

Riffides

Doug Ramsey on Jazz and other matters...

Recently in *recommendations* Category

CD: Ernestine Anderson

Ernestine Anderson, *Hot Cargo* (Fresh Sound).

In these 1956 sessions, Anderson's early singing has lost none of its naturalness, musicality or appeal. Her accompaniments by Harry Arnold's big band and Duke Jordan's trio sound equally fresh. [I wrote earlier](#) that this was one of the best vocal albums of the 1950s. I am revising that assessment. It is one of the best vocal recordings of the last half of the twentieth century. Sweden's Metronome label originally released this perennially new collection as *It's Time For Ernestine*. Mercury issued the LP in the US two years later and called it *Hot Cargo*, despite the disapproval of its producer, Börje Ekberg, and Anderson. Whatever the title, it is still time for Ernestine.



December 12, 2008 1:06 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

CD: Wadada Leo Smith

Wadada Leo Smith's Golden Quartet, *Tabligh*, (Cuneiform). A stalwart of the avant garde for nearly four decades, Smith continues at the head of the pack in free jazz. In this set of four moody, barely-structured pieces, the trumpeter frequently evokes late-period Miles Davis. He sometimes takes the horn below its natural range to explore pedal-tone territory that Davis never visited. Pianist Vijay Iyer, bassist John Lindberg and drummer Shannon Jackson have developed an uncanny ability to react to Smith's flights of unrestrained imagination. The sidemen also have impressive solo moments. Iyer's virtuosic turns are notable. On the long title track, the four interact with astonishing energy and empathy.



December 12, 2008 1:05 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

CD: Alexander String Quartet

Alexander String Quartet,
Retrospections (Foghorn Classics).

The ASQ plumbs the seriousness, assertiveness and sense of glee in



quartets 1, 2 and 3 of the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Wayne Peterson. Peterson draws on inspiration from sources as varied as samba, bluegrass, the bebop of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, and predecessors including Bartok and Ives. He integrates those influences in spirit, not letter. Played by the Alexander String Quartet with deep understanding, Peterson's pieces take the listener to

unanticipated places. This music is not for background to household chores, dog-walking or doing your taxes. It rewards listening with your feet up, your head back, your eyes closed, a glass of something good nearby and your imagination ready to soar.

December 12, 2008 1:04 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

DVD: Bobby Shew

[The Bobby Shew Story](#) (Skyhigh Films). The great trumpeter talks about his career -- stumbling into a jam session at age fifteen and discovering that he had

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