

live/REVIEWS

more jazz than
you'll ever hear



Esperanza Spalding



Branford Marsalis



GoGo Penguin



Courtney Pine and Samuel Dubois

Photos: Roger Thomas (main pics), DSY Media (festival site)

Love Supreme Festival

Glynde, East Sussex

An all-jazz residential UK festival – who'd have predicted it? Spread over an idyllic estate in rural East Sussex, Love Supreme's USP was reflecting the music's broad church and it certainly delivered on that score with barely a whiff of smooth jazz. Jazz's liberation from club and concert hall also seemed to liberate audiences; GoGo Penguin, Matthew Lee, Portico Quartet and Snarky Puppy drew large, enthusiastic crowds that were as youthful as the artists. Among the

unexpected gems on the smaller stages, Outlanders impressed with their burning Afro-fusion, One Hat Trio featured some sublime post-Parker alto rhapsodising from Alan Barnes, and Paul Richards beautifully updated the Laurindo Almeida nylon-string Brazilian guitar style. The Main Stage challenged artists and sound crew alike; Gregory Porter's beautiful baritone got over but his band sounded brittle despite Herculean soloing from Yosuke Sato (echoes of Gonsalves at Newport?). Soweto Kinch charmed with his

adventurous spirit while Bryan Ferry's appearance was either the bravest or one of the most baffling career reinventions by a major 'pop' artist in recent memory. Esperanza Spalding's complex, sometimes convoluted fusion of neo-soul, jazz and funk didn't quite cut through but, in the Big Top, Courtney Pine played perfect festival music to a feverish crowd, drawing on calypso and soca and making a sound strangely reminiscent of Ornette's Prime Time with its chattering rhythm guitars and tropical vibes. Marcus

Miller mixed funk, go-go, P-funk and breakneck bebop to dazzling effect while Branford Marsalis and Terence Blanchard delivered masterclasses in rhythmic complexity and tension/release, the best soloists of the festival. Melody Gardot also struck gold with her nuanced vocal phrasing and impressionistic piano playing. But the event's crowning achievement was positioning jazz as a young, vibrant music – if just a few of the nippies running around get into the music and pass it on, the future's bright. **Matt Phillips**

Glasgow Jazz Festival, **Scotland**

Glasgow Jazz Festival is a sprint these days compared to the stamina-sapping ten-day run of yore. Nonetheless, in its 27th year and despite facing the kind of funding problems that are by no means its own preserve, the festival pulled out a good proportion of the sort of gigs that will surely still be talked about when next year's event – and maybe the one after – comes around.

A wide ranging programme saw the popular – including a ridiculously youthful Georgie Fame, the returning local, singer Carol Kidd, and the rabble rousing Blind Boys of Alabama – share the page, if not the

stage, with experimentalists from the Glasgow Improvisers Orchestra pool and jazz from the classic era (step forward the Nova Scotia Jazz Band) preceding the young guns of Manchester in the shape of trumpeter Matthew Halsall's impressionistic sextet and motoring minimalists GoGo Penguin.

Venezuelan pianist Leo Blanco did his still-growing reputation the power of good with an enthralling solo set. Alto saxophonist Laura Macdonald led a superb quartet through melodic original compositions with a strong pulse and considerable bite, and Glasgow-based Paul Harrison performed the unenviable task of replacing Stan Tracey on the piano stool with unsurprising assurance

alongside Bobby Wellins' instantly recognisable tenor.

In the absence also of Snarky Puppy, Chris Dave's Drumhedz provided the groove that made you move, as well as ensemble passages of spectacular togetherness and a blend of the elemental and the super-sophisticated, potent soprano and tenor sax, big boned bass lines and drumming that spoke of bionic wrists and titanium ankles. **Rob Adams**

Festival D'essaouira, **Gnaoua, Musique Du Monde**

For too long the fusion at the Gnawa Festival in Essaouira, Morocco has been washed out and/or overpowered by the syrupy

keyboards of assorted French jazzers. Not any more: a change of guard at this 16th edition saw the Gnawa maalems – masters of the guimbi bass-lute – matched with artists whose musicality both complimented and challenged that of their hosts'. Acclaimed Cuban jazz pianist Omar Sosa played a storming gig in Essaouira with the late conguero Miguel 'Anga' Diaz; this time around, paired with the Zeus-like Mahmoud Gania, Sosa surpassed himself. Dressed in trademark flowing white tunic, with an urban sound informed by his Afro-Cuban roots and honed by the sharpest jazz chops this side of Camaguey, Sosa met Gania at a musical crossroads laid out by mutual ancestors and together