

~~as well as ever on “Basic Bolero,” one of several tunes here with a Latin touch. Another singer, Paulette McWilliams, hits the mark on two more Bass originals, the whimsical “Since I Found You” and the bluesy “Just A Fool”. Standards “My Foolish Heart” and “Dark Eyes” round out a versatile and enjoyable release. There are plenty of lawyers. The world needs a solid pianist-composer-lyricist. Welcome back, Dave Bass!  
Whaling City Sound; 2015; 60 min.~~

**~~Event Horizon; Mark Wade, bass.~~**

~~This is a debut album for New York bassist Wade. He indicates a preference and fondness for piano trios, so it's no surprise that he enlisted the lyrical and lovely touch of Tim Harrison on piano and the subtleties of Scott Neumann, drums. This is as much pianist Harrison's album as it is Wade's. And Harrison's versatility and gentle approach made these compositions “sing.”~~

~~Wade writes long lines that give all three players breathing room and opportunity to make attractive musical statements. I was particularly drawn to “Valley and Stream” with its classical feeling and a crystalline bowed solo from the leader. The one standard on the session is a playful and fresh look at “If I Only Had a Brain,” the classic Harold Arlen tune from “The Wizard of Oz.” There's a lot of beauty mixed with a little whimsy here. What a delightful debut!  
Self-produced; 2014; 54 min.~~

**~~The Journey; Charles McPherson, alto sax.~~**

~~The life-in-jazz journey of alto sax great Charles McPherson has found him in the company of Charles Mingus, Barry Harris, Art Farmer and loads of other heroes. That road also put him on the soundtrack to “Bird,” the Clint Eastwood film on the life of Charlie Parker. But it was a routine Denver gig that found him in the presence of such gifted locals that McPherson knew he just had to record with them. And this CD is the result.~~

~~McPherson's bop chops remain firmly rooted as he explores a program of standards and originals with Keith Oxman, tenor sax; Chip Stephens, piano; Ken Walker, bass; and Todd Reid, drums — all first cabin players. A few highlights: his engaging alto and tenor meeting with Oxman on his original, “Manhattan Nocturne”; a fanciful flight on Parker's classic bop line “Au Privave”; “I Should Care” is one of those “forever” ballads, and McPherson's alto is appropriately sweet and tender; the title tune, with some tricky passages and bop-drenched lines, is fresh and vita; finally, another original, “Bud Like,” puts McPherson on a bebop horse race which of course he wins! His dedication to Parker is clear. Yet throughout a long career, McPherson has made his own unique place in the story of jazz.  
Capri; 2015; 55 min.~~

**~~Family Dedications And More; Chip White, drums, poetry, vibes, and compositions.~~**

~~This is one of those jazz rarities that works to perfection. White is a drummer with a resume that includes gigging and recording with many of the greats of bebop. He is also blessed with the talent of creating brief poetic vignettes or biographical sketches of past masters of jazz. On this two-CD session (one is music, the other is poetry), he plays a scintillating set of originals with respected colleagues, and then waxes poetic with loving tributes to no less than 19 jazz icons. Among them are Jobim, Louis, Billie, Nat, Sarah, Cedar, Chet, McCoy and Bill Evans. And believe it or not, this is Volume 4 of these combinations of music and poetry. On the music disc, White welcomes Eddie Henderson, Wycliffe Gordon, Renee Rosnes, Peter Washington and other luminaries. Pretty good company, right?~~

~~The 10 original White compositions are energetic items with vigorous solo space for all and melodies that zip by like rush hour traffic. You gotta hand it to White, a double artistic talent who just keeps on keepin' on.  
Dark Colors; 2014; two CDs, total time 87:53.~~

**~~New Jazz Standards; Sam Most, flute, alto flute, clarinet, baritone sax, vocals and scat.~~**

~~Along with Frank Wess of Basie band fame, Sam Most was a pioneer in the use of the flute in a bebop setting. This beautiful session turned out to be Most's final recorded document and — no pun intended — he went out on a high note. Every note, every phrase, every challenging boppy twist and turn is accomplished flawlessly — even though Most's health had begun to slip at the time of the recordings. The 12 tunes here are the creations of one of my favorite trumpet players, Carl Saunders. He writes bright, buoyant lines with real melodies, and Most, one might say, makes the “most” of them. Perhaps a bit surprisingly, Saunders does not play on the session. That honor is given to a superb veteran L.A. rhythm section headed by the in-demand pianist Christian Jacob. If you want to check out some pure fun, try “Is That Asking too Much.” Most scats up a storm in this~~