



French tenor saxophonist Bordenave delves deep into a key chapter of

jazz history that has a particular relevance to ECM: the music made in the early 1960s by the magical trio of Jimmy Giuffrè, Steve Swallow and Paul Bley was reissued in the early 1990s by the German label, which rarely releases music from other eras.

In any case Bordenave uses the material wisely, for his original compositions fully uphold the spirit of such forward-looking music without a blind pastiche. Like the barway, misty, hazy atmosphere of the work is familiar – as if the sounds were drifting across the stillest of waters – Bordenave has brought a personal slant to that imagery, carving a niche somewhere between scored sanctified song and improvised abstraction. In any case he is playing tenor rather than clarinet as Giuffrè did, and draws a touchingly vaporous tone from the instrument, but also opts to add a touch more weight from time to time.

His accompanists, pianist Florian Weber and bassist Patrice Moret, strike a balance between understatement and propulsion, so that all the overlapping melodies do not become too static. As serene and meditative as this music may be it also has bursts, or rather notable flickers of energy and bold, focused, fluid movement, invigorating all the atmospheric

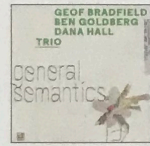
sound. **Kevin Le Gendre**

**Geof Bradfield/
Ben Goldberg/
Dana Hall Trio**
General Semantics

Delmark Records DE 864 (CD)

★★★

Geof Bradfield (ts, ss, bcl), Ben Goldberg (cl, contra acl) and Dana Hall (perc). Rec. 2018



Both mainstays of the Chicago jazz scene, Geof Bradfield and Dana Hall are

long-time musical sparring partners. However, Bradfield and his fellow reed player Ben Goldberg had never played together before the week recording began in the autumn of 2018 for this debut trio project.

The sound the three of them make together leaves deliberate holes – there's no bass – although that doesn't stop them from hitting and exploiting a groove when the mood takes them, as on the title track, and when Bradfield's soprano sax is matched with Goldberg's soprano clarinet on 'Hit Flip Switch' they readily conjure the joyous spirit of New Orleans jazz. Much of the material, with its striking improvisations, is original, but Duke Ellington is one of a handful of iconic performers whose work is reinterpreted by the trio. The Duke's 'Half the Fun', from *Such Sweet Thunder*, emerges, via a brooding opening contra alto clarinet solo, in a form remarkable for its dense texture and snaky rhythmic

attention. **Robert Shore**

**Johanna
Burnheart**

Ropedadope RAD-573 (CD, LP) ★★★

Joanna Burnheart (vn, v, syn), David Swan (el p, syn), Jonny Wickham (b), Boz Martin-Jones (d, perc) and Noel Langley (Hermeto's frog, bottle tops, one track). Rec. 29-30 March 2019



Burnheart is a German classical talent now living in London, whose

conversion to jazz was refracted through Berlin techno. As a violinist playing modal jazz, she follows in the rare path of the Polish prodigy Zbigniew Seifert, who though he went electric stayed a Coltrane acolyte.

Burnheart's roots are less fixed, and violins anyway no more prevalent than synths and David Swan's Wurliitzer, as her debut explores a dancehall haunted by swirling electronic production and dub delays. Her violin's dark, slurring tone on 'Plastik' is intrinsically intriguing in jazz, and part of a slanting, noir sound-world on 'Box Office', as if the whole track has assumed her bow's physical stance. Often subject to primitive digital manipulation, its pizzicato peaks swoop into a swinging collage of dance modes in 'Forever Dance', while 'Mensch' sees choppy violin meet Swan's gently decorous, cocktail funk in an enigmatic clinch. There is an Afrobeat lilt to 'Silence is Golden', and Burnheart scats numbly. 'Never Let Me Go' perhaps goes deepest into her idea of German jazz, as her double-tracked, dreamy ballad vocal gusts through echoing sonic corridors over steam-hammer drums, hinting at Düsseldorf synthpop group Propaganda's icy cool.

Nick Hasted

**Benn Clatworthy
System 6**

Bennie's Lament

www.bennclatworthy.com (DL) ★★★

Benn Clatworthy (ts, ss, bcl), Ron Stout (t, flhn), Jeremy Sellers (tb), Bryan Velasco (p), Bruce Lett (b) and Yayo Morales (d). Rec. date not stated

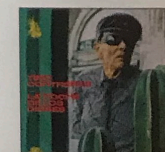
makes an annual playing visit to Britain, usually with an excellent trio in tow, and seems able to keep going in both countries at once. This time, though, he's heard with his West Coast band and pretty energetic they are too. My digital review version supplied no extra information or notes so this particular session's provenance is far from clear. Nine of the 11 compositions are Clatworthy's own, but which I can't tell you for sure.

On first hearing, this is far removed from his usual hard bop tenor plus rhythm format as served up on his UK visits. If anything, the opening tracks are Mingus-like effusions of clattery activity, Clatworthy's ethereal soprano emerging from the chaos, as the other horns offer ominous sounds, before a free-form finish. 'Terry Briggs' is shorter and softer, a straight ballad reading with Clatworthy's plaintive tenor apparent. Elsewhere ensemble pieces that might grace a Horace Silver set come through but invariably with that Mingus-evoking sense of impending mayhem. Pianist Velasco is spirited on 'Good Grape', Stout's frail trumpet at its core with vigorous trombone. These pieces tend to build, layer upon layer, the leader taking his chance well on tenor in Coltrane-fashion on the title track. So, an eclectic musical mix which doesn't quite make its intentions clear. **Peter Vacher**

**Tino Contreras
La Noche de los Dioses**

Brownwood Recordings BWOOD239 (CD, LP) ★★★

Tino Contreras (d), Valentino Contreras (b), Jaime Reyes (p, ky), Emmanuel Laboriel (g), Luis Calatayud (ss, ts, conch shell, ocarina flutes), Eduardo Flores (perc), Carlos Icaza (Harmonic Arps, perc), and Marco Gallegos (g). Rec. 2020



In 1978 Mexican drummer Tino Contreras released a remarkable

album called *Musica Infinita*, a disorienting blend of avant-garde psychedelia and waltzing swing, funk grooves, operatic vocals and pre-Colombian



Johanna Burnheart

Jazzwise Magazine November 2020

<https://www.jazzwise.com/news/article/introducing-the-november-2020-issue-of-jazzwise-featuring-shabaka-hutchings>