

Midwest Record

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10/29/16

BROWNTASOURAS

SNAGGLE/Long Slog: Funk/jazz fans, the next generation is in the house. Led by a 25 year old, produced by a sidekick of Randy Brecker and listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the world's fastest drummer as part of their crew, your ears aren't deceiving you when you put this on and think you're in the presence of some killer, new funk. A bunch of hard charging lads that probably can't do anything but deliver the goods, this is what you have to play when you need to get the blood flowing. Smoking stuff throughout. 1701

www.donaldray.com

DONALD RAY JOHNSON/ & Gas Blues Band/Bluesin' Around: This cat was the drummer on "Boogie Oogie Oogie", but don't hold that paycheck against his lifetime of blues cred. A classic vocalist that shows the field hasn't totally been taken over by white boys with the blues, the blues vet delivers on originals as well as dipping into the bags of Dixon, Walker, Peterson and others. A double barreled dose of heartfelt blues/soul, this is one smoking bad boy you need to add to your real blooze rotation. A winner throughout.

JEFFERSON ST. PARADE BAND

JEFFERSON ST. PARADE BAND/Viral: This bunch of rising, young bad boys might take their cues from Nawlins second line funk but that doesn't stop them from opening a can of peaches en regalia and adding it to some world, pomo and goodness knows else. A mobile party band that gleefully doesn't know when to stop mobilizing, just when you think you know how to pigeon hole them, the grin at you with a gleeful 'gotcha'. A tonic for kids of all ages that think 50 is the new 30 as well as kids who grew up thinking this kind of mash up is normal, who could have fingered this galaxy wide sound as originating from Indiannoplace? Smoking stuff throughout.

www.laurenbushjazz.com

LAUREN BUSH/All My Treasures: This next gen jazz diva gets special points on her debut for kicking things off with a proper speed reading of a Bob Dorough tune that needs speed to be properly delivered and for not doing another cover of "Nature Boy". A swinging, sassy lass who's only crime is probably offending boomers by including a Dave Mason tune as a superannuated oldie with the rest of the classic song book entries, jazz vocal fans are sure to be charmed by this charmer who loves her work and wants to share. Hot stuff throughout.

www.leighpilzer.com

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LEIGH PILZER/Strunkin': You've encountered this sexy lady before from her work with Diva and other august organizations so the mighty blowing here should come as no surprise. Sounding like no stranger to smoky jazz clubs that keep smoking well into the night, this not quite after hours set is a real pleaser as you can tell from the audience reaction. Solid stuff propelled by a bunch of jazzy ladies that are no strangers to delivering the goods, it's a real delight that Pilzer can do her thing without having to deal with being trumped at every turn. Killer stuff throughout.

NABROC

LARRY CORBAN/Corban Nation: What a cute title for such an effervescent release. The guitar man is joined again by some pals that have become quite at home with each other and this quartet plus shows they have their fingers on the pulse of contemporary jazz that swings. A solid set by pros that showed up to play, you can engage with this or relax with it at any level you choose and still find it completely enjoyable. Tasty stuff that's easy on the ears even when you press the repeat button and let it roll.

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www.nicolesaphos.com

NICOLE SAPHOS/Tiptoe: She should have called her debut "Lady Swings the Bass" as she's out there giving a bass that looks bigger than her a real work out. Fronting a smoking jazz trio that knows how to rejuvenate classic songs as well as give proper setting to originals, this gal sings and swings like she's got lungs used to training for marathons. Hot stuff that really perks up your ears, Saphos and company add some magic to her jazz vocals giving it that extra oomph. Well done.

OUTSIDE IN

ALEX LEVINE QUARTET/Towards the Center: The smart, young guitarist reaches back to his fairly recent academic years for material on this new album. Birthing the music in an unhurried fashion, he undertook finding the sweet spot where written composition can evolve organically from improv and head arrangements making a unique set. Sometimes letting the notes fall where they might, there winds up not being a false note in the bunch. Left leaning contemporary jazz well played is what's on tap here in the end. Tasty stuff throughout that will perk up jazz guitar fan's ears. Check it out. 1605

www.petasong.com

PETA/Beauty Thunders: The opera student that discovered world beat while in music school comes out with her third album and it moves way beyond well intentioned girl friend music for yoga classes. Firmly finding her footing, she creates a set of personal, diaspora based music based in her ethnic roots and heritage no matter how removed from them she is in the real world. If you aren't listening closely, you can call her a nu Loreena McKennitt but you'd be short changing her and you. This isn't girl friend music and this isn't granola music---this is a real e ticket ride for the armchair traveler. Cast aside your sword and sorcery notions and strap yourself in for the wild ride of the year. Hot stuff.

RECORDKICKS

HANNAH WILLIAMS & the Affirmations/Late Nights & Heartbreak: Wow, let's roll the clock back 45 years or so. There were a lot of soulful ladies that made their marks as backing vocalists for Rolling Stones and were given solo record deals that went no where based on that cred. If this record came out back then, this would have been the one that broke that background singer ceiling. Williams has soul to

spare and delivers it while leaving a bunch in reserve by accident. The kind of bad ass soul that it seems like only white English boys know how to deliver anymore, this was recorded in England with a bunch of up and comers from Bristol that sound like they grew up on show bands from the gulf coast here. A soul fan must have, this is da bomb (and a half). Well done.
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