



**DVD: New Morning 25th Anniversary (1981-2006) 2-Disc Set**

**Review Rating:** Excellent

**Label/Studio:** inakustik / MVD Visual

**Catalog #:** INAK-6464 DVD

**Region:** 0 (NTSC)

**Released:** June 5, 2007

**Genre:** Jazz Concert

**Synopsis:** Compilation tribute to Paris' New Morning club.

**Directed by:** Patrick Savey

**Screenplay by:** n/a

**Music by:** various

**Produced by:** Daniel Farhi

**Cast:** Disc 1: Archie Shepp Band, Clark Terry All Stars Band, Bob Berg & Niels Lan Doky Trio, Randy Brecker & Niels Lan Doky Trio, Lavelle, Lou Donaldson Quartet, Ray Brown Trio with Art Farmer & Roy Hargrove, Pierre Boussaguet, Joe Lovano Nonet, Larry Carlton-Steve Lukather Band, Robben Ford Band, Gil Scott-Heron & Amnesia Express

Disc 2: Monty Alexander Trio, Billy Cobham Culture Mix, Al Foster Band, Ray Barretto Group, Omar Sosa Band, Paolo Fresu, Mike Stern, Larry Coryell, Badi Assad, John Abercrombie, John Hammond, Willy Deville Acoustic Trio, Duke Robillard band, Elliott Murphy Hamond

Hosted by Alvin Queen & Manu DiBango








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**Film Length:** 240 mins

**Colour**

**Languages:** English and French Dolby 2.0

**Subtitles:**

**Process/Ratio:** 1.33:1

**Anamorphic DVD:** No

**Special Features :**

Play Music Only option

**Comments :**

Still active since its debut in 1981, the Parisian New Morning jazz club is showcased in this stellar 2-disc set featuring a broad mix of jazz, blues, and fusion greats who performed in the intimate club in its first 25 years.

Each disc offers a distinctive lineup, with Alvin Queen and Manu DiBango providing reminisces and intros on Disc 1, and DiBango going solo on Disc 2 (with his French intros subtitled in English).

Queen's approach is more walking through the streets, looking at the façade, and remembering the

locale that was deliberately inviting and supportive of musicians away from their hometowns, whereas DiBango adds more detailed bio capsules of lead musicians.

Disc 1 includes separate performances by veterans like Clark Terry, Ray Brown, Art Farmer, and Lou Donaldson (giving a soulful version of "Laura" after a witty anecdote of his first sax gig), but there's some surprises in more contemporary aces like the late Bob Berg (whose performance is also included as a bonus feature on Inakustic/MVD Visual's separate [Berg DVD](#)), and Lavelle, herself delivering a fiery, jazz-funk rendition of the Beatles classic "Come Together," with a generous sax solo in the midsection.

The sound quality is decent throughout, but some performances – such as the Ray Brown Trio with Art Farmer and Roy Hargrove – are better miked, and offer a warm, analogue sound, with Brown's resonant bass cuddling the sharp trumpet solos. Just as fun is Brown paired with fellow bassist Pierre Boussaguet for their duet of "How High Is the Moon," and Farmer and Brown performing the gentle and bittersweet classic "In a Sentimental Mood."

The Joe Lovano Nonet offer a traditional big band sound, while the Larry Carlton-Steve Lukather is more contemporary blues, as is the Robben Ford Band.

The retro sounds of Gil Scott-Heron & Amnesia Express are the last group featured on Disc 1, and their rendition of "Three Miles Down" takes the simple groove and builds the easy, elliptical phrase into a crescendo of textured percussion, strong sax work, easy-flowing keyboards, and funky electric bass.

The material gathered on Disc 2 is primarily fusion, including the electric guitar and keyboards of the Billy Cobham Culture Mix, and the Al Foster Band, which stretches "Jean-Pierre" into an epic soundscape using drums, elegiac piano, pulsing electric bass, and raw, aggressive sax. While each musician gets his time to provide heavy-handed solos, the most alluring is the spiraling sax work which weaves between the slow bass pulse, dragging notes to create almost unbearable tension at times.

Running just over 17 mins., it's one of the set's standout selections from the myriad live performances professionally taped by the New Morning club, and as with any one performance, it'll have you scouring for more info on some great bands.

Latin jazz also gets attention in the show-stopping "Wayne's Composition" by the Ray Barretto Group, who spend about 18 minutes taking Wayne Shorter's tune from subtle conga solos to ferocious solos by each musician. Close-miked with warm bass, it's also hypnotic to watch Barretto playing non-stop like a steady dynamo, while the young musicians pause between their own solos.

Barretto's performance is Disc 2's central high point, and Omar Sosa's band forms the grand finale, delivering an amazing mix of Latin and Brazilian rhythms, funky bass, and piano work that glides between Latin, modern jazz, and solo classical styles. The group's energy is unbridled, and they're one of the few groups who manage to engage audiences into more physical grooving than the calm, if not respectfully toe-tapping & head-nodding that's typical in most of the concert extracts.

Perhaps following the fast-slow-fast programming of old LPs, Disc 2's volcanic core suddenly switches to the mellow tones of Paolo Fresu's ambient version of "Bessie You Is My Woman Now" from **Porgy and Bess**, and it's admittedly a harsh transition after a trio of propulsive jazz, Latin, and fusion performances.

One compromise with compilation sets is the sometimes uneven shifts between music styles, though fans of Fresu's slow-and-ambient style might find the Latin tunes abrasive and heavy. Disc 2's final third also deals with more modern fusions, like Mike Stern's electrified "Ha Ha Hotel;" and the trio solo guitars of Larry Coryell, Badi Assad, and John Abercrombie (plus vocals by Assad).

The switch to blues for the concluding songs also illustrates the club's broad appeal to jazz and blues enthusiasts, with John Hammond's solo rendition of "Walking Blues" demonstrating the immense sonic colour of his raw performance style, using voice, harmonica, and a rustic (and rusting) metal guitar.

Cajun flavour is present in Willie Deville's rendition of Warren Zevon's "Carmelita"; some clean, intimate saloon atmosphere in Duke Robillard's version of "I'm Still in Love with You"; and the soft rock-folk style of the Elliott Murphy Band playing "Elvis Presley's Birthday" concludes this excellent DVD set.

The DVD transfers are very clean, and the stereo mix for most performances is well-balanced. There's also a music-only option that skips the Queen and DiBango intros, though in most cases the intros carry into the performances, leaving a few frames of dialogue before the music begins.

As a sampler, this is an great combo of diverse styles, and hopefully this set will be followed by complete performances by some gifted musicians.

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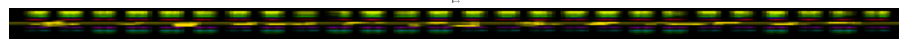
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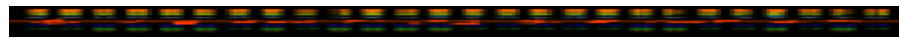


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