

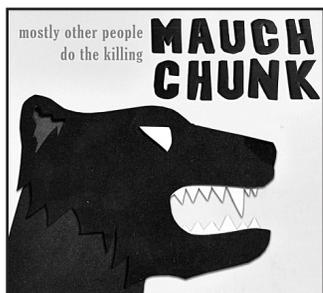
Range
Pete McCann (Whirlwind)
by George Kanzler

Range could refer to many things: ensemble sounds evoked from the quintet; styles explored in the repertoire; guitar sounds employed by the leader and/or compositional strategies applied to the ten tracks, such as 12-tone rows, jazz-rock, odd meters, Anton Webern dyads, rubato intros and homages to/evocations of Kenny Wheeler, Richie Beirach, Bill Frisell and Lee Konitz. It's both a wide range of stylistic influences and a demonstration of the broad creative nature and harmonic inquisitiveness of Pete McCann's artistry.

Besides a panoply of guitar sounds—both electric and acoustic—McCann also achieves ensemble variety by having pianist Henry Hey switch to Rhodes electric keyboard or organ at times and bassist Matt Clohesy double on electric bass. Mark Ferber ranges over a full drum kit with sticks, brushes and mallets as a virtual percussion section. And alto saxophonist John O'Gallagher is equally at home evoking Konitz, fervid bebop or aggressive jazz-rock à la David Sanborn.

The CD is well-programmed to unfurl different aspects of the leader and band's playing, beginning with a quartet of lyrically melodic pieces from a largely acoustic quintet, McCann on conventionally jazz-toned electric guitar, although he plumbs jangly low notes on "Seventh Jar". "Mustard", the fifth track, changes up things with odd meters, fuzzy reverb electric guitar, electric bass and organ, with both guitar and organ solos ending in cinematic crescendos. The other excursion into jazz-rock, "Bridge Scandal" (Track 8), features rock-sharp guitar and hard-toned alto in a tune evoking the George Washington Bridge lanes shutdown shenanigans by New Jersey Republicans. Hey's Rhodes is out front on "Dyad Changes" and the Konitz tribute "Rumble", a Lennie Tristano-ish AABA song with McCann at his fluid best. "Mine Is Yours", the closer, is a slowly unfolding, diaphanous piece—McCann's only venture on acoustic guitar—beginning with rubato musings from alto and guitar over soft rhythm section accents and culminating in a theme harmonized by alto and guitar to end the album.

For more information, visit whirlwindrecords.com. This project is at Birdland Nov. 12th. See Calendar.



Mauch Chunk
Mostly Other People Do the Killing (Hot Cup)
by Stuart Broomer

Mauch Chunk arrives at a critical time for Mostly Other People Do the Killing (MOPDtK): it's the first CD by the band since it reached the limit of post-modern irony with the release of *Blue*, their note-for-note reconstruction of Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue*. It's also the band's first release since the departure of trumpeter Peter Evans, replaced by pianist Ron Stabinsky. Although the latter has been a key

participant in the band's last two CDs, it's a fundamental shift. There's nothing quite like Evans' aggressive virtuosity and the alteration somehow makes bassist/composer Moppa Elliott's humor seem gentler, less arch, when delivered with the embracing warmth that Stabinsky brings.

As has been the case for the past 11 years, each piece is named for, and somehow inspired by, a Pennsylvania town. Each is a slightly off-kilter compound of elements drawn from the breadth of the jazz tradition, mixing harmonic languages from standards and blues to Coltrane changes and polytonality, sometimes in self-ridiculing patterns doomed to decay or disintegration. Most of the usual bases are touched on, from the light Latin beat of "West Bolivar (for Caetano Veloso)" to the understated boogaloo of "Mehoopany (for Frank Fonseca)", but each has distinguishing marks, some special compound of weirdness that will arise. Saxophonist Jon Irabagon graces "West Bolivar" with an extended passage in kazoo tone to cap the interplay between him and Stabinsky, at once uncanny and ludicrous. The ballad "Niagra" is at once heartfelt and mawkish by turn.

As usual with MOPDtK, the level of performance is remarkable. Irabagon sticks to alto, linking directly to the instrument's pitch-bending blues specialists (from Pete Brown through Sonny Red), pressing the tradition backwards to vaudeville and forward to free improvisation. Drummer Kevin Shea maintains the strange ability to establish a groove while doing everything possible to disrupt it, creating tremendous swing in the process. Elliott the bassist anchors the music in a state of flux (the Pennsylvania of his mind) and throughout Stabinsky sounds right at home, whether paying homage to hardbop great Sonny Clark or sifting the auditory detritus of a thousand lounges.

For more information, visit hotcuprecords.com. This band is at Bargemusic Nov. 6th and Cornelia Street Café Nov. 11th. See Calendar.



UTAZATA
Rema Hasumi (Ruweh)
by Mark Keresman

Rema Hasumi, Brooklyn-based Japanese pianist and finalist in the 2009 Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz competition, debuts with *UTAZATA*, a word meaning discussions of music between singers and hearer.

With the exception of two improvisations, all tracks are based on traditional Japanese music. "Clouds Toward East Turning Madder" is almost a ballad in the jazz sense—Hasumi plays some spare, gently rolling chords and Ben Gerstein's trombone has a virtually vocal cast, sometimes resembling an anguished moan in a forest, other times reminiscent of Duke Ellington's expressive brass section(s). Todd Neufeld makes with some tantalizingly brief, sizzling guitar sustain. About halfway through, Hasumi wordlessly sings in a slightly parched, translucent tone, alternating between ruminative sighs and searing ache. (Patty Waters fans take note.) The cumulative effect of this sonic tapestry is both dreamy and slightly nightmarish. "Lullaby of Takeda" features more wordless vocals against an ethereal backdrop of sparse tinkling notes and the takeaway is balmy and becalming. Thomas Morgan's temperate bass evokes both an acoustic guitar and koto, anchoring and buoying Hasumi's song. Drummer Billy Mintz is self-effacing throughout, contributing

impressionistically à la the late Paul Motian.

The improvised pieces are slightly less satisfying. While the playing is inspired and even beautiful, "Moon That Dissolves Into Spring Dawn" meanders, though earthy trombone provides impetus and spurs the group into a blues-hinted implied groove and guitar cuts through you like the cold wind of November.

While *UTAZATA* could use some more variety of mood(s), it's an estimable debut and is recommended to free-leaning cultural gate-crashers, especially those interested in traditional Japanese strains.

For more information, visit ruweh.com. This project is at Beam Brooklyn Nov. 20th. See Calendar.

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NOV 24 DROM 7:30PM	NOV 25
	CAFE NOCTAMBULO
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	2ND SET 9PM
NOV 28	
METROPOLITAN ROOM	
1PM	
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