

©BryanMurrayPhotography2008

Aaron Irwin

saxophone/woodwinds/composer

Aaron was born October 26, 1978 in Decatur, Illinois. His mother and father both encouraged him to play music at an early age, and when he was 5 years old, he began taking piano lessons with Joanne Holmes at Macon Music. Although his grandmother and grandfather both taught at Macon Music and the Decatur Music Center for over 15 years, Aaron did not take to piano with much enthusiasm and at the age of 10, he switched from piano to alto saxophone with dreams of playing in a pep band and/or with Billy Joel. His first saxophone teacher was Mr. Ken Stillwell, who along with Aaron's grandfather, played for many years in the Decatur Municipal Band (a group that Aaron would later play in as well). Aaron began studying with other local saxophonists in junior high and high school, including Perry Rask, who taught (and still does) at Millikin University. While in high school, Aaron would get to play with the locally celebrated Macarthur High School jazz band the would get to play the Montreux Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, as well as touring Japan playing at the MUSE in Tokorozawa, Japan. *(continue on page 2)*

In 1996, Aaron moved to Chicago, Illinois to attend DePaul University and to study with Mark Colby and Susan Cook. It was in Chicago, where he was immersed in the music and culture of the city, that Aaron became focused on practicing and refining his playing. While at DePaul he played a few gigs around the city with various groups that included Charles Cameron and the Sunshine Festival, World Class Noise, and the Michael Lerich Orchestra. While playing in the DePaul University Big Band, he got to record a live CD with trumpeter Tom Harrell, perform on a Trans-Atlantic jazz cruise with drummer Louis Bellson, as well as playing with a host of jazz greats including Dick Oatts and Joe Lovano! During this time, he spent his summers working on various cruise ships through Carnival and Norwegian Cruise Lines. In 2000, Aaron moved to Miami, Florida to attend graduate school at the University of Miami, where he recorded a commissioned work (Three Romances) by Maria Schneider with the University of Miami Concert Jazz Band, as well as playing gigs in and around the greater Miami area.

In 2002, Aaron moved to New York and has since established himself as a much in demand musician in the thriving New York music scene having performed and/or recorded with many of New York's finest musicians and bands. Along with his work as a sideman, he has also recorded two CDs of his own for the Fresh Sound/New Talent record label based out of Barcelona, Spain. His first CD, *Into the Light* (featuring saxophone guru Rich Perry) received many critical accolades and was heralded by the *New Yorker* magazine as being one of the ten best jazz recordings of 2006 alongside such artists such as Ornette Coleman, Joe Lovano, and Paul Motian. His playing has been described by *Jazz Times* as "generat[ing] thoughtful dialogs, crunchy little grooves, and moments of great emotive power". He has toured Europe, Japan, and much of the United States playing jazz festivals, Broadway productions, and other various types of shows. In September 2008, his second CD, *Blood and Thunder* was released again through Fresh Sound/New Talent featuring both well renowned saxophonist Chris Cheek (Charlie Haden, Bill Frisell) and guitarist Ben Monder (Maria Schneider, Paul Motian).



©BryanMurrayPhotography2008

JAZZ REVIEW

November 2008

Aaron Irwin

Blood And Thunder

FRESH SOUND NEW TALENT
FSNT300

Like The Sunshine; The Wizard; Blood And Thunder; Back To You; From This Moment On; Little Hurts; Sprung; Very Early; Until We Say Our Last Goodbye.

Aaron Irwin (as); Chris Cheek (ts); Ben Monder (g); Eliza Cho (vn on Until We Say only); Matt Clohesy (b); Ferenc Nemeth (d). 2/08.

Here's something. No grand-standing; no God-bothering; no dour abstractions or bland parsing of the harmonic code: instead an album of the purest and most delightful melody. Irwin looks like he just won the science prize at high school, but he plays like a bruised angel. "Like The Sunshine" introduces you to a musical imagination that is all affirmation and light, the two saxophone lines weaving together with a simplicity that's utterly deceptive. "The Wizard" is clever; the dancing line is reminiscent of Jewish folk music (I hope I'm not making a false connection here) and Monder follows the leader's quietly ecstatic solo with one of his own immaculate statements. The title track begins with a Frisell-like shape from Monder again and then allows in a little more dissonance, but it's hardly scary stuff. The blood is pulsing round, rather than spilt; the thunder is the softer kind that follows summer lightning.

Irwin dances gracefully through his "Back To You", and this time you notice just how good the unobtrusive section is. With no piano, the harmonies are very open, and Clohesy and Nemeth keep things moving without cluttering up the mix. The bassist does some great stuff, but you have to listen up for him on subsequent hearings.

There are, as you'll see, a couple of standards. I don't recall a better version of "From This Moment On", though I love Buddy De Franco's and Kenny Dorham's readings of it, and "Very Early" (played, as is the last track, without Cheek in support) is impeccably faithful to Bill Evans's original, while highlighting Irwin's very pure tone, and Clohesy's limpid inventiveness. The group becomes a quintet again for the final track. The violin (Ray Nance, not Leroy Jenkins!) adds a swoony glamour to the elegiac closing track.

I earnestly suggest you track this one down. If it doesn't delight and move you, you might find that you actually died in the night.

JIM WEIR



December 2008
 Reviews: Undertones
 Bill Milkowski

AARON IRWIN GROUP

Blood and Thunder (Fresh Sound/New Talent)



This winning disc works on many levels. Aaron Irwin, a superb alto saxophonist with a lovely tone and fluid chops, is surrounded by stellar talent in tenor saxophonist and frontline foil Chris Cheek, guitarist Ben

Monder, bassist Matt Clohesy and drummer Ferenc Nemeth. His compositional style skillfully blends sophisticated harmonies and counterpoint with an engaging melodicism that sticks with the listener, as on the second-line groover "Like the Sunshine," the playfully swinging "Sprung" and the exquisite ballad "Until We Say Our Last Goodbye."

BC Home	TV/Film
Music	Culture
Sci/Tech	Books
Politics	Sports
Gaming	Tastes
Desicritics	GlossLip
BC Forums	BC Radio
Fanboy	Web Cultist

[Lijit Search](#)

Part of the
BLOGCRITICS
Network



Article Archives

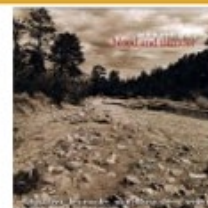
2002 [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2003 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2004 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2005 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2006 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2007 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2008 [Jan](#) [Feb](#) [Mar](#) [Apr](#) [May](#)
[Jun](#) [Jul](#) [Aug](#) [Sep](#) [Oct](#) [Nov](#) [Dec](#)
 2009 [Jan](#) [Feb](#)

REVIEW

Music Review: Aaron Irwin Group - *Blood and Thunder*

Written by [Jordan Richardson](#)

Published September 11, 2008



See also:

- » [Music Review: Nat King Cole - L-O-V-E](#)
- » [Music Review: The Bittersweets - Goodnight, San Francisco](#)
- » [Music Review: Sonya Kitchell - This Storm](#)

Alto saxophonist and composer [Aaron Irwin](#) unleashed his brand of multifaceted and gorgeous compositions with his 2006 debut *Into the Light*. Two years later, Irwin is back with a follow-up that expands on his musical vision.

Blood and Thunder is a thrillingly capricious showcase of Irwin's songwriting talents and his sax playing. Seven of the nine tunes are Irwin Originals, with his graceful and prosaic songwriting talents put to full use. His group also tackles a Bill Evans tune and makes wonderful music with some classic Cole Porter.

At times, the Aaron Irwin Group functions like a band of desperados or musical outlaws.

Despite some rather strict compositions, there is an awful lot of freedom to roam. Chris Cheek's tenor sax converses with Irwin's alto, while guitarist Ben Monder makes hay in the background and leaps into the spotlight when the time is right. The stable bass of [Matt Clohesy](#) is convivial and Ferenc Nemeth's drums tie things together well.

Irwin's music flows through the veins of the listener, timed to a distant heartbeat. At times, the compositions take expected paths, granting comfort to the listener. But Irwin is intrepid and he doesn't hold back from releasing melodies and moments infused with sonic power and dazzling force.

certain core sense of alarm and trial. Irwin's layering of the composition is never easy and can be rather troubling at times, even as the song veers off into a basic tango.

As unsettling as Irwin's compositions can be, they are also always hospitable. As *Blood and Thunder* reveals, there is force within the vital signs.

"Sprung" tackles pleasure with taut exactitude. The light tapping of Nemeth's drums guides the bouncy track but never ensnares it on its own elation. Indeed, Irwin's musicians play havoc with one another here and seem to be having a whole lot of fun doing it. The track is engaging and convincing in its glee.

The album's opening track, "Like the Sunshine," matches its title faultlessly and greets the listener like the dawn. Supple percussion introduces the alto sax, giving the song progression with intelligibility.

Blood and Thunder is a courageous and crisp jazz record. It is appealing, absorbing, and affectionate. Irwin's command over the music is immaculate, as he leads his group through his harmonious universe with the style and grace of a truly great musician. His original compositions are astonishing in their beauty and his work with a pair of classics is similarly stunning.

Fresh Articles Fresh Comments

Most recent comments for BC

Music

- » On [Waiting For the Miracle: Leonard Cohen To Tour](#) by 231257: DESEJO AMIZADE COM SENHORAS DOS 25 A 50ANOS SOU MOCAMBICANO COM NIVEL MEDIO DO ENSINO TECNICO
- » On [The '80s And The Cringe Factor: Mr. Mister's One Album Wonder](#) by MacDermot: Out of Touch is a good tune.
- » On [Q: Rap vs. Hip-Hop - What's the Difference?](#) by Empty Space: Is a beat with no vocals considered rap or hip hop??? I ask this because there is no difference 2 me...
- » On [Music Review: Neil Diamond - Home Before Dark](#) by Evan: and i want to see Neil Diamond photographed with Elton John becuse i saw him photographed with Bill... Dissagree. It IS esential if you want to put Aftermath & Between The Buttons in the original track ...

See [More Comments!](#)

blogtalkradio™

Screen Time
Stacey Oristano of "Fr...

00:00

rss profile share

Screen Time
Stacey Oristano of "...

Cyber Mix Tape Show
Q's Tunes-A Qui...

BC Multiplayer Chat
Multiplayer Chat #61: Kil...

Magdalena Ball
Interview with Bel Schenk

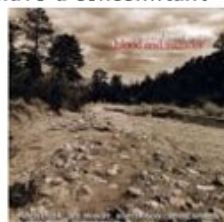
TV TALK
BuddyTV's John ...

Rifftides

Doug Ramsey on Jazz and other matters...

Recent Listening: Aaron Irwin

Aaron Irwin Group, *Blood and Thunder* (Fresh Sound New Talent). In a tray card photograph, we see the 30-year-old alto saxophonist drinking a glass of milk and looking about eighteen. Irwin's compositions and arrangements have a concomitant freshness about them, and resourcefulness. His writing tends to make his quintet sound bigger. There is no piano; Ben Monder's guitar has the chording assignment. Chris Cheek's tenor sax adds a third melody voice. Both solo with economy and plenty of unexpected turns, as does Irwin. Matt Clohesy is the bassist, Ferenc Nemeth the drummer.



These musicians are in the thick of New York's young experimental-cum-mainstream jazz population. Irwin, a product of the impressive DePaul University (Chicago) jazz program run by **Bob Lark**, has adapted to the yeasty Manhattan/Brooklyn scene. His title tune has an appropriately ominous caste amplified by the harmonies expressed and implied in the interaction of the saxophones and the guitar. The melody line and harmonies of the country-sounding "Back to You" might have been written by Hank Williams. Irwin doesn't unveil the melody of "From This Moment On" until the final chorus. The collective and individual improvisations in the first five minutes take full advantage of the basic, good-natured harmonies that helped make the song one of Cole Porter's biggest latterday successes.

The saxophones and the guitar intertwine on "Little Hurts," reacting to one another's ideas in a sort of musical basket weaving until Monder takes over for a solo that manages to incorporate force, restraint and premonitions of uncertainty that are not entirely resolved before the track ends. "Sprung" is a pointillist melodic exercise on the harmonic pattern of "It Might As Well Be Spring." Its good humor spills over into the solos. The Bill Evans waltz "Very Early" glides along in character with its composer's intentions and features a chorus of improvisation by Clohesy that helps bring home why he's being much discussed among his contemporaries. Irwin adds Eliza Cho's violin for the last track, "Until We Say Our Last Goodbye," a composition so like a classic standard song that it all but demands a lyric.



The bloom of originality in Irwin's approach is fertilized by his reach into the traditions of several branches of American music. If that becomes a trend among a young jazz generation that sometimes defeats itself by defying tradition, it can only benefit them and the music.

February 2, 2009 1:05 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

Categories: [main](#)

ABOUT THIS ENTRY

This page contains a single entry by [Rifftides](#) published on *February 2, 2009 1:05 AM*.

[Hank Crawford](#) was the previous entry in this blog.

[Recent Listening: Hendelman, Shaw, Dial-Roche](#) is the next entry in this blog.

Find recent content on the [main index](#) or look in the [archives](#) to find all content.



AJ ADS

[Introducing AJ Arts Blog Ads](#)

Now you can reach the most discerning arts blog readers on the internet. Target individual blogs or topics in the ArtsJournal ad network.

[Advertise Here](#)

AJ BLOGS

[AJBlogCentral](#) | [rss](#)

culture

[About Last Night](#)

Terry Teachout on the arts in New York City

[Artful Manager](#)

Andrew Taylor on the business of arts & culture

[blog riley](#)

rock culture approximately

[CultureGulf](#)

Rebuilding Gulf Culture after Katrina

[Dewey21C](#)

Richard Kessler on arts education

[diacritical](#)

Douglas McLennan's blog

[Flyover](#)

Art from the American Outback

[Life's a Pitch](#)

For immediate release: the arts are marketable

[Mind the Gap](#)

No genre is the new genre

[Performance Monkey](#)

David Jays on theatre and dance

[Plain English](#)

Paul Levy measures the Angles

[Rockwell Matters](#)

John Rockwell on the arts

[Straight Up](#)

Jan Herman - arts, media & culture with 'tude

dance

[Foot in Mouth](#)

Apollinaire Scherr talks about dance

[Seeing Things](#)

Tobi Tobias on dance et al...

Aaron Irwin Group

Blood and Thunder

Fresh Sound/New Talent FSNT 320

| ★ ★ ★

Aaron Irwin (as), Chris Cheek (ts), Ben Monder (g),
Matt Clohesy (b), Ferenc Nemeth (d), Eliza Cho (v). Rec.
11 and 13 February 2008

It's neither avant-garde nor self-consciously innovative, but that doesn't stop Aaron Irwin's second outing as leader from being a gently dazzling affair in a straightahead kinda way. That's partly because, though still only 30, the US altoist is a composer of distinction, and the seven (out of nine) originals here all display an admirable fund of melodic invention: try the shimmering title track or the moody slowburner 'Little Hurts'. These are tunes that aren't afraid to twinkle nostalgically, a little in the manner (curious to report) of Bob Dylan's last album, *Modern Times*. Despite the sanguinary sonic promise of the title, the quintet's music evokes a cosier, safer bygone world. 'Back to You' is a lovely folksy ditty, which sees Irwin and Cheek's saxophones modestly embracing over Monder's exquisitely laidback comping, while guest performer Cho adds a beautifully judged yearning, soaring violin line to the closing lullaby 'Until We Say Our Last Goodbye'.

Robert Shore

Steel Nerves

Aaron Irwin: *Blood And Thunder* (Fresh Sound/New Talent 320; 55:10) ★★½ This smart set of tunes balances alto and tenor with guitar in some great musical conversations. It doesn't hurt that you've got Chris Cheek on tenor and Ben Monder playing guitar. Altoist Irwin keeps things interesting, aided by bassist Matt Clohesy and Ferenc Nemeth, whose drumming threatens to undermine the sax-guitar dynamic. "Like The Sunshine" and "The Wizard" cue the listener that melody as well as improvisation matter, even as Nemeth's beats help shape the proceedings. The program evokes the spirit of a Warne Marsh/Lee Konitz reunion.

Ordering info: freshsoundrecords.com

Bob Mover: *It Amazes Me* (Zoho 200809; 62:30) ★★ With his crooning and sax stylings, Mover recalls the personal melding of Jimmy Rowles with Stan Getz. The album is full of standards that have the potential to seduce the lover in us all. A tad quaint, Mover's band and interpretations still manage to convey an edge. Uptempo blowing vehicles like "I Believe In You" and "People Will Say We're In Love" balance out songs like the title track and "How Little We Know," which beg for candlelight and perhaps another glass of wine.

Ordering info: zohomusic.com

Chris Greene: *Soul And Science 2: Electric Boogaloo* (SM 003; 49:00) ★★½ On a rough-and-ready outing, saxophonist Greene dovetails nicely with his mostly electric piano player Damian Espinosa in a set that has a garage band feel, with help from bassist Marc Piane and drummer Tyrone Blair. The music is funky, as "Adamantium (Part III)" indicates, but it can also be straightforward with a standard like "Bernie's Tune," played true to form as an uptempo swinger. "You Win Again" gets down to the roots of the music with its gospel-blues feel. Greene's multiple sax approach and the band's loose feel point to a band in the process of becoming and capable of connecting.

Ordering info: chrisgreenejazz.com

Eric Person: *Rhythm Edge* (Distinction 4004; 60:23) ★★ Person's soulful stylings lean toward the sophisticated in this set of 16 tunes that combines uptempo swing and ballads in what is essentially a straightforward jazz outing. Fans of solid blowing will find much to like in Person's uptempo



Jimmy Greene: *exploratory suite*

visit to "Yesterdays," but also with his more experimental, open-ended "All Out In The Open," a song that suggests searching for form even as it remains a brief, forceful statement of conviction. Person also flirts with electric keyboards, such as on the uptempo swinger "Supersonic."

Ordering info: ericperson.com

Jimmy Greene: *The Overcomer's Suite* (Nu Jazz 1001; 61:27) ★★½ Tenor and soprano saxist Greene manages to avoid the tiresome overplaying side of long strides (except for "I'll Keep Loving You," all of the six songs average well more than 10 minutes), thanks to a tight band and interesting solos and arrangements. For fans of extended, exploratory playing that manages to keep its center, *The Overcomer's Suite* sticks out. Its emphasis is expressed through what feels like a quasi-religious outing via the variegated "Anthem Of Hope," the stately "Gethsemane" and insistent "David Undaunted."

Ordering info: nujazzentertainment.com

Mike Frost Project: *Live* (Blujazz 3365; 60:11) ★★½ The best parts of *Live* come on the blues: It's funky, swinging and unpretentious. Tenorist Frost (who doubles on soprano) is in the pocket, throaty and full of feeling on the uptempo swinger "Buzzy." For fans of lively jump blues with a few twists (the mood pieces "Nica's Winter Waltz" and Duke Ellington's "In A Sentimental Mood"), the Frost Project sounds like a winner live. DB

Ordering info: blujazz.com

blujazz
PRODUCTIONS

PLUS
LOIN
MUSIC



The long awaited CD from
Dee Alexander

"...you are in the presence
of jazz royalty", Neil Tesser



Florin Niculescu
Plays Stephane
Grappelli
with
Christian
Escoude Marc
Fosset



Michel Benita
w/ Manu Codjia



Laika Fatie
Misery - A tribute
to Billie Holiday
with
Robert Glasper
Daryl Hall
Greg Hutchinson



www.blujazz.com 773-477-6872



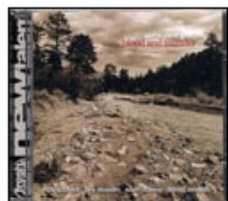
SUBSCRIBE!
1-800-554-7470

Jazz CD Reviews

Aaron Irwin Group - Blood and Thunder - Fresh Sound New Talent

The nerdy-looking Aaron Irwin delivers jazz of uncommon depth and attractiveness

Published on January 06, 2009



Aaron Irwin Group - Blood and Thunder - Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT 320, 55:40 ***:**

(Aaron Irwin - alto sax; Chris Cheek - tenor sax; Ben Monder - guitar; Matt Clohesy - bass; Ferenc Nemeth - drums; Eliza Cho - violin [track 9])

Managing to sound old-timey and completely up-to-date all at once, leader Aaron Irwin and his group mine a similar vein to some of Ted Nash's music, as well as that of, say, the Tin Hat Trio. What we've got here is quite attractive faux-antique jazz—carefully composed, arranged, and played—yet always sounding fresh and

spontaneous.

A number of things make this disc stand out: the exceptional musicianship of the band, especially the inimitable Ben Monder on guitar and the equally adept Ferenc Nemeth on drums; the wacked-out compositions, notably the demented title cut, "Blood and Thunder," itself worth the price of admission; and the pretzel-logic arrangements ("Sprung," e.g., with its doubled alto sax/bass coda). Surface naïveté masking deep sophistication—that what's happening going down on this remarkable disc. Check out, e.g., the irresistibly effortless "Back to You," sounding like updated Western swing with its lazy Big Lebowski/Sam Elliot vibe. Very attractive. "Little Hurts" engages in a bit of high dudgeon, snake-charming its way into one's sensibilities with its sinuous dual horn/guitar figures and generally ominous disposition. The Monkish "Sprung" dances along crazily like a drunken sailor, bobbing and weaving its way through one's ears. One can scarcely believe "Until We Say Our Last Goodbye" isn't the theme to some forgotten Bogey/Bacall classic.

The boys have quite a way with standards as well. Cole Porter's "From This Moment On" gets a deeply swinging yet slightly off-kilter reading, while the Bill Evans classic "Very Early" beguiles with its effortless pulse and diaphanous mood.

Blood and Thunder is deceptively simple music that rewards careful listening and, in the end, delivers big-time payoffs.

Tracklist:

Like the Sunshine
The Wizard
Blood and Thunder
Back to You
From This Moment On
Little Hurts
Sprung
Very Early
Until We Say Our Last Goodbye

- Jan P. Dennis

[Click Here](#) to Send Your Opinions on this to AUDIOPHILE AUDITION!

[Email this page](#) to a friend.

View a [printer-friendly page](#) of this review.

Location: [Home](#) » [Jazz CD Reviews](#) » Aaron Irwin Group - Blood and Thunder - Fresh Sound New Talent



THE NEW YORKER

JAZZ NOTES

BEST OF 2006

by Steve Futterman

JANUARY 22, 2007

BEST OF 2006

Michael Carvin, "Marsalis Music Honors Michael Carvin" (Marsalis Music)—A mainstream horn-plus-rhythm quartet let loose on standards. Do you feel the dust settling already? Not on this sharp set, led by an under-recorded drummer whose enthusiasm generates an explosive turn from the tenor saxophonist Marcus Strickland.

Ornette Coleman, "Sound Grammar" (Sound Grammar)—The concept here isn't quite new: in the late sixties, Coleman had a quartet with two acoustic bassists. Still, returning to the plucked-and-bowed setup brings out a coiled lyricism in the saxophonist that shakes up romps like "Matador" and his 1959 blues number "Turnabout" (which he has retitled "Turnaround") and brings a wrenching emotion to the ballad "Sleep Talking."

Bill Frisell, "Bill Frisell, Ron Carter, Paul Motian" (Nonesuch)—As a departure from his forays into twisted Americana and world music, the inventive guitarist delivers a bona-fide jazz album. The all-star threesome performs like a seasoned band, and Frisell remains the only six-string poet of his generation.

The Kevin Hays Trio, "For Heaven's Sake" (Jazz Eyes)—There are plenty of talented pianists under the age of fifty, but few have Hays's melodic charms and sense of style. Here he produces superbly designed improvisations on standards and jazz classics. He reworks Sonny Rollins's "Sonnymoon for Two" by stretching out the phrasing, to great effect; Hays is a player who knows that he isn't being paid by the note.

Aaron Irwin Group, "Into the Light" (Fresh Sound New Talent)—Irwin is a lyrical alto saxophonist and a compelling original composer, as well as a canny bandleader. Unconcerned about sharing space on his debut with another horn player, Irwin calls on the seasoned tenor saxophonist Rich Perry, and their interplay injects subtle tension into imaginative interpretations of Porter's "So in Love" and even "All the Things You Are."

Joe Lovano, "Streams of Expression" (Blue Note)—The album's centerpiece, a vivacious Gunther Schuller arrangement of three tunes from Miles Davis's "Birth of the Cool" recordings, works so well that the missteps don't seem quite so egregious—although the newly invented double-necked soprano saxophone that Lovano trots out should be hurled into a deep well.

Paul Motian Band, "Garden of Eden" (ECM)—The drummer Motian's love for the electric guitar reaches a new peak with this three-guitar group. Throwing in two saxophones to thicken the sound even further, Motian somehow maintains a spacious sonic environment that is both affecting and intriguing.

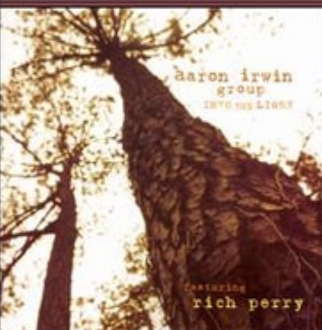
Houston Person and Bill Charlap, "You Taught My Heart to Sing" (HighNote)—The pianist Charlap is decorous and loath to rumble; the tenor saxophonist Person, warm and enveloping. They mesh together like father and son (Person is thirty-two years older than Charlap) on a duet program that shines with old-school charm.

Daryl Sherman, "Guess Who's in Town" (Arbors)—Sherman's winsome voice, cozy delivery, and sure piano work turn such chestnuts as "Don't Worry 'Bout Me" and "Then I'll Be Tired of You" and her own standard-to-be, "Welcome to Manhattan," into things of intimate beauty. Among the exceptional supporting players, the guitarist Jon Wheatley stands out.

Anthony Wilson Nonet, "Power of Nine" (Groove Note)—The anxiety of influence hasn't touched Wilson, a guitarist and composer who is the son of Gerald Wilson, the legendary West Coast arranger. The younger Wilson exhibits an ear for tonal color and spruce charts, coaxing a fulsome power from his compact nonet. He also elicits a heartfelt performance from his sometime boss Diana Krall on the elegiac Jimmy Rowles ballad "Looking Back."

Into the Light

Aaron Irwin/Rich Perry

[Send to Friend](#)

Album Browser

[Previous](#) [Next >](#)

Artist

[Aaron Irwin/Rich Perry](#)

Album

[Into the Light](#)

Rating

★★★★☆

Release Date

Feb 14, 2006

Recording Date

Aug 16, 2005, Aug 18, 2005

Label

Fresh Sound New Talent

Genre

Jazz

AMG Album ID

R 864296

[Corrections to this Entry?](#)

Review

by \$|B410604Scott Yanow

Altoist Aaron Irwin's *Into the Light* is a particularly intriguing set. On some selections [Ryan Scott's](#) guitar sounds a bit like [Bill Frisell](#) (no easy task), making the group seem a bit like the [Paul Motian Trio](#) with [Frisell](#) and [Joe Lovano](#) despite the inclusion of bass. Occasionally, the interplay between Irwin and tenor saxophonist [Rich Perry](#) (who is on five of the eight numbers) is reminiscent of [Lee Konitz](#) and [Warne Marsh](#), particularly on "So in Love." But much of the time the performances are quite original. Whether floating out-of-tempo or swinging hard, Irwin's music (he contributed five of the eight selections) is full of surprises and is consistently unpredictable. This CD grows in interest with each listen and is highly recommended.

Tracks

		Title	Composer	Time
1	🔊	All the Things You Are	Irwin, Kern	8:38
2	🔊	Fumes	Irwin	7:57
3	🔊	In the 90's	Irwin	5:45
4	🔊	Into the Light	Irwin	7:38
5	🔊	So in Love	Porter	10:19
6	🔊	The Point	Irwin	8:20
7	🔊	The Anti-Hero	Irwin	4:32
8	🔊	Ugly Beauty	Monk	5:23

Releases

Year	Type	Label	Catalog #
2006	CD	Fresh Sound New Talent	245

REVIEWS Undertones

By Forrest Dylan Bryant

PAT BIANCHI

East Coast Roots (Jazzed)



Pat Bianchi's debut as a leader marks the Denver-based organist as a strong new voice in the current wave of Hammond B3 combos. Bianchi's trio rides the groove hard, focusing on lesser-known standards for most of the set. Guitarist Mark Whitfield's fleet-fingered fluidity and Byron Landham's authoritative drumming match Bianchi's explosive outbursts and conversational staccato passages, taking even the tightest turns with seemingly effortless zeal. The result is a catchy, eminently likeable soul-jazz romp.

CHRIS CHEEK

Blues Cruise (Fresh Sound/New Talent)



This warm session puts saxophonist Cheek in front of the Brad Mehldau Trio for a comfortable program of originals and rediscovered chestnuts. The group strikes an appealing middle ground between old-school and modernist interpretative styles: Cheek is lyrical and swinging on tenor, alto and soprano sax, keeping his lines clean and direct while the trio flows and sparkles beneath. Three particularly striking tracks find Mehldau on Fender Rhodes rather than piano, augmenting the disc's feel-good vibe.

PATRICK CORNELIUS

Lucid Dream (Patrick Cornelius)



Twice winner of ASCAP's Young Jazz Composers Award, Patrick Cornelius has devoted the bulk of his second recording to original works. The seven examples given here show a dusky elegance that owes much to Wayne Shorter while retaining a unique identity. But Cornelius also has a wild side. His insistent solos on alto and soprano saxophones occasionally break loose, as on an inspired deconstruction of "Billie's Bounce." An agile quintet provides solid support throughout the set.

KRIS DAVIS

The Slightest Shift (Fresh Sound/New Talent)



Kris Davis' quartet wastes no time on her second CD. Digging through eight of the pianist's turbulent, open-structured pieces in a crisp 40

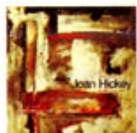


Aaron Irwin

minutes, they slide readily into collective groans, finger-snapping Monk-ish walks and tumbled heaps of crossed melodic lines. Davis' compositions are carefully drawn but explosive. As she slices through expressive tangles of notes, tenor saxophonist Tony Malaby spars with Eivind Opsvik's bass and Jeff Davis' colorful drumming, making for a spirited four-way conversation.

JOAN HICKEY

Between the Lines (OA2)



Leading with a gentle touch at the piano and a lighthearted sense of adventure, Hickey guides her Chicago-based quintet through hard-bop and modern jazz territory with aplomb. She also allows the music to take a few rhythmic detours, adopting a reggae beat or flirting briefly with free jazz. The first four tracks show off the group's strength and flexibility to best effect, with the original tune "Herbris" and a stunning "The Man I Love" as standouts.

AARON IRWIN GROUP

Into the Light (Fresh Sound/New Talent)



Time is elastic in Aaron Irwin's universe, expanding and contracting capriciously. As Irwin's lithe, straightforward alto sax playing jostles with Rich Perry's resilient tenor, Ryan Scott's moody guitar and the mercurial rhythm section, his tunes melt like Dali's watches, with each soloist allowed to redefine the tempo at will. Although this approach sometimes creates a feeling of meandering self-indulgence, it also generates thoughtful dialogues, crunchy little grooves and moments of great emotive power.

PHIL KELLY & THE SW SANTA ANA WINDS

My Museum (Origin)



Like their meteorological namesake, this California counterpart to Phil Kelly's Seattle-based big band is breezy, warm, and unmistak-