendrix material and forget this is supposedly the drummer's retrospective. Aida Khann's extraordinary vox transform 'Manic Depression', while 'Voodoo Child' pitched against African chants and percussion is so vivid, Lê's guitar so barnstorming, that Carrington's role is easy to overlook. However, as an arranger in her own right,

Sidney Bechet

