

## NEW ISSUES

### 1) H2S2 DANCE IN TOWN META 40

*MUNCHKINS / LUZERN-  
LAUSANNE / DANCE / WHITE  
/ THE BREEZE / DOWN TOWN.*  
40:00.

Alex Hendriksen, ts; Franz  
Hellmuller, el g; Luca Sisera, ac  
b; Michael Stulz, d. 4/07, Zurich,  
Switzerland.

### 2) FRANZ HELLMULLER L'ENVOL META 44

*M. I. C. H. I. / L'ENVOL / WOW  
/ BUTTERFLY / MOONRIVER /  
ENDZEIT / THEA.* 48:00

Hellmuller, el g; Nat Su, as;  
Andre Pousaz, ac b;  
Norbert Pfammatter, d. 8/07,  
Zurich, Switzerland

### 3) MARCEL LUSCHER - YUM YUM YUM DEAD LILIES META 45

*DEAD LILIES / POOR SUN /  
INTRODUCTION TO SCHUBIGER  
/ SCHUBIGER / I DON'T CARE  
/ SCHON / WYRSTCHENBUDE  
/ INTRODUCTION TO NACHTS  
SCHLAFEN DIE RATTEN DOCH /  
NACHTS SCHLAFEN DIE RATTEN  
DOCH / LIME / DEAD LILIES  
(REPRISE).* 58:00.

Luscher, ts, cl, b c; Thomas  
Luscher, p, el p; Luca Sisera, ac

The CDs under review in this segment have in common a contemporary outlook on the style options one chooses in making one's musical statement. None of these artists embrace a Hard Hop, Bopstream, or Post-Bop orientation. (No value judgment is implied here.) They seek their expressive means in a stylistic elsewhere. The first three artists come out of the scene in Switzerland. The last one is active in the U.S.

H2S2 (1) lines up tenor, guitar, bass, and drums for an engaging set of originals and a couple of numbers by notable others in today's music. Mark Helias' "Munchkins" begins the proceedings with a Rockish feel and a meandering melody head that has an appealing asymmetry. From the start Franz Hellmuller gives notice that he is a guitarist to be reckoned with. His first solo begins with Surf Jazz overtones and then settles in with fleet and interesting lines over a kind of vamp. Alex Hendriksen's tenor gets a nice spot, then a recurring riff gives drummer Michael Stulz a chance to show his soloing abilities. He has command of his sound and good rhythmic variation.

The CD proceeds with a variety of showcases for what might be dubbed the "New Not No-Thing." Or is it "New Not New-Thing"? There's a memorable "Luzern-Lausanne" with solid solo bass, and a provocative two-way improv for guitar and tenor, and then a good moment for drums. Onward to a nice version of Paul Motian's "Dance." It sports a spacy, then abruptly staccato post-Bailey guitar. The tenor gets Free with a barrage of rather quiet notes and sounds while the drummer plays rims, cymbals, etc., out of time. The mix includes some space notes on guitar. Then it all goes into time, Hendriksen plays around with some note motives while it gets pointillistic-funky and Hellmuller comps some out chords. Well done, if I might say so.

The Hellmuller tune "White" has a country-Ornette feel and it's Free-funky. Hellmuller plays with some enveloping chords and good expanded pentatonic runs. Hendriksen on tenor begins playing with some melodic fragments and the two engage in a dual solo spot where everyone is sensitively tuned to one another.

This is a fine example of the contemporary bag—pretty Free, some exploration, good solo spaces, solid rhythmic drive, and compositional strength. And it manages to sound like itself. That's quite a feat. It's recommended for something new in a style that does not go backwards to tradition and doesn't get all that out either. It's very good for what they do with those parameters.

The next CD further exposes the talents of guitarist Hellmuller, this time with his own ensemble (2). All compositions are his and a new cast of sax-bass-drums comes into play.

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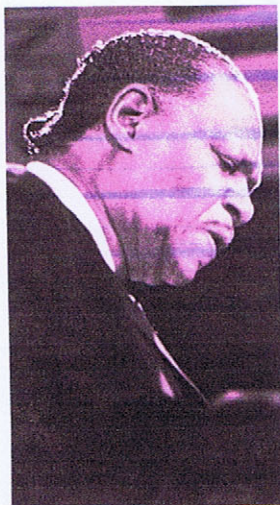
b; Beni Burgin, d, toys. 10/1-2/07,  
Zurich, Switzerland.

### 4) COURT MAST SAUSALITO SUMMER

JAZZ VISTA 1

*GOLD COAST / SAUSALITO  
SUMMER (ACOUSTIC) / MARLING  
SONG / TAM JUNCTION /  
BRIDGEWAY / WEST WIND /  
LONELY SEA / JIB JIVE / HIGHWAY  
1 / CAT'S PAW / WATER STREET /  
SAIL HOME. 41:00.*

Mast, cnt, tpt; Scott Pedersen,  
saxes; Tim Wallace, flt;  
Sam Grobe-Heintz, p; Dave Bell,  
el g; Ari Munkres, ac b;  
Kendrick Freeman, d.  
no date listed, Marin County, CA.



McCoy Tyner by Gerard Putrick

"m.i.c.h.i." has a vaguely bossa feel and shows off Hellmuller's lushly subtle guitar comping, then an interesting solo that owes something of its sound to contemporary Jazzers like Abercrombie, Scofield, and a touch of the harmonic density of Rypdal in a certain mood. Lovely.

The title track, Jazz waltz "L'Envol" has a nice feel. Hellmuller solos again with taste, a sense of tone and linear harmony that's good to hear. His phrasing is sure and varied. This is a good example to play to someone who wants to hear what modern Jazz guitar is about. Su's alto solo that follows has a coolness that does not lack thrust. Then a drum solo tumbles into an enhanced sense of time without losing its forward momentum.

"Wow" puts Hellmuller in a Fusionish mode, which he handles with ease and advanced lining; while Su plays some runs to complement him. Quite respectable and interesting.

Hellmuller and his group construct a worthy set that should appeal to those seeking a beyond-Bop contemporary program. Hellmuller plays with conviction and results; his band is sympathetic and well attuned to his approach. It is good music and shows him to be someone to watch.

The oddly named group Yum Yum Yum (3) turns in a less effective set than the first two—in that there are some distinctly rough edges showing. Leader Marcel Luscher pens most all of the numbers and plays tenor, bass clarinet, and clarinet, with the first two instruments evincing a somewhat bottomless tone, as if the instruments were miked closer to the top, near the mouthpiece, or perhaps that is just his sound, if so a rather thin one. His intonation occasionally wobbles and there are some moments where he seems slightly unsure in his phrasing. On the other hand his choice of notes and approach are not without interest. The fellow group members sound just fine, if slightly undistinguished. It may be that Luscher's compositions are his strong suit.

There's a slow, lyrical "Dead Lilies" that features clarinet and electric piano. The attractive if simple "Poor Sun" has a Latinish rhythm, a straightforward rhythmic riff in piano, and Luscher's tenor taking the head melody on top. "Schubinger" has a kind of quirky, interestingly humorous-ghoulish theme with an almost tango feel. The bass clarinet is prominent and plays a quite appropriate role for this sort of thing. Also the decent ballads "Schon" and "Nachte" have their charms.

This is a good effort, marred by less than stellar moments. Mr. Luscher may need a bit more woodshedding. But his writing shows potential. Good luck to him.