

*Live in Kraków*  
**Barry Altschul & The 3Dom Factor (Not Two)**  
 by Stuart Broomer

Barry Altschul, who turns 75 this month, is one of the great drummers of jazz, including work with Paul Bley in the '60s, his role in Circle and the subsequent years in tandem with Dave Holland in both Anthony Braxton's '70s quartets and the Sam Rivers Trio. His playing balances drive and precision, the former achieved in part through his control of sound, a miracle of compressed energy that provides a varied weave of rhythms and sudden quiet explosions to ignite the music. He can be rambunctious with exactitude.

3Dom Factor grows from earlier associations: bassist Joe Fonda was a member of the FAB Trio, completed by the late violinist Billy Bang, while Altschul first teamed with Jon Irabagon to drive the monumental *Foxy* (2010), the saxophonist's 80-minute, one-track homage to Coltrane, Rollins and the limit of the CD's capacity. This live set from Kraków's Alchemia has comparable energy, but segmented into shorter, more diverse units.

Altschul's provisional themes sometimes pay homage to other master drummers—hence, "Martin's Stew" and "For Papa Jo, Klook and Philly Too". After an introductory homage from the leader, the former goes straight to the band's core identity, a precipitous balance of hard blowing and complex interaction, the central focus on Irabagon's hard-edged tenor. When the group moves inside for Monk's "Ask Me Now", Irabagon's rapid invention suggests one of the pianist's greatest tenor foils, Johnny Griffin. Fonda is a central presence throughout, a model of order in the midst of great forces, coming to the fore for some fine, individual moments, but generally contributing to the rhythmic focus, subtly shifting his lines around in ways that add to the possibilities of the mix.

Departing from a characteristic force, "Irina" is alive with lyricism, Altschul providing a distant field of precise taps and rattles in support of Fonda's spare lines and Irabagon's muscular balladry. Turning occasionally in mid-piece to soprano, Irabagon touches on keening dirge for "Irina" and a comic blend of duck and shennai in a quiet interlude in the midst of a blazing "3Dom Factor".

For more information, visit [nottwo.com](http://nottwo.com)

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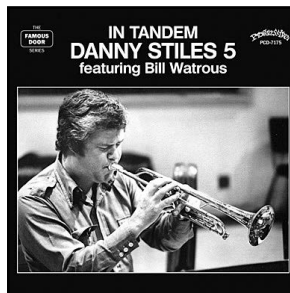


*Artefact Remolino Tres*  
**Tony Malaby Trio (SelloCabello)**  
 by George Kanzler

Tenor saxophonist Tony Malaby goes south, way south, on this venture into free-form jazz recorded in Argentina with two natives, guitarist Juan Pablo Arredonda and drummer Carto Brandan. Clocking in at just over a half hour, the album features only three tracks, the first much longer than the other two combined. "Artifact" is 18 minutes of over-diffuse ramblings, veering off into free jazz territory after a theme-like head, Malaby producing a wide variety of tones and timbres from honking and squeals to overblowing and high trills. Arredonda ranges widely on guitar too, from chattering amplified lines to unamped metallic tingles while Brandan employs hands, sticks, brushes and bundles in a plethora of drum/percussion sounds. Sound, its depths and bounds, seems to be the *raison d'être* of this track, although it's all been done better before, starting with the Art Ensemble of Chicago over half a century ago.

The two other tracks are much shorter and more focused. "Remolino" unwinds from a heraldic theme, Brandan beginning with hands on toms and cymbals and moving to sticks and full drumkit as the tempo accelerates under an emphatic tenor solo, morphing into a trio colloquy as the ideas in the theme reemerge and coalesce in a satisfying conclusion. "Tres", the last track, reminds us that the drummer is South American, as Brandan opens with a 90-second solo on the Brazilian cuica drum, switching to brushes on drumkit under a lyrical guitar solo flowing into a bassline behind Malaby's concluding, ballad-like solo.

For more information, visit [sellocabello.com](http://sellocabello.com). Malaby is at Brooklyn Conservatory of Music Jan. 21st with Eivind Opsvik and The Stone Jan. 25th. See Calendar.



*In Tandem*  
**Danny Stiles 5 (Famous Door-Progressive)**  
 by Scott Yanow

Danny Stiles, whose 20-year deathaversary was December 2017, could have been a contender. A superb swing/bop trumpeter who always woke up sessions, Stiles had an impressive resumé. He worked with Woody Herman, Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band and Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra in addition to being on many New York recordings in the '60s-70s. In the early '70s he was a key soloist with trombonist Bill Watrous' Manhattan Refuge Orchestra.

Stiles' best albums were the five that he made with Watrous for Famous Door (now owned by GHB/Jazzology and released on their Progressive subsidiary). Unfortunately Stiles had a much lower profile after 1978 when he made his last recording. He moved to Florida, became discouraged by his career and life and committed suicide on Dec. 29th, 1997.

1974's *In Tandem* is arguably Stiles' finest recording.

He leads a quintet of Watrous, pianist Derek Smith, bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Bobby Rosengarden on uptempo blues "Dirty Dan" (highlighted by some unaccompanied choruses for the horns), "It Had To Be You", a faster-than-usual "Blue Room", "In A Mellow Tone" and two of the leader's tunes. The original program is augmented by three previously unreleased alternate takes. Stiles and Watrous play colorful and extroverted solos, almost daring the other to play something more spectacular. Plenty of fireworks occur, resulting in a highly recommended and timeless set filled with hard-swinging music. Stiles deserves to be remembered.

For more information, visit [jazzology.com](http://jazzology.com)

**ON SCREEN**

*Saxophone Colossus featuring Sonny Rollins*  
 Robert Mugge (MVD Visual)  
 by Eric Wendell

"Before a concert, I try to meditate on what I have to do." So states Sonny Rollins (who recently announced his retirement) at the start of director Robert Mugge's 1986 film *Saxophone Colossus*, newly rereleased on DVD. The quote is telling of Rollins, who was in his mid 50s when he said this, still figuring out what to do, how to do it and how to do it the best he can.

Named after Rollins' seminal 1956 Prestige album, *Saxophone Colossus* is neither quite a concert film nor a documentary but rather a slice of Rollins in the mid '80s on the heels of elderhood and what that means for the modern artist. Set against two performances—one with his group at the outdoor venue Opus 40 in Saugerties, NY on Aug. 16th, 1986 and at the premiere of his concert *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* on May 18th, 1986 in Tokyo—Mugge captures with care and custody Rollins doing what he does best.

What Mugge does so well is let Rollins speak without interruption, both with his words and music. After a brief introduction at the start of the film with Rollins, sitting with his wife Lucille, talking about what he does before a concert, Mugge cuts to Rollins' group for nearly 14 minutes as they perform the song "G-Man" uncut, interwoven with beautiful visual sweeps of the band and the breathtaking bluestone that encapsulates the grounds of Opus 40.

Interspersed with the concert footage are interviews with jazz critics Francis Davis, Gary Giddins and Ira Gitler, each of which take a stab at placing Rollins in the greater cultural context of the jazz idiom. While complementary, it takes the steam away from Rollins as their academic proceedings do little to serve the narrative.

The highlight of the film is Rollins taking a rock star-esque jump off the platform at Opus 40, resulting in a broken heel and an over-the-top continuance as he plays in pain. With this, Mugge captures a man meditating in his pain while continuing to put on a show, figuring it out in the moment, how to do it and how to do it the best he can.

For more information, visit [mvdvisual.com](http://mvdvisual.com)