

# Record Reviews



## TOMMY ALEXANDER / KEITH WILLIAMS

### WEST COAST SERIES

[*Alexander The Great!*] (1) *Mad About The Boy; Tomboy; We'll Be Together Again; I Hadn't Anyone Till You; Midnight Sun; Lullaby Of Birdland; Old Devil Moon; The Song Is You; All The Things You Are; It Could Happen To You; Flamingo;* (2) *Don't Be That Way; Was That The Human Thing To Do?; Trees; Mine; [The Dazzling Sound]* (3) *I Remember You; Carioca; Toscana; Winter Wonderland; Easy To Love; Wiki Wiki; Bernie's Tune; Sleeping Princess; When Your Lover Has Gone; Caleta; Solo; Why Not?* (73.05)

#### JJ CONTENT

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(1) Clyde Reasinger, Ed Bordenave, Bob Clark, Bobby Stiles (t); Dave Wells, Fred Strong, Lew McCreary, Jay Hill (tb); Dick Paladino, Lanny Morgan (as); Bill Trujillo (ts); John Bambridge (ts, bar); Lennie Mitchell (bar); Arnold Ross (p); Tommy Tedesco (elg); Harry Babasin (b); Sal LaPertche (d). Hollywood, 24, 25 November 1955.

(2) Pete Candoli, Conrad Gozzo, Manny Klein, Uan Rasey (t); Murray McEachem, Si Zentner, Tommy Pederson (tb); Ed Kusby (tbb); Skeets Herfurt (as); Ted Nash, Fred Falensby (ts); Bob Dawes, Chuck Gentry (bar); Cliff Fishback (p); Al Hendrickson (elg); Joe Mondragon (b); Alvin Stoller (d). Hollywood, 11 May 1954.

(3) Collective personnel: Keith Williams, Johnny Audino, Don Fagerquist, Don Smith, Wes Hensell, Jerry Kadovitz, Frank Beach, Cappy Lewis (t); Joe Howard, Herbie Harper, Harry Betts, Ed Freudenberg, Tommy Pederson, Ray Weigand (tb); George Roberts, Marshall Cram (tbb); Jack Dumont (as, cl); Russ Cheaver (ss); Bill Carson (as); Ted Nash, Charles Romo, Don Renfrew, Bob Hardaway (ts); Bill Ulyate, Don Davidson (bar); Al Hendrickson, Tommy Tedesco (elg); Curtis Counce, Joe Comfort, Francis James (b); Larry Bunker, John Lais (d); Gene Estes, Ralph Collier, Dick Shanahan (pc). Hollywood, July, December 1956.

### Fresh Sound FSR-CD 965

Just as Jordi Pujol's recent East Coast Series featured NYC bands with echoes of Elliot Lawrence this reissue of Hollywood-based bands inevitably calls to mind Les Brown. The 21-year-old Lanny Morgan making his recording debut adds to this sense of déjà vu because at this early stage of his career he sounds very like Ronnie Lang who was a featured soloist with Brown in the 50s. He has some impressive outings on *We'll Be Together Again* and especially *All The Things You Are*. Tommy Alexander, who played trombone with Billy May, has surrounded himself here with veterans of the Kenton, Shaw, Goodman and Charlie Barnet bands for a satisfying set

of jazz-influenced dance music. Long-time Harry James sideman Dave Wells makes a big impression with his extrovert Kai Winding approach on *Midnight Sun, Lullaby Of Birdland* and *The Song Is You*. He also switches to bass trumpet for a tender *Mad About The Boy*.

Keith Williams obtained a degree in music at the Occidental College in Los Angeles in 1948 and went on to become an orchestrator for Walter Lantz Cartoons. This was his first date as a big band leader and like Tommy Alexander he assembled some of the finest Los Angeles musicians to interpret charts which have a middle-of-the-road, easy-listening feel. There are not too many solos but Ted Nash and the great Don Fagerquist take off on *Bernie's Tune*. Tommy Tedesco, who helped create the signature sound of Dave Pell's Octet, is heard on *When Your Love Has Gone* and Nash is showcased again on *Why Not*, an attractive original by the leader.

Gordon Jack

Arriale (p); Jasper Somsen (b); Jasper Van Hulsten (d). Belgium, 18-19 December 2017. (2) Somsen and Van Hulsten out; add Kate McGarry (v).

### Challenge 73453

Much is made in the liner notes of the piano trio as an ensemble. That said, when Arriale opens up on the boppish *Slightly Off-Centre*, one of her six compositions, it is bassist Somsen who leads the way in the traditional manner and drummer Van Hulsten who conspires. But there's a difference: Belgian engineer Floren Van Stichel, with producers Arriale and Somsen, have opted for a close register of bass and drums, sometimes bringing them forward like pushy guests.

So, one is always conscious of an equal threesome, particularly as Somsen and Van Hulsten are prominent. The full sound is completed by Arriale's two-handed attention to the keyboard. One is often reminded of the 1980s Keith Jarrett trios except that Arriale's belief in orchestral depth through chording is an antidote to the churning of bass and drums in the style of Jarrett's sidemen. Where Jarrett's chromatic, right-hand eruptions excite, Arriale prefers to make us aware of the harmonic undertow or its effectiveness in carrying the tune, at least once with a two-handed unison head.

She turns a lovely melody, typified by *Another Sky*, the musical equivalent of being quietly read to. Her chords are active, too, behind the bass solo on the fabulously funky *Over And Out*, and she is an accommodating accompanist for Kate McGarry on the valedictory Kath Brennan/Tom Waits number *Take It With Me*. A likeable album.

Nigel Jarrett



## LYNNE ARRIALE TRIO

### GIVE US THESE DAYS

(1) *Woodstock; Appassionata; Finding Home; Give Us These Days; Slightly Off-Centre; Another Sky; Let It Be; Over And Out;* (2) *Take It With Me* (50.31)

**CHET BAKER**

**FOR LOVERS**

CD1: *My Funny Valentine; I Fall In Love Too Easily; How Long Has This Been Going On?; The Thrill Is Gone; While My Lady Sleeps; But Not For Me; Time After Time; I Get Along Without You Very Well; There Will Never Be Another You; Look For The Silver Lining; The More I See You; This Is Always; Someone To Watch Over Me; Angel Eyes; Grey December; I Wish I Knew; Daybreak; You Make Me Feel So Young; Just Friends; I Remember You; Let's Get Lost; I'm Old Fashioned* (73.03)

CD2: *Everything Happens To Me; You Don't Know What Love Is; That Old Feeling; It's Always You; I've Never Been In Love Before; When I Fall In Love; My Ideal; Like Someone In Love; My Buddy; Let Me Be Loved; Deep In A Dream; Do It The Hard Way; Long Ago And Far Away; Forgetful; You're Driving Me Crazy; It Could Happen To You; My Heart Stood Still; Dancing On The Ceiling; Old Devil Moon; I Fall In Love Too Easily; The Song Is You; My Funny Valentine* (77.35)

CD3: *Travlin' Light; Alone Together; You Go To My Head; Lush Life; How High The Moon; Almost Like Being In Love; It Never Entered My Head; 'Tis Autumn; If You Could Seem Me Now; September Song; You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To; Time On My Hands; I Could Have Danced All Night; You And The Night And The Music; Early Morning Mood; My Funny Valentine* (76.27)

Baker (t, v) with collective personnel including Gerry Mulligan, Pepper Adams (bar); Bill Evans, Russ Freeman, Kenny Drew (p); Kenny Burrell (g); Carson Smith, George Morrow, Paul Chambers, Leroy Vinnegar (b); Chico Hamilton, Philly Joe Jones, Dannie Richmond, Connie Kay (d). San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Paris and Milan between 1952 and 1959.

**Jazz Images 38053**

**STRINGS & ENSEMBLE**

CD1: *You Don't Know What Love Is; I'm Thru With Love; Love Walked In; You Better Go Now; I Married An Angel; Love; I Love You; What A Difference A Day Made; Why Shouldn't I; A Little Duet For Zoot and Chet; The Wind; Trickledidlier; Mythe; Worryin' The Life Out Of Me; Chet; Not Too Slow; Phil's Blues; Dinah; V-Line* (67.26)

CD2: *Bockhanal; Ergo; Moonlight Becomes You; Headline; A Dandy Line; Little Old Lady; Goodbye; Pro*

**CRITICS' CHOICE**

The 10 CDs JJ critics most wanted to hear from this month's review pile

Chet Baker	Live At Ann Arbor	Jazz Images 38061
Chet Baker/Gerry Mulligan	Original Quartet	Jazz Images 38054
Gordon Beck	Jubilation!	Turtle 501
Gordon Beck	When Sunny Gets Blue	Turtle 502
Dave Brubeck	Gone With The Wind	Jazz Images 24740
Peggy Connelly	Hollywood Sessions	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 964
Bill Frisell	Music IS	Okeh 19075815002
Stan Getz/Lionel Hampton	Hamp & Getz	Jazz Images 24739
Guy Lafitte	His Quartette & Quintette	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 962
Martial Solal	Solo Piano Vol. 2	Fresh Sound FSR-CD 960

*Defunctus; Little Man, You've Had A Busy Day; Dot's Groovy; Stella By Starlight; Tommy Hawk; I'm Glad There Is You; The Half Dozens; Dot's Groovy; Stella By Starlight* (54.33)

Baker (t) with collective personnel including Zoot Sims, Jack Montrose, Herb Geller, Bob Graf (ts); Bud Shank, Fred Waters (as); Russ Freeman, Bobby Timmons (p); Joe Mondragon, Jimmy Bond, Carson Smith (b); Shelly Manne, Peter Littman, James McLean (d). Los Angeles, California between December 1953 and October 1956.

**Jazz Images 38060**



**CHET BAKER IN PARIS**

CD1: *Rondette; Mid-Forte; Sad Walk; Re-Search; Just Duo; Piece Caprice; Pomp; The Girl From Greenland; Brash; Summertime; You Go To My Head; Tenderly* (56.44)

CD2: *Lover Man; There's A Small Hotel; Autumn In New York; These Foolish Things; I'll Remember April; Chet; Dinah; V-Line; Alone Together; Exitus; Once In A While; Chekeetah* (59.39)

CD3: *How About You; Anticipated Blues; Tasty Pudding; Mythe; Not Too Slow; V-Line; In A Little Provincial Town; Mythe; Chet; Not Too Slow; Dinah; V-Line; Let Me Be Loved; Just Friends; Let's Get Lost; I Fall In Love Too Easily; My Funny Valentine* (58.45)

Baker (t) with collective personnel including Bobby Jasper (ts); Dick Twardzik, Gerard Gustin, Raymond Fol, Rene Ultreger, Francly Boland (p); Jimmy Bond, Benolt Quersin

(b); Peter Littman, Nils-Bertil Dahlander, Jean-Louis Viale (d). Paris, France, 11 October 1955 to 15 March 1956.

**New Continent 648044**

The 40th anniversary of Baker's death is, I guess, as good a time as any to reflect on his legacy. But the world is not short of Chet Baker collections and to attract attention they need to offer something different. Chet Baker For Lovers is the one that disappoints the most. The packaging is good and the accompanying booklet by Mark Hales well written; but the lovers theme has just been done too many times before; three renditions of *My Funny Valentine* on one collection is two too many.

Strings & Ensemble fairs better. This collection presents the complete original Columbia LPs – Chet Baker & Strings and Chet Baker Ensemble. The albums marked Baker's first recordings with a string orchestra and accompanying Baker are such fine musicians as Zoot Sims, Jack Montrose and Russ Freeman. The collection also contains the complete Pacific Jazz LP, Chet Baker Sextet, as well as a Chet Baker big band set recorded in Los Angeles in 1956.

Chet Baker In Paris is the one that works for me. This three-CD collection presents all the music originally issued from Baker's studio sessions made for the Barclay label during his first European tour in 1955 and 1956. Most of these sessions are in a quartet or quintet format and feature some fine musicianship from Baker, Dick Twardzik (who died shortly after from a drug overdose), Bobby Jasper and Francly Boland. In addition there are some tracks re-recorded by Baker back in Los Angeles using the same arrangements as the French recordings, but with a larger group of musicians. How-

ever, the inclusion of five Baker classics – including *I Fall In Love Too Easily* and *My Funny Valentine* – is unnecessary and deviates from the focus of the collection.

None of these collections further our knowledge or understanding of Baker as a man or a musician, but they do serve to remind us what a talented but fragile musician he was. For my money, if you want to remember Baker as a vocalist – check out Chet Baker Sings (1954-6, Blue Note) and if you want to hear Baker at his musical best try Playboys with Art Pepper (1956, Pacific Jazz).

Ian Lomax



**CHET BAKER**

**ANGEL EYES**

(1) *Angel Eyes; When I Fall In Love; The Song Is You; Deep In A Dream; Goodbye; I Should Care; Autumn In New York; My Funny Valentine; Street Of Dreams; Violets For Your Furs; Forgetful* (2) *Tensione; Alone In A Crowd; Relaxin' With Chet; I Soliti Ignoti; Tema D'Amore*; (3) *Smog; Twilight In Los Angeles; Thinking Blues* (77.55)

Baker (t, v) all tracks with: (1) Len Mercer's Orchestra, Milan, Sept-Oct 1959. (2) Piero Umiliani Orch, Rome, 1960 (soundtrack to Audace Colpo Dei Soliti Ignoti). (3) as (2) Italy, 1962 (soundtrack to Smog).

**Jazz Images 38064**