

# Hit List

his music is likened to the blues. Still, "Feel Like A King" is the only song on the disc that approaches "true" blues. The tune is built over a mid-tempo rhythm, and Achison's playing is particularly impressive here as well as on "Living In Fear," where he filters B.B. King through the Allman Brothers.

Achison's music is sometimes relaxed but never bloodless. Bluesy but not the blues. And, most importantly, artsy but not – well, let's just go ahead and say it – *fartsy*. – **RA**



**Gerry Mulligan Sextet**  
**Legends Live: Liederhalle**  
**Stuttgart, November 22, 1977**

Jazz Haus

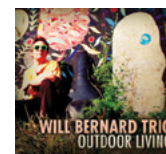
A year prior to this German concert, Mulligan had recorded *Idol Gossip*, an

excellent album that sometimes gets overlooked in the voluminous, 45-year body of work of jazz' greatest baritone saxophonist. His impressive ensemble for the album (or one of them) is intact here, with guitarist Mike Santiago, vibraphonist Dave Samuels, pianist Thomas Fay, drummer Bobby Rosen-garden, and bassist George Duvivier (the only member of both of *Gossip's* aggregations—the other including such heavyweights as Bucky Pizzarelli, Lionel Hampton, Hank Jones, and Grady Tate). In fact, the group performs three of that album's eight songs, along with Mulligan's "Line For Lyons" and "My Funny Valentine," which are forever linked to him and his association with trumpeter/vocalist Chet Baker.

The opening "For An Unfinished Woman" is more cerebral (almost in a Modern Jazz Quartet vein) than Mulligan's previous connections with hard bop and West Coast "cool" school, a label he always hated. San-

tiago's single-note attack is the most visceral section of the number. On the uptempo "Idol Gossip," he digs in to the edge of distortion, with fiery octave choruses, and the bluesy "Out Back Of The Barn" is right down his lowdown alley. A revelation for guitar fans, Santiago's slim resume includes work with Chico Hamilton around this same period and little else.

The new Jazz Haus label is committed to releasing seldom heard recordings, mainly from live European TV and radio broadcasts, including the SWR Archives (approximately 3,000 hours). The other two CDs in its maiden trio are Benny Goodman's 1959 orchestra, featuring vocalist Anita O'Day and guitar legend Jimmy Wyble, and Cannonball Adderley's 1969 quintet (no guitar, but an amazing find). Jazz fans will no doubt want to support the label's launch to help ensure more great jazz down the pike. – **DF**



**Will Bernard Trio**  
**Outdoor Living**

Self-distributed

It's all about the groove for Will Bernard and bandmates. Sometimes that groove is jittery. Sometimes pretty. Sometimes it's just plain funky. And even though he's usually classified as a jazz guitarist, Bernard shows himself as comfortable in a rock and roll or funk vein as he is in anything else.

The chunky riffs of "Nature Walk" illustrate what Bernard, Wil Blades on Hammond B-3, and drummer Simon Lott do best. The song moves between soul and jazz, and Bernard's two- and three-note licks float perfectly above the rhythm section, which is truly cooking. "Morgan Deux" has a



**THE HOBART BROTHERS & LIL' SIS HOBART, At Least We Have**

*Each Other* (Freedom) A "let's see what happens" convergence of Freedy Johnston, Jon Dee Graham, and Susan Cowsill, this could have crashed. Instead, it resulted in great collaborative tunes and a three-pronged vocal attack established acts *wish* they had. Graham does all the soloing on his trusty gold Strat except for the Johnston's "Nashville" solo (on his '64 Jazzmaster) in "All Things Being Equal." – **DF**

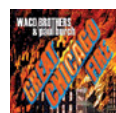
**STEPHEN DAVID AUSTIN, A Bakersfield Dozen** (Self-distributed)

In Paul Marshall, Steve Austin has an invaluable asset. Marshall's twang-soaked, pure country picking almost defines the art and *demand*s attention. Combine that with Austin's unique perspective on incisive originals like "Best Ex I Ever Had," and you've got good reason to spin this disc over and over again. – **RA**

**THE TALLEST MAN ON EARTH,**

*There's No Leaving Now* (Dead Oceans) Swedish guitarist and songwriter Kristian Matsson channels Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger in creating his own, unique indie folk songs. Straight from touring with Bon Iver, he plays open-tuned acoustic guitar with an earnestness that beautifully supports his singing. – **MD**

# extra! EXTRA!



**WACO BROTHERS AND PAUL BURCH, Great Chicago Fire** (Bloodshot Records)

Combining the raucous Waco Brothers with Nashville's Paul Burch might seem a stretch, but we get the best of both acts. Burch's country influence highlights "Flight To Spain" while the brothers' rock-and-roll twang stays strong on the title cut. In between, there's a Stonesque vibe on "Wrong Side Of Love" and beautiful rock guitar on "Monterey," a hit just waiting to happen. – **JH**



**TOMMY WOMACK, Now What!** (Cedar Creek)

The singer/songwriter/guitarist's sequel to *There, I Said It* hits pay dirt again – ironically, since the award-winning *Said It* was about being washed up. Womack gets some cool Strat tones when he's not coming up with lines like "A hundred bucks to play three sets/This is as good as it's gonna get." The oddly versatile Jim Hoke adds pedal steel and sax. – **DF**



**ELIJAH FORD, Upon Waking** (self-distributed)

Fresh from playing bass and guitar with Ryan Bingham in the Jeff Bridges' flick *Crazy Heart* and touring

with Bingham's Dead Horses band, Elijah Ford launches his debut album. His original songs are melodic, cinematic rock with searing guitar and production from his father, March Ford, the former lead guitarist of the Black Crowes. – **MD**



**JT COLDFIRE, Always & Never** (self-distributed)

At its best, this disc will remind you of a great night at a great bar. "It's Alright With Me" showcases Coldfire's big, badass voice and his hot rockabilly/honky tonk guitar playing. "I'd Rather Die In My Sleep" shows he picks "da blues" pretty good, too. – **RA**



**DUKE ROBIL-LARD JAZZ TRIO, Wobble Walkin'** (Blue Duchess)

Ever prolific, Duke Robillard is back with a stylish songbook of standards from the Gershwins, Cole Porter, Nat King Cole, Billie Holiday, and others. Brad Hallen's walking acoustic bass lines add the perfect echo to Robillard's warm electric archtop tone. – **MD**



**JOHN OATES BAND, The Bluesville Sessions** (WBA Records)

Recorded live at Sirius/XM Studios, Oates' latest is a

continuation of his solo release from last year, *Mississippi Mile*. A lot of the same songs are done with Oates and guitarist Mark Newman infusing cuts like "Sittin' On Top Of The World" and "Something You Got" with new energy. And he can't resist an old Hall and Oates song, closing with a rearranged "Maneater." – **JH**



**NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE, 17 Pine Avenue** (Woodstock Records)

The classic band's renaissance continues with this new album, featuring seven tunes penned by Grateful Dead lyricist Robert Hunter. Original guitarist/vocalist David Nelson and pedal steel man Buddy Cage are joined by lead guitarist Michael Falzarano to lay down some retro San Francisco country rock. – **MD**



**ALO, Sounds Like This** (Brushfire Records)

ALO makes pop that shows off a good hook, both musically and lyrically. Most of the songs have intriguing chord changes, and guitarist Lebo adds liquid solos. "Dead Still Dance" features power chords and interesting soloing over a one-chord vamp. They get the funk on occasion, such as "Blew Out

The Walls," which sounds like a tribute to the Dead's "Shakedown Street." – **JH**



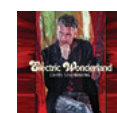
**SIDI TOURÉ, Koima** (Thrill Jockey) Singer/songwriter Sidi Touré was

leader of the award-winning Songhai Stars in his native Mali before releasing his first solo album in 2011. In contrast to the sparse, acoustic tone of *Sahel Folk*, this lively quintet outing, featuring lead guitarist Oumar Konate and the sokou (violin) of Zumana Tereta, is sure to suck you in. – **DF**



**SAM BARRETT, Serious** (self-released)

"Serious" describes Barrett's talents as an acoustic guitar player as well as anything else. "Alf's Song" is just one of Barrett's moving, substantive, often beautiful folk songs made that much better by cleanly executed and sometimes lightning-swift playing that, for all its intricacy, doesn't sacrifice one bit of soul. – **RA**



**CHRIS STANDRING, Electric Wonderland** (Ultimate Vibe Recordings)

Standring's jazz is by turns funky, elegant, and, yes, smooth. His soloing is subtle on "Almost September" while he sounds almost Metheny-esque on "All That Glitters" as he glides through the chord changes. He pulls out the nylon-string guitar for the Brazilian feel of "Oliver's Twist." Not every cut will leave you satisfied, but Standring hits the mark on most. – **JH**