

# Rifftides

Doug Ramsey on Jazz and other matters...

an **artsJOURNAL** blog

## Recent Listening: Rigby And Eckemoff

September 13, 2017 by Doug Ramsey

**Jason Rigby** Detroit-Cleveland Trio, [ONE](#) (Fresh Sound New Talent)

The simplicity of the Rigby Trio's cover design matches the uncomplicated instrumentation—saxophone, bass and drums. It is a configuration used to great effect by Sonny Rollins and Ornette Coleman in classic recordings when they were at the height of their powers. Whether the 42-year-old Rigby has reached that stage in his career remains to be heard, but in this 2016 album he affirms his skill as an improviser on tenor and soprano saxes. Indeed, although he wrote five pieces for the album, they are springboards for his explorations and those of bassist Cameron Brown and drummer Gerald Cleaver and do not disclose the sophistication of his arranging in earlier albums like *Translucent Space* and *The Sage*. They impart Rigby's unflagging energy as a soloist and the symbiotic relationships he has developed with Brown and Cleaver. The opening "Dive Bar," as an example, is a gripping conversation between Rigby's tenor and Cleaver's drums. Rigby uses the standards "You Are Too Beautiful" and "Embraceable You" primarily as bases for unfettered improvisation that includes occasional short, often witty, quotes from the songs. The album title suggests that there may be more of this trio on the way. It will be interesting to hear what's next.

## Yelena Eckemoff, *In The Shadow of a Cloud* (L&H)

Cleaver joins pianist Yelena Eckemoff in this impressive two-CD album of original compositions. Now a New Yorker, the Russian-born Eckemoff includes, along with Cleaver on drums, three more of the city’s most prominent jazz artists; saxophonist/flutist Chris Potter, guitarist Adam Rogers and bassist Drew Gress. As in *Blooming Tall Phlox* earlier in 2017 and several other albums on her L&H label, Eckemoff’s classical training is apparent in her playing and in the impeccable construction of compositions recalling her life and family in Russia. Her continuing collaborations with leading American and European musicians reflect her status in the jazz community. That was as true of the acceptance and enthusiasm of the four young Finns who joined her for *Blooming Tall Phlox* as it is for the US stars of this new Eckemoff venture. Among the highlights are the evocative title tune with its melding of nostalgia and urgency, the unrepressed excitement of “On the Motorboat,” Potter’s floating soprano saxophone in the irresistible “Waltz of the Yellow Petals,” and “The Fog,” in which Gress’s bass line buoys a feeling that manages to be at once mysterious and reassuring. Throughout, Eckemoff’s impeccable keyboard touch, harmonic resourcefulness and intriguing compositions make *In the Shadow of a Cloud* an important addition to the discography of a pianist whose reputation continues to expand.

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#### CD: Ivo Perelman, Matthew Shipp

Ivo Perelman, Matthew Shipp, Whit Dickey, Gerald Cleaver, Enigma (Leo Records) Perelman, a Brazilian living in New York, is a tenor saxophone virtuoso who does not allow  
December 1, 2013  
In "recommendations"

#### The Critics' Choices

Try as I might to ignore requests to vote in polls, I don’t seem to be able to say no to Francis Davis. This year, the eminent critic persuaded 136 people to take part in his annual  
December 19, 2013  
In "Main"



#### Monday Recommendation: Andy Brown

June 8, 2015  
In "recommendations"

# Comments



Bill Kirchner says

September 13, 2017 at 6:12 pm

Jason Rigby is yet another of NYC's too-hidden treasures. Hopefully, this CD will get him some of the attention he deserves. He's also formidable on alto saxophone as well.

## DOUG RAMSEY



Doug is a recipient of the lifetime achievement award of the Jazz Journalists Association. He lives in the Pacific Northwest, where he settled following a career in print and broadcast journalism

in cities including New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland, San Antonio, Cleveland and Washington, DC. His writing about jazz has paralleled his life in journalism... [\[Read More\]](#)

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## DOUG’S BOOKS

Doug's most recent book is a novel, *Poodie James*. Previously, he published *Take Five: The Public and Private Lives of Paul Desmond*. He is also the author of *Jazz Matters: Reflections on the Music and Some of its Makers*. He contributed to *The Oxford Companion To Jazz* and co-edited *Journalism Ethics: Why Change?* He is at work on another novel in which, as in *Poodie James*, music is incidental.

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DOUG’S PICKS



Monday

Recommendation: McNeely & The Frankfurtians

Jim McNeely, The Frankfurt Radio Big Band, Barefoot Dances and Other Visions (Planet Arts)  
McNeely fortifies his position in the upper echelon of jazz arrangers in this set of new pieces for the formidable Frankfurt Radio Big Band. The album begins with his tribute to the late Bob Brookmeyer, “Bob’s Here.” Despite the dedication to [...]

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Monday Book Recommendation: Lilian Terry’s Jazz Friends

Lilian Terry, Dizzy Duke Brother Ray And Friends (Illinois)  
Lilian Terry’s book is full of anecdotes

about her friendships with the musicians mentioned in the title—and dozens of others. Enjoying modest renown in Europe for her singing, Ms. Terry has also been involved in radio and television broadcasting and is a cofounder of the European [...]

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## Monday Recommendation: Oscar Peterson Plays 10 Composers

Oscar Peterson Plays (Verve) In this five-CD reissue, the formidable pianist plays pieces by ten composers who dominated American popular music for decades. Peterson had bassist Ray Brown and guitarist Barney Kessel, succeeded by Herb Ellis. It’s the trio that made Peterson famous with Jazz At The Philharmonic and—by way of the 10 albums reproduced [...]

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Monday

# Recommendation: DIVA At 25

The DIVA Jazz Orchestra 25th Anniversary Project (ArtistShare) It has been a quarter of a century since Buddy Rich’s manager and relief drummer Stanley Kay found himself conducting a band whose drummer was young Sherrie Maricle. Intrigued by her playing, Kay set out to find whether there were other women jazz musicians of comparable talent. [...]

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Monday

## Recommendation, Keith Jarrett Trio: After The Fall

Keith Jarrett, Gary Peacock, Jack DeJohnette, After The Fall (ECM) In 1998 Keith Jarrett was emerging from a siege of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome that had sidelined him for two years. As he felt better, he was uncertain how completely his piano skill and endurance had returned. He decided to test himself. He gathered his longtime [...]

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# Monday Recommendation: Gerard Kubik, Jazz Transatlantic

Gerhard Kubik, Jazz Transatlantic, Vol. I and Vol. II (University Press of Mississippi) The first volume of Kubik’s work is subtitled, “The African Undercurrent in Twentieth–Century Jazz Culture;” the second, “Jazz Derivatives and Developments in Twentieth-Century Africa.” The descriptions indicate the depth and scope of the Austrian ethnomusicologist’s research, which has taken him to Africa [...]

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