

and octaves as it builds to a gorgeous, harmonic chord solo.

Stryker's original tunes cover ground from frenetic bop ("First Strike") to light, bluesy swing ("The Rose (For Mike Rosinsky)") to the unique melody and otherworldly feel of "Sentinelle." Other covers include the classic "Tenderly," given an after-hours feel with bluesy soloing, and the gorgeous ballad "Lady Sings the Blues."

Stryker is accompanied by Jared Gold (on Hammond B3), Quincy Davis (drums), and Stephen Riley (sax), whose breathy tone is the perfect complement to Stryker's playing — and all know how to build solos and keep them moving. All but two tracks are at least eight minutes long, and the group's take on "Watch What Happens" clocks in at almost 13 minutes. — *JH*



Jinx Jones Rip and Run

Home Brand Records

Jinx Jones long ago proved himself a fine player, and his latest disc reinforces that he is a major talent in the rockabilly, jazz, and country field. On occasion, a strong Brian Setzer influence weighs in, but never overtakes his own personality.

"On Parole & Out of Control" highlights Jones' mastery of roots rock, its hyper-speed guitar romping along at breakneck speed; the lyric shows a playful side. Speaking of, it's tough not to laugh out loud at "Doughouse," with its tale of love gone bad and a chicken-pickin' solo that perfectly fits the country feel. The tour de force, though, is "How High the Moon." His gorgeous chord opening turns quickly into plain-old swing that features the familiar melody before Jones displays his harmonic skills while playing chords and chops that takes the listener through chorus after chorus of soloing without becoming monotonous or boring.

Jones, bassist Joe Kyle, Jr., and drummer Jimmy Sage form the trio, and get some help from pianist Caroline Dahl and steel guitarist David Phillips. The band cooks and the empathy between the players is obvious. With *Rip and Run*, Jones moves up a rung on the ladder. — *JH*



Mitch Seidman, Jamie MacDonald, Claire Arenius Triangulations: Live In Vermont

Kyan Music

The set, recorded live at the Open Music Collective, in Vermont, perfectly captures the workings of this

trio and the inherent quirkiness in the playing of Mitch Seidman, who surprises on pretty much every cut. Jamie MacDonald (bass) and Claire Arenius (drums) make every cut an enjoyable adventure.

Three songs here were written by the band — two by Seidman, one by Arenius; the latter's contribution, "When Worlds Touch You," is a moody ballad with quiet chording and a contemplative bass solo from MacDonald. Seidman's "White Pearl" is a light, flowing piece where the rhythm section percolates under his clever and interesting solos. His "Zokomotion" has a bop feel.

Seidman really shines on the covers. His take on Attila Zoller's "Strawpelter" is a blues swinger and an example of how Seidman slips perfect little "ear worms" inside solos that stick with you. His solo on "Bag's Groove" makes you forget the almost-automatic connection between the Zoller and Wes Montgomery. He mines Songler's catalog again for "Seascape," a frantic tune that, on first listen, sounds disjointed... but listen to it more closely and you discover it's disjointed in the best way!

The obvious respect the players in this trio have for each other shows in every cut. And at every turn, Seidman proves a very distinctive voice in jazz guitar. — *JH*



Get Free Devi

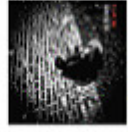
Tree Nature Records

Devi is a rock trio led by singer/guitarist Debra, and the band shows an affinity for good songs with strong, melodic hooks. The mix includes pop, rock, folk, psychedelica, and everything in-between.

The band's strengths are on display on "When It Comes Down," a song with a melancholy feel, great hooks, and a soaring guitar solo that fits perfectly. Debra's playing is big, melodic, and bold. "C2H2.N03" covers a lot of ground, and demonstrates perfectly what this band is about; starting with a pop/folk feel with descending bass lines and chords catchy as hell, it moves into an almost metal feel with a nasty solo. Debra wraps it up with a frenetic Hendrix-style jam. The Hendrix vibe shows up again on the title cut — a simmering rock ballad with nice changes and a soaring solo. The haunting "Welcome to the Boneyard" has a gorgeous melody highlighted by a lovely slide solo and Debra's stunning vocal. The record wraps with a take on Neil Young's "The Needle and the Damage Done." It starts with the familiar acoustic guitar before Debra adds atmospheric slide and finally a solo that recognizes the rock and roll that's always been inherent in the quiet song's lyric.

While Debra is clearly the focus

of this band, Dan Grennes on bass (who has since left the band) and John Hummel on drums are more than up to the task as a rhythm section. — *JH*



Val Bonetti Wait

Baraban Records

A first listen to guitarist Val Bonetti's *Wait* makes one respect his playing. Subsequent listens make you appreciate his music, too. This is simply Bonetti and his acoustic, focusing on jazz but employing many other styles including classical, world music, and the blues.

Cuts like "3.25" are immediately likeable for their gorgeous changes and walking bass lines. "A Frog in the Kitchen" shows an intimate knowledge of harmonics, as Bonetti mixes them with bends, percussive notes, and a bluesy middle segment with great changes and a walking bass line. While many of the pieces are uptempo, reflective pieces like "Blue Friend," are highlighted by lovely chord changes, while the haunting "Night Will Be Light" invokes a classical feel. "Three Views of a Secret" almost feels like an ensemble number; a jazzy piece, it floats on great chord changes while the rhythm and bass parts swing. Like the entire album, it's an impressive solo outing. — *JH*



Tomas Janzon Experiences

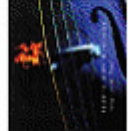
Changes Music

Tomas Janzon is a traditional-jazz guitarist influenced by Wes Montgomery, with hints of Metheny and Scofield. It's also obvious he has one of the best jazz-guitar tones you'll hear.

Most of the songs here are old warhorses that could easily be cliché, but with the imaginative playing of Janzon, keyboardist Art Hillery, bassist Jeff Littleton, and drummer Albert "Tootie" Heath, they are spared the indignity.

Janzon's fat jazz sound is apparent on the opener, "Here's That Rainy Day." His first solo messes playfully with the melody, while the solo out mixes Wes-like octaves and chords. A hard-swinging version of "Billie's Bounce" hits the solo hard with notes flying everywhere. "Moonin" captures the inherent funkiness of the Bobby Timmons classic, and the solo is funky and original, but keeps jazz in the mix. "Float" is a Janzon original with a spooky, off-kilter feel where his bop solo fits perfectly. The other original, "Blue Bee," has an airy feel that makes it stand out from the blues and funk. The record closes with a beautiful solo piece, "En Deilig Roser,"

which showcases everything about Janzon's playing that make this one of the best jazz guitar records from the past year. — *JH*



Fere's Hot Strings Swing World Blues

ICB

With the passing of decades, Fere Scheidegger has become one of the venerable masters of Gypsy jazz. His Hot Strings group has released a score of albums over the past 20 years, and along the way have played with many Manouche and Gitan legends.

The band's latest CD offers more of a good thing. Fere's guitarwork is backed by Rainer Hagemann on violin and baritone violin, rhythm guitarist Dani Solimine, bassist Thomas Duerst, and several guest musicians. The album kicks off with the rousing "Hot Club Dance" that swings with intensity — one of Fere's trademarks. The group adds few classic jazz covers to their songlist here, but both "Night and Day" and "Whispering" are worthy.

In keeping with the album's title concept and Fere's own interest in '70s rock, the band turns to both "Little Wing" and "Black Magic Woman," transporting them into the Gypsy jazz lexicon. Thanks to Fere's musician-ship, these not only work, but seem natural.

Fere long ago proved himself on guitar, but his playing has continued to grow on this outing. He seemingly can't help but swing. And yet it's the simple and beautiful melodic sensess of his solos that make them such gems. — *Michael Dreigni*



Stéphane Grappelli The Quintessence: Paris—London 1933—1958

Fremeaux

Monieur Grappelli had a knack for being in the right place at the right time in terms of finding the perfect guitarist foils. This two-CD collection showcases the best of those duets.

It began with Django Reinhardt, of course, as their Quintette du Hot Club de France set the mold for Gypsy jazz and string swing. Happily, this collection includes not the overplayed classics, but a handful of rarities that unveil new aspects of Grappelli and Django's combined art.

The bulk of the set focuses on Grappelli's later ensembles — recordings that are not merely hard to find, but too often overlooked and even unknown to most string-swing fans.

There are an assortment of cuts here from Grappelli's stay in London during World War II. After a breakup