

Alon Nechuhstan - Venture Bound (2014)

Donny McCaslin (Saxophone) Born August 11, 1966, McCaslin grew up in Santa Cruz, CA; inspired by his father, a pianist and vibraphonist, the youngster started playing tenor saxophone at 12, and quickly progressed, touring Europe and participating in the prestigious Monterey Jazz Festival's California All-Star band while in high school. After attending the Berklee College of Music in Boston, he joined Berklee professor Gary Burton's quintet, with whom he toured for four years. McCaslin moved to New York, in 1991, working with bassist Eddie Gomez and then joining the group Steps Ahead, with whom he made the 1995 disc *Vibe* (NYC Records). But he really began to turn heads with his solo work in larger ensembles – first Ken Schaphorst's big band, and subsequently the acclaimed Maria Schneider Orchestra, where his performance on the album *Concert In The Garden* received a Grammy nomination for "Best Jazz Instrumental Solo" in 2004. So much for McCaslin's "traditional" credentials, which provide the anchor for his much-admired work in more adventurous realms. Chief among these is the pianoless quartet Lan Xang (which evolved from an experimental partnership with fellow New York saxist David Binney) and the quintet led by the widely lionized trumpeter Dave Douglas, who added McCaslin to his band in 2005. Reviewing the Douglas Quintet in *Jazz Times*, Josef Woodard wrote of McCaslin: "He's a versatile player who moves easily between inside and outside musical zones [T]here's a fluidity and grace to his playing even when he's pushing at envelopes."

Thanks to the high profile of the Dave Douglas Quintet, McCaslin in the last two years has achieved wider praise for the incisive twists and purposeful turns of his emotionally charged solos. But those qualities – along with his sometimes startling virtuosity, and his distinctive voice as a composer – had actually been on display for much of the previous decade, during which McCaslin proved himself a valued sideman on recordings by Danilo Perez, Luciana Souza, and performances with Tom Harrell, Brian Blade, John Pattitucci, The Mingus Band, and Pat Metheny.



WWW.Donnymccaslin.com

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John Ellis (Saxophone) Upon John's graduation in '99, he was immediately asked to return to New Orleans for a year to teach saxophone at Loyola University while Tony Dagradi was away on sabbatical. He quickly reintegrated himself into the scene in New Orleans, playing and recording albums with the bands of both Jason Marsalis and Roland Guerin. Not wanting to stray too long from New York however, John returned shortly after the school year ended, and before the year was out he had begun playing and traveling with 8-string guitar wizard Charlie Hunter and with R&B sensation Bilal Oliver. He also released his next album, "Roots, Branches, and Leaves", which explores the source of John's musical identity through arrangements of folk songs sung to him in his childhood. It features Nicholas Payton, Jason Marsalis, Roland Guerin, Aaron Goldberg, and Bilal, and it was released on the Spanish label Fresh Sound / New Talent

From December of 1999 to May of 2006, John traveled and recorded with several incarnations of Charlie Hunter's groups, appearing on four of Charlie's albums, "Songs From The Analog Playground", "Right Now Move", "Friends Seen And Unseen", and "Copperopolis". Through Charlie's tours and recordings John had the chance to work with a wide variety of musicians including Norah Jones, Mos Def, Theryl DeClouet, Kurt Elling, Steven Chopek, Chris Lovejoy, Jans Ingber, Dean Bowman, Curtis Fowlkes, Johnny Vidakovich, Terreon Gully, Gregoire Maret, Alan Ferber, Ron Miles, Josh Roseman, Sam Newsome, and Derrek Phillips. By the end of his time with Charlie, John was playing tenor saxophone, melodica, bass clarinet, and Wurlitzer in the band.



www.johnaxsonellis.com

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Philadelphia native and **trumpeter Duane Eubanks** has performed everywhere from the Hollywood Bowl to Birdland to the Kennedy Center, in addition to touring throughout Europe and Japan. He has also been featured in “Jazz Times” and “All About Jazz” and was a recipient of two Grammy Awards for “Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album,” for his work in the Dave Holland Big Band albums, “What Goes Around” in 2002 and “Overtime” in 2005.

The years of study and continual encouragement from Robin and Kevin motivated Duane, when he was in his early 20's, to move to New York with his good friend and musical partner, pianist Orrin Evans. Duane's first gig in Europe followed, when he was 22, with the Illinois Jacquet Big Band. He has since performed in a number of other big bands as well, including the Dave Holland Big Band, Frank Foster Loud Minority Big Band, Roy Hargrove Big Band, Oliver Lake Big Band, Next Legacy Orchestra, Jason Lindner Big Band, and Lionel Hampton Big Band.

Duane has also worked with saxophonists Bootsie Barnes, Benny Golson, James Moody, Bobby Watson, Tim Warfield Jr., Jeff King, J.D Allen, Bill McHenry and Antonio Hart; drummers Mickey Rocker and Louis Hayes; trumpeters Donald Byrd, Tom Harrell, Randy Brecker, Terrell Stafford, and Nicholas Payton; bassists Eric Revis and Avery Sharpe; pianists Mulgrew Miller and John Hicks, and trombonist Curtis Fuller, among others. Duane takes pride in working in various genres of music. This has given him the opportunity to work, record, and/or tour with The Temptations, Alicia Keys, Talib Kweli, Mos Def, Wu Tang Clan, Freedom Williams, and Kirk Franklin, among others. This will also be reflected in his newest album, featuring himself on trumpet, as well as Abraham Burton on tenor saxophone, Eric McPherson on drums, and Dezron Douglas on bass.

Duane will also be featured on his brother Kevin's next album, along with his brother Robin. He is currently touring with Dave Holland's two-time Grammy Award-winning big band and pianist Mulgrew Miller's band, Wingspan. Duane is also presently performing with Captain Black Big Band, led by pianist Orrin Evans, and a quartet led by drummer Jeff Williams. In addition to performing, Duane also teaches private lessons at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music. He has also taught trumpet lessons at the highly-respected Oberlin College in Ohio.



<http://duaneeubanks.weebly.com>

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Bassist Chris Lightcap has worked with Marc Ribot, Regina Carter, Craig Taborn, Glen Hansard, Mark Turner, John Medeski, Tomasz Stanko, Chris Potter, Paul Motian, John Scofield, Dave Liebman, Paquito D’Rivera, Joe Morris, Sheila Jordan, James Carter, Butch Morris, Ben Monder and many other artists. His playing is featured on over 50 albums and as a bandleader/composer. Lightcap eventually became busy performing and recording throughout the city’s diverse musical environment. He also met many musicians who would become longtime creative collaborators. Meanwhile he continued his writing, contributing music to various cooperative bands and side projects. In 1998 he assembled his own group, a quartet featuring Gerald Cleaver on drums and Tony Malaby and Bill McHenry on tenor saxophones. Lightcap’s two recordings with this group, “Lay-Up” (2000) and “Bigmouth” (2003) were released on Fresh Sound Records. Both CDs were on CMJ’s top 10 radio chart and received critical acclaim in the New York Times, Jazztimes, Cadence, the Village Voice, and All About Jazz.

As a both an upright and electric bassist Lightcap has worked with a wide array of material and musicians. He has toured and played major festivals with such bandleaders as Mark Turner, Tomasz Stanko, Ravi Coltrane, Joe Morris, Matt Wilson, Ben Monder, Terrel Stafford, and Rob Brown. He performed weekly with the Cecil Taylor Big Band in 1995 and was invited to perform in a trio with Archie Shepp and Sunny Murray in Paris the following year. For the next two years he worked regularly throughout New York City in a trio led by saxophonist George Garzone. In 2000 Chris joined the ensemble of Regina Carter. He subsequently performed and recorded extensively with Carter throughout four continents and has been featured alongside the rest of her group with the Boston, Atlanta and Minnesota Symphonies. He has also worked with singer-songwriters like Glen Hansard and Ruper Orodorkia, country/rock artist Smokey Hormel and the Brazilian surf guitarist Joao Erbetta.



www.chrislightcap.com

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Drummer Adam Cruz has been a member of pianist Danilo Perez's trio, which also features bassist Ben Street. But, in a business known for brief, constantly changing partnerships, he has chosen to develop and maintain long-standing working relationships such as those with pianists Perez and Simon, saxophonists David Sanchez and Steve Wilson, and the Mingus Big Band. And even before that, Cruz had established his name working with artists such as trumpeters Charlie Sepúlveda and Tom Harrell, saxophonists Chris Potter, Pharaoh Sanders, and Paquito D'Rivera, guitarist Charlie Hunter and, perhaps most notably, touring and recording with pianist Chick Corea.

Born in New York City, Cruz is the son of Ray Cruz, a *timbalero* who played with Mongo Santamaría, Richie Ray and Bobby Cruz. "I used to sit in on his gigs when I was a little boy. Music is second nature to me," reminisces Cruz.

Cruz played drums throughout his youth and because he was exposed early on to jazz, Latin music and other styles, he says he never thought about styles or what kind of music he was playing. He studied at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University from 1988 to 1990. There he studied piano with Kenny Barron ("He taught me my first piano voicings," says Cruz) and met saxophonist David Sanchez, who was already making a name for himself on the scene. David proved to be a key supporter for Cruz's career. He then transferred to Manhattan's New School, studying with teachers such as Kenny Washington, Joe Chambers, Louis Nash, Portinho, Maria Schneider and Victor Lewis (who recommended Cruz for the Mingus Big Band job). His time at the school was "a challenge," says Cruz, as his career was taking off, while he was getting calls from Paquito D'Rivera, Charlie Sepulveda, the late pianist Hilton Ruiz. Still, Cruz graduated, receiving his BFA in 1993.



www.adamcruz.net

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Brazilian percussionist Rogério Boccato plays in projects led by some of today's leading jazz players, among them Danilo Perez, John Patitucci, Edward Simon, David Binney, Ben Allison, Paul Bollenback, Jon Gordon, and Mike Holober. He has also collaborated with top-ranking Brazilian artists, such as Toninho Horta, Dori Caymmi, Moacir Santos, and Vinicius Cantuária.

He is featured on two Grammy-nominated albums: Kenny Garrett's "[Beyond The Wall](#)" and John Patitucci's release "[Remembrance](#)", alongside Joe Lovano and Brian Blade.

As a longtime member of the "Orquestra Jazz Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo", Brazilian percussionist Rogério Boccato has played with Antonio Carlos Jobim, Hermeto Pascoal, Milton Nascimento, Egberto Gismonti, João Bosco, Joe Zawinul, among many others.

Rogério Boccato has been a faculty member of the Percussion department of [The Hartt School](#) (University of Hartford) teaching Brazilian Percussion and Ritmica, and recently joined the faculty of the [Manhattan School of Music](#) and [Montclair State University](#).

He has been presenting clinics on Brazilian music, focusing on traditional Brazilian rhythms and styles applied to the drum set and to Jazz combo, which have been enthusiastically received at universities around the United States, Mexico and Portugal.



www.rogerioboccato.com

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Moroccan musician Brahim Fribgane, oud player currently lives in New York City.

Brahim has had the privilege of performing with such amazing artists as Dr. L. Subramaniam, Leni Stern, Vishal Vaid, Club d'Elf, Sami Yusuf, Hassan Hakmoun, Will Calhoun, Adam Rudolph, Zakir Hussein, Giovanni Hidalgo, Malika Zarra, Hamid Drake, Selva Ganesh, Steve Gorn, Larry Coryell, Reggie Workman, Hubert Laws, Corey Segal, Adam Deitch, Pete Seeger, Amit Chatterjee, Medeski Martin & Wood, to name a few.

Some of the recent venues at which he has performed include the 2010 World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar, Senegal, Joe's Pub and BAM Cafe.

He has recorded with Harry Belafonte, Paula Cole, Club d'Elf, Jamsheid Sharifi, Leni Stern, DJ Logic, Malika Zarra, Morphine, among other talented artists. See [discography](#) for complete list.



www.brahimfribgane.com

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Alon Nechushtan's (pianist & Composer) music adventures has brought him to far corners such as the Yokohama Festival Japan with his contemporary compositions, The [Sao-Paolo Brazil Jewish Music Festival](#) with his Quintet [Talat](#), Toronto and Montreal's Rex Hotel with his [Jazz Trio](#) and The [Tel Aviv](#) New Music Biennale with his Compositions for Large Ensemble. Resident of New York City, Alon has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Central Park Summer Stage, The [Blue Note](#) Jazz Club and [Joe's Pub](#) frequently with his projects as a band leader of various groups or as an in demand sideman. All About Jazz magazine called him a fantastic [pianist-composer](#) with abundant chemistry and boundless eclecticism.



” A talent to watch, with a surfeit of ideas, an unbridled spirit and bold, two-fisted sense of Architecture”

(Down Beat magazine 2011)

www.musicalon.com