

Pat Metheny w/ Christian McBride & Antonio Sanchez: Day Trip

PUBLISHED MARCH 1, 2008 – DAVID R. ADLER

JazzTimes may earn a small commission if you buy something using one of the retail links in our articles. *JazzTimes* does not accept money for any editorial recommendations. Read more about our policy [here](#). Thanks for supporting *JazzTimes*.

Pat Metheny is best known for his 30 years and running with the Pat Metheny Group. Among his widely varied projects, however, the trio holds a special place, beginning in 1976 with his debut album, *Bright Size Life*, featuring Jaco Pastorius and Bob Moses. Since then Metheny has worked in trios with Charlie Haden and Billy Higgins (*Rejoicing*), Dave Holland and Roy Haynes (*Question and Answer*) and Larry Grenadier and Bill Stewart (*Trio 99>00*, *Trio Live*). Even those who admire the outsized ambition and sunny accessibility of the Pat Metheny Group tend to find the guitarist's trio dates refreshing, a return to first jazz principles. Such is the case with *Day Trip*, the premiere studio offering from a lineup that has already drawn concert crowds for several years.

That Metheny has handpicked two high-caliber partners is no surprise. Philadelphia's Christian McBride is a proven artist with a multi-stylistic appetite, equally virtuosic on acoustic and electric bass. Antonio Sanchez, from Mexico, did solid if unheralded work on the New York scene before becoming a Pat Metheny Group member and the drummer in this, Metheny's latest trio. *Migration*, Sanchez's well-conceived debut album for CAM Jazz, features Metheny on two cuts and underscores the magnetism of the relationship they've built.

On *Question and Answer*, and to some extent with Grenadier and Stewart, Metheny made a point of playing standard tunes. *Day Trip* is a bit different. There are 10 previously unrecorded originals and no standards, much like the two recent collaborative discs with Brad Mehldau. There is more wood and steel in Metheny's electric sound than in years past, most clearly on "At Last You're Here," a mellow straight-eighth tune in three, and "Snova," a bossa with a melodic arc that could be called Mehldau-*esque*. Listen closely to the intros on the nylon-string reverie "Is This America? (*Katrina 2005*)," as well as the steel-string acoustic ballad "Dreaming Trees," and you can hear Metheny breathe in between chords.

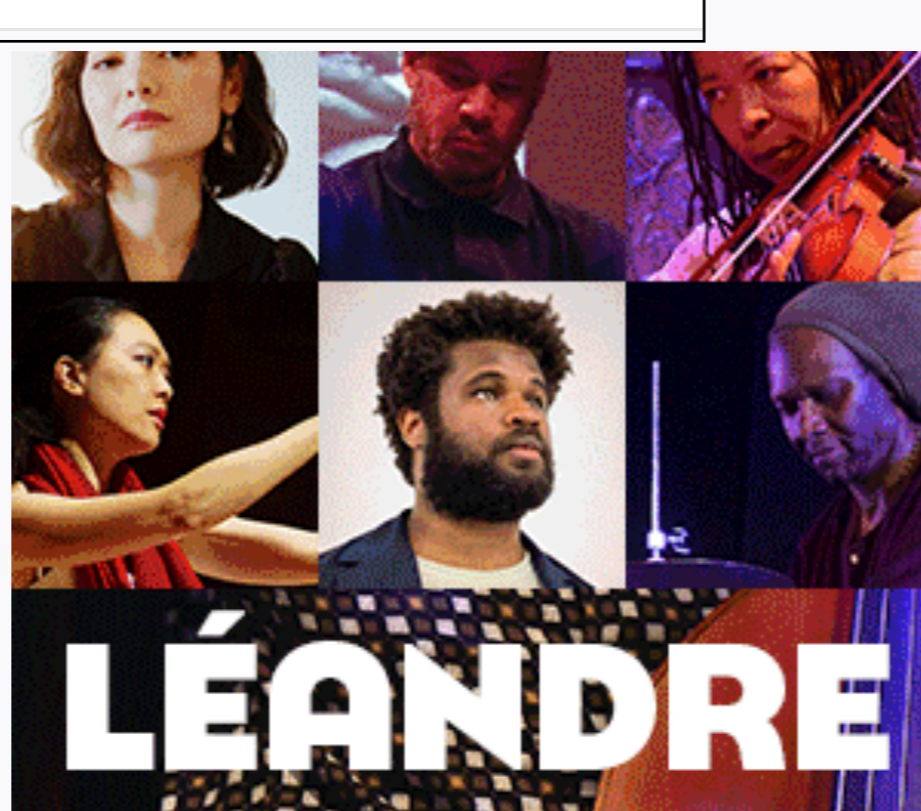
On the uptempo side, "Let's Move" and "Day Trip" are boppish heads in the "H&H" mold, but with heightened speed and complexity. In McBride's kung-fu mastery of the unison breaks, and Sanchez's accenting of every hairpin rhythmic turn, one hears a band in bloom, impossibly tight, harnessing chops to musical effect. The opening samba "Son of Thirteen" finds Sanchez practically four-handed, playing grooves inside of grooves. Live, when Metheny pairs off into duos with each player, the band's inner mechanisms are all the more apparent.

Metheny's signature Roland synth-guitar makes its appearance on the curious rock-reggae number "The Red One" and on "When We Were Free." The latter, in heavy, Elvin Jones-ish 3/4 time, has taken the place of "Question and Answer" as a live showstopper. Between the opening vamp and first chorus, the tune modulates up a major third, from C minor to E minor. About eight minutes in, the volume comes down and the mood grows ominous; Sanchez's rimshots, sparsely placed and drenched in echo, ring out like distant gunfire. In concert the trio draws this passage out as the lights gradually fade, along with the sound. The tune ends in full darkness.

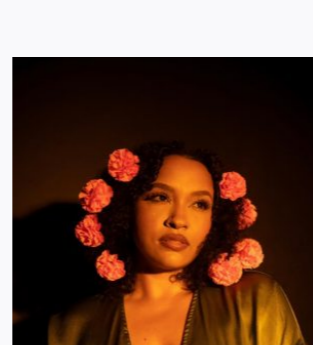
It's worth noting another of McBride's recent trio engagements: the September 2007 Carnegie Hall gig with Sonny Rollins and Roy Haynes. (Metheny was there to listen.) Much fanfare surrounded Rollins' return to the trio idiom, and his choice of two key Metheny allies says something, however indirectly, about the guitarist's stature. Having won Grammys in every category from rock to new age, Metheny is still among the most authoritative of jazz artists. *Day Trip* bears that out especially well.



All-Inclusive Holiday Packages



Festivals & Events



May 2-7
From 8:00 PM to 8:00 PM EDT
Alex Isley
New York, New York

SEE MORE

Editor's Picks



LISTS
The 10 Best Jazz Albums of the 1950s: Critics' Picks

In 2020, to celebrate JazzTimes' 50th...



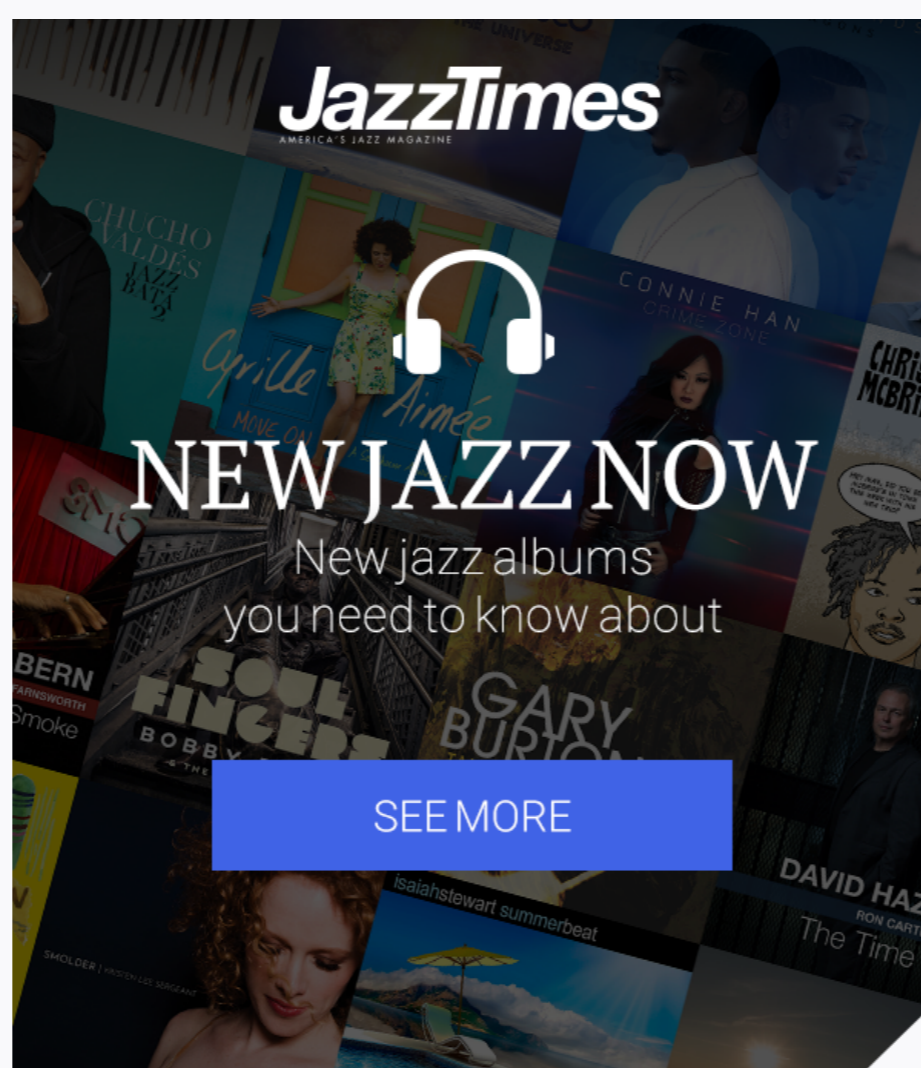
LISTS
Year in Review: The Top 40 Jazz Albums of 2022

We calculated our top 40 new releases of 2022...



LISTS
Year in Review: The Top 10 Historical Albums of 2022

We calculated our top 10 historical/reissue...



Advertisement

Related Posts

[Jim Snidero Feat. Kurt Rosenwinkel *Far Far Away* \(Savant\)](#)

[Chris Dingman *Journeys Vol. 2* \(Self-Released\)](#)

Jim Snidero Feat. Kurt Rosenwinkel *Far Far Away* (Savant)

While a partnership between alto saxophonist Jim Snidero and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel wasn't immediately predictable, upon closer analysis, makes perfect sense. Both have been active ... [Read More](#)

Chris Dingman *Journeys Vol. 2* (Self-Released)

Vibraphonist Chris Dingman has always been a thoughtful musician, his unique, kinetic style providing both emotional uplift and meditative escape. With his new album, *Journeys* ... [Read More](#)

Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis with Shirley Scott *Cookin' with Jaws and the Queen* (Craft)

As one who has feverishly collected the Prestige Cookbook albums of the great tenor saxophonist Eddie Lockjaw Davis for years, I was dumbstruck when I ... [Read More](#)

[Leap Day Trio *Live at the Cafe Bohemia* \(Giant Step Arts\)](#)

Leap Day Trio *Live at the Cafe Bohemia* (Giant Step Arts)

Giant Step Arts is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2018 by Jimmy Katz, the most in-demand photographer in jazz, who in recent years has ... [Read More](#)

JazzTimes Newsletter

America's jazz resource, delivered to your inbox

SIGN UP FOR OUR FREE NEWSLETTER