

# Mehldau's new album tracks jazz's evolution

'Anything Goes' features covers of Thelonious Monk and nine other artists with unique takes on jazz

By Carl Sundberg  
Pulse Columnist

When an art form begins to mimic itself and replicate patterns, it is a sure sign that the form is on its way out.

To continue to exist, it must expand, grow and branch out. It must evolve. This is especially true for music, and even more so for jazz.

One clever way to show the evolution of jazz is by taking songs written in the past and rehashing them, putting them into a new context, to show that growth is taking place.

Pianist Brad Mehldau is doing just that on his latest album, "Anything Goes."

The ten tracks on "Anything Goes" are all covers, ranging from Cole Porter and Thelonious Monk songs to those of Paul Simon and Radiohead. The title of the album comes from the Cole Porter song, describing the sound and feel of the whole album, with its broad range of songs, perfectly.

Credit must also be given to Larry Grenadier on bass and Jorge Rossy on drums, who round out the trio on the album. These three musicians are truly talented and help each other with subtle and almost awkward engagements. Their interplay is like a catch-up conversation between a group of longtime friends — very cheerful but also relaxed. There is no need to really impress each other, but the time spent is obviously joyous.

The opening track, "Get Happy," is just under ten minutes long and holds your attention every minute with its bizarre timing and polyrhythms bouncing and rolling in and out of each other. Here is where Rossy really flashes his skills

behind the drums, performing tricks and stunts that are quite spectacular. There is also the feeling of comical delight behind the notes, like Mehldau is laughing through his piano.

Another track that has this joyous, almost comical feel to it is the rare Thelonious Monk track, "Skippy." The trio moves up and down the rather traditional sounding jazz piece with a modern sophistication that harkens to the future of the genre, saying "See, it is still alive!"

The ballad "I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face," from Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's classic "My Fair Lady," is more heartbreaking and beautiful than the original ever was. The gentle cascading of Mehldau's phrasing gives the song a heightened emotional tug that must be heard to be understood.

As for the renditions of the pop/rock songs by Paul Simon and Radiohead, Mehldau and his trio interpret them with class, intelligence



Courtesy

The Brad Mehldau Trio will play at The Shedd Concert Hall April 13.

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Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Tiffany, who prefers to go by one name, is a dancer for John Henry's Sunday-night burlesque show, which also features comedy and music acts.

## John Henry's weekend burlesque allows patron participation, nudity

The bar's Sunday burlesque show resembles that of a '30s club and has a variety of acts

By Ryan Nyburg  
Senior Pulse Reporter

Every Sunday night at 10 p.m., John Henry's changes from a downtown bar into something resembling a 1930s jazz club. The bar and video poker machines

are bathed in red light and the employees wear vintage formal attire. Drink orders and the clicking of pool balls overlap with the jazz and 1950s rock coming over the speakers. On a small stage in the front, a band begins to warm up.

The stage is set for John Henry's Broadway Revue. Featuring a wide range of performances, garish costumes and audience participation activities, the show has become a popular late-night event in Eugene, drawing 80 to 100 customers a week,

according to the management.

"There's nothing like it in Eugene," bar manager Mark Martin said. "It's really one of a kind here. You go to the big cities and you'll see a lot of good shows like this there. But not in Eugene."

One of the attractions, according to Martin, is that the audience can join in the show. Anyone who has an idea for an act can suggest it and possibly perform on stage.

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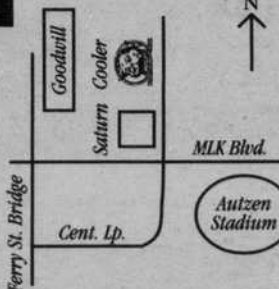
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