

# Albums: Reissues/Archive

Landmark Recording ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★ Disappointing

## Basie Mary Ann Band

1931 (3CD) ★★★★★

with big band and small  
man, Thad Jones (t),  
Paul Quinichette, Eddie  
Ernie  
Charlie Fowlkes (bs),  
Eddie Green (g), Jimmy  
Eddie Jones  
Al Hibbler  
Clayton, Buster Harding,  
Sy Oliver and Manny

197 August 1954

The big band put  
together after  
Basie had spent  
more than a year  
leading an octet  
with Sonny  
Williams joining  
to be heard here,  
was there from the  
of Basie's  
band was

heavier  
it actually had much  
with his late 1940s  
number of  
contributing to  
all had Swing Era  
and there were  
rivals of earlier  
including two with  
his best to  
Rushing -  
casual forward-  
like 'Blee-Blop  
usily done by Basie  
(in 1949). There was  
standard, such as  
'The Kind', but by and  
of the 'new' band  
by melodic  
signals from Hefti  
for example 'Cherry  
You And Me' (a  
1957s

earlier outfit, the  
smallist but varied  
is a superb rhythm  
with ex-Jay McShann  
Johnson, for  
only appears on a  
session - while  
on duets with Basie's  
ther small-group).  
eely enough of

Lockjaw in one of several brief  
stays with Basie, there's lots of  
rewarding stuff from Newman  
and perhaps too much of the  
pallid Quinichette, while people  
like Thad Jones and the reed-  
playing 'Two Franks' only arrive  
towards the end of this package.

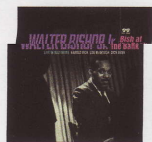
The main problem is the sound  
balance - producer Norman  
Granz favoured a 'natural' mono  
sound with very little reverb and  
few mikes, so that on occasion  
a soloist gets partly drowned  
by the ensemble or, when the  
trumpets are heavily muted they  
can be dominated by saxophone  
backings. There's not much a  
reissue producer can do about  
this, but the self-described  
'humble CD annotator' has a lot  
to be humble about, including  
errors in the listings. But, despite  
the sometimes oppressive  
acoustics, these 63 tracks are a  
breath of fresh air, especially if  
taken in small doses. **Brian Priestley**

## Walter Bishop Jr Bish at the Bank - Live in Baltimore

Reel to Real RTRCD 010 (CD, 2LP, DL)

★★★★

Walter Bishop, Jr (p), Harold Vick (ss, ts, f), Lou  
McIntosh (b) and Dick Berk (d).  
Rec. 28 August 1966 and 26 February 1967



This double  
album set is  
another find from  
the archives of  
the Left Bank

Jazz Society in Baltimore,  
produced by the archive's Cory  
Weeds and the indefatigable Zev  
Feldman. All eight tracks here  
clock in at an average of 12  
minutes apiece, and maybe with  
some judicious selection these  
might just have provided one half  
decent album. For instance, an  
unsubtle bash through the 'Blues',  
with Dick Berk mindlessly  
thrashing the drums and Vick  
playing a tenor solo devoid of  
invention, might have benefited

from being left in the vault. The  
piano is no great shakes at the  
Madison Club, where this and the  
other August 1966 tracks were  
recorded, which doesn't help  
matters. Maybe owing to the  
venues, or the tastes of the crowd,  
even what are normally ballads  
were played at a medium or  
uppi'n' tempo: so, there's no room  
for Jobim's 'Quiet Nights' or a  
curiously fast 'Willow Weep for  
Me' (featuring Vick's spiky  
soprano playing) to breathe.

When Bishop is given space  
to develop his ideas, and not  
crowded by the saxophone or  
drums, he has plenty to say, and  
the somewhat superior piano at  
the Famous Ballroom, where the  
last four tracks were cut, shows  
off his playing far better. The case  
for releasing material by Bishop is  
a good one, he was a fine pianist,  
under-represented on record,  
but having to cherry-pick this  
set just to get to the moments of  
his best work isn't really helpful.  
The closing 'Prancing' has more  
space for ideas to develop than  
any of the other tracks, with a fine  
bass and tenor duo section, and,  
on this track, Bishop's fluent solo  
choruses with bass and drums  
have much more sympathetic  
support from Berk than he offers  
elsewhere on the album.

Overall this new set doesn't  
bear comparison to the fine  
teamwork by Vick and Bishop  
(plus Woody Shaw) on the 1971  
*Coral Keys*, backed by the world-  
class rhythm team of Reggie  
Johnson and Idris Muhammad.  
And for Bish's own playing from  
the 1960s, this Baltimore package  
comes nowhere near his great  
trio with Jimmy Garrison and  
Hogan on Black Lion's *Milestones*  
from 1961. **Alyn Shipton**

## Marion Brown Mary Ann (Live In Bremen 1969)

Moosic M1221-2 (2 CD) ★★★★★

Marion Brown (as), Ed Kroger (tb), Sigg Busch  
(b) and Steve McCall (d) Rec. 24 April 1969



European  
broadcasting  
saves the day yet  
again, or 'noch  
einmal' as they



Walter Bishop



Kenny Burrell

say in Germany. We had  
Radio Bremen for the  
and safe keeping of the  
performance by American  
saxophonist Marion Brown  
leading an ensemble that  
comprises his compatriot  
drum legend Steve McCall  
lesser known local players  
more than hold their own

In fact, the presence of  
trombonist Ed Kroger is  
interesting for the contrast  
strikes with the leader's  
punchy reed. There is a  
bulk and bluster in the  
sound that is representative  
wave of avant-garde playing  
found a way of ratcheting  
intensity levels of their  
freeing up meter without  
abandoning the core values  
spirituals and swing. The  
additional layers provided  
Brown's carnivalesque  
well as Kroger's rumbly  
percussion contribute to  
overall freshness of the  
and the improvising is  
notably high standard  
throughout. Like Archie  
and Pharoah Sanders, one  
of John Coltrane's  
protégés, and the spirit  
'Father' is vividly invoked  
To Coltrane. **Kevin Le Gendre**

## Kenny Burrell Four Classic Albums

Avid Jazz AMSC1433 (2 CD)

Kenny Burrell (g), Art Farmer (t),  
McKusick (as), Al Cohn, Tina Turner  
Payne (bs), Mal Waldron, Tom  
Bobby Timmons, Roland Hanna  
Kotick, Doug Watkins, Ben Tucker  
Davis (b), Ed Thigpen, Elvin Jones  
and Roy Haynes (d).