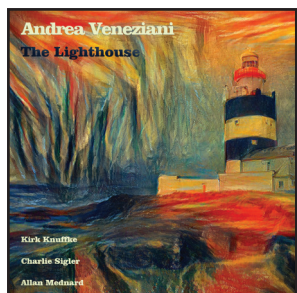


Rhodes), Obed Calvaire (drums) and Anthony Almonte (congas, vocals). Album opener, "Nuyorican Souls", sets the tone, blending Afro-Cuban, jazz and R&B musical sensibilities with bilingual lyrics that speak to the plight of a Latino people with "rhythm in our blood." The group delivers smooth ensemble playing throughout that often gives it a larger-than-its-size big band sound, laced with plenty of solo power. Henriquez demonstrates his virtuosic bowing on "Bodegas Groove", a funky tribute to the rapidly disappearing establishments that have long been the cornerstones of Latino neighborhoods. An album highlight is "Afro Monk", which pays tribute to the iconic pianist who was a longtime resident of "San Juan Hill," the so-dubbed neighborhood of Manhattan's Upper West Side, razed in the early '60s to make way for the construction of Lincoln Center. Also memorable are the NOLA-flavored throwdown of "Robert's Red Line" (referring to the racist banking practice known as redlining) and the pulsating Afro-Cuban rhythms in "Ritmo's 53".

For more info visit carloshenriquezmusic.com. Henriquez is at Rose Theater with Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra's "Duke Ellington at 125" tribute May 3-4. See Calendar.



The Lighthouse
Andrea Veneziani (s/r)
by Fred Bouchard

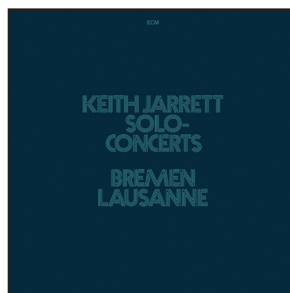
The Lighthouse shines as a beacon on Andrea Veneziani, a firm, gentle leader with a sprightly sense of melody, keen ear for ensemble interaction, and a didactic nose to sniff out and codify instructive lessons. The Tuscan-born bassist arrived in New York in 2009 as a Fulbright Scholar; with a master's degree in music from NYU, he carved out a niche as a sideman (e.g. Ben Monder, Houston Person, Brian Lynch, George Schuller) and also became an educator on the faculty of the New York Jazz Workshop. This new release, a belated sequel to his imaginative 2012 leader debut *Oltreoceano* (with pianist Kenny Werner and drummer Ross Pederson), presents eight originals cut from whole cloth and devoted to highlighting his new band's personalities, including Kirk Knuffke (cornet), Charlie Sigler (guitar) and Allan Mednard (drums).

Telltale hallmarks illuminate Veneziani's compositional style. Melodies favor a series of short, weighted motifs that may call and respond. Poised, subdued themes shift up-tempo into solos. Subtle harmonic progressions may circle back or echo. Except on the opener and closer and one gravid intro, the leader eschews soloing, ostensibly to fix his beam on aural observation, congenial dialogue, aesthetic cohesion and forward impetus. The title track and "In Perpetuum" share twisting structures and sequences that elicit inventive solos from all hands. The dreamlike "Gravity" harkens to a famous ballad by Thad Jones (another stellar cornetist) as Knuffke waxes adventurous. "Bop-Be", suffused with light humor, finds a tip-toe unison line à la Lee Konitz-Warne Marsh, interrupted by a free-for-all, followed by edgy duets and Mednard's snappy fills. Knuffke's yearning lines reminisce of Kenny Wheeler on a peaceful "Rainbows"; Mednard's rimshots set up his own and Sigler's sunny arcs

and group fade. "Twelve Clowns" in sing-song 3/4 evolves from Sigler's Ed Bickert-esque arpeggiations to Knuffke's playful bluesy statement. The wistful "Seasons" and samba-strut of "Shunting Line" wrap this satisfying set, the double-bass' undercurrents of attentive aplomb assuring success.

In a recent *DownBeat* essay on methods and techniques for bebop improvisers, Veneziani exhorts students to master kernels (pockets) of phrasing, control (brake) tempos, loop short sections and stick with eighth notes. Good advice to hear such pros expound.

For more info visit andreaveziani.com. Veneziani is at Café Erzulie May 1. See Calendar.



Solo Concerts: Bremen/Lausanne
Keith Jarrett (ECM)
by Terrell K. Holmes

In 1973, two years after his solo piano debut, *Facing You*, and two years before *The Köln Concert* would ensure his place in jazz history, Keith Jarrett (who turns 79 this month) played a pair of solo piano concerts in Germany and Switzerland in March and July that he viewed as part of his "anti-electric music crusade." The resulting album, *Solo Concerts: Bremen/Lausanne*, is in some ways more accomplished than *Köln*, and is the album that signaled Jarrett's arrival as a master improviser (he also composed all the music).

The Bremen concert begins slowly as Jarrett muses among the chords, trying out different colors and textures. Once he establishes a theme he plays variations on it, then mines new melodies from the variations to create music of stunning depth and beauty. Jarrett lays down waves of arpeggios complemented by bass notes that rumble like the tide coming in. He moves from classical piano, gospel-inflected block chords and barrel house, with some stride thrown in for good measure.

And he was just warming up. The Lausanne concert, performed a few months later, is a *tour de force*, with compositions shifting in creative ideas, such as a garrulous, full-bodied blues rhythm underpinned with crescendos of heavy, full force block chords. This concert includes one of Jarrett's most memorable excursions, a stretch of impassioned, intense playing that continues to build until it ends with a slowly diminishing acquiescence of the bass notes. His opening excursion into prepared piano on the second half of this concert is stark, almost eerie, and pitch perfect. He alternates with more gospel influenced chords, which are the ones that seem to move his soul the most. One section of the concert, towards the end, consists of an all-out assault on the keys. Some might interpret this as a challenge to the audience; others might think that Jarrett had momentarily run out of ideas. Jarrett? No, he was only creating.

Fifty years later, because of Jarrett's creativity and dynamism, *Solo Concerts: Bremen/Lausanne* sounds as fresh as the day it was first released, and this recent vinyl boxed set reissue (part of ECM's "Luminessence" series) will be welcomed by the countless Jarrett fans who wore out their copies long ago.

For more info visit ecmrecords.com

Arts and Letters

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