



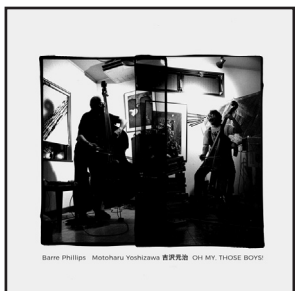
Laid Black
Marcus Miller (Blue Note)
 by Anna Steegmann

Laid Black, bassist Marcus Miller's 23rd album, is as laid-back as it gets—the perfect soundtrack for an easygoing summer. Two-time Grammy Award winner Miller has a stellar resumé and is known for a distinctive style blending funk, R&B, jazz and soul. His band of saxophonist Alex Han, keyboard player Brett Williams, drummer Alex Bailey and a number of guests create a modern-day journey through the worlds of funk, hip-hop, jazz, soul, gospel and R&B.

Opener "Trip Trap" is the only live recording on the CD. The great groove with its stripped-down bass, energetic and hard-hitting percussion and New Orleans horns is captivating. Miller breathes new life into "Que Sera Sera", a supremely soulful and bluesy version of the standard on which vocalist Selah Sue complements the leader's earthy bass perfectly, while funky and muscular "7-T's" featuring Trombone Shorty will make you want to dance. "Sublimity 'Bunny's Dream'" echoes Miller's previous album *Afrodeezia*, surrounding the listener like a gentle summer breeze, noteworthy for Jonathan Butler's acoustic guitar. The ballad "Someone to Love" is heartbreaking and tender, Miller's voice emotional, his bass romantic and playful. "Keep 'Em Running", the Earth, Wind & Fire tune, is upbeat and moves from R&B to hip-hop with bass taking center stage. "Preacher's Kid", Miller on bass clarinet, is dedicated to his father and solemn like a church hymn. "Untamed", Miller playing piano solo, and "No Limit", Miller on synthesizer, showcase his composing and technical skills. You wonder if there's any instrument he doesn't play. *Laid Black* is addictive; play it over and over and discover new delights every time.

Miller played an outdoors concert in his native Brooklyn at Metrotech Commons last month as part of the annual BAM R&B Festival. The audience was fired up from the beginning, clapping, dancing and singing along. Miller performed several songs from *Laid Black* as well as the crowd-pleasers "Amandla" and "Tutu" he wrote for his tenure with Miles Davis. He deconstructed the iconic Temptations' hit "Papa Was a Rolling Stone", adding horns and taking wild improvisational excursions before returning to the familiar melody. Unaccompanied, he played the hymn "How Great Thou Art" on clarinet as a dedication to his recently deceased father and mother-in-law. Enthralling. Electrifying. Touching. Miller at his best.

For more information, visit bluenote.com



Oh My, Those Boys!
Barre Phillips/Motaharu Yoshizawa (NoBusiness)
 by Pierre Crépon

This new archival release is the latest product of the sinuous history of the Japanese Chap Chap label,

which issued a string of quality recordings in the '90s and returned in more recent years, notably for a series of co-productions with Universal Japan in 2015 titled "Free Jazz Japan in Zepp". Lately, Chap Chap has been collaborating with NoBusiness, helping to cement the Lithuanian label as a premier destination for archival avant garde material.

Oh My, Those Boys! adds to an early Chap Chap CD, Motaharu Yoshizawa's *Live "Okidoki"*, which contained 40 minutes of the bass duet with Barre Phillips featured here, recorded in 1994 at Café Amores in the Southwest Japan city of Hōfu. The release contains two long free improvisations, the first one abridged to 30 minutes on the LP version, which would therefore be recommended only to hardened vinyl enthusiasts.

Discographical traces suggests that Japanese free jazz first emerged around several distinct poles, Yoshizawa, who died 20 years ago this month, having been aligned with the more radical elements (tenor saxophonist Mototeru Takagi, guitarist Masayuki Takayanagi, alto saxophonist/guitarist Kaoru Abe) and later becoming an anchor in the international free improvisation network, working with such players as Americans pianist Dave Burrell and soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy and Brits saxophonist Evan Parker and guitarist Derek Bailey. Phillips hardly needs any introduction.

The music conjures at once something very ancient and very new. The entirely free playing evokes echoes of imaginary primeval times predating musical rules and the thorough mastery displayed by the musicians encompasses the whole history of the bass, up to areas uncovered by the most recent avant garde.

After an initial section of quietly plucked strings, the bows come out of the quivers. Phillips and Yoshizawa play together throughout. There are no alternating solos and, remarkably, no obvious interplay cues. The improvisation is truly synchronous, without ever clashing. The result is hardly explainable, mesmerizing music. The middle section of the first piece might be the most stunning moment of the recording, music any composer working with pen and paper would have been very happy to create.

Yoshizawa's instrument is a homemade five-string upright electric bass, judiciously ran through electronic effects, something which adds another parameter, throwing off the listener's expectations.

Yoshizawa's work was featured in two other important series: PJJ's 70年代日本のフリージャズを聴く!, which brought historical Japanese free jazz releases to CD, and PSF's J・I・コレクション, archival tapes from the early days of the scene. Like the Chap Chap recordings, both are highly recommended.

For more information, visit nobusinessrecords.com



Jubilation! (Celebrating Cannonball Adderley)
Jim Snidero & Jeremy Pelt (Savant)
 by George Kanzler

Alto saxophonist Jim Snidero and trumpeter Jeremy Pelt have produced a smart, eminently listenable celebration of the music and spirit of the late Julian "Cannonball" Adderley in a quintet setting mirroring the bands Cannonball led with his brother Nat Adderley. In fact, one of the tunes most closely associated with Cannonball, "Work Song", was actually penned by Nat. Its signature call-and-response

dialogue between saxophone and trumpet, in stop-time, provides the envoi to this album. Backing the co-leaders is a muscular, hard-driving rhythm section anchored by drummer Billy Drummond, who worked with Nat Adderley, bassist Nat Reeves and pianist David Hazeltine.

Along with "Work Song", this quintet also essays Cannonball's "Sack O'Woe", another soul jazz down-home classic with a fat backbeat, notable here for Pelt's driving solo and Hazeltine's interaction with Drummond during the pianist's solo turn. Soul jazz birthed various rhythms, among them the boogaloo shuffle. Rather than reprise one of Cannonball's boogaloes, Pelt has written his own, "Party Time", an original that opens this CD and introduces us to Snidero's Cannonball-inspired, testifying, narrative style. Snidero also contributes one original, the snappy "Ball's 90th", commemorating Julian Adderley's 90th birthday anniversary, the 15th of this month. The other tunes are mined from the Adderley Brothers' band repertoires. "Stars Fell On Alabama" is the one slow ballad, featuring Snidero in the lead role and soloing in a long out chorus and coda.

The diversity of the repertoire is highlighted by tunes written by members of the Adderleys' rhythm section: bassist Sam Jones' "Del Sasser", a hardbop swinger in the 32-bar AABA format, and bassist Walter Booker's "Saudade", a Brazilian-inspired semi-bossa. Cannonball's catchy, neo-bop "Wabash" rounds out the program and is the one track featuring Pelt with Harmon-muted trumpet. With this album, Snidero and Pelt reveal that the Cannonball Adderley legacy is well worth continued exploration.

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. This project is at Dizzy's Club Sep. 16th. See Calendar.

EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH



JAZZ VESPERS



**SINGER/FLAUTIST
 MELANIE CHARLES**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH
 3 PM - DONATIONS WELCOME**

**JAZZ VESPERS AT EBC HAS BECOME
 ONE OF BROOKLYN'S MOST SUCCESSFUL
 ONGOING JAZZ MUSIC SERIES**

**EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
 279 LAFAYETTE AVENUE, BROOKLYN
 CORNER OF ST. JAMES PLACE
 FOR MORE INFORMATION: 718-622-1107
 EBCCONNECTS.COM/JAZZVESPERS**