

Best Of 2019

"When you're going through hell, keep going."

Often (mis)attributed to Winston Churchill

Whether plumbing the inexhaustible depths of Monk's compositions like Frank Kimbrough and Miles Okazaki, bringing the accumulated insights of sixty years of composing brilliance to a lush orchestral setting like Wayne Shorter, displaying a striking freshness in an improvisational form he invented nearly fifty years ago like Keith Jarrett, demonstrating the wavy nature of the lines between composition and improvisation, standards and originals like Thumbscrew or importing an alt-country vocal sensibility into a fluid, uncategorizable musical virtuosity like Charles Lloyd; the artists who made the 58 recordings below helped all of us to keep going by being inventive, respectful, rebellious, jarring, earnest, playful, collaborative, fractious, incandescent - in short, by being faithful to all we love in jazz.

* denotes a special favorite

Ambrose Akinmusire, Origami Harvest

JD Allen, Love Stone

The Bad Plus, Never Stop II

Jonas Cambien Trio, We Must Mustn't We

Steve Coleman, Live at the Village Vanguard, Vol. 1

John Coltrane, Both Directions at Once

Sylvie Courvoisier, D'Agala,

Andrew Cyrille, Wadada Leo Smith, Bill Frisell, Lebroba*

Miles Davis and John Coltrane, The Final Tour,

Dave Douglas, Brazen Heart Live at the Jazz Standard

Maria Faust, Machina

Errol Garner, Nightconcert

Camilla George, The People Could Fly,

Devin Gray, Dirigo Rataplan
Charlie Haden & Brad Mehldau, Long Ago and Far Away*
Stefon Harris & Blackout, Sonic Creed
Eddie Henderson, Be Cool
Fred Hersch Trio, Live in Europe*
Fred Hersch Trio, 97@ The Village Vanguard
Fred Hersch & Anat Cohen, Live in Healdsburg
Marquis Hill, Modern Flows
Jon Irabagon Quartet, Dr. Quixotic's Traveling Exotics
Keith Jarrett, La Fenice
Frank Kimbrough, Monk's Dreams*
Lee Konitz & Dan Tepfer, Decade,
Azar Lawrence, Elementals
James Brandon Lewis & Chad Taylor, Radiant Imprints
Charles Lloyd & The Marvels + Lucinda Williams, Vanished Gardens
Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Sound Prints, Scandal*
Makaya McCraven, Universal Beings,
Mark Masters, Our Metier*
Brad Mehldau, Seymour Reads the Constitution,
Myra Melford's Snowy Egret, The Other Side of Air*
Allison Miller & Carmen Staaf, Science Fair
Francois Moutin & Kavita Shah Duo, Interplay
Wolfgang Muthspiel, Where the River Goes
Miles Okazaki, Work
Hanna Paulsberg Concept, Daughter of the Sun
Mikkel Ploug & Mark Turner, Faroe
Noah Preminger, Genuinity
Noah Preminger & Frank Carlberg, Whispers and Cries,

Joshua Redman, Still Dreaming

Cecile McLorin Salvant, The Window

John Scofield, Combo 66

Trygve Seim, Helsinki Songs

Wayne Shorter, Emanon*

Martial Solal, My One and Only Love

Gunther Baby Sommer, Baby's Party,

Luciana Souza, The Book of Longing

Bobo Stenson Trio, Contra la Indecision

Kevin Sun, Trio

Henry Threadgill, Double Up, Plays Double Up Plus*

Henry Threadgill 14 or 15 Kestra, Dirt . . . and More Dirt

Thumbscrew, Ours

Thumbscrew, Theirs*

Mark Turner & Ethan Iverson, Temporary Kings

Cuong Vu 4Tet, Change in the Air

Denny Zeitlin, Wishing on the Moon