

Tom Hull - on the Web

An occasional blog about populist politics and popular music, not necessarily at the same time.

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Tuesday, October 24, 2023

Music Week

October archive (in progress).

Music: Current count 41047 [41003]
rated (+44), 31 [27] unrated (+4).

I took an extra day this weekend. I decided to hold off starting Speaking of Which until late Saturday, and then write intro instead of searching for links. I struggled Sunday with what turned out to be a false start, then wrote yet another intro, taking a break midway to collect some links. It got late, and I decided I should hold off and write up the missing



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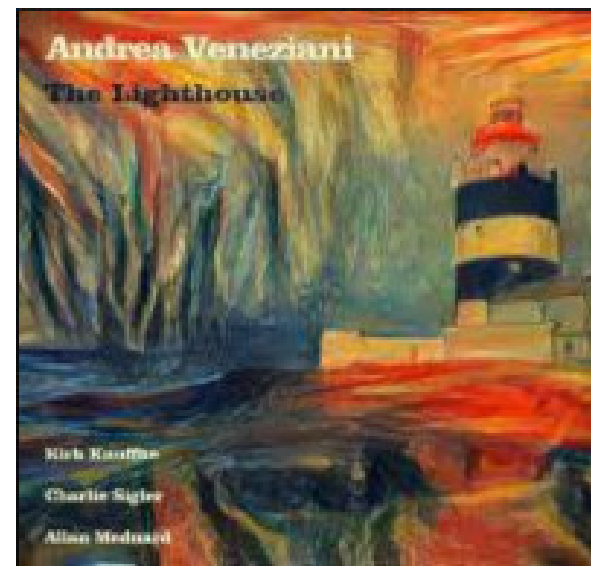
Antiwar

outline points Monday afternoon. Took most of the day before I posted.

I then did the cutover for Music Week, but by then I didn't feel like writing any form of this intro, so I sat on it until Tuesday, fairly late. Tuesday afternoon got wiped out in grocery shopping, a first pass toward a birthday dinner later this week. Frankly, I'd rather think about that than this, but last week is in the bag, so I might as well wrap it up quick.

Next week will be short. I seriously doubt I'll get any listening in until Saturday. I certainly won't be starting another Speaking of Which. And I wouldn't mind just punting for the year. The world has a long ways to go to catch up with what I've written already.

What I do hope to write about next week is the 18th Annual Francis Davis Jazz Poll. I've set up the result directory locally, so I need to post that. The main thing I want to do in the next couple weeks is to expand the voter list. To that



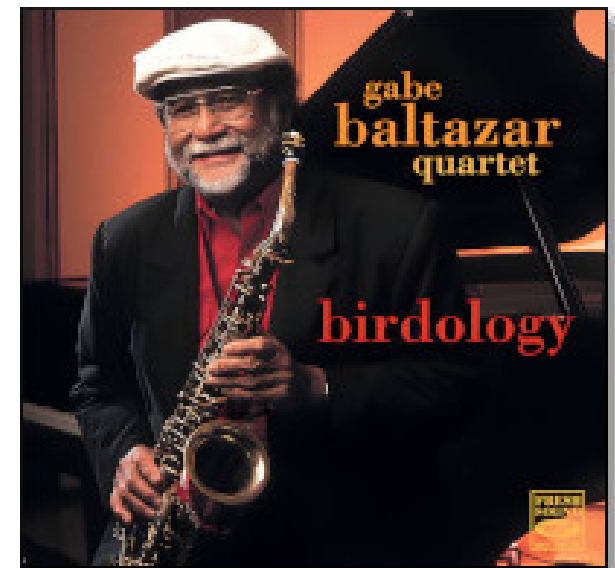
**Attention to the
Unseen
Helena Cobban
Juan Cole
Counterpunch
Crooked Timber
Richard Crowson
Kevin Drum
FiveThirtyEight
Peter Frase
Kathleen Geier
Glenn Greenwald
Tony Karon
Mike Konczal
Paul Krugman
Andrew Leonard
Mondoweiss
More Perfect Union
Naked Capitalism
No More Mr Nice
Blog
Alex Pareene
Portside
TalkingPointsMemo
Tikun Olam
TomDispatch
Maxine Udall
Stephen Walt
Washington Monthly**

Others

end, I'm trying to take a more systematic survey of who's writing what. I'd like to extend invites to another 30-50 critics -- probably half outside the US, which (I don't have a reliable count, so I'm only guessing) could double the number of non-US critics. I doubt this will skew the results much, but it should broaden the base. That would be a big plus for people like me who find the bottom two-thirds of the list more interesting than the winners.

As for this week, I started off with a premature jazz ballot, where half of the records selected were unheard by me. The Miles Davis archival piece got me looking at recent Fresh Sound reissues, mostly albums from the 1990s when Jordi Pujols set up sessions with many of his cool jazz heroes, and I wanted to hear them all. (I already knew several, especially with Herb Geller and Bud Shank, and also some very good Charlie Mariano records.)

Then I read that John Zorn's Tzadik records are returning to streaming platforms. (I followed them fairly close before they picked up their toys and headed home.) Tzadik is much more than Zorn's personal label, but he's so prolific all I managed this week was his own 2023 releases (plus a couple slightly older).



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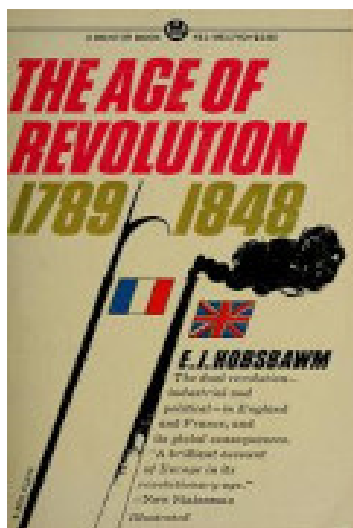
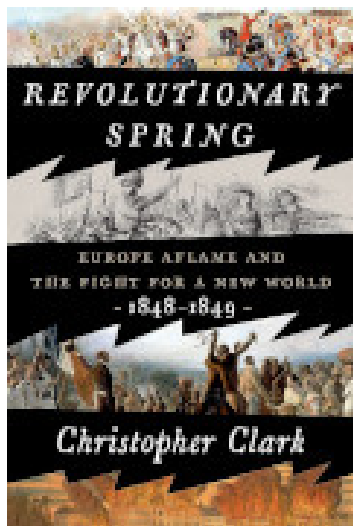
Still reading Christopher Clark's *Revolutionary Spring*, now almost 600 pages in, as the revolutionary hopes get dashed by right-wingers. While I'm not a fan of violence coming or going, that coming from the right is always particularly bitter.

New records reviewed this week:

Afro Peruvian New Trends Orchestra: *Cosmic Synchronicities* (2023, Blue Spiral): Large band (10 pieces), directed by composer Corina Bartra, first album, richly textured with engaging rhythm. **B+ (***)** [cd]

Dmitry Baevsky: *Kid's Time* (2022, Fresh Sound New Talent): Russian alto saxophonist, from Leningrad, moved to New York over 20 years ago, great-grandfather was a famous Yiddish ethnomusicologist, has always shown great poise and tone (I count three previous A- albums). Trio with bass (Clovis Nichols) and drums (Jason Brown), plus guest trumpet on three tracks (Stéphane Belmondo). Nine originals with a couple standards and one from Dexter Gordon. Makes it all look easy. **B+ (***)** [sp]

Ron Blake: *Mistaken Identity* (2021 [2023], 7ten33 Productions): Tenor/baritone saxophonist, had three albums 2003-08, this his first in 15 years. With Bobby Broom (guitar), bass (Nat Reeves or Reuben Rogers), and drums (Kobie Watkins). Mainstream sound, Broom really paves the way. **B+ (***)** [sp]



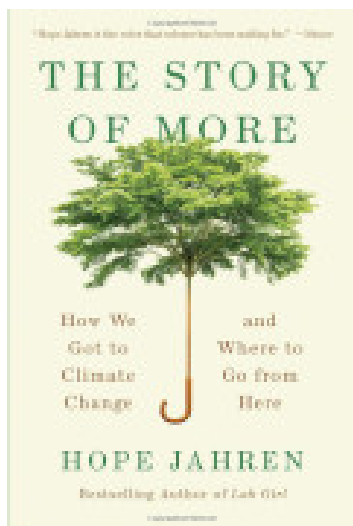
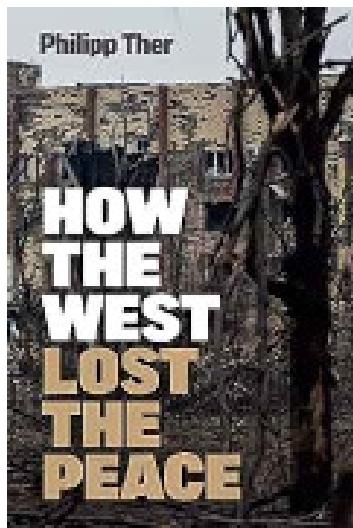
Flying Pooka! [Dani Oore & Florian Hoefner]: *The Ecstasy of Becoming* (2021 [2023], Alma): Saxophonist, plays soprano here and is credited with voice, has side credits back to 2005, with piano here, a German based in Canada. I'd like this better without the voice. **B+(*)** [cd]

Louis Hayes: *Exactly Right!* (2022 [2023], Savant): Drummer, b. 1937, started 1957 with Horace Silver and Curtis Fuller, played with Cannonball Adderley 1959-65. Scattered albums from 1960, becoming more regular after 1989. Quintet here with Abraham Burton (tenor sax), David Hazeltine (piano), Steve Nelson (vibes), Dezron Douglas (bass). **B+(**)** [sp]

Marie Krüttli: *Transparence* (2022 [2023], Intakt): Swiss pianist, has trio and quintet albums, solo on this one. **B+(*)** [r]

Martin Lutz Group: *LoLife/HiLife* (2023, Gateway, 2CD): Danish pianist, group plays what they call "afro nordic soul jazz." The "afro" comes from a childhood spent much in eastern and southern Africa, with the horns recycling riffs you'll recognize from township jive classics, although toned down and stretched out a bit. Organized as two discs, but total is just 41:53. **B+(***)** [sp]

Mendoza Hoff Revels: *Echolocation* (2023, AUM Fidelity): Noise guitarist Ava Mendoza and bassist Devin Hoff (probably best known for the Nels Cline Singers), with drummer Ches Smith and tenor saxophonist James Brandon Lewis -- the bigger name here, but taking a supplementary role, mostly buried in the mix, but worth listening for. I probably should like this more than I do, but she's never clicked for me. **B+(***)** [sp]



Azuka Moweta & Anioma Brothers Band: *Nwanne Bu Ife* (2022, Palenque): Igbo highlife band, from Nigeria, seems to be their first album. **B+ (***)** [bc]

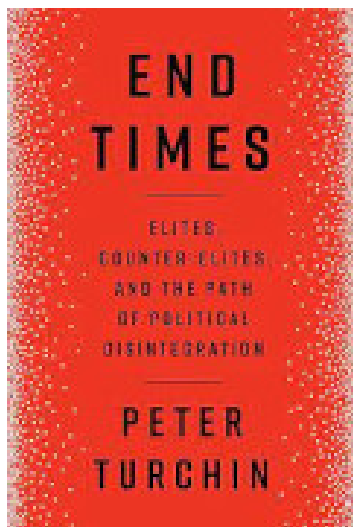
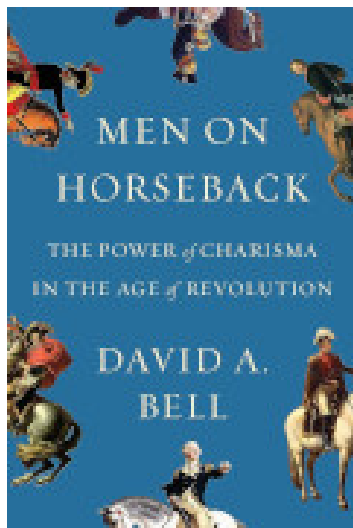
Gard Nilssen's Supersonic Orchestra: *Family* (2022 [2023], We Jazz): Norwegian drummer, has played in a number of avant groups since 2002 (Cortex was particularly memorable), runs the trio Acoustic Unity and this unconventional 17-piece big band (7 saxophones, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, 3 basses, 3 drumsets, everyone adds to the percussion), now on their second album. **A-** [sp]

Ivo Perelman/Nate Wooley: *Polarity 2* (2023, Burning Ambulance): Tenor sax and trumpet duo, following up on a 2021 album. **B+ (**)** [bc]

Precarious Towers: *Ten Stories* (2023, Shifting Paradigm): Described as "a Midwestern all-star band," I recognize Sharel Cassity (alto sax/flute) and Johannes Wallman (piano), but they aren't exactly household names, and I'm not sure I've run across the others: Mitchell Shiner (vibes), John Christensen (bass), and Devin Drobka (drums). **B+ (***)** [sp]

Matana Roberts: *Coin Coin Chapter Five: In the Garden* (2023, Constellation): Alto saxophonist, from Chicago, debut 2002 in the trio Sticks and Stones, started the *Coin Coin* series in 2011, with spoken word narratives exploring ancestral history, this one a "character study" of "an ancestor of Roberts who died from an illegal abortion." **B+ (**)** [sp]

Jim Rotondi Quintet: *Over Here* (2023, Criss Cross): Mainstream trumpet player, originally from Montana, debut 1997, based in Austria these days,



joined here by Americans Rick Margitza (tenor sax) and Danny Grissett (piano), plus bass and drums. **B+(**)** [r]

Chris Speed Trio: *Despite Obstacles* (2022 [2023], Intakt): Tenor sax/clarinet player, originally from Seattle, a dozen or so albums as leader, many side credits (especially Tim Berne, Jim Black, Claudia Quintet). Steady trio with Chris Tordini (bass) and Dave King (drums). **B+(***)** [sp]

Terell Stafford: *Between Two Worlds* (2023, Le Coq): Trumpet/flugelhorn player, from Miami, debut 1995, mainstream, nice sound, backed by Tim Warfield (tenor/soprano sax), Bruce Barth (piano), bass, drums, and percussion. **B+(***)** [sp]

Sufjan Stevens: *Javellin* (2023, Asthmatic Kitty): Singer-songwriter from Detroit, I was disappointed he never pushed his "50 states project" beyond Michigan and Illinois, but he's up to ten studio albums now (per Wikipedia; sometimes it's hard to tell what counts and what doesn't). Seems like he's getting more and more baroque. **B+(*)** [sp]

True Stomach of a Bird [Ulf Mengersen/Lina Allemano/Kamil Korolczuk]: *Computation Intensive Spontaneousness* (2023, self-released): German bassist, with trumpet and electronics. **B+(*)** [sp]

Andrea Veneziani Quartet: *The Lighthouse* (2022 [2023], self-released): Italian bassist, based in New York, second album, quartet with Kirk Knuffke (cornet), Charlie Sigler (guitar), and Allan Mednard (drums). A very good setting for Knuffke, the guitar a big help. **A-** [cdr]