

Jazzwise

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KEYS TO
THE HIGHWAY

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MEHLDAU**

OPENS UP

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THE LATE
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**MEGA
FESTIVAL
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THE UK'S
BIGGEST
SELLING
JAZZ
MAGAZINE





DERBY JAZZ LAUNCH BIENNALE WITH COURTNEY PINE

Derby Jazz, who regularly present jazz events in and around the city and commission new music, are holding the first ever Derby Jazz Biennale from 29-30 May. Titled *Every Second*, which refers to the event taking place every second year as well as the music constantly reinventing itself, the Biennale is organized by Geoff Wright as an ongoing event and will feature performances, exhibitions and workshops taking place over the weekend at Derby's Assembly Rooms and QUAD venue, located in the city centre. Backed by funding from the East Midlands Development Agency, the strong line-up of UK talent includes Courtney Pine, Partisans, Curios, Polar Bear, Tony Kofi Trio with Corey Mwamba, Dave O'Higgins/Chico Chargas, a jazz-jive party Pete Long's All-Star Goodmen Orchestra and Gene Krupa Uptown Orchestra and a new commission from pianist John Bailey. **For more information go to www.derby-jazz.co.uk**



JULIAN JOSEPH PREPARES FOR PREMIERE OF NEW JAZZ OPERA

Following on from his groundbreaking jazz opera *Bridgetower* pianist Julian Joseph, with librettist Mike Phillips, are set to unveil their latest collaboration, an opera set in the world of American baseball.

Shadowball tells the compelling story of the struggles, triumphs and challenges facing black athletes in the USA during the 60 years they were excluded from major league baseball while also tracking the influence and development of black jazz music at the time.

Commissioned by the award-winning Hackney Music Development Trust *Shadowball* has already been awarded the prestigious 'Inspire Mark' by the Olympic Games organising committee for outstanding contribution to Games legacy and also won the support of Major League Baseball International. An extensive educational programme throughout 2010 leading up to the 2012 Olympics will introduce hundreds of young people in over 20 schools to the sport of baseball and to the music. The premiere of the jazz opera and first performances will take place on 29 and 30 June at London's Mermaid Theatre.

Leading Pianists To Feature In Steinway Festival at Pizza Express Jazz Club

Last year to mark the arrival of a new Steinway piano at the Pizza Express Jazz Club the Dean Street club put on a well-received piano festival which gave a range of top class pianists a chance to put the new piano through its paces.

The festival proved such a success that the club is again mounting a piano festival in April with a strong array of UK and international piano talent. Kicking off on Thursday 15 April in a double show the festival opens with leading UK pianist Julian Joseph and US piano star Joey Calderazzo. The following night's early show's first set features two of the UK's brightest new talents Tom Cawley and Kit Downes who dazzled last year with Troyka and his own piano trio. The second set features UK piano legend John Taylor (*below*) plus Richard Fairhurst. The late show features two musicians equally adept on piano and vocals, Ian Shaw and Liane Carroll. On Saturday 17 April there's a lunchtime show with Korean piano star Younee joined by Alex Hutton for the first set with the second set featuring Kate Williams and Robin Aspland and in the evening it's the turn of Gwilym Simcock and US pianist Aaron Goldberg in the early show with a second set provided by Robert Mitchell and Kaidi Tatham. The late show features Joe Stilgoe and Anthony Strong. The festival comes to a close on Sunday 18 April with a lunchtime show featuring Serbian pianist Bojan Z and French star Baptiste Trotignan and climaxes with French star Yaron Herman and the UK's Gary Husband. **To book go to www.pizzaexpresslive.co.uk**



F-IRE FESTIVAL AT THE PHEASANTRY

The F-IRE Collective launch a week long festival of new groups in May at The Pheasantry in Kings Road, Chelsea: a legendary late-1960s underground music venue that is now owned by Pizza Express who reintroduced live music late last year. The F-IRE Collective have played a major role in incubating and nourishing forward looking new bands over the last decade, inspiring other collectives such as Loop and LIMA. The F-IRE Festival launches with two nights at Pizza Express Jazz Club, Dean Street Soho on 22 May with Partisans and Kit Downes (*above*) solo playing the early show and Partisans plus Kairos 4Tet (*below*) playing the late show before the week kicks off at The Pheasantry with an exciting programme of up and coming new names that are sure to break through in the coming year. Dates are: Sam Crowder Group plus Talking Sages (23 May); Keyboard Symposium: George Fogel and friends (24 May); Fred Thomas & Jiri Slavik plus Tassos Spiliotopoulos Trio (25 May); Fred Thomas & Jiri Slavik plus Round Trip (26 May); Jonathon Bratoeff Quartet plus Porpoise Corpus (27 May); Will Collier Septet plus John Turville Trio (28 May); Portrait Bellvue plus Shadow Writing (29 May) **Tickets are available from [Pizza Express bookings line on 0845 602 7017](http://www.pizzaexpressbookings.com).**



STEVE SMITH: VITAL INFORMATION DATES AND NEW INDO-JAZZ TRIO

Drummer Steve Smith brings his Vital Information group into Ronnie Scott's club for two nights from 25-26 May as part of a European tour. Featuring keyboardist Tom Coster, guitarist Vinny Valentino and bassist Baron Browne, Vital Information made their debut for Columbia in 1983 and have gone on to record eleven subsequent albums, the most recent *Vitalization* which came out in 2007. Known for their hard-hitting improvisation recent years have seen Smith's interest in South Indian Carnatic music creeping into the band's repertoire and this interest is extended with the launch of his new Indo-jazz group, the Raga Bop Trio. Alongside Smith on drums and Konnakol, the vocal interpretations of Southern Indian rhythms, will be saxophonist George Brooks who's played with a number of Indian fusion groups including Bombay Jazz with Larry Coryell, and guitarist Prasanna whose unique style combines South Indian Carnatic music with jazz, rock and funk. Raga Bop Trio have their debut album released by the Abstract Logix label in June.



Neil Cowley Trio Tour New Album Radio Silence

The Neil Cowley Trio, one of the breakthrough British jazz groups of the last five years, embarks on a major tour next month as new album *Radio Silence* is released. The tour begins in Leeds and winds its way round the country via club dates at Band on the Wall in Manchester and Ronnie Scott's in London before finishing in Birmingham. Cowley is joined again by Richard Sadler on bass and Evan Jenkins on drums. The tour begins at The Venue, Leeds on 5 May followed by Band on the Wall, Manchester (6), Philharmonic, Liverpool (7), Turner Sims, Southampton (8), The Old Market, Brighton (12), Colston Hall, Bristol (13), the Junction, Cambridge (16), the Stables, Milton Keynes (18), the Corn Exchange, Newbury (19), Ronnie Scott's (31 May and 1 June), Norwich Arts Centre (3 June), Royal and Derngate, Northampton (4 June) and CBSO Centre, Birmingham (5 June).