



Standard
Devorah Day/Dominic Duval (CIMP)
 by Florence Wetzel

If you think nothing new is happening in the world of jazz vocalists, it's time to listen to Devorah Day. Her 2003 debut *Light of Day* (Abaton Book Company) was a revelation, and now she follows up with the equally strong *Standard*. Day is gifted with a one-of-a-kind voice: her range is astounding, and her phrasing highly original and unexpected. But while Day has great skill, she employs no artifice, and this gives her a powerful authenticity; she has the emotional honesty found in all the great jazz singers, an uncompromising clarity that expresses the heart of a song.

Standard finds her in the illustrious company of Dominic Duval, one of jazz' most important bassists, and their duet is an inspired pairing. Day and Duval match their gifts to a wide range of standards, as well as Day's composition "Come Closer" and an improvisation entitled "Four Dees". Day dives deep into the poignancy of "Good Morning, Heartache", "Yesterday", "When Sunny Gets Blue", and she gives a unique interpretation to "Them There Eyes", "Just One of Those Things", and "Ain't Misbehavin'". Day's fractured cohesion and strong fragility invest the songs with a thoroughly modern sensibility, and Duval's subtle bass gives Day both the background and space needed to make the songs her own.

It's also quite impressive that *Standard* was recorded in CIMP's legendary Spirit Room, live to two tracks with no alteration whatsoever. At this point CIMP has 200 releases to its credit, forming a veritable library of improvised music. *Standard* proves once again that you can't pigeonhole CIMP, who might be one of the last labels expected to release a CD with songs by Cole Porter and Lennon/McCartney. But CIMP prides itself on standing out of the artist's way, and happily they gave Day all the freedom she needed. Like Thelonious Monk, standards provide Day with a perfect jumping off point, a means to give full range to her unique conception and artistry.

For more information, visit www.cadencebuilding.com. Duval is at 55Bar Jul. 13th. See calendar.



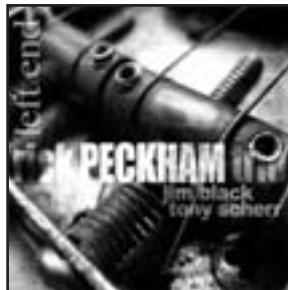
The Long View
Marty Ehrlich (Enja-Justin Time)
 by Jeff Stockton

Jazz needs composers like Marty Ehrlich. Like his mentor Julius Hemphill, Ehrlich, while proficient in the more conventional small group settings, envisions something greater, hearing music of multiple textures, moods, origins and voicings. Divided into six movements and a postlude, *The Long View* was originally conceived as aural accompaniment to an exhibition of paintings by Oliver Jackson (another Hemphill cohort). That this work stands on its own is implicit.

The first movement commences with a bracing sax statement by Ehrlich, followed by the stirring entry of twelve more musicians on a range of reeds, brass and rhythm. Trumpeter Eddie Allen takes a turn out front, before being joined by Ehrlich in an exchange of growls and squeals. The horns swell and recede, sometimes in big band style swing, at other times in furious group improvisation. Occasionally an instrument will come to the fore, like Mark Dresser's bass solo that signals the segue into "Movement II". In contrast to the rousing horns of the first part, this movement features the rolling mallets of Bobby Previte, the mournful strings of Mark Feldman on violin, Ralph Farris on viola, Erik Friedlander's cello and Ehrlich's pretty soprano. The depth of "Movement III" is measured by Ned Rothenberg's bass clarinet, J.D. Parran's contrabass clarinet and Andy Laster's baritone, which enable a conversation between trumpets and provide poignant contrast to Ehrlich's flute song. "Movement IV" starts with Wayne Horvitz playing delicately on piano in a quartet setting before Ehrlich tears it up on alto. Later in the same piece, Ehrlich and Dresser duet on flute and bass. Ray Anderson's trombone establishes the slow drag groove of the beginning and end of "Movement V", with Ehrlich responding with bluesy tenor, and for "Movement VI", the full ensemble mimics the scope and variety of "Movement I", this time dominated by Ehrlich's honking alto soloing, bubbling accompaniment by Marcus Rojas on tuba and Pheeroan akLaff's emphatic beats.

Movement within movements, gripping orchestrations, and overwhelming collective work define Ehrlich's accomplishment. If you're looking for something more than usual small group jazz, Ehrlich's music for large band is challenging and rewarding.

For more information visit www.justin-time.com. Ehrlich is at Tonic Jul. 1st. See calendar.



Left End
Rick Peckham (Perfected Music)
 by Sean Fitzell

The opening twangy guitar riff off the title track of guitarist Rick Peckham's *Left End* suggests an edge usually associated with rock music, a feeling solidified by the propulsive groove of drummer Jim Black and bassist Tony Scherr (both with plenty of rock in their backgrounds) to push the leader's statement further. And that's just the first 30 seconds.

Peckham's debut as a leader draws on early classic rock guitar influences for sound and attitude and infuses them with improvisational daring and sophisticated harmony. The resultant blend, in this capable trio's hands, reminds listeners that "fusion" doesn't have to be pejorative. This is exemplified on "353-1001", when the group locks into the rollicking odd-time opening. After a guitar solo over the halting bass line and skittering drums, the tune devolves into a more spacious exploration of quiet dynamics and sonic textures, until Black rebuilds the quirky groove, returning the group to the head.

The mid-tempo feel of tunes like "Mr. Medium" and "You Know What That Means" feature Peckham's more cleanly phrased and slick guitar runs. Open-formed pieces, including "Hawthorn" and "Soporific", highlight the trio's ability to coax an array of sound from their instruments and patience for subtle nuance.

These qualities were evident at the group's CD release show at Tonic last month, which allowed for extended improvisations. This was especially apparent in the middle of "Hammer Damage", with Peckham meandering amid Scherr's percussive bowing and Black's assortment of toy bells and steel bowls. Also highlighted was how seamlessly Peckham changes his guitar sound - "Gibbons" went from a growling riff and aggressive rhythm to a mellower, moody section and back again without dropping a note or a beat.

Left End is a new chapter in the tradition of the "power trio". Peckham's concise composing serves an array of sonic textures and unexpected twists, with a healthy dose of attitude and wit.

For more information, visit www.rickpeckham.com



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