



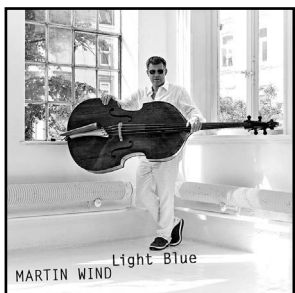
**Spaceships Over Africa**  
Ra Kalam Bob Moses/Bukky Leo (Ra-Kalam)  
by John Pietaro

A thicket of clouds ominously close out the sky and burst in a barrage of rolling thunder on “Cosmic Soul Spirits”, opening *Spaceships Over Africa*. Drummer Bob Moses’ trademark triple-time, varied sticking phrases around an expansive drumkit are on full display. Ever so slowly, the piece works its way to midtempo jazz, concurrently singing praise and crying out of loneliness. The piece and so much of what comprises the rest of this album, speaks to the career of Ra Kalam Bob Moses. His early work with Rahsaan Roland Kirk (when Moses was still in high school) was followed by gigs with Larry Coryell, Gary Burton, Jack DeJohnette and Dave Liebman at the dawn of fusion. Moses became a band leader in the ‘70s and embarked on a visceral study of music and spirituality that has served him well. He has released some historic works in these decades and surely this latest on his own label, recorded six years ago this month, is among them.

Leo Olubukola Afolabi, better known as Bukky Leo, is an AfroBeat tenor saxophonist of note and the full breadth of his artistry is made clear from track one. He seems to call on the spirit of John Coltrane, most evident in the first track as well as the following “How Light Dances”. Leo’s lilting, broad instrumental voice, however, moves into a decidedly Ayler-esque place as the album progresses, with a reed sounding as indelible as sand-laden beech wood. This Janus-like alternation is most befitting as the music shifts around him. The collaborative nature of this pairing is overt; each has a page of liner notes to personalize the relationship.

The album contains nine selections as intriguing as they are brief and on three tracks guests add new layers to this duo, which begins where the Coltrane/Rashied Ali pairing left off. Bassist Don Pate, a frequent Moses collaborator, is present on two tracks and adds a sonic woodiness quite reminiscent of the late Johnny Dyani. His lines would have been welcome throughout the disc. Vivek Patel’s trumpet opens and closes the album but is most effectively heard on “Joyous Gathering”, the centerpiece, which also includes alto saxophonist Kritavi Jim Warshauer. The full quintet, only present here, is most compelling and Moses would be robbing listeners of a brilliant band if he doesn’t record a full album of this joyful noise.

For more information, visit [nativepulse.com/Ra-KalamRecords.html](http://nativepulse.com/Ra-KalamRecords.html)



**Light Blue**  
Martin Wind (Laika)  
by Ken Dryden

Bassist Martin Wind has long been in demand as a sideman, having made many recordings with artists like Bill Mays, Don Friedman, Dena DeRose and others. The German native has also been the leader or co-leader

of over 20 albums for various European labels. This German release, recorded in the U.S., features an outstanding international cast from the U.S. (pianist Bill Cunliffe, pianist/organ player Gary Versace, reed player Scott Robinson and drummer Matt Wilson), Canada (trumpeter Ingrid Jensen), Israel (clarinetist Anat Cohen) and Brazil (drummer Duduka Da Fonseca and vocalist Maucha Adnet), interpreting ten of Wind’s originals. Although Wind has plenty of bass chops to share, his primary focus is on his musicians, though he does take the spotlight from time to time.

Organ adds to the funky atmosphere of “While I’m Still Here” (a very transparent reworking of the standard “Sweet Georgia Brown”), also featuring Wind and Robinson’s surprisingly soulful tenor saxophone. The upbeat “Ten Minute Song” (literally written in that time frame) showcases Robinson on the infrequently heard bass saxophone, with inspired soloing from Versace (piano), Jensen and Cohen. “February” is a gorgeous melancholy ballad with richly textured interplay, featuring fiery trumpet.

For the second half of the CD, Da Fonseca and Cunliffe take over on drums and piano. The heartfelt tribute “A Genius and a Saint” is a waltz saluting the late bassist Bob Bowen, utilizing both Cohen and Robinson on clarinet in a call-and-response pattern but with overlapping lines, lush piano adding the perfect seasoning. “Seven Steps to Rio” is an engaging samba adding Adnet, Da Fonseca nearly stealing the show with his drum break. Wind switches to playing arco bass for the haunting ballad “Sad Story”; Adnet composed its Portuguese lyric, which beautifully conveys the song’s sense of loss, with Cohen’s expressive clarinet serving as a bridge before the vocalist returns with Lice Cecato’s English lyric. It’s hard not to become caught up in Wind’s infectious bossa nova “De Norte A Sul”, highlighted by sensuous vocals and captivating piano.

For more information, visit [laika-records.com](http://laika-records.com). This project is at Jazz at Kitano Mar. 30th-31st. See Calendar.



**Spree Coast Jazz (Berlin 1963)**  
Helmut Brandt Orchestra (Sonorama)  
by Andrey Henkin

On Mar. 27th, 1963, the Academic Senate of Freie Universität Berlin unanimously passed a resolution naming then-U.S. President John F. Kennedy an honorary member of the university and inviting him to speak on his forthcoming trip, during which he would give his famed “Ich bin ein Berliner” speech, a defiant moment in the Cold War. Some seven kilometers north, German baritone saxophonist and bandleader Helmut Brandt, active from the mid ‘50s until his death in 2001, was making his own international statement, recording a jazz orchestra featuring American players. Over 50 years later, that music is finally heard on this release.

Those Americans were West Coast alto saxophonist star Herb Geller, bebop trumpeter Benny Bailey and Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland Big Band trombone stalwart Nat Peck, joining members of the RIAS and SFB radio orchestras in Harry Samp and Ack van Rooyen (trumpets), Stefan Von Dobrzynski (tenor saxophone and flute), Siegfried Schmidt (valve trombone), Günter Meier (piano), Hajo Lange (bass) and Heinz Niemeyer (drums); a variation of this band would record Oliver Nelson’s *Berlin Dialogue For Orchestra* in 1971.

Brandt has a few solo spots during the hour-long set but is more prominent for his composing. 10 of the 13 tracks are his pieces (the others are Vincent Youmans’ “Tea for Two” and a pair by Dutch film composer Jerry van Rooyen, brother to Ack), including the six-part, 26-minute “Ferrien Suite”. If your CD wasn’t labeled, the music could easily be mistaken for hip American jazz of the period, sharing much with the music of the aforementioned Nelson and executed with the precision expected from German radio band players. The suite, however, distinguishes its composer and his band with movements of sprightly shuffle and featured flute.

For more information, visit [sonorama.de](http://sonorama.de)

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