



Tenga Niña
Jacques Thollot (Nato)
 by Mark Keresman

French drummer Jacques Thollot (born 80 and died two years ago this month) has such a singular history it's a shame he's not better known on this side of the pond. At 13, he was the official substitute for house drummer Kenny Clarke at the legendary Parisian Blue Note, played with Clark Terry, Chet Baker and Eric Dolphy and was on one of the greatest avant jazz recordings ever: Don Cherry's *Eternal Rhythm*. Thollot didn't helm very many sessions so this reissue of 1996's *Tenga Niña* is all the more an event.

Thollot had a most distinctive style. Like Clarke, his specialty was propulsive swing and use of the whole drumkit in an almost orchestral manner and he didn't go in for long solos (though there is one short solo piece herein). While baptized in the bop tradition Thollot also embraced the avant garde and fusion. *Tenga Niña* is marked by a wonderful eclecticism, not just from track to track, but within the pieces themselves, segueing one into another, suite-like. The proceedings begin with a brisk bit of bebop, lent savor by the crackle of guest Henry Lowther's trumpet, before alternating with a Latin-flavored lilt evoking, of all things, the Mexicali-flavored pop of Herb Alpert in his Tijuana Brass days. Then there's an interlude from Noel Akchoté's guitar—rhythmically spiky, Jimi Hendrix-like playing, pastoral acoustic picking and a prog-rock flavored segment—all while Thollot propels things along with a shuffle beat. This is just the first 15 minutes, folks. Tony Hymas plays spare and truly lyrical piano and bassist Claude Tchamitchian is subdued but solid.

Tenga Niña is full of memorable (catchy, even), engaging compositions and a variety of moods, ranging from pensive to breezy. What makes its almost bewildering variety work so well is Thollot and company's unassuming delivery. While there is inspired and often unpredictable musicianship, there is restraint and a complete lack of bombast. Fans of postbop, the jazzier side of progressive rock and fusion's 1969-74 epoch—*Tenga Niña* will bring you all together for an all-night party.

For more information, visit natomusic.fr



My Blue Heaven
Daryl Sherman (Muzak)
 by Scott Yanow

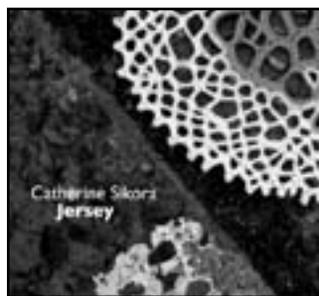
Daryl Sherman has always been a delightful performer as both a singer and a pianist. The daughter of trombonist Sammy Sherman, she grew up hearing swing and loved the music from the start. Mildred Bailey was an early influence on her singing although she always had her own sound within the vintage style. She began playing piano when she was five, worked some early jobs with her father and in the early '80s sang with the Artie Shaw Orchestra. Since 1983

Sherman has recorded on a regular basis and her projects have included tribute recordings to Jimmy McHugh, Hoagy Carmichael and Bailey. She played Cole Porter's Steinway piano on a regular basis during her 14-year engagement at the Waldorf-Astoria.

While Sherman normally records with a band, on *My Blue Heaven* she is heard solo except for two numbers on which bassist Harvie S joins in. Recorded in New York for the Japanese Muzak label, this intimate affair finds her stretching herself a little by performing some material beyond swing, including a bit of cabaret and more modern songs. The only well-known tunes here that date from before the '50s are the title track and "You Turned The Tables On Me". Sherman sounds quite comfortable interpreting a pair of Cy Coleman songs ("I Walk A Little Faster" and "You Wanna Bet") along with "Feel Like Makin' Love" and Jimmy Webb's "The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress". She contributes the wistful "Cycling Along With You", performs a few obscurities and begins "Fly Me To The Moon" by singing the rarely-heard verse.

Sherman's vocals are basic and quietly expressive, mostly sticking to the lyrics and words while swinging. Her piano is top-notch, offering both sympathetic accompaniment and inventive solos. *My Blue Heaven* is easily recommended to those who enjoy hearing superior lyrics rendered by a veteran vocalist who has full understanding of the words she sings.

For more information, visit muzak.co.jp. Sherman is at Café Noctambulo Oct. 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th. See Calendar.



Jersey
Catherine Sikora (Relative Pitch)
 by John Sharpe

In the liners of Irish-born, NYC-based saxophonist Catherine Sikora's first solo outing, the author reports various complimentary reactions from English saxophone maestro Evan Parker, who heard the disc during a car journey. As the creator of numerous solo albums Parker provides a fitting reference point. In many ways Sikora resembles Parker on tenor saxophone, in that she has created a personal language in which she sublimates technique according to what she wants to achieve and maintains a discernible relationship to the free jazz tradition in her syntax. Sikora presents a program of 13 spontaneous meditations, which often have the reflective air associated with unaccompanied recitals.

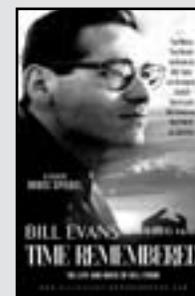
Sikora's subtle use of multiphonics forms one dominant trait of the set, whether that be how she shades the notes at the end of a phrase on "The Knowing Of Sums" or how the ghostly harmonics swell from near silence on "Clashes With Ice". But, as on the opening "Ripped From The Headlines", she carefully marshals her approach, recalling another English saxophonist John Butcher in her absolute control and deployment of overtones. Where she remains distinct from both Butcher and Parker is in how she incorporates such dissonance into a stream of delicate abstract lyricism. Perhaps that explains the message from a neighbor reproduced on the sleeve, thanking her for the live music emanating from her practice regime—not a testimonial many reed players possess!

Sikora cultivates an unhurried attitude, in which she often pauses at the end of one utterance before moving on to the next, sometimes, as in the drifting "After All", to the degree that the listener might think

the piece has concluded. Other influences surface only briefly. The first few notes of "Barn Door Open" evoke Coltrane and the piece takes on appropriately spiritual inflections thereafter and there is a blue tinge to the final very short "Tassels On The Day". Nonetheless, she leavens her calm steady style with more energetic passages on occasion, particularly on "Storms A Brewin'", where her undulating trajectory and sudden leaps and yelps suggest circular breathing. It all makes for a well-rounded statement, which promises more to come in the future.

For more information, visit relativepitchrecords.com. Sikora is at The Stone Oct. 18th. See Calendar.

ON SCREEN



Time Remembered: The Life and Music of Bill Evans
 (A Film by Bruce Spiegel)
 by Ken Dryden

Bill Evans is one of the most important jazz pianists of the second half of the 20th century. His groundbreaking trios focused on group interplay rather than the usual leader with accompanists while his lyrical style influenced many pianists.

Bruce Spiegel's far-ranging documentary is an unforgettable collage constructed from many sources: eight years of interviews with musicians who knew or played with Evans, in addition to family, friends and later pianists who felt his influence. There are also audio and rare video clips from Evans' performances on record and television, along with interviews with him. The interview subjects include: drummers Paul Motian, Jack DeJohnette, Marty Morell, Joe LaBarbera, Arnie Wise and Eliot Zigmund; bassists Chuck Israels and Marc Johnson; trombonist Bob Brookmeyer; guitarists Jim Hall and Mundell Lowe; vocalists Jon Hendricks and Tony Bennett; and producer Orrin Keepnews, who recorded the pianist extensively during two separate periods of his career, first learning of him after Lowe played a wire recording of him over the phone.

The analysis of his initially hidden contributions to Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* are discussed at length by journalist Ashley Kahn while pianists Larry Willis, Eric Reed and Jack Reilly provide insight into Evans' playing style. The pianist's sister-in-law, Pat Evans, and her daughter Debby (for whom "Waltz For Debby" was named) share family memories. The success of Evans' early trio with Motian and bassist Scott LaFaro was cut short days after their brilliant 1961 Village Vanguard recordings when LaFaro was killed in a car wreck, sending the pianist into a deep depression. Evans' long battle with heroin addiction is examined in detail, as is the cocaine abuse that contributed to his premature death at 51 in 1980.

While many of Evans' landmark recordings are excerpted throughout the film (often from old LPs rather than CDs), his rarely-seen TV performances, shown in brief snippets, are an added bonus. Spiegel's comprehensive portrait of this brilliant musician and composer will delight Evans fans.

For more information, visit billevanstimeremembered.com. A screening will take place at Manhattan School Oct. 26th.