



Josh Green Cyborg Orchestra

Mightier Than the Sword

A host of distinctive, fresh jazz composers are on the scene today, equally adept with the pen as they are with the ax. Here's a sampling of what to listen for, ranging from the semi-traditional (emphasis on the "semi") to the decidedly unorthodox.

Bert Joris & the Brussels Jazz Orchestra, *Smooth Shake* (De Werf 144; 67:36 ★★★★★) This rollicking CD may at times evoke Gil Evans, at others Benny Golson. But trumpeter-composer Joris and the Brussels Jazz Orchestra offer their own kind of cool, spanning both versions of the funky title track, the rich ballad "How Could We Forget" and "Nasty Boy," stand-outs among these nine captivating tunes. "Nasty Boy" is a witty portrait of a snazzy dude that sets Joris' tart lines and squeals against fat trombones to forge a way-cool piece of Euro soul; Toni Vitacolonna's drumming also abounds with flourish and drama. In a similarly engaging vein: "Mr. Dado," a showcase for alto saxophonist Frank Vaganée, Hendrik Braeckman's guitar and Marc Godfroid's trombone.

Ordering info: brusselsjazzorchestra.com

Bill Anshell, *Rumbler* (Origin 82728; 66:00 ★★★★★) Ambivalence and shadowplay suffuse this intriguing album by Portland, Oregon-based piano guru Anshell. Jeff Coffin's querulous soprano saxophone launches the medium-tempo title track, one of the most conversational on this engaging CD. The soloists vary, but the qualities of surprise and confidence always figure here. In addition to originals spanning the piquant "Heisenberg's Fugue State" and "39F," a tricky exercise verging on pop, Anshell delivers a liberated interpretation of Thelonious Monk's "Misterioso," a "For No One" that shows how wonderfully malleable Beatles melodies can be, and a magisterial solo rendition of Duke Ellington's "Reflections In D."

Ordering info: originarts.com

The Delegation, *Evergreen (Canceled World)* (ESP-Disk 5017; 84:48 ★★★★★) Pianist-composer **Gabriel Zuckerman** leads a definitively diverse ensemble through an ecologically resonant program of 12 movements. The result is a fascinating form of sonic installation blending wild improvisation, classical strings, disciplined unison passages and untrammelled solo excursions. The titles of the tunes are largely cryptic, the movements not easy to sync with. These notes on "Headlight Imprecise (Summaries 1)," one of the longer tracks, may communicate this startling album's unique atmosphere: cacophonous and anarchic, collapsing into piano, very urban as in traffic jam and road rage, then collapsing (or is it coalescing?) into string sweep, yet still packing that piano punch. Then the saxes thicken the mix, beginning to hint at a direction, a form emerging out of chaos. The struggle is exciting, if not easy. Midway through, it softens, as if not sure where to go, but slowly, saxophone and violins assert themselves.

Ordering info: espdisk.com

Josh Green & The Cyborg Orchestra, *Telepathy & Bop* (Self Release; 67:52 ★★★★★) If Looney Tunes were to revive, Green would write the soundtracks. This long, animated album encompasses stentorian modern jazz in "Improvisation & Nebula," a track that proves Green a piano master; the smoky, eerie "La Victoire"; the sinuous dance tune "Reverie Engine: The Ambiguous Rhumba"; and the sparkling "Soir Bleu." The album is a marvel of unexpected voicings, as well as tunes that threaten to go every which way but are paradoxically even-keeled. It also features the cacophonous "Boy & Dog In A Johnny-pump" and "The Lauer Transplant," the aural document of Green's unexpected meeting with a certain television personality. **DB**

Ordering info: joshuagreenmusic.com



INTUITION - INTCHR 71320

MIROSLAV VITOUS QUINTET

Ziljabu Nights

(live at Theater Gütersloh, 2016)



CHALLENGE RECORDS - CR 73421

NATALIA M.KING

Bluezzin' t'il Dawn

"An album with a rare fervor...a sure value."
Rolling Stone France

[f @nmkmusic](https://www.facebook.com/nmkmusic)

WWW.CHALLENGERECORDS.COM

SUBSCRIBE
877-904-JAZZ

