

CD Shortcuts: New Releases

3'Ain

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Choux de Bruxelles Label ★★★

This Belgium-based trio's five-track EP is boosted by the moodily animated presence of the scintillating Syrian trumpeter Yamen Martini; otherwise it's an engaging mix of Arabic-inflected melody, accordion-based Musette, Tango and improv.

Black Light Collective

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Ropeadope ★★★

The smooth saxophonist David McMurray both fronted and produced this extended septet's retro classic version of R&B/soul/funk with a breezy yet percussively grooving punch.

Enzo Carniel and House of Echo

Wallsdown

Jazz&People ★★

This experimental French quartet is an acquired taste; led by a pianist, whose sci-fi-influenced sonic design connects his melodic piano loops a la Steve Reich to jazz-pop fusion sensibilities, electronica and manipulated samples.

Natalie Duncan

Free

Fallen Tree 1 Hundred ★★

The first release on this singer's long-time collaborator Goldie's record label finds her sticking to an uninspiring MOR neo-soul pop formula that contains no real hint of any jazz.

Joe Fielder's Big Sackbut

Live in Graz

Multiphonics Music ★★

Three trombones and a tuba will sound like heavy listening to most but Fielder's tribute to Roswell Rudd, who passed away in 2017, injects something of Rudd's playful energy and extensive vocalisations into a set that inhabits both free and early jazz soundworlds.

CeCe Gable

More Than a Song

CCGableLLC ★★★

Well-respected on the cabaret jazz circuit, the singer nevertheless is working in a creative setting, her engaging conversational tone and ease of phrasing are backed by a simpatico quartet that includes her arranger-bassist Harvie S.

Christian Lillinger

Open Form for Society Live

Edel ★★★

Mostly recorded Live at JazzFest Berlin in 2019, the German drummer Lillinger's international 10-piece (including British cellist Lucy Railton and Swedish bassist Petter Eldh) incorporates colliding polymeters into an intriguing avant-minimalist composition/improv mix.

Lasse Lindgren

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Sleepy Night Records ★★

A Swedish trumpeter, an ex-member of Bohuslan and Danish Radio Big Bands, hits some stratospheric high notes soloing in a selection of big bands/orchestras on covers ranging from brassy easy listening pop to bebop-fired standards.

Dave Mooney and the Hope of Home Band

Live at National Sawdust

Sunnyside ★★

Recorded Live in Brooklyn, guitarist Dave Mooney keeps good company with a contemporary quintet featuring drummer Brian Blade, but throughout Mooney's originals there's a sense it would benefit from being less easy-going at times.

Quinsin Nachoff

Pivotal Arc

Whirlwind Recordings ★★

For this Canadian saxophonist-composer's second Whirlwind release he presents a convincing if tough-going contemporary classical violin concerto (for virtuoso Nathalie Bonin) and string quartet with just mild hints of folk-dance and jazz.

John Finbury

Quatro

Green Flash Music ★★★

A US composer specialising in Brazilian and latin jazz hires an all-star cast: great contributions from pianist Chano Domínguez, soulful Mexican singer Magos Herrera and a pulsating backline in John Patitucci and Antonio Sánchez.

Kristiana Roemer

House of Mirrors

Sunnyside ★★★

This understated New York-based singer-songwriter has a softly confiding tone and writes reflective lyrics and some unexpected harmonic twists for her jazz-rooted ensemble to get stuck into.

Jesper Thilo Quartet

Swing is the Thing

Stunt ★★★

Danish saxophone legend who has recorded with swing giants such as Hank Jones and Clark Terry both growls and purrs his way through an elegantly reassuring old-school swing-to-bop set of standards.

Cat Toren's Human Kind

Scintillating Beauty

Panoramic/New Focus ★★

You don't have to be high to appreciate this Brooklyn-based keyboardist-composer's band's salute to the socially-conscious east-meets-west jazz of the late 1960s, but it probably helps – it's a concept of 'freedom' that tends ironically towards well-worn platitudes and an overreliance on 'vibe.' **Selwyn Harris**