

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET



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MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

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MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

USA - Canada / Press Quotes

"In the course of recording three albums with its current lineup, the Parisian powerhouse of brothers François and Louis Moutin's Reunion Quartet has quickly established itself as one of the most creative new bands of the decade."

Jennifer Odell-Downbeat-November 2010

"Over a few short years and a handful of albums, the Moutin Reunion Quartet have established themselves as one of the best working bands in Jazz history."

Michael G. Nastos-All Music Guide-April 2010

"The vibrant Moutin Reunion Quartet has delivered fiery album after fiery album since its 2002 debuts and continues on an upward trajectory"

John Kelmann-All About Jazz-March 2010

"Francois Moutin is one of the giants of Jazz European Division."

Michael J. West-Washington City Paper-April 2010

"Louis Moutin, with his hunchback drumming style and limitless chops, is a spectacular rhythm machine and should be heralded as the second coming of Elvin Jones."

Michael G. Nastos-All Music Guide-April 2010

"Perhaps most striking and innovative about this group are the roles of the brothers..."

Carolyn Heneghan-Where Y'at- May 2010

Soul Dancers successfully documents the Moutin Reunion Quartet's strong and sometimes edgy music, driven by the double-barreled fraternal engine at its core. In performance (like most good bands), the Moutins vibrate at a different frequency altogether, promising some real firework when they appear this weekend.

Neil Tesser-Chicago Examiner-April 2010

"Together the CD and DVD of Sharp Turns find the Moutin Reunion Quartet at the top of its game, a group where everyone stands out without ever sacrificing its all-important group sound".

John Kelmann-All About Jazz

"The Moutin Reunion Quartet has so much to offer, and is definitely worth seeing live."

George Harris-All About Jazz LA

"François and Louis Moutin play with infinite nuance in subtle modern jazz collective in this new Sharp Turns CD and accompanying DVD (...) a message of touch, a message of love."

Dick Crockett – Bop n' Dicks

"this powerful group should always be on everyone's priority list when they are in town"

Gilles Laheurte – JazzImprov

"the constant feeling of musical togetherness, of players deeply in touch with each others, brought everything vividly to life (...) at 44, they have transformed their brotherly into an extraordinary and admirable creative partnership".

Don Heckmann - LA Times.

"It would be hard to find two musicians more in sync than the twins"

Ted Panken – Downbeat

“The intensely powerful quartet played with the kind of total engagement that grabbed the audience from the first note (...) this will undoubtedly be one of those shows that everybody’s raving about long after the festival has ended”

John Kelman – AAJ

“Rarely have I heard and seen a group whose performance was so absolutely exhilarating as the latest incarnation of the Moutin Reunion Quartet”

Ed Trefzger – Jazzweek

“The group consistently shows instrumental confidence (François’ bass prowess is a marvel in itself) and a unified approach rare even among groups with all its members residing in the same postal code...”

Ashley Kahn – Jazz Times

“Many things—besides the exciting, inventive way they combine straightahead and a sort of “neo-fusion” jazz — make the Moutin Reunion Quartet a distinctive ensemble (...) Their music is high-energy, free-wheeling, yet also lyrical, and terrifically interactive”.

Bob Protzman – Erie Times News

CD REVIEWS

SOUL DANCERS



DOWBEAT

Review "Soul Dancers" – Jennifer Odell

ALL MUSIC GUIDE

Review "Soul Dancers" – Michael Nastos

ALL ABOUT JAZZ NY

Review "Soul Dancers" – John Kelman

CHICAGO EXAMINER

Review "Soul Dancers" – Neil Tesser

Moutin Reunion Quartet *Soul Dancers*

PLUS LOIN MUSIC 4525

★★★★½

In the course of recording three albums with its current lineup, the Parisian powerhouse of brothers Francois and Louis Moutin's Reunion Quartet has quickly established itself as

one of the most creative new bands of the decade. Pairing a profoundly virtuosic rhythm section with a series of lyrical compositions that highlight the brothers' seeming fascinations with neo-bop and Weather Report-era fusion, the quartet's latest effort only advances its status.

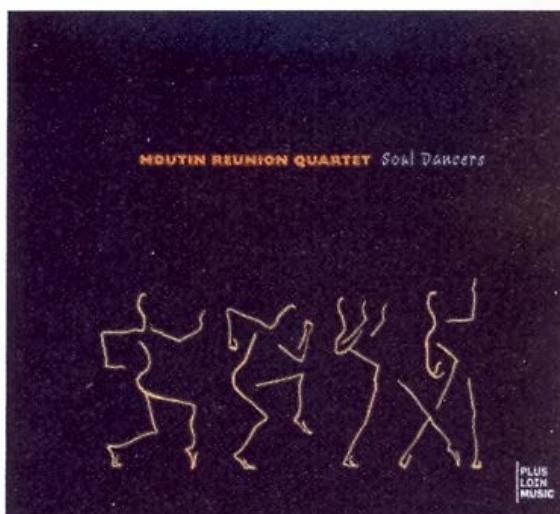
Deft time-shifts and the thoughtful admiration of musical heroes mark more than a few of the album's nine, electric keyboard-heavy tracks. "Blessed And Cursed" pays homage to Jaco Pastorius with enigmatic keyboard waves of atmosphere setting the stage for a lone, methodically punctuated cymbal crash. As the first bass strains give way to Rick Margitza's thoughtful, almost brooding tenor performance, the mood shifts, as if to recall one of Pastorius' infamous swings from low to high and back. Next, "Mr. N.R.," another tribute tune, recognizes the contributions of spoken word artist Norman Riley. And the most unique track on the album comes in the form of a bass-and-drums medley of Thelonious Monk tunes, perfect for illustrating the legend's percussive approach to melody.

—Jennifer Odell

Soul Dancers: Sold Answers; Depths Light; Momentum; Monk's Medley; Mr. N.R.; Blessed And Cursed; Clinton Parkview; Forgotten Feelings; Quiet Force. (49:05)

Personnel: Francois Moutin, bass; Louis Moutin, drums; Pierre de Bethmann, piano, keyboards, vocals; Rick Margitza, tenor saxophone.

Ordering info: plusloin.net



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Soul Dancers

Moutin Reunion Quartet



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Artist

[Moutin Reunion Quartet](#)

Album

Soul Dancers

Rating

★★★★☆

Recording Date

Sep 27, 2009-Sep 30, 2009

Label

Plus Loin Music

Time

48:59

Genre

Jazz

AMG Album ID

R 1783459

Review

by Michael G. Nastos

Over a few short years and a handful of albums, the *Moutin Reunion Quartet* have established themselves as one of the best working bands in jazz history. Their repertoire is dotted with memorable compositions played powerfully, while their virtuosity is present as ever on this project. Furthering the compositional skill of the extraordinary bassist *François Moutin*, six of these nine pieces are stamped with his playful, inventive, and deft melodic identity. Brother *Louis Moutin*, with his hunchback drumming style and limitless chops, is a spectacular rhythm machine, and should be heralded as the second coming of *Elvin Jones*. Tenor saxophonist *Rick Margitza's* mid-register, tart, sweet sound has really settled in with this ensemble, tossing aside any post-*Michael Brecker* comparisons, but staying in the neo-bop realm for ear grabbers like "Sold Answers" and the hard-charging mighty funk of "Momentum." Two of these tracks will probably be familiar to fans, as the hip, modal "Mr. N.R." is similar to the selection from the *Moutin's* album *Something Like Now* titled "Take It Easy," while the hard bopper "Clinton Parkview" is reprised via the bassist's contribution alongside saxophonist *Ernie Watts* and his 2007 CD *Analog Man*. Keyboardist *Pierre DeBethmann* – after some solo projects – keeps widening his groove and depth of color field, adding subtle synthesizer or bluesy organ sounds on top of his clever acoustic piano and pungent Fender Rhodes. It seems this group just gets better and better, but in fact they're refining their approach, while continuing to make more exciting, original modern jazz music that is stunning and arresting on many visceral levels.

Tracks

	Title	Composer	Time
1	Sold Answers	Moutin	6:50
2	Depths Light	Moutin, Moutin	6:49
3	Momentum	Moutin	5:37
4	Monk's Medley	Monk	4:08
5	Mr N.R.	Moutin	5:33
6	Blessed And Cursed	Moutin	4:07
7	Clinton Parkview	Moutin	4:07
8	Forgotten Feelings	Moutin	4:52
9	Quiet Force	Moutin	6:56

Releases

Year	Type	Label	Catalog #
2010	CD	Plus Loin Music	4525

all about jazz

Soul Dancers

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Plus Loin Music (2010)

By [John Kelman](#)

Despite the reunion now nearly a decade old, there's nothing out of place or out of time about the vibrant Moutin Reunion Quartet. The group—co-led by twin brothers François (bass) and Louis (drums) Moutin—has delivered fiery album after fiery album since its 2002 debut, *Power Tree* (Dreyfus), but it's only been since its third release, *Something Like Now* (Nocturne, 2005), that the group has settled on the winning line-up of keyboardist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist [Rick Margitza](#).



Since then, MRQ's combination of modern mainstream energy and tasteful application of electric keyboards has been honed with extensive gigging and a double-sided follow-up, *Sharp Turns* (Blujazz, 2007). *Soul Dancers* doesn't represent a significant change in the group's M.O., but there's plenty to recommend. Always informed by 1970s fusion supergroup [Weather Report](#), here the references are even more direct than usual.

If there's any period in Weather Report's 15-year history that drives MRQ, it's that of *Night Passage* (Columbia, 1980), when the group returned to a more decidedly swinging, less funk-driven approach. MRQ's increasing reliance on electric keyboards creates a more direct lineage, as *Soul Dances'* opener, Louis' "Sold Answers," draws in structure and groove from *Night Passage's* fervently swinging title track. François may play acoustic bass rather than the late [Jaco Pastorius' fretless electric, but the references are clear; he's an equally virtuosic player with a similarly robust tone and visceral sense of time. He also demonstrated that he's a deeply lyrical player in his solo on the balladic "Depths Light," co-written by the Moutins and paying homage to classic \[Joe Zawinul\]\(#\) tunes like *Night Passage's* "Dream Clock" and "A Remark You Made," from *Heavy Weather* \(Columbia, 1977\).](#)

That's not to say *Soul Dancers* is solely driven by Weather Report's influence. As they've done with [Charlie Parker](#) and [John Coltrane](#) on previous discs, a medley based on [Thelonious Monk](#) serves as a duet feature to focus most sharply on the remarkable symbiosis shared by these twin brothers throughout the disc.

With François' affiliation for Pastorius, the balladic tribute, "Blesses and Cursed," comes as no surprise. The bassist's material occupies much of the disc's second half including the knotty burner "Clinton Parkview," which features a piercing solo from American expat Margitza and an equally powerful acoustic piano solo from de Bethmann. Louis solos rarely, but his support—ranging from lithe, cymbal-driven work on his contrapuntally challenging "Forgotten Feelings" to his more muscular approach on the funkier "Momentum"—remains fundamental to the group's sound. And when he does solo on the closing, mid-tempo modal swinger, "Quiet Force," he demonstrates a focused sense of construction.

With a combination of engaged and invested playing that's steadily evolving a distinctive group sound, and a repertoire that draws on its influences liberally while still possessing a voice of its own, Moutin Reunion Quartet's *Soul Dancers* is another fine release from a group that continues on an upward trajectory.

Track listing: Sold Answers; Depths Light; Momentum; Monk's Medley; Mr. N.R.; Blessed and Cursed; Clinton Parkview; Forgotten Feelings; Quiet Forge.

Personnel: François Moutin: upright acoustic bass, composition; Louis Moutin: drums, composition; Pierre de Bethmann: piano, keyboards, voice; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone.

Style: [Modern Jazz](#)

National ▸ Arts and Entertainment

Chicago Jazz Music Examiner



Fusion a la Français: Moutin Reunion Quartet hits Chicago this weekend

April 30, 9:23 AM ▸ Chicago Jazz Music Examiner ▸ Neil Tesser

Chicago Jazz Music Examiner rates this:



Fraternité: Louis (left) and François Moutin (photo: Ursula K)

If you're like most American music fans, you'll shrug at the news that the [Moutin Reunion Quartet](#) performs in Chicago this weekend at [Club Blujazz](#). You shouldn't; but don't blame yourself. Like its namesake leaders – identical twins [François](#) and [Louis Moutin](#) (bass and drums, respectively) – this Paris-based band has kept a pretty low profile in the States.

That could easily change with this month's release of [Soul Dancers](#) (Plus Loin Music) -- especially for those who appreciate the finer points of fusion jazz.

Not that the Moutin band restricts itself to the fusion genre; in fact, their previous release, [Sharp Turns](#), included a DVD made up of mostly acoustic music (recorded at the Skokie Theater in 2007). And [Soul Dancers](#) – which also features the MRQ's lively keyboardist [Pierre de Bethmann](#) and saxophonist [Rick Margitza](#), the

former Miles Davis sideman – neatly displays the quartet's range of repertoire. Case in point: a lithe medley of three Thelonious Monk tunes, winningly performed on bass and drums only.

But by placing three of their most contemporary, high-energy performances at the top of the disc, the Moutins pose the musical question, "How do you say Weather Report in French?" (It's *bulletin météorologique*, for you sticklers.)

I have no problem whatsoever with anyone who explores the legacy left by [Weather Report](#), the best jazz band of the 70s. Balanced on a tightrope connecting the divergent but complementary styles of its co-founders, Weather Report balanced mystery and focus, rock mechanics with jazz instincts, and Wayne Shorter's unamplified saxes against Joe Zawinul's electronic keyboards.

A dozen groups have sought to build on that sound and every one of them catches my attention, at least superficially. But the first three songs on this album have an extra panache, forming a sort of

suite with which the Moutins pay self-avowed homage to Zawinul, who died in 2007.

Thus the opening tune on *Soul Dancers* – the play-on-words “Sold Answers” – immediately recalls Weather Report’s “Black Market,” with a keyboard-bass vamp, piercing synthesizer *obbligato*, and a tenor solo that smoothly references Shorter’s sound and phrasing. But the song still pitches its own tent, thanks largely to the complex rhythmic underpinning provided by its composer, Louis Moutin.

“Depths Light,” has the spacious melody, soaring synth chords, and processional tempo that mark so many of Zawinul’s mid-70s ballads, from “American Tango” to “A Remark You Made,” the clearest analog for this song (and one of Weather Report’s best-known melodies). “Momentum” – written, like most of the tracks here, by François – borrows from Shorter songs such as “Palladium” and “Port Of Entry.”



The new album, released in the U.S. this month

Throughout the album François plays only acoustic bass, and that makes the MRQ’s fidelity to Weather Report’s sound all the more impressive. Weather Report was known in part for a succession of bass guitarists (most notably [Jaco Pastorius](#)) who changed the role of that instrument in jazz. Yet François – an undersung virtuoso soloist with a deeply vibrant tone, who has appeared on several albums by the acclaimed saxophonist [Rudresh Mahanthappa](#) – holds his own in the comparison.

(Of course, if anyone can reverse-engineer the Weather Report mystique, it ought to be the Moutins. Jazz might not be rocket science, but the Moutins *are* rocket scientists: before forming their first band, they both studied engineering, and between them have a masters in math and a doctorate in physics.)



In concert (from left): Pierre de Bethmann, Rick Margitza, and Moutins (photo by Ursula K)

On the tracks that eschew electronics, the MRQ swings with easy power, allowing Margitza the chance to stretch authoritatively and taking advantage of de Bethmann’s skilled accompaniment work. This material also fills out the portrait of François: his bass alternates between taking a

front-line role and adding yet another layer to his brother’s restlessly inventive drum work.

Soul Dancers successfully documents the MRQ’s strong and sometimes edgy music, driven by the double-barreled fraternal engine at its core. In performance (like most good bands), the Moutins vibrate at a different frequency altogether, promising some real fireworks when they appear this weekend.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet plays at 8 and 9:45, Friday and Saturday night, at Club Blujazz, 1540 W. North Ave.

CD REVIEWS OF SHARP TURNS



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CD Review "Sharp Turns" – John Cizik

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CD Review "Sharp Turns" – Michael Nastos

CD Review "Sharp Turns" – Jack Garner

Top Jazz cds pick of 2008

Ashley Kahn Top 10 CDs of 2007

CD Review "Sharp Turns" – Dick Crockett

CD David Adler 6 picks.

CD Review "Sharp Turns"

JAZZ IMPROV®



Moutin Reunion Quartet

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www.plusloin.net. Blujazz Productions, P.O.
Box 578720, Chicago, IL 60657.

www.blujazz.com. www.moutin.com.
(DualDisc) CD Side: *The Speech; Kuki's Dance;*
Trane's Medley; A Good Move; Time Apart;
Two Hits on the N.J.T.P.; A Blue Dream; Sharp
Turns. DVD Side: *Take it Easy; Echoing; Bird's*
Medley; Surrendering; Something Like Now.

PERSONNEL: Francois Moutin, Upright
Acoustic Bass; Louis Moutin, Drums; Rick Margitza,
Tenor Saxophone (except Track 3); Pierre
de Bethmann, Piano (except Track 3), Fender
Rhodes, Vocals.

By John Cizik

Sharp Turns is the latest project from the twin brothers Moutin – bass player Francois, and drummer Louis. This is the fifth album as leaders for the Paris-born duo, and the fourth for the Reunion Quartet. This review spotlights the limited-edition DualDisc, an 8-cut CD on one side, and a live concert DVD featuring five songs from their last CD on the other. The video side also includes bits of an interview by journalist Niel Tesser. Francois or Louis wrote all the songs here save two, “Trane’s Medley” on the CD, and “Bird’s Medley” on the DVD.

You hear a lot about the concept of twin telepathy – if it does exist, imagine how helpful it would be to the bedrock of your rhythm section! Twin mind-reading or not, the Moutins are part of a tight group here. “The Speech” begins with a light swing feel reminiscent of Vince Guaraldi, with Pierre de Bethmann in the piano chair. The lone American in the quartet, former Miles Davis sideman Rick Margitza, brings us the melody with his smooth tenor. Both take nice solo turns in the piece. “Kuki’s Dance” lets the brothers shine, Francois playing a string bass line while Louis wows on the kit. Francois displays his terrific soloing ability here as well. De Bethmann switches off from a pretty acoustic piano solo to some down n’ dirty wah-wah Rhodes on this cut.

The twins alone play “Trane’s Medley,” drummer Louis accompanying Francois’ quick-fingered bass. John Coltrane themes and interplay between the brothers are the features here. “A Good Move” starts in a hard-driving rock mode, then switches to swing for de Bethmann’s solo, where he combines acoustic piano with a slightly detuned upper register of the Rhodes for a unique effect. He shares the melody line with the tenor and bass at times too. The feel shifts throughout the song, coming back to swing again

for Margitza’s solo chorus. The pretty ballad “Time Apart” starts with a beautiful echoing solo piano intro from de Bethmann, joined after about a minute and a half by the rest of the quartet, Margitza playing the melody. The solos are wonderful, none more so than the stunning two minute tenor cadenza that showcases Margitza’s mastery of his instrument. He plays some harmonics that are out of this world, and has a gorgeous, clear tone with just the right amount of reverb added.

The upbeat “Two Hits on the N.J.T.P.” follows, a tune written by Louis, who only became a jazz drummer at age twenty! Not sure if the letters stand for New Jersey Turn Pike, but they could – this is the first project the brothers have recorded in the United States after touring here to support their last CD. This album was recorded in Brooklyn early in 2007. Francois leads us into “A Blue Dream” with a solo bass chorus that sets up beautifully into the entrance of the piano with the head. This is another laid-back tune, as dreamy as the title suggests. Louis’ hi-hat gives the number a slightly Latin lilt. The sax and piano solos are again outstanding.

The title cut wraps up almost an hour of great jazz, a swing burner that has the sax and piano sharing the melody. The piano solo is again taken with a detuned sound, giving it the sonic patina of a wild-west saloon piano. It’s an interesting rough edge to an otherwise straight-ahead smooth tune. Nothing rough about Margitza’s tenor solo, as Francois hits a fast walking bass underneath. The rhythm section occasionally drops out for a beat under the solo, adding to the intrigue. Francois takes another complex solo, with the piano comping underneath. Louis keeps it all together on drums.

The DVD was recorded on January 6, 2007 at the Skokie Theater in Chicago. The songs stretch out a little longer on the video, none are shorter than eight minutes. The first thing that struck me was the physical setup of the group. The piano and drums face each other, with the bass in between, and the tenor out front. It’s an atypical setup, and strange not to see the drums in the back in the middle! Margitza and his tenor disappear from the picture when he isn’t playing, allowing the soloist the spotlight. The second thing I noticed was that the Moutin’s look a lot younger than their 46 years!

On “Take it Easy,” Louis’ composition, Francois and de Bethmann show off fast finger work. Margitza has a lengthy solo. For a while it’s just him and the drums playing off each other – a great effect. And boy, do these guys look like they’re having fun! In between cuts you get snippets of a great interview by Chicago journalist Niel Tesser. You’ll learn more about the band, including how the twins went from getting their degrees in engineering to being successful touring and recording musicians. “Echoing” is Francois’ composition, and he begins it solo. Watch his facial expressions while he plays – they’re as fascinating as his technique. He’s hunched over the instrument as if he’s studying every inch of the fretboard – but most of the time his eyes are squeezed shut. (You may also notice here that the twins bear a

passing resemblance to Harry Connick, Jr.) The rest of the group joins for what becomes a pretty swing tune.

The brothers pay homage to another saxophone legend with “Bird’s Medley,” another bass/drum duo in the same style as “Trane’s Medley” on the CD. Louis forgoes sticks, playing the drum kit with his hands for his number. Francois’ playing and arrangement recalls another great bass player – Jaco’s treatment of “Donna Lee” on his debut album. Solo piano starts Francois’ “Surrendering,” with the classically-trained de Bethmann taking the spotlight. He has amazingly long fingers, and a light, pretty touch. Margitza gets his turn to blow in this sweet ballad, again showing off his wonderful tenor tone. Louis’ “Something Like Now” puts a bow on the DVD side, an upbeat number that begins with the piano and bass playing a tandem line. Again there’s plenty of space for everyone to solo, and show off their skills.

If you listen just beyond the end of the CD, you’ll hear someone with a French accent say “Do you guys think we have it?” No doubt guys – you do.



DOWNBEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

Moutin Reunion Quartet

Sharp Turns

BLJAZZ 3358

★★★

The Moutin Reunion Quartet has become one of the tightest units in jazz. Not only do the twin brothers François and Louis Moutin share a special connection, but they have found two sympathetic bandmates in pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza. One could hope that they will take the music in a new direction rather than settle in a comfort zone, as *Sharp Turns* follows too closely in the footsteps of its predecessor.

Supporters of the status quo will be happy to hear that the band has not lost any of the impressive stamina that defines its finely crafted post-bop. The album title also aptly suggests the four-some's facility for negotiating the toughest passages. The brothers do not deviate from their medley tradition; as a duo they revisit several John Coltrane staples that they adroitly combine to create a homogeneous amalgam. A few pieces bear the imprint of an acoustic version of Weather Report, but the brothers' music is



imbued with its own vitality.

On bass, François dazzles with his sturdiness and fine sense of placement. Drummer Louis keeps things moving and never stays too long in the same spot. Margitza displays an increasing confidence and relishes bringing his phrases near the point of rupture; de Bethmann brings, with varying degrees of success,

new elements to the table. His free intro/outro on "Kuki's Dance" is intriguing, while his wordless vocals on "The Speech" add a nice touch; elsewhere, his Fender Rhodes dissonances are out of place.

A limited-edition release includes a DVD featuring a live performance that illustrates the band's physicality and drive, and offers the opportunity to hear the group stretch out on selections from its previous album, *Something Like Now*.

—Alain Drouot

Sharp Turns: The Speech; Kuki's Dance; Trane's Medley; A Good Move; Time Apart; Two Hits On The N.J.T.P.; A Blue Dream; Sharp Turns. (59:59)

Personnel: François Moutin, bass; Louis Moutin, drums; Rick Margitza, tenor saxophone; Pierre de Bethmann, piano, Fender Rhodes, vocals.

» Ordering info: blujazz.com

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\$4.99 08>
0 09281 01493 5
AUGUST 2008 U.K. £3.50



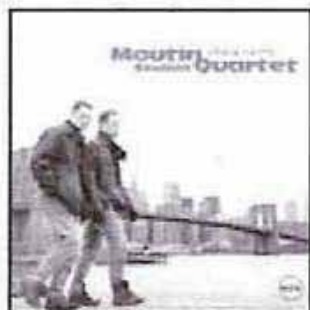
all about jazz

NEW YORK

January 2008 | No. 69

Your FREE Monthly Guide to the New York Jazz Scene

newyork.allaboutjazz.com



Sharp Turns
Moutin Reunion Quartet (Nocturne)
by Laurel Gross

Must it be pointed out that François and Louis Moutin are twins? Admittedly, it is a novelty to see these two handsome Gallic faces mirror-image each other in live performance and on a special DVD side of their new release *Sharp Turns*, the latest outing of their Moutin Reunion Quartet. But live with them a little and it will become apparent that these multi-talented gentlemen are also singular individuals linked by a common passion, not unlike other committed jazz musicians who have played together for a long, albeit very long, time. These self-taught offspring of jazz fans have been playing together since childhood. And 'playing' is the operative word. Making jazz in the early days was unadulterated fun. "A game," as the two explained in a useful interview with journalist Neil Tesser on this CD/DVD package.

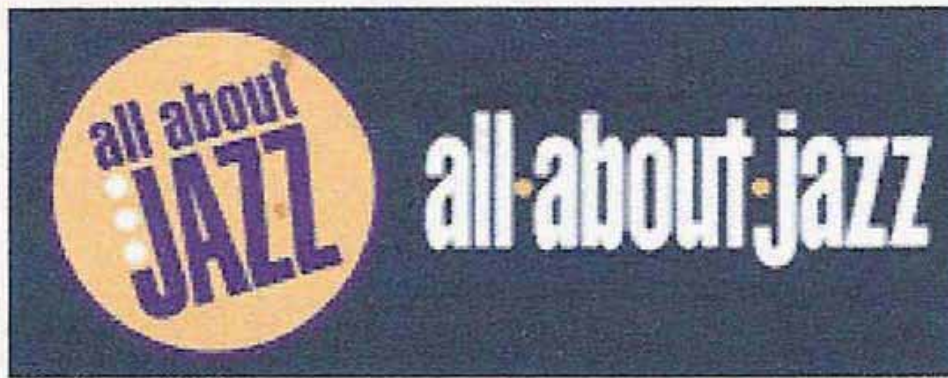
Their current playfulness is obvious in the rambunctious and inventive "Trane's Medley" from the new CD. The rhythmic elements of this satisfying improvisational romp off Coltrane are strictly 'hand-made', with Louis fingering his drums while the bowless François viscerally handles the bass, both coaxing unusual sounds from their instruments. The lighthearted and infectious joy was on display last month at a CD release celebration at Greenwich Village's Cachaça, where the brothers were joined, as on the CD, by Moutin Reunion Quartet regulars: the versatile American-born Rick Margitza on tenor and resourceful French pianist Pierre de Bethmann.

For those who can't sample the Moutins live, the DVD portion of the dual package - captured during a January 2007 show at Chicago's Skokie Theater -

showcases original compositions by François and Louis including "Bird's Medley", a tribute to Charlie Parker, and other pieces from their previous Moutin Reunion Quartet recording *Something Like Now*.

Other standouts from the new album - also excellently realized during the energetic and seriously (and humorously) intense opening set of the two-night run at Cachaça - include the title track, a rousing, fully engaging modern work by François; "A Blue Dream" from Louis, with a lovely solo by son frère and Louis' catchy, swinging "Kuki's Dance".

For more information, visit nocturne.fr



Sharp Turns

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Blujazz (2007)

By John Kelman

Plenty has already been written about François and Louis Moutin, co-leaders of the Moutin Reunion Quartet, and the special simpatico they share as twin brothers. Over the course of three albums, including *Something Like Now* (Nocturne, 2005), the bassist and drummer have evolved a contemporary approach that, despite being largely acoustic, borrows as much—philosophically if not sonically—from fusion groups like Weather Report as it does classic influences like John Coltrane and Charlie Parker. MRQ is also a powerhouse live group, making the dual-sided *Sharp Turns*—one side a CD of new material, the other a concert DVD featuring songs from *Something Like Now*—a strong addition to the catalog for those familiar with the group, and the ideal entry point for newcomers.



Sharp Turns is an evolutionary rather than revolutionary disc, and the second to feature tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and pianist Pierre de Bethmann. There's plenty of muscular playing to go around, with Margitza standing out only because, with the tragic passing of saxophonists Michael Brecker and Bob Berg in recent years, the Paris-based American ex-pat is clearly carrying their torch with a robust tone and seemingly endless flow of ideas. The saxophonist moves effortlessly from the soulful power of his solo on François' viscerally grooving "A Good Move" to a spare but all-the-more-impressive-for-it *à capella* spot on the bassist's elegant ballad, "Time Apart," running the gamut from soft multiphonics to near-classical arpeggios. When considering contemporary tenor saxophonists making a difference, Margitza's name clearly deserves to be considered in the same breath as Chris Potter and Donny McCaslin.

Bethmann's an equally versatile player, his hauntingly beautiful intro to "Time Apart" in sharp contrast to Louis' upbeat and irregularly metered "Kuki's Dance," where his confident solo on acoustic piano is underscored by his wah-wah'd Fender Rhodes. The bassist's even more rhythmically idiosyncratic and thematically knotty "Two Hits on the N.J.T.P." demonstrates Bethmann's empathic accompaniment skills, as the entire group approaches fusion territory during Bethmann's high energy, Chick Corea-informed Rhodes solo at the song's frenetically swinging end.

The Moutin brothers solo with equal aplomb throughout, but are even more essential as almost literally joined-at-the-hip rhythm section partners, driving Louis' more relaxed but no less insistent "A Blue Dream" and François' aptly named modal title track with a rare combination of undeniable personality and selfless team play. As in live performance, the brothers go it alone on "Trane's Medley," a clever combination of Coltrane themes and intuitive interaction that's even better than *Something Like Now's* "Bird's Medley."

The DVD, from a 2007 Chicago show—also featuring excerpts of a band interview by *Chicago Reader's* Niel Tesser—makes it clear that, as hot as MRQ's studio recordings are, the energy is pushed even further in performance. Together, the CD and DVD of *Sharp Turns* find the Moutin Reunion Quartet at the top of its game, a group where everyone stands out without ever sacrificing its all-important group sound.

Visit Moutin Reunion Quartet on the web.
Moutin Reunion Quartet at All About Jazz.

Track listing: CD: The Speech; Kuki's Dance; Trane's Medley; A Good Move; Time Apart; Two Hits on the N.J.T.P.; A Blue Dream; Sharp Turns, DVD: Take It Easy; Echoing; Bird's Medley; Surrendering; Something Like Now.

Personnel: François Moutin: upright acoustic bass, composition; Louis Moutin: drums, composition; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone (CD#1, CD#2, CD#4-8, DVD#1, DVD#2, DVD#4, DVD#5); Pierre de Bethmann: piano (CD#1, CD#2, CD#4-8, DVD#1, DVD#2, DVD#4, DVD#5); Fender Rhodes (CD#1, CD#2, CD#4, CD#6, DVD#1, DVD#2, DVD#4, DVD#5); vocals (CD#1).

Style: Modern Jazz/Free Improvisation | Published: January 03, 2008



all about jazz

December 2007 | Vol. 5 No. 11



Moutin Reunion Quartet
Sharp Turns
Blujazz Productions
by George Harris

For a long time they were two-thirds of the Martial Solal Trio, but twin brothers François and Louis Moutin have branched out on their own, putting out their second with tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and pianist Pierre de Bethmann in the lineup. This CD/DVD combo is quite worthwhile on two fronts; the DVD features the band performing a healthy sample of the music from their CD in concert, and the new CD shows the growth of the band in terms of intuitive interplay and compositional strength. Both bassist François and drummer Louis have penned a set of intriguing tunes. Louis' "A Blue Dream" features some subtle and delicate harmonization, along with Margitza's warm yet edgy tenor, while his "Kuki's Dance" has an infectious groove to it. François' bluesy title piece is as catchy as it is creative. The bass/drum duet of Coltrane tunes is an added delight, modernizing up the classics. Lively, in touch and conversant, the Moutin Reunion Quartet has so much to offer, and is definitely worth seeing live. Short of being there in person, this CD/DVD is a worthy stocking stuffer.

Moutin Reunion Quartet on the web: www.moutin.com.

Track Listing: Speech/ Kuki's Dance/ Trane's Medley/ Good Move/ Time Apart/ Two Hits on the N.J.T.P./ Blue Dream/ Sharp Turns

Personnel: François Moutin- bass; Louis Moutin- drums; Rick Margitza- tenor sax; Pierre de Bethmann- piano

allmusic



All Music Guide

March 2008

Review by Michael G. Nastos

As the Moutin Reunion Quartet have evolved over five years, their modern mainstream jazz sound has indeed discovered tighter, sharper edges based on their ability to elongate time signatures, dig deep into their expertise as improvisers, and discover a neo-bop signature sound that is as irresistible as any in contemporary music. Tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza has settled into his role as a post-Michael Brecker melodicist, while pianist Pierre DeBethmann is ever formidable and a perfect foil for bassist Francois Moutin, especially with his left hand working in tandem with the contrabassists pluckings, bowings and walking. While Francois aside from this band is quickly becoming a first call sideman, his twin brother Louis is developing distinct individualism, displaying one of the more unique approaches and styles in the post-bop/Max Roach school of ferocious drumming. You have to witness Louis live to appreciate his uniqueness, but from an audio perspective alone, his talent borders on astonishing, and also assumes a fierce leadership role as a composer. There's some outstanding, nearly breathtaking music here - - the hip, heavy and enigmatic "Two Hits On The N.J.T.P." which deserves a close listen, the heady, purely modern neo-bop title track loaded with drum flourishes, and the tension and release of "A Good Move," which is a trademark device of the band. A brittle and staggered kinetic funk informs "Kuki's Dance," there's the nimble indirect swing waltz "A Blue Dream," and a tribute "Trane's Medley" with just bass and drums. Margitza also evokes John Coltrane during the delicate, pensive, artistic ballad "Time Apart." It seems that as good as this group is in the studio, they are much more powerful heard live, as evidenced by the accompanying DVD available in this package, featuring superior material from their previous CD "Something Like Now." Well on their way to being one of the top working bands in contemporary jazz, the Moutin's have it all goin' on. Please thoroughly check these cats out if you haven't already.

February 15, 2008

MOUTIN REUNION: SHARP TURNS. On one hand, the Rochester International Jazz Festival is a great chance to catch long-loved acts. On the other, it's a way to discover new artists who remain favorites as the years go by. That's been the case for me with the quartet led by French brothers Francois and Louis Moutin, on bass and drums, respectively, and including pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza. Though rhythm sections are usually designed to support and not to lead, the brothers do an expert job of forging ahead with this excellent quartet. The brothers' talents are on ample display in *Sharp Turns*, their latest album. The bassist and drummer are both surprisingly melodic, witty and ingratiating players, but they also make plenty of room for their compatriots. The new disc features mostly originals, including an energetic African groove on "Kuki's Dance" and some great straight-ahead swinging on "The Speech." They also pay tribute to a master with "Trane's Medley." The tasteful intelligence and musicality I first heard at the jazz festival continues full throttle on their new album. — Jack Garner

JAZZ IMPROV NY

The Ultimate Directory of NY Area Jazz Club, Concert & Event Listings

TOP JAZZ CD PICKS OF 2008

This list is in alphabetical order by artist — includes new recordings and re-issues.

J.D. Allen - I Am, I Am
 Jamie Baum - Solace (Sunnyside)
 Jerry Bergonzi - Tenorist (Savant)
 Ron Blake - Shayari (Mack Avenue)
 Jane Ira Bloom - Mental Weather
 T.K. Blue - Follow the North Star
 Don Braden - Gentle Storm (High Note)
 Cannonball-Coltrane Project - Spectacular (Primrose Lane)



Caribbean Jazz Project - Afro Bop Alliance (Heads Up)
 Leonardo Cioglia - Contos
 Anat Cohen - Notes From The Village (Anzic)
 Conrad Herwig - The Latin Side of Wayne Shorter (Half Note)
 Marc Copland - New York Trio Recordings Vol. 2 (Pirouet)
 Joey DeFrancesco - Joey Di! (High Note)
 Eliane Elias - Something For You (Blue Note)
 Duke Ellington - New York, New York (Storyville)
 Wayne Escoffery - Hopes and Dreams (High Note)
 Amina Figarova - Above the Clouds



Fourplay - Energy (Heads Up)
 Bill Frisell - History, Mystery (Nonesuch)
 Giacomo Gates - Luminosity (Double Dave)
 Gordon Goodwin - Act Your Age
 Larry Ham - Just Me, Just You



Tigran Hamasyan - New Era (BluJazz)
 Roy Hargrove - Earfood (EmArcy)
 Gene Harris - Live In London (Resonance)
 Dave Holland - Pass It On (Emarcy)
 George Kahn - Cover Up!
 Kenny Barron - The Traveler (Sunnyside)
 Mike LeDonne - FiveLive (High Note)
 Tom Lellis & Toninho Horta - Tonight (Adventure)
 Peter Lerner - Cry For Peace (BluJazz)
 Pete Levin - Certified Organic
 Charles Lloyd - Rabo De Nube (ECM)
 Lionel Loueke - Karibu (Blue Note)
 Joe Lovano - Symphonica (Blue Note)
 Joe Magnarelli - Persistence (Reservoir)
 Willie Martinez - After Winter Spring
 Bennie Maupin - Early Reflections (Cryptogramophone)



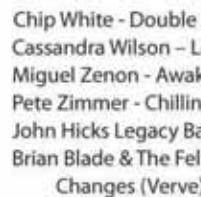
Brad Mehldau - Live (Nonesuch)
 Pat Metheny - Day Trip (Nonesuch)
 Bob Mintzer Big Band - Swing Out (MCG)
 James Moody & Hank Jones - Our Delights (IPO)
 Bill Moring - Spaces in Time (Owl)
Moutin Reunion - Sharp Turns (BluJazz)
 Bob Mover - It Amazes Me (Zoho)
 New Jazz Composers Octet Turning Gate (Motema)



Scott Robinson - Plays The Compositions of Thad Jones (Arbors)
 Sonny Rollins - Road Shows (Emarcy)
 Harvie S & Kenny Barron - Now Was the Time (High Note)
 Avery Sharpe - Legends & Mentors
 Mark Sherman - Live At The Bird's Eye
 Kenny Garrett - Sketches of MD (Mack Avenue)
 John Stein - Encounterpoint (Whaling City)
 Stryker/Slagle - The Scene (Zoho)
 Todd Coolman - Perfect Strangers (Fan-funded ArtistShare Project)



Sumi Tonooka - Long Ago Today
 Tuck and Patti - I Remember You
 McCoy Tyner - Guitars (Half Note)
 Vanguard Jazz Orchestra Monday Night Live (Planet Arts)
 Rick Wald - Play That Thing
 Bobby Watson - From The Heart (Palmetto)
 Ernie Watts - Live at the Jazz Bakery
 Mark Weinstein - Straight No Chaser (Jazzheads)



Chip White - Double Dedication
 Cassandra Wilson - Lovely (Blue Note)
 Miguel Zenon - Awake (Marsalis Music)
 Pete Zimmer - Chillin' (Tippin)
 John Hicks Legacy Band - Mind Wine (High Note)
 Brian Blade & The Fellowship Band - Season of Changes (Verve)





2007 Jazz Poll Ballots: A-O

New releases, reissues, debuts, and more—
each critic's picks

January 2nd, 2008 6:05 PM

Ashley Kahn (NPR *Morning Edition*)

NEW RELEASES (listed alphabetically, 5.5 points each)

Andy Bey *Ain't Necessarily So* 12th Street

Bonerama *Bringing It Home* Highsteppin' Productions

Michael Brecker *Pilgrimage* Heads Up

Jimmy Cobb *Cobb's Corner* Chesky

Anat Cohen *Noir* Anzic

Moutin Reunion *Quartet Sharp Turns* (import)

Chris Potter *Follow the Red Line: Live at the Village*

Vanguard Sunnyside

Chris Potter *Song For Anyone* Sunnyside

Michael Stephans *Om/shalOM* Endemik

Jeff "Tain" Watts *the Ebonix Folk's Music* Black Keys

Bopndicks 10 picks Dec 2007

Dick Crockett

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET SHARP TURNS blujazz

Francois and Louis Moutin play with infinite nuance in subtle modern jazz collective in this new "Sharp Turns" cd and accompanying DVD, a series of live performances. Francois and Louis Moutin are twins and no doubt rivaling jazz musicians in their musical youth. Brothers are thicker than that, as they make beautiful music in this special reunion cd. Francois, remarkable bass player, song writer and arranger, who now resides in New York City and Louis, an inventive musician and writer as well who holds forth as a leading jazz drummer, residing in Paris. Pierre de Bethmann, the pianist and saxophonist Rick Margitza amply contribute also to this exciting quartet. Francois and Louis writing skills are equally shared. Francois "The Speech" has that bright heroic connotation with Margitza phrasing skipping over a soft palette of light and dark colors stepping up to a slight melodic husk trining with de Bethmann vocalizing and the Moutins on message in the end. Then "Kuki Dance," a playful romp with an incredible bass line and the others juxtaposed and having fun on the run. "Trane's Medley" is an exploratory excursion for the brothers, who baste each other and forth as if a homage to they're playing off each other, just like old times, the best of times. The Moutins sure can play off one another! Then Rick Margitza's saxophone leads off on Francois', "A Good Move," a joyful contrapuntal striking statement into a jam with Pierre's acoustic piano and the very strong Moutin definitive bass line with Louis steady drumming throughout.. A striking pose for such a dynamic rhythm section. Francois' "Time Apart" is a lovely work with Pierre's subtle phrasing to the late afternoon Francois' solid bass and Louis brush work with cymbal highlighting, a glow autumnal passing of time. Then Rick carries it out that's a solo in the end, that's so emotional, textured in many variances as talking softly, slow, fast, kinetic a message of touch, a message of love.

All Picks:

JOEL WEISKOPF DEVOTED TO YOU CRISS CROSS JAZZ

ANDY BEY AIN'T NECESSARILY SO 12th Street Records

TRIO M BIG PICTURE Cryptogramophone

MARVIN STAMM QUARTET ALONE TOGETHER Jazzed Media

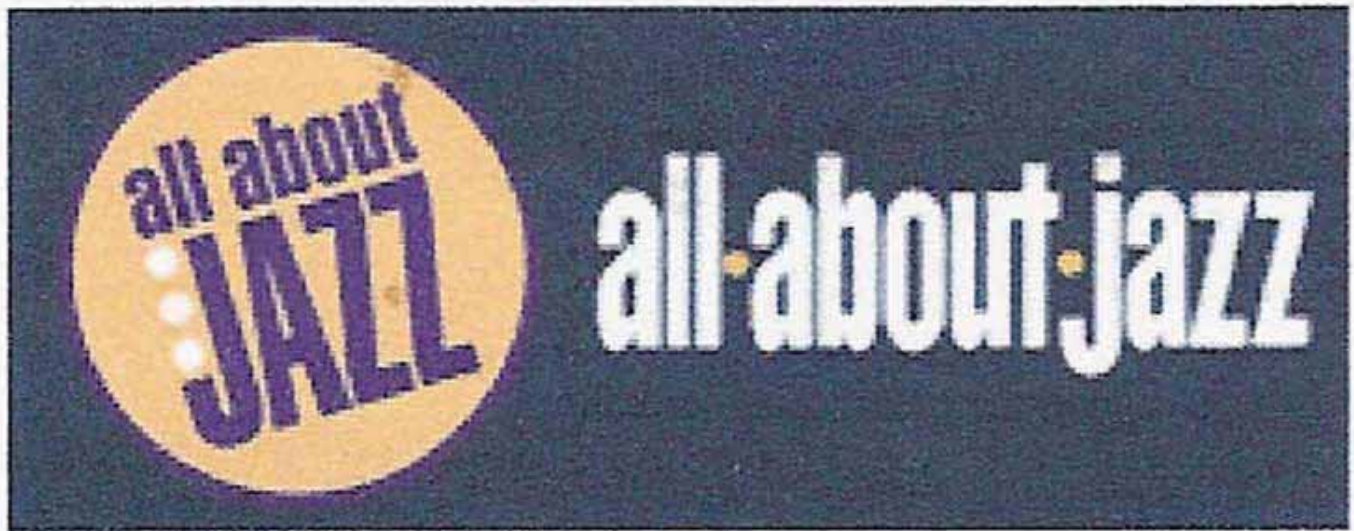
THE JON HEMMERSAM/DOM MINASI QUARTET CDM Records

MIKE ELLIS BAHIA BAND Alpha Pocket Records

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET SHARP TURNS blujazz

RICHARD COLE SHADE Origin Records

BRENT JENSEN BILL ANSHELL JEFF JOHNSON JOHN BISHOP/ONE MORE MILE Origin Records

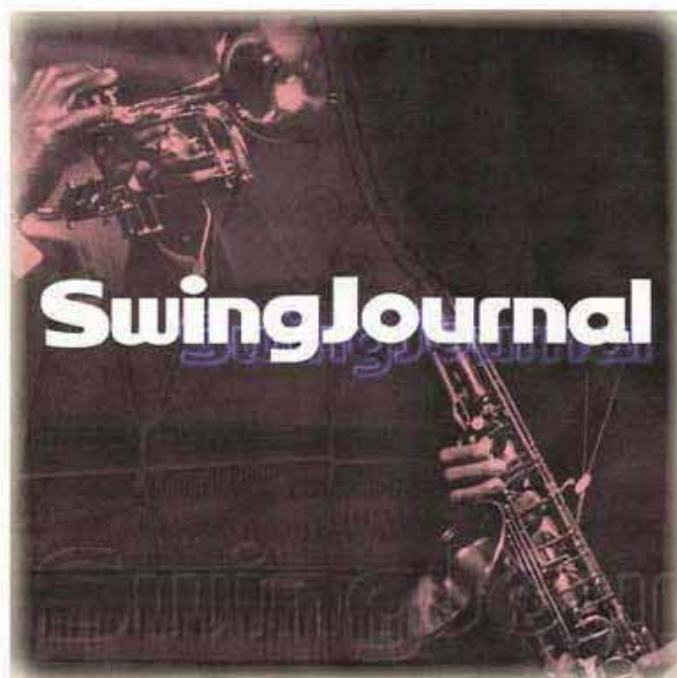


January 2008

Recommended New Listening:

- Andy Bey -- *Ain't Necessarily So* (12th Street)
- Chris Gestrin -- *After the City Has Gone: Quiet* (Songlines)
- Frank Kimbrough -- *Air* (Palmetto)
- Moutin Reunion Quartet -- *Sharp Turns* (Nocturne)
- Tyshawn Sorey -- *That/Not* (Firehouse 12)
- Daniel Yvinec -- *The Lost Crooners* (BEE Jazz)
- Henning Sieverts -- *Symmetry* (Pirouet)

-David Adler NY@Night Columnist, AllAboutJazz.com



IMPORT DISCS



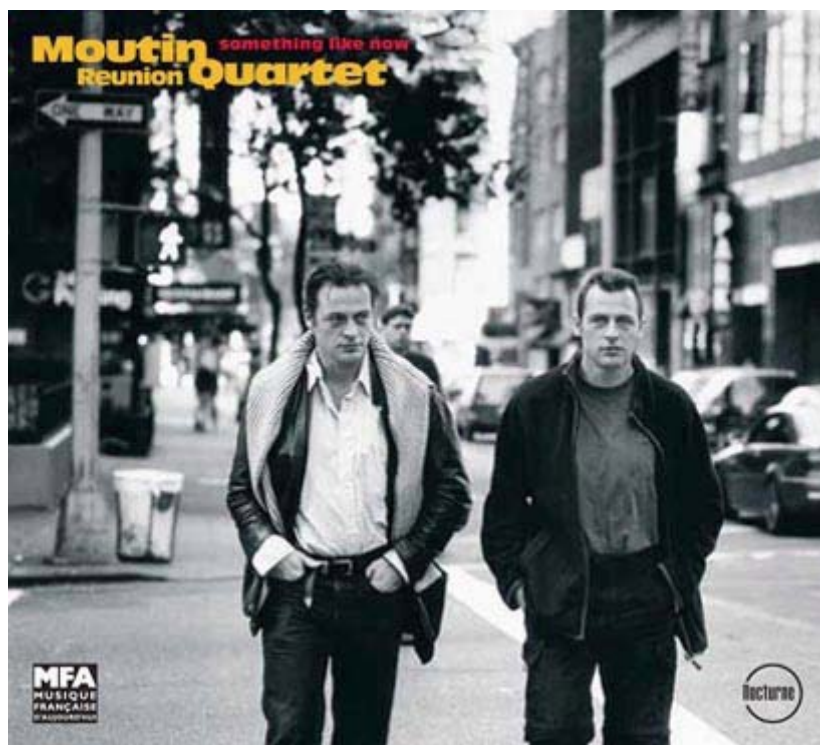
Sharp Turns / Moutin Reunion Quartet

① The Speech ② Kuki's Dance ③ Trane's Medley ④ A Good Move ⑤ Time Apart ⑥ Two Hits On The N.J.T.P. ⑦ A Blue Dream ⑧ Sharp Turns [+DVD] ● Francois Moutin(b) Louis Moutin(ds) Rick Margitza(ts) Pierre De Bethmann(p, el-p, vo) 2007.3.19-24, NYC ● Nocturne NTCD4501

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フランスの売れっ子兄弟がキャリアを総決算したカルテット作 CD&DVD作は欧米での自然な流れなのだろう。双子のムタン兄弟を核とした仏米ユニットは、本作に至ってさらに結束を強固にした印象。ハードコアなサウンドが好みのニーズを満たすこと間違いない。フレンチ・コネクションによってマーギツァが再生したことも特筆もの。シカゴでのライブ映像も強力。

CD REVIEWS OF SOMETHING LIKE NOW



CADENCE MAGAZINE

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL

SWING 2BOP

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

JAZZ TIMES MAGAZINE

DOWNBEAT MAGAZINE

POP MATTERS

EJAZZNEWS.COM

JAZZREVIEW

ALL ABOUT JAZZ

ALL ABOUT JAZZ

ALL ABOUT JAZZ

O'S PLACE JAZZ NEWSLETTER

IMPROVIJAZZATION NATION

ALL ABOUT JAZZ

JAZZWEEK

CD Review "Something Like Now" –

CD Review "Something Like Now" –Karl Stark

CD Review "Something Like Now" –Bruce Crowther

CD Review "Something Like Now" –Mark Miller

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Owen Cordle

CD Review "Something Like Now" – James Hale

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Robert R. Calder

CD Review "Something Like Now" – George W. Caroll

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Richard Boursier

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Chris May

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Mark F. Turner

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Ken Franckling

CD Review "Something Like Now" – D. Oscar Groomes

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Dick Metcalf

CD Review "Something Like Now" – John Kelman

CD Review "Something Like Now" – Ed Trefzger

Cadence

THE REVIEW OF JAZZ & BLUES: CREATIVE IMPROVISED MUSIC

1) FRANCOIS MOUTIN, SOMETHING LIKE NOW, NOCTURNE 375.

Something Like Now - Part 1 / Something Like Now - Part 2 / Bird's Medley / Take It Easy / Surrendering / M.R.C. / Tomcat / Echoing / Bottom Line - Part 1 / Bottom Line - Part 2 / Touch And Go. 59:10.

Moutin, comp. ac b; Louis Moutin, comp, d; Pierre de Bethmann, p, el p; Rick Margitza, ts. February 5-8, 2005, no recording location listed.

The fourth album by twin brothers Francois and Louis Moutin (1) is a strong, contemporary mainstream Jazz album. With an impressive discography behind them and an even more impressive list of sideman credits, the brothers Moutin have toured and gigged with a who's who of international talent. Their own quartet, founded in the mid-1990s, concentrates on semi-acoustic mainstream swing with more than a bit of inspiration taken from the classic second quintet of

Miles Davis. This influence is most apparent on the tracks where pianist Pierre de Bethmann switches to Fender Rhodes and the rhythm section delves into snappy, hi-hat driven, early fusion rhythms. Making the Miles Davis connection even more implicit, tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza, with a slew of Blue Note releases to his credit, was also part of Davis' final ensemble, playing on three albums with him.

With an in-the-pocket groove and a rich tone on acoustic upright bass, Francois and his brother Louis, an imposing presence on trap set, have the sort of empathetic rhythm section interaction that siblings from a musical family engender. Their fellow quartet members fit in nicely to their familial structure, de Bethmann is a linear player in the Post-Bop tradition and Margitza an energetic saxophonist with an equitable blend of post-Coltrane and Wayne Shorter influences. Although there are a few contemplative ballads, the quartet really shines when engaged in pieces that shift ever so subtly in their rhythmic and harmonic structure. Modulating rhythms while maintaining an invigorating energy level, the quartet displays considerable talent.

With vitality and robust playing all around, *Something Like Now* is a mainstream Jazz album that never lacks in improvising acumen. Aside from a few missteps, most notably the Lite Jazz vamp of "Tomcat," the album is a strong document of mainstream Jazz improvisation.



CD Review: Moutin Reunion's 'Something Like Now'

Posted: Jan. 18, 2006

Moutin Reunion *Something Like Now* Nocturne Jazz

Two French twin brothers assemble a quartet that sounds like a mix of Weather Report and Pat Metheny.

Bassist Francois Moutin and drummer Louis Moutin, who earned advanced degrees in physics and mathematics before turning to jazz more than a decade ago, create a heady stew that is challenging and surprisingly orthodox in its search for improvised magic.

Francois, who has played with musicians Archie Shepp and Randy Brecker, plays his bass with Jaco-like insouciance, while Louis, a veteran of groups with Michel Legrand and John Abercrombie, is an impassioned timekeeper. The twins, who wrote 10 of the 11 tunes here, have a wild time negotiating a Charlie Parker tune, "Bird's Medley," as a duet.

Tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza often takes the lead, blowing cacophonous lines of great intensity, while pianist Pierre de Bethmann keeps grounded a quartet that is highly intellectual and still ardent.

- *Karl Stark,*

JAZZ . . . and other obsessions

Welcome to Bruce Crowther's Website

February 1, 2006

<http://www.swing2bop.com/index.html>

Moutin Reunion Quartet *Something Like Now* (Nocturne NTCD 375)

After many years playing in bands led by others, identical twin brothers François and Louis Moutin formed their own quartet in 1990. More appearances with others followed and then, in 1998, the brothers teamed up again to form this group, the Moutin Reunion Quartet. Bassist François and drummer Louis are both virtuoso players and they have brought into their band two other highly gifted instrumentalists, pianist Pierre de Bethmann and tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza. Playing with flair and imagination a repertoire that is drawn almost exclusively from music written by the brothers, the quartet has built a solid reputation in the past few years thanks to engagements on both sides of the Atlantic and to their CDs of which *Something Like Now* is the fourth. Vibrant and dynamic, this is a striking contemporary jazz group.

NEW RELEASES

JAZZ

Something Like Now

Moutin Reunion Quartet
Nocturne/Fusion III

★★★★½

|||| The flashy Franco-American Moutin Reunion Quartet made good impressions at the Toronto Downtown and Ottawa jazz festi-

vals during its North American tour this past summer. The rest of Canada can now hear why. As documented on *Something Like Now*, the MRQ is a largely acoustic post-fusion band with bop roots; when it doesn't sound like Weather Report or Steps Ahead unplugged, it's playing Charlie Parker lines. There are two Mou-

tins, bassist François and drummer Louis, twins who naturally build their music from the bottom up, all portentous ostinatos and shifting tempos, and ask only that pianist Pierre de Bethmann and American tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza be suitably fleet and frisky on top. They are. — *Mark Miller*

JazzTimes

CD Reviews

CD Reviews

November 2005 issue

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

Something Like Now (Nocturne)

This album is full of heroic, high-energy jazz: pounding unison bass-and-piano lines overlaid with heavily drawn harmonized piano-and-tenor lines. The Paris-born Moutin twins, bassist Francois and drummer Louis, performed with an impressive array of European and visiting American jazz musicians before moving to New York in the late 1990s. Their Moutin Reunion Quartet, now seven years old, includes pianist Pierre de Bethmann and tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza. Not to denigrate the virtuosity and good intentions of the musicians, but this is not my favorite brand of jazz. Too busy. Too forceful. Little room for subtlety. I'm sure mine is a minority opinion.

The two-part title tune by Louis suggests Weather Report. Other originals-three more by Louis, four by Francois-also favor a tiered, well-orchestrated approach, although less influenced by Joe Zawinul.

Francois can do anything with the bass: low notes, super-high runs, speed-of-light execution-you name it. Louis is an interactive presence in the ensemble as well as behind solos. Margitza has a surprisingly malleable tone for a hard player. His long tones on "Surrendering" have a singing, human quality. De Bethmann's playing, vaguely reminiscent of Herbie Hancock, is agreeable.

-Owen Cordle



Moutin Reunion Quartet

Something Like Now

NOCTURNE/LIGHTYEAR 375

★★★★½

If you think Harvard grad Joshua Redman arrived in jazz with a great back story, check out the Moutin twins. Both received scientific Doctoral degrees in their mid 20s, then left academia for music. Physicist François left France for New York in 1997 and found work with everyone from Harry Belafonte to Vijay Iyer. Drummer Louis—an engineer—stayed behind and flourished on the European music scene. The brothers' third recording using the Reunion moniker, and the second with saxophonist Rick Margitza onboard, *Something Like Now* burns

with big chops. If it seems like something you've heard before, perhaps the Moutins can be excused because they are clearly having a ball.

Indeed, François has such lithe technique and tremendous range that he can belie his 43 years by sounding like a kid in love with his newly mastered toy. On Louis' hard-grooving "Take It Easy," François holds the center ground with his dominant tone while his brother powers through a slightly off-kilter rhythm. The bustling pace of François' "M.R.C." provides him with an opportunity to illustrate his fluidity across the entire register of his instrument, and "Bird's Medley" shows off the brothers' bop roots as they toss Parkerisms around in a duo format.

As their three-minute tribute to Charlie Parker shows, the Moutins could carry a CD on their own, but Margitza is a strong presence, too, scorching through the skalom gates of the second half of Louis' title tune and smoldering on François' "Surrendering," the only composition approaching a ballad. Pianist Pierre de Bethmann plays a much more restrained role, providing color where needed, but adding little to the ensemble work. —James Hale

Something Like Now: Something Like Now—Part One; Something Like Now—Part Two; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line—Part One; Bottom Line—Part Two; Touch And Go. 50:10

Personnel: Rick Margitza, tenor saxophone; Pierre de Bethmann, piano; Fender Rhodes; François Moutin, bass; Louis Moutin, drums.

Ordering info: www.nocturne.fr

POP MATTERS

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

Something Like Now

(Nocturne)

Rating: 7

US release date: 30 August 2005

UK release date: Available as import

If the brothers Moutin pay heed to such notices as this, they might be grateful to some of the irritations attendant on the present reviewer's life when he began his attention to their new CD. I am extremely grateful for their having put together a set of performances so wonderfully resolved. Things can work out!



Regardless of any information of a biographical order, explaining why this band is called "Reunion", or the liner notes' reference to the other three guys but with a different pianist, this quartet is incredibly tight after a fashion which raises the phrase *maximum efficiency*. I suppose they could play very well and flawlessly, on a bad night for all of them -- the sort of thing Europeans have heard from a few outstanding ensembles on gigs soon enough after landing to feature jet-lag.

This set was surely performed in more favourable circumstances, for what can happen with the too-recently landed when jet-lag has been sweated out a bit, happens very early here. Especially the bassist co-leader, Francois Moutin, loosens up within the consistent structure of the ensemble, and without any overall element slackening he follows the warm-up chorus by adding things. Dave Holland's quintet gave me my biggest experience of jet-lag management transforming into out-and-out brilliance. It's this sort of waking up the very different Moutin ensemble conjures, waking the listener to hear something really going on.

"Something Like Now -- Part 1" is the opener, composed by the drummer Louis Moutin, the bassist's twin brother. The piano (Pierre de Bethmann) and bass open like they were Siamese twins; in comes the drummer (and the American in the band), Rick Margitza, and it's an ensemble, over a lot of bass work and a piano solo of class. Quite where "Something Like Now -- Part 2" begins is hard to say. I can't be bothered scrolling back; I heard no break and there was more magnificent bass. The tenor comes out of the ensemble, and by the time he's established a forward line against the repeated pattern of the stomping thing the performance has become, the drummer is laying about the cymbals. The internal balance is startling.

The brothers duet on the assemblage of Charlie Parker material which is the second track, and the only one not credited to either of them (though the bassist is credited with arranging this). It stops suddenly and the pianist comes in contrastingly with the drummer's "Take It Easy". Margitza has a softer tone, like some other interesting post-Coltrane non-imitators. Like him, the melodically creative pianist sounds as if he's soloing above a big band. The twins do a lot on bass and drums. Tempo changes are implied, the pianist's move to Fender Rhodes, as the second tenor solo proceeds, enlists him in the formerly two but now three-man semblance of a big band. Nice that he gets to open the track which follows with an unaccompanied section. Bass and drums slip in with support and (for the moment at least) the foregoing turns out to have been an introduction to a plaintive tenor ballad on which passion is tempered by a sense of vulnerability. The ballad voice shifts for a little to the bass, and the tenor resumes, playing harmonics and eventually a delicate cadenza.

Lots of unpredictable things happen during this close to an hour of music. I can't really understand the title "Tomcat". Still, the unison doubling first of a piano line with the tenor, and then piano with bass, is characteristic of *trompe l'oreille* effects which can suddenly dissolve to allow the pianist freedom to solo, shift tempo, be as simple and unflashy as he likes, all with remarkable bass support. Francois Moutin is the one melody instrument player whose does any extended deliberately virtuosic performance, but that very often in providing support. The theme of "Echoing", like the equally unshowy and reflective "Surrendering", comes in late after a prelude, but then Margitza and de Bethmann are allowed remarkable relaxation.

A theme composed by a bassist and entitled "Bottom Line"? Like the other originals here it has a strong, well, line. The tenor doesn't solo but with piano and drum support presents the equivalent of ensemble passages supporting the solo bass feature. This is another two-parter; "Bottom Line -- Part 2" starts where the pianist begins to solo. Subsequently he slides over to Fender Rhodes, to join in a tenor-led miniature big band ensemble ride-out. Fender Rhodes is also used for the tempo or maybe just rhythm change in the closer, with some rock guitar effects. That comes out slightly like a George Russell huge-band boogaloo -- such that old master taped with dozens of Scandinavians, as issued on the Italian Soul Note label. The Moutins do it with quartet. Ouh!

Ejazznews.com, review CD par George W. Carroll

It's really incredible how the American invention of Jazz has pervaded all ethnic cultures globally. Twins François & Louis Moutin (plus group), have created an ambitious project for the enjoyment of the masses.

And, if Charlie Parker's 'Bird's Medley' is any indication of what they were trying to accomplish in the area of edification, the quartet has prevailed! I observe a certain innate biting precision within the combined group as they ply their wares. I must say that bassist Francois executes his bass lines with an exuberance that can only be verbalized as fiery! This is a group that enjoys the challenge of playing their music in settings that are other than traditionally relaxed. Rather, it's a more positive, aggressive, & dynamic jazz which the group offers



Featured Artist: The Moutin Reunion Quartet

CD Title: Something Like Now

Year: 2005

Record Label: Nocturne / Lightyear

Style: Straight-Ahead / Classic



Musicians: Louis Moutin (drums); Francois Moutin (acoustic bass); Rick Margitza (tenor sax); Pierre de Bethmann (piano, Fender Rhodes).

Review: *Something Like Now* begins with the full rich tones of Francois Moutin's string bass almost commanding the listener to wait for what's coming. Moutin is an imposing bassist and when joined his identical twin brother Louis at the drums, the pair becomes a stirring partnership. The Parisian jazzmen both earned degrees in other fields. Drummer Louis Moutin is an engineer while Francois holds a doctorate in physics.

The twins formed the Moutin Reunion Quartet in 1999 looking for a vehicle from which they could offer their original compositions to a wide audience. With Francois Moutin living in New York City and Louis in Paris, the brothers have toured the world for more than three years.

Pianist, Pierre de Bethmann is a native of Boulogne, France. He discovered music as a child and furthered his jazz base at Berklee College of Music in the USA. Like the Moutin twins, de Bethmann left a professional career in business to become a full-time musician.

Rick Margitza is one of the busiest young saxophonists on the European and world scenes. He contributes considerably to the success of the quartet and this album. While he came to this writer's attention on *Alegresse* with the Maria Schneider orchestra five years ago, the tenor player had already established a solid reputation with his albums on Blue Note and Palmetto. He has recorded nine sessions as a leader and many more as a sideman with Miles Davis, Maynard Ferguson and Flora Purim.

With the single exception of "Bird's Medley," all compositions are by the twins, four by Louis and four by Francois. The title tune and "Bottom Line" are two-part compositions. One of the most impressive pieces is the ballad "Surrendering" and it features some beautiful passages by Margitza and Francois Moutin. Another highlight is the up-tempo "M.R.C." where everyone gets a chance to shine. Francois Moutin's fiery and precise execution turns "Bottom Line" into a showcase number. Pierre de Bethmann adds some innovative but flowery ideas.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet is an up-to-the-minute outfit bordering on a fusion sound. They are presently touring Europe and will return for an American tour in late September 2005 playing Ann Arbor, Lansing, Cincinnati, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Philly, Washington and New York. The tour schedule can be found on the quartet's web page.

Tracks: Something Like New Pt 1; Something Like New Pt 2; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line Pt 1; Bottom Line Pt 2; Touch And Go.

Record Label Website: <http://www.lightyear.com>

Artist's Website: <http://www.moutin.com>

Reviewed by: Richard Bourcier



Something Like Now

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Nocturne (2005)

By [Chris May](#)

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Louis and François Moutin are French-born twin brothers who play drums and bass. Since '97, when François relocated from Paris to New York, they've been separated by a few thousand miles, but have managed periodically to get together to tour and record as the Moutin Reunion Quartet. Saxophonist Rick Margitza joined the lineup in '04 for the group's second album, *Red Moon*, and pianist Pierre de Bethmann comes on board with *Something Like Now*.



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Most of the time, the brothers are playing other peoples' music—they're both busy session players and sidemen—and the Reunion Quartet gives them the opportunity to perform their own material. Every track here, aside from the Charlie Parker collage "Bird's Medley," is written, separately, by either Louis or François.

The Moutins have remarkably similar composing styles. Because they're twins? Or because they're both rhythm section players? Je ne sais pas, but I suspect a bit of both. The tunes are mostly full-on, fierce, and upbeat, their angular themes built over brooding, ostinato-based extended riffs, light on lyricism and heavy on atmosphere—the exceptions are François' balladic "Surrendering" and "Echoing," and "Bird's Melody," a 3:24 bass and drums dialogue. Think a heavied-up acoustic Weather Report and you're getting close.

The standard of musicianship is high, as you'd expect from a band led by two top sessionmen, and although the Moutins take all the writing credits, they don't hog the solo space. Margitza is up front pretty much throughout with his no-frills, full-throttle blend of Coltrane, Shorter, and Brecker. Bethmann is probably the freshest voice at the mic, and he delivers blindingly intense solos on "Echoing," "M.R.C.," and the perversely named "Take It Easy." His occasional use of the Fender Rhodes includes sonically inventive contributions to the title track and "Touch And Go."

And the bottom line? This is technically accomplished, high-energy jazz, with a well-defined aesthetic and truckloads of group interplay and muscular soloing. It is, perhaps, a touch muso-ish, and the composition base might benefit from being broadened to include other writers, but it's an often exhilarating ride.

Track listing: Something Like Now Part 1; Something Like Now Part 2; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line Part 1; Bottom Line Part 2; Touch And Go.

Personnel: François Moutin: acoustic upright bass; Louis Moutin: drums; Pierre De Bethmann: piano, Fender Rhodes; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone.

Style: [Modern Jazz/Free Improvisation](#) | Published: August 23, 2005

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Chris May edited Black Music & Jazz Review, and has written books on jazz, African and reggae musics. [More about Chris...](#)

Something Like Now

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Nocturne (2005)

By [Mark F. Turner](#)

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Those twins are at it again: producing some fine jazz.

Paris-born bassist François and drummer Louis Moutin continue their brand of in your face (more correctly in your ear) jazz that sharply illustrates of contemporary bop sensibilities. Previous recordings and extensive gigs in Europe and the US have earned them respect among critics and fans as musicians dedicated to fresh compositions and vigorous performance.



Since their musical reunion in 1999, the brothers have led various quartets with a focus on performing original material. Now pianist Pierre de Bethmann's vivid keys and Rick Margitza's muscular saxophone complete the quartet, once again solidifying a recording with strong performances.

As the rhythmic foundation, the brothers Moutin are as tight and creative as ever. On the labyrinth patterns of "Take It Easy," they swing with intensity and complement one another's abilities intuitively as François brings a robust bass solo to fuse with Louis's driving percussion. This also takes place on the lovely ballad "Surrendering," which features thoughtful solos supported by whispery drum brushwork.

This articulation is conveyed in the writing of many of the compositions, such as the mellow "Echoing" or the high stepping bounce of "Touch and Go." Like the '80s fusion group Steps Ahead, this band skillfully mixes modern textures with a standard quartet sound.

Track listing: Something Like Now - Part 1; Something Like Now - Part 2; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line - Part 1; Bottom Line - Part 2; Touch and Go.

Personnel: François Moutin: acoustic upright bass; Louis Moutin: drums; Pierre de Bethmann: piano, fender rhodes; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone.

Style: [Mainstream/Bop/Hard Bop/Cool](#) | Published: September 30, 2005

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Considering himself a modern day 'Jazz Explorer' Mark continues to discover new and exciting music territories. [More about Mark...](#)



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Something Like Now

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Nocturne (2005)

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France's twin brother jazz combination, bassist François and drummer Louis Moutin, have just released their third Moutin Reunion Quartet recording in six years since the unit was formed as a showcase for their swinging, original compositions. It's another bop-rooted contemporary odyssey that is delightful in its scope and focus. The band is rounded out by pianist Pierre de Bethmann and the immensely gifted saxophonist Rick Margitza.



Part 2 of the “Something Like Now” title track provides a splendid example of rhythm section supporting soloist as Margitza embarks on a strong, cohesive, and crafty solo. Rich with nuance and variation from bar to bar, it never gets repetitively boring. The brothers Moutin depart from their even split of original compositions on François' arrangement of “Bird's Medley”—consisting of several themes from compositions by Charlie Parker. This is a bass and drums duet from start to finish with Louis trading sticks for bare hands throughout, plus an occasional hi-hat accent.

Of particular interest is the tune “Take It Easy”—a wild ride, despite its perhaps tongue-in-cheek title. It's full of energy and fire, with the rhythm section uniting as a cushion to propel Margitza's intense soloing. De Bethmann opens the ballad “Surrendering” with an extended solo that leads into the more poignant side of Margitza's playing. François' “Echoing” is an acoustic bass showcase with minimal support. The other three players tiptoe in one by one to let its full feeling build gradually. “Touch and Go” is a funky choice for the closer, adding more dollops of the band's Weather Report acoustic and electronic influences as de Bethmann shifts to Fender Rhodes.

The quartet has reinforced the feeling from last year's *Red Moon*: this is one serious unit with much to offer the straightahead jazz listener.

Track listing: Something Like Now - Part 1; Something Like Now - Part 2; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line - Part 1; Bottom Line - Part 2; Touch and Go.

Personnel: François Moutin: acoustic upright bass; Louis Moutin: drums; Pierre de Bethmann: piano, Fender Rhodes; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone.

Style: [Mainstream/Bop/Hard Bop/Cool](#) | Published: October 15, 2005

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Ken Franckling is an award-winning jazz writer and photographer who has been covering the mainstream jazz scene for more than 20 years for a variety of publications. [More about Ken...](#)

This article first appeared in [All About Jazz: New York](#).



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O's Place Jazz Newsletter, review CD par D. Oscar Groomes

Moutin Reunion Quartet - *Something Like Now* 4/3

O's Notes: The Moutin brothers, Louis (d) and François (b) wrote all of the songs except a cool new arrangement of "Bird's Medley". They are joined by Pierre de Bethmann (p) and Rick Margitza (sax). This unit is seamless and it makes "M.R.C" really swing. François's racing bass lines are hot, especially on "Tomcat". They create a mildly funky fusion that sounds great and it feels good too!

D. **O**scar Groomes

Improvjazzation Nation, review CD par Dick Metcalf

Moutin Reunion Quartet - SOMETHING LIKE NOW:

Superb sonics & excellent jazz composition will make this a reunion you'll wish you'd been there for... & with this CD, you can (at least for a few) feel like you are. The recording has an "intimate" feel... not just the playing, but the *recording* itself... I'm not exactly sure why it comes across that way, but it does. You'll want to be in line on August 30th, 2005, when this is released in stores... it's that pleasant a listening experience. Siblings Louis (drums) & Francois (bass) Moutin are joined by a most excellent pianist, Pierre de Bethmann & sax player Rick Margitza. The majority of the tracks are all original, which makes the experience ever more exciting for these ol' ears... totally fresh ideas that are expressed with total energy & will challenge your ears to reach new plateaus. This is one of the best jazz albums I've listened to this year, & it comes MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED for jazz buffs who want pure creativity flowing into their ears!

Something Like Now

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Nocturne

By John Kelman

print email

When twin brothers François and Louis Moutin brought their Moutin Reunion Quartet to this year's Ottawa International Jazz Festival, it was one of those surprise performances that created an immediate buzz amongst festival-goers. The intensely powerful quartet played with the kind of total engagement that grabbed the audience from the first note. While most people didn't know who the Moutin Reunion Quartet was walking into the show, it's a sure bet that they'll be remembering them for a long time to come.

The quartet's performance—which also featured newcomer/pianist Pierre de Bethmann and tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza (a Miles Davis alumnus who moved to Paris a couple of years back and has been with the group since their second release, '04's *Red Moon*)—focused almost exclusively on new material from *Something Like Now*, once again a showcase for drummer Louis and bassist François' strong contemporary writing and the kind of simpatico interaction and uncanny intuition between them that makes indisputable the argument for twins sharing a special connection.

While the Moutin Reunion Quartet is an all-acoustic affair—with the exception of the occasional Fender Rhodes work by Bethmann—the influence of Jaco-era Weather Report is strong, in particular the complex detailing of Wayne Shorter's best writing for that group. And yet, the execution is so effortless and the grooves so unassailable that the elaborate foundations are truly invisible until you pay close attention. And, despite the inherent challenge of the material, there's also room for the kind of interpretive spontaneity that makes for an invigorating listen throughout.

Louis' paradoxically-named modal burner "Take It Easy" finds the brothers lighting a fire beneath Margitza's explosive solo, but they also realize that it's necessary to pace an album, doing so with François' gentle ballad, "Surrendering," an evocative vehicle for the tender side of Margitza and Bethmann—whose accompaniment is sparse but wonderfully supportive. As in performance, the brothers deliver a bass/drums duet, in this case "Bird's Medley," cleverly piecing together a number of Charlie Parker themes that finishes off with "Donna Lee"—and is an impressive alternative to the late electric bassist Jaco Pastorius' duet of the same piece with percussionist Don Alias, from his '76 self-titled debut album.

What distinguishes the music of the Moutin Reunion Quartet is how it can be tightly arranged and yet completely opened at the same time. Louis' funky album closer, "Touch and Go," may revolve around strict form, but the group can seamlessly shift gears—sometimes begging the question whether it's spontaneous or prearranged—preventing them from ever being predictable. And while formidable chops abound, none of the players demonstrate any superfluous excess. Every well-constructed solo works as both self-contained entity and part of a greater collective.

With consistently outstanding playing, creative writing, and unabashed interplay, *Something Like Now* demonstrates the Moutin Reunion Quartet's clear evolution since *Red Moon*. It deserves the kind of exposure that this, their first album with major US distribution by WEA, will hopefully bring.

Visit [Moutin Reunion Quartet](#) on the web.



Track Listing: Something Like Now - Part 1; Something Like Now - Part 2; Bird's Medley; Take It Easy; Surrendering; M.R.C.; Tomcat; Echoing; Bottom Line - Part 1; Bottom Line - Part 2; Touch and Go.

Personnel: François Moutin: acoustic upright bass, composition; Louis Moutin: drums, composition; Pierre de Bethmann: piano, fender rhodes; Rick Margitza: tenor saxophone.

Style: Mainstream/Bop/Hard Bop/Cool

Review Published: September 03, 2005

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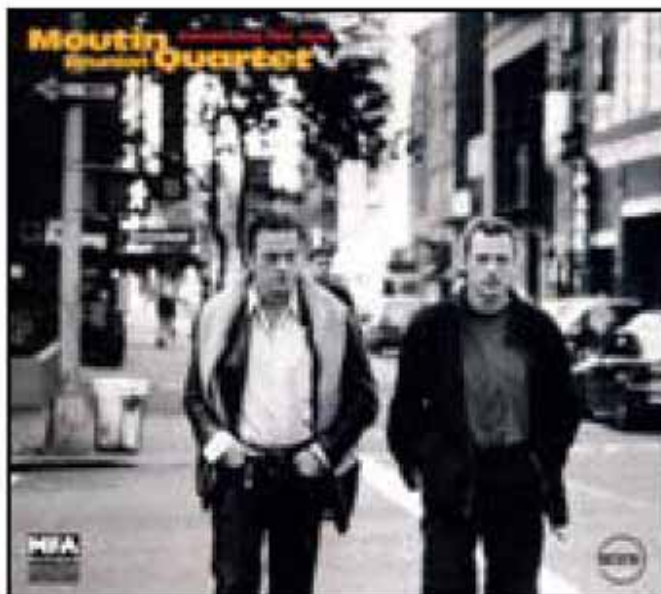
When not writing feverishly for AAJ, John Kelman contributes to the Canadian magazines *Muzik Etc.* and *The Jazz Report*. More about John...

Reviews and Picks

Moutin Reunion Quartet

Something Like Now (Lightyear)

LIKE MOST OF you, I'd guess, I'm pretty much immersed in jazz, between listening to new releases and to the radio, and catching as much live music as possible. Rarely, though, have I heard and seen a group whose performance was so absolutely exhilarating as the latest incarnation of the Moutin Reunion Quartet. Anchored by the telepathically taut playing of twins François (bass) and Louis Moutin (drums), the



quartet adds a new pianist this time, Pierre de Bethmann, to create one the most explosive rhythm sections around. Saxophonist Rick Margitza glides above the fray as the group's melodic voice, but equals the others' intensity with some fiery improvisational passages. All but one track – “Bird's Medley,” a François Moutin arrangement of Charlie Parker tunes performed as a duo by the Moutins – are François or Louis compositions, and there's not one that I wouldn't recommend for airplay. Lithe, lean and muscular, *Something Like Now* is a lock on my list of the year's ten best. – *Ed Trefzger*

Contact: Neal Sapper, New World 'N' Jazz

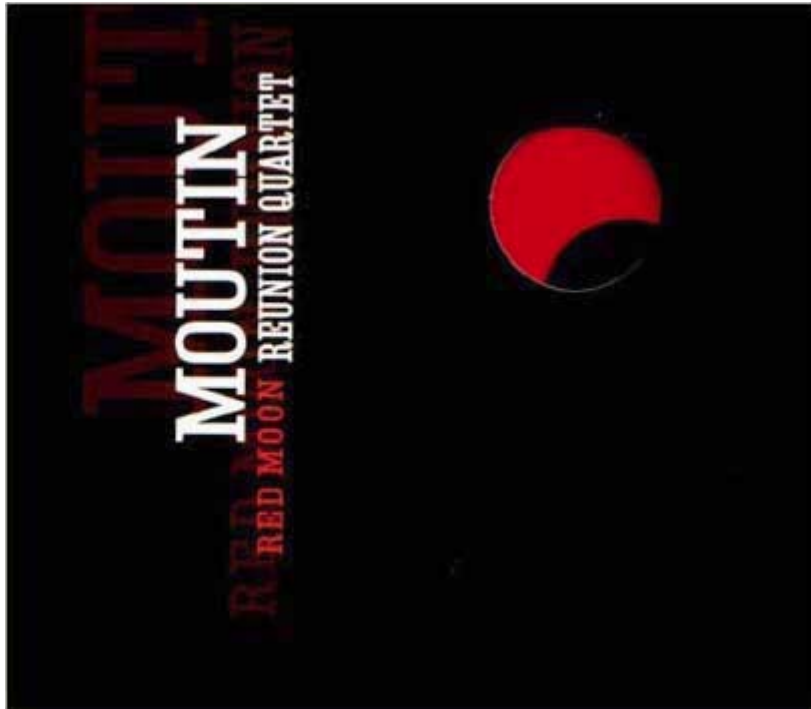
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Release Date: Aug. 30

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CD Review "Red Moon" – Steve Nash

L.A. Times

JAZZ SPOTLIGHT

They're widening the global fraternity

France's Moutin twins exemplify the music's international appeal.

By Don Heckman

Special to The Times - January 18 2004

Jazz has been reaching out globally at least since World War I, when the appropriately named Lt. James Reese Europe and his 369th Infantry "Harlem Hellfighters" brought the rhythms of ragtime to battle-scarred France.

Although the musical flow initially moved outward from the U.S., high-quality international jazz players began to arrive on the scene in the '20s. Since then, the romance with jazz has expanded to every corner of the world.

In more recent years, with few American icons around to create new, pervasive stylistic genres, jazz has blossomed in boundary-less fashion, a panoramic garden blending the essential elements of improvisation and swing with sounds and rhythms from every part of the planet.

"Red Moon" (Sunnyside Records) by the Moutin Reunion Quartet is a superb example of this cross-pollination. The group's leaders are French bassist Francois Moutin and his twin brother, drummer Louis Moutin. The brothers were heard most recently in the Southland as members of a trio led by the innovative pianist Martial Solal. Their ability to move gracefully with the sudden twists and turns of Solal's improvisational inventiveness stamped the pair as potentially significant artists in their own right.

In the opening track of "Red Moon," the twins duet adventurously through Charles Trenet's "La Mer," transforming the classic melody into a joyous, hard-swinging romp underpinned by an irresistible rhythmic groove. The album closes with a harmonically off-kilter rendering of "Stompin' at the Savoy" featuring the quartet's other members, French pianist Baptiste Trotignon and American saxophonist Rick Margitza.

In between are eight originals, four by each of the Moutin brothers. The moods range from the lyrical, inner atmospheres of "Soraya" and the roaring, groove-driven surge of "Jazz Married" to the disjunct rhythms of "Taking Off," the layered textures of "Sailing Through the Clouds" and the contemporary bop of "New-York Silly."

Margitza, a far too under-recognized player, swings with Coltrane-inspired energies throughout. Trotignon, 29, is a real find; a casually virtuosic technician with a subtle touch, a rich melodic imagination and a propulsive sense of rhythm.

But it is the playing of the Moutin twins that takes the music from the level of eminently listenable to the lofty plane of prime, world-class jazz.

There are other rhythm section brother teams in jazz; Percy and Albert "Tootie" Heath, Victor and Roy Wooten. But no identical twins that come immediately to mind.

And the remarkable interplay between Francois and Louis' intuitive, enmeshed, symbiotic is a convincing aural manifestation of the belief that identical twins are connected in remarkable, inexplicable fashion.

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

"Red Moon"

Sunnyside

The brothers Moutin—Francois on bass and Louis on drums—bracket their new quartet release with a pair of familiar tunes cast in a new light: First, an abstract duet arrangement of "La Mer (Beyond The Sea)," marked by skittish lines, swift exchanges and percussive textures; last, an unusually slow and soulful take on "Stompin' at The Savoy." If you lose track of a melody at times, no matter. The band's transcendent musical rapport offers ample compensation.

The tunes that fall in between the standards are all original pieces, and they range from the album's knotty and angular title theme, with its allusions to Thelonious Monk-like harmonic designs and Latin jazz rhythmic cadences, to the haunting ballad "Soraya," a splendid showcase for pianist Baptiste Trotignon and saxophonist

(and recent band recruit) Rick Margitza.

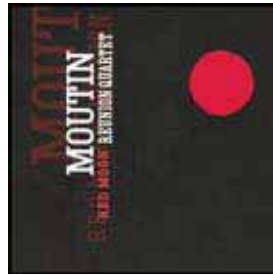
Seasoned rhythm section-mates, the brothers clearly view this ensemble as an opportunity to compose and play jazz that is at once accessible and adventurous, intimate and expansive. They take turns contributing pieces, alternately introducing atmospheric balladry ("Sailing Through the Clouds") and harmonically torqued modal excursions ("Taking Off"). For all the mood shifts, though, there are of plenty of common denominators, beginning with Francois's unfailingly resonant tone and Louis' flair for balancing unfussy swing with clustered accents. The addition of Margitza is a big plus as well, since he wields both tenor and soprano saxes here with muscularity and grace.

— Mike Joyce

Appearing Thursday at the Kennedy Center. ■ To hear a free Sound Bite from Moutin Reunion Quartet, call Post-Haste at 202-334-9000 and press 8124. (Prince William residents, call 703-690-4110.)

AAJ Publisher's Picks of the Week

JAN 11, 2004



Red Moon

Moutin Reunion Quartet | Sunnyside

Avant garde music is not my cup of tea : I usually find it dark and formless, and the more “out” it goes, the faster I turn it off. But when I heard the opening track here, a bass and drum derangement of “La Mer,” I was struck by how playful it could be. Same thing for the next and title track, a driving funk/Latin mix, where pianist Baptiste Trotignon and saxist Rick Margitza join the party, contributing to the genial celebration. I was surprised that I could not only follow the journey, but enjoy it as well. Either my ears have grown after a decade of reviewing, or these guys have produced something special. Perhaps both.

In any case, the leaders are twin brothers, Francois and Louis Moutin, who offer four originals each, as well as two standards arranged by Francois. The “reunion” reflects Francois's return after leaving the first Moutin group in 1996 for the US. The music is bold, with intricate rhythms and intriguing harmonies. Trotignon's piano knits the quartet together with melodic silk, supple and strong.

“Apollo 13” conveys the power and mystery of space flight, with Margitza soaring, as he does on “Sailing Through the Clouds.” “Taking Off” makes the most out of a simple riff; “New-York Silly” is full of the Apple's energy, while “Soroya” is a moody ballad. “Stomping at the Savoy” becomes more like “Slinking at the Savoy” in Francois's fresh conception.

This is original, exciting, well-crafted music; it will definitely challenge those used to swimming in the mainstream, but the rewards of listening are many.

~ Dr. Judith Schlesinger

Track Listing: La Mer, Red Moon, Apollo 13, Soraya, Jazz Married, Taking Off, Sailing Through the Clouds, New-York Silly, Elle Aime, Stompin' at the Savoy

Personnel: Francois Moutin (acoustic upright bass, composer), Louis Moutin (drums, composer), Baptiste Trotignon (piano), Rick Margitza (tenor and soprano sax)

Style: Modern Jazz/Free Improvisation

Review Published: January 2004

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Moutin Reunion Quartet - Red Moon - CD Review



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WYNTON MARSALIS

The Magic Hour
(Blue Note)

Make that *The Magic Half-Hour*. Wynton Marsalis' debut release for Blue Note offers a handful of genuinely affecting tracks offset by an equal number of duds. And most of the trouble stems from the trumpeter's otherwise admirable interest in the past. When Marsalis first burst on the scene, during the early 1980s, he primarily looked to '60s-era Miles Davis for inspiration. Since becoming artistic director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, however, he has delved further and further into the roots of the music. Unfortunately, as *The Magic Hour* demonstrates, Marsalis' musical way-back machine doesn't always offer a smooth ride. On tunes like "Feeling of Jazz" and "You and Me," he clearly aims to capture the sound of an earlier era. His solos are essays on early jazz-trumpet technique. And his ability to conjure up the brilliant sound of Louis Armstrong or the animal growl of Bubber Miley is remarkable.

For all Marsalis' erudition and facility, however, the net effect is pedantic and contrived — an impressive lecture on jazz history, but a lecture, nonetheless.

Only when Marsalis loosens up sufficiently to sound like himself does the music catch fire. On tracks like "Big Fat Hen," "Skipping," and "Free to Be," the trumpeter embraces the full range of his resources, from primordial swing to post-bop abstraction. Here, Armstrong and Davis, New Orleans grooves, and cerebral solo lines happily commingle as part of a fully integrated sound.

At moments like this, Marsalis seems to be speaking to us in his own voice. Would that he did so more often.

—Alexander Gelfand

THE MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

Red Moon
(Sunnyside)

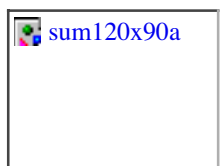
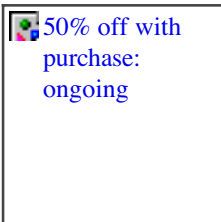
This post-bop-mainstream group hasn't yet garnered the American audience it merits, despite rave reviews during the past few years in Boston, Washington, L.A., and New York.

François and Louis Moutin are identical twins who play upright bass and drums, respectively, and they are in superb form here. The band is their second group together, hence the "reunion" tag. Louis' drumming is a constant stream of invention, only obtrusive when it's supposed to be. Françoise's precisely articulated sound — which often includes double-stops on those fat bass strings — has been described as "horn-like."

The fraternal ESP shared by the twins extends to pianist Baptiste Trotignon and saxophonist Rick Margitza, who has a sound like Michael Brecker and edgy lyricism. Each of the bookends for this set overhauls a standard in a striking way. It starts with an encrypted, arresting arrangement — for drums and bass only — of "Beyond the Sea." At the close, find a rich restatement of Chick Webb's old "Stompin' at the Savoy," packed with beautiful insinuations. In between are eight Moutin originals, including the title track, which showcases slanting chords and an urgent, declamatory theme.

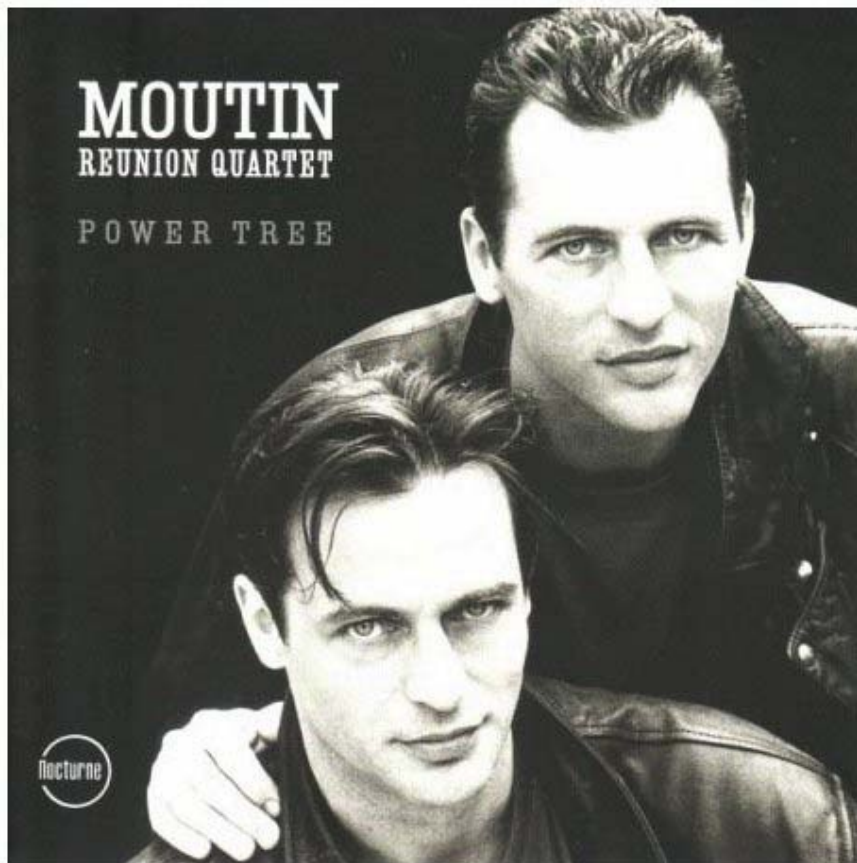
—Steve Nash

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THE BAD PLUS

CD REVIEWS OF POWER TREE



WASHINGTON POST

CD Review "Power Tree" – Mike Joyce

DOWNBEAT MAGAZINE

CD Review "Power Tree" – Ted Panken

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 2002

V5

— ON THE TOWN —

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET "Power Tree"

Dreyfus

One of the most memorable jazz concerts in town last year found piano virtuoso Martial Solal at the French Embassy, collaborating with bassist Francois Moutin and drummer Bill Stewart. Moutin's contributions that night were often inspired—by turns soulful and sophisticated, subtle and striking.

The same virtues enhance the performances on "Power Tree," an extended family affair that teams the bassist with his twin, drummer Louis Moutin, and two fellow Frenchmen—pianist Baptiste Trotignon and saxophonist Sylvain Beuf.

It's clear from the outset that the quartet isn't going to settle for anything approaching a stock arrangement. The opening track features the brothers Moutin exclusively, recasting "La Vie en Rose" as an exceedingly nimble bass and percussion duet. When Trotignon and Beuf enter the picture on the next cut, Louis Moutin's "Free Climbing," the quartet quickly forges a compelling sound, full of probing harmonies and propulsive rhythms.

With Beuf doubling on tenor and soprano saxophones, the band then goes on to conjure a variety of moods, often within the framework of the same performance. "Toutes Directions," for example, begins casually enough before the rhythm section locks

into a churning modal gear and Beuf's horn acquires a bright, insistent tone. Similarly, a medley of "Les Copains d'abord" and "Le Gorille" juxtaposes Trotignon's gliding lyricism with a fitful rhythmic attack and Beuf's now simmering, now searing sax. But in the end it doesn't much matter if Francois Moutin is going it alone, as on the evocative ballad "Africa," or the full quartet is fired up, as on "Song for a Cat." The level of musicianship and invention is consistently impressive.

— Mike Joyce

Appearing Friday and Saturday at Twins. ■ To hear a free Sound Bite from the Moutin Reunion Quartet, call Post-Haste at 202/334-9000 and press 8107. (Prince William residents, call 703/690-4110.)

DOWN BEAT.

october 2002

volume 69 - number 10

Moutin Reunion Quartet

Power Tree

Dreyfus 36704

★★★½

On *Power Tree*, Francois Moutin, a compelling bassist who projects a dark, spot-on tone with an attack that can be fleet and hornlike, but also foundational and bottom-oriented, joins forces with his identical twin, drummer Louis, reedman Sylvain Beuf and pianist Baptiste Trotignon on a program of six originals, two by French singer Georges Brassens, and the old chestnut "La Vie En Rose."

It would be hard to find two musicians more in sync than the twins, who lay down one surging, complex, interlocked groove after another, Beuf, who gets a song-like effect on tenor and a clarinetish flavor on soprano, elegantly navigates the melodies with savoir faire and good intonation; Trotignon provides apropos comp,

harmonic imagination and straightforward solos. The musicianship is impeccable, and the group generates a lot of fire.

Francois Moutin, the bassist, is the type of player you pay attention to even when he's walking a bassline, and who constructs several declamations that you can return to for inspiration over and over again.

—Ted Panken

Power Tree: La Vie En Rose; Free Climbing; Africa; Flying Bridge; Toutes Directions; Je m'suis fait tout p'tit; Medley: Les Copains d'abord/Le Gorille, A batons rompus; Song For A Cat. (70:18)

Personnel: Francois Moutin, bass; Louis Moutin, drums; Baptiste Trotignon, piano; Sylvain Beuf, tenor and soprano saxophones.

Ordering Info: www.dreyfusrecords.com

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Louisiana Music Magazine

From France to Frenchmen Street

By John Swenson

When the French twin brothers Francois and Louis Moutin were growing up in Paris, one of the games they engaged in together was pretending they were playing New Orleans traditional jazz. "When we were five or six years old, we used to play Jelly Roll Morton," says Francois. "He was one of our first influences. My brother was playing piano and I was playing guitar."



October 2 and 3, the Moutins will travel to Louisiana, where they will actualize their childhood fantasy on the stage at [Snug Harbor](#). "This will be our first time in New Orleans, so we are really excited," Francois says. "We're going to check the local music for sure. We have no preconceived plan. I'm sure we'll meet a lot of people."

The Moutins were brought up on a steady diet of jazz thanks to their father, an avid jazz collector who maintained his precious store of 78s through most of the Nazi occupation of France during World War II.

in France who were really interested in jazz, following whoever came into town and going to hear them in basement clubs,” says Francois. “He was a very good dancer and he bought records, so a lot of his collection was made of the early wax pressings. At the end of the war when the German army occupied Paris, jazz was forbidden so he had to get rid of a big chunk of his collection to prevent being arrested. He replaced what he lost so we were able to listen to Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis and so many others.”

The Moutins learned piano from their mother, who played by ear, but over the years Louis eventually became a drummer and Francois played bass. They studied at university and both became engineers, but they continued to play music and eventually turned to music as a full time occupation.

“I managed to be elected president of the music club at my school,” says Francois, “so instead of going to courses we would spend the whole day jamming with the guys. We started to get gigs at little clubs. We both had a passion for mathematics and physics, but when it comes to making it your profession, it’s not the same thing.”

Becoming professional musicians split the brothers apart as they each became highly sought after sidemen on their respective instruments. Francois became the bassist for the great jazz pianist Martial Solal, and in the 1980s he moved to New York City at the urging of friends in the jazz community. “When I moved to New York, my brother and I were apart,” says Francois, “but in the 1990s we began to play together again in other bands.”

In 1998, the Moutins, who by now were regarded as the best rhythm section in the history of French jazz, released their first album as the Moutin Reunion Band.

“One day my brother played me a tune that he wrote, and I loved it so much I said we should put a band together again. I was writing as well, and we both liked what we were coming up with. At first we only played in France, then we would play together in Martial’s band. A couple of years later, we recorded an album and our band was able to play in the U.S.”

The Moutins now have five albums under their belt and a chance to realize their childhood dream of playing in New Orleans. They are looking forward to a cultural exchange with New Orleans musicians at [UNO's](#) Sandbar program almost as much as the Snug Harbor gig.

“We’re going to do some sort of master class in which we’ll end up playing with the students,” says Francois. “We will improvise, and with jazz, that’s the best way to approach it. We start talking, we ask them questions, they ask us questions, perhaps we can give them some advice and hopefully we’ll learn something from them as well. That’s the great thing about jazz; every time you play, you’re hoping to learn something from the experience.”

Published October 2008, OffBeat Louisiana Music & Culture Magazine, Volume 21, No. 10.

The New Face of Jazz by [Charles Farrell](#)

In the last few years jazz has made one of its most radical transformations since the 1960s. Globalization, quick and easy internet access to various musical idioms and increased scholarship (musicians now often get advanced degrees from noteworthy music schools) have resulted in both a promising era for jazz and a plethora of abundantly talented instrumentalists.

One of the potential hazards of such bounty, however, is the ease with which important new musicians can wind up being missed by all but hardcore listeners. Listed below are twelve musicians, many of whom are still at relatively early stages of their careers, who are in the process of leaving indelible marks on the shape of jazz to come. They draw inspiration from the full timeline of jazz history, from salsa and funk, from hip-hop and contemporary classical, from ragas and reggae and come from a variety of countries (Vietnam, India, France and Italy to name a few).

What connects these musicians is a combination of studied virtuosity and unabashed emotionalism. Previous generations of jazz musicians tended to fall into the "hot" or "cool" category, with little stylistic overlap. These folks need no such classifications, moving easily from the rigorous logic of Lenny Tristano to the shrieks and wails of Albert Ayler. They can even reference Charles Ives and DJ Olive within the same composition and not have it come across as awkward or pretentious.

Is there a downside to all of this newness? Not really. Listening to the music does require some commitment. None of it "swings" in the traditional sense. It's not music that allows you to go on autopilot. But all innovative music journeys to mainstream acceptance from "difficult" and "avant-garde" beginnings. Charlie Parker and John Coltrane were both once accused by critics of not being able to play their instruments. With them, as with these vital young players, all that was required to set things straight was an open mind and a little acclimation. The music richly repays a listener's commitment.



Artist: [Moutin Reunion Quartet](#)

Release Date: 2007

Francis Moutin

There's some irony in admitting that a Frenchman may just be the closest to being the Keeper of the Flame for straight-ahead jazz. But such is the state of the genre today: any facet of its history is liable to be upheld by anyone, from anywhere. If bassist Francis Moutin isn't as preoccupied with breaking new ground as a composer or arranger as others featured here, he is no less significant a musician. Moutin is at the forefront of modern bass playing -- a true virtuoso with a breathtakingly full tone, stunning hand speed and a range of idiomatic mastery that allows him to be secure in any context. Consider this: Moutin recently recorded with both the 80 year-old piano genius Martial Solal and young innovator Rudresh Mahanthappa (*Mother Tongue*). He negotiates both settings with equal aplomb. Moutin has a twin brother Louis (a fine drummer) with whom he plays in the eponymous Moutin Reunion Quartette.

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MOUTIN REUNION

Counting on Intuition

Watching twin brothers François and Louis Moutin load their van after a gig at Chicago's HotHouse last June, one could hardly imagine that they both hold a post-graduate degree from two of the most prestigious French engineering schools. But music has been part of their life since they were growing up. "Our parents had an extensive jazz record collection covering all eras," François said. "They also had instruments and they would take us out to concerts."

As they shared a passion for math and music, their educational path was actually directed by bad music instructors and great math teachers. In college, however, they got somewhat disillusioned with their classes and became more involved with music. After graduating, they met another pianist, Jean-Marie Machado, and that experience convinced them that jazz was going to be their bread and butter. They quickly started to garner attention and were hired by reed player Michel Portal and pianist Martial Solal.

Louis is cautious for fear of being misunderstood when asked about a relationship between math and music, but François is eager to answer. "The most pertinent common attribute is intuition," he said. "When you try to solve a problem or elaborate a theory, intuition becomes an essential tool. And you also use your intuition when you try to create music or improvise." This is reflected in their hard-bop/post-bop, which is far from cerebral and is packed with emotion and energy.

Their current project is called the Moutin Reunion Quartet for a reason. Following the advice of musicians such as Carla Bley and Peter Erskine, François moved to New York in 1995. "I loved it right away," he said.

During François' exile, the twins did not take part in too many projects together. "One day [in 1999], my brother called me and played a new composition over the phone," François said. "Since I had several of mine in stock it became natural to start a group."

Although the quartet is acoustic, its music occasionally suggests Weather Report. "I love that band," François said. "They created a language that hardly anybody has used since. They had a unique rhythmic approach to the melody and their music contained some harmonically elaborate elements."

Louis added: "We did borrow their approach to composition, the way they structured a piece and how this structure leads to improvisation."

While the two brothers co-lead the group, they do not co-write the tunes. However, the cohesion of their project shows once more what a special relationship they have. "If you listen to our music you can feel the differences," Louis said. "But at the same time, the music comes



Louis (left) and François Moutin

from the same vein and you can see a close kinship between our writing styles. We each have our own touch."

The group's line up also includes pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza, who joined the quartet after sitting in on several occasions as substitutes. Their predecessors, saxophonist Sylvain Beuf and pianist Baptiste Trotignon, left as their own careers took a turn for the better. Without diminishing the contributions of these earlier band members, the Moutins feel that they have now the band they have been looking for. Their recent album, *Something Like Now* (Nocturne), is the first to benefit from a large U.S. distribution.

"We just want to play," Louis said. "Most French musicians don't get to perform outside of France. Playing all around the world with Martial Solal showed us that it was possible."

—Alain Drouot

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Music

No Moutin Ruse

You're not seeing double. Identical twin Frenchmen lead jazz ensemble that's bound for Erie.

Published: September 29, 2005 7:00AM

Advertisement

Many things -- besides the exciting, inventive way they combine straight ahead and "neo-fusion" jazz -- make the Moutin Reunion Quartet a distinctive ensemble.

The band is co-led by identical French-born twin brothers Francois and Louis Moutin. Louis, a drummer, lives in Paris, while bass player Francois has been a New Yorker since 1997, making the band bi-continental.

Each has an advanced degree, but neither one is in music. Louis has a master's in math, Francois has a Ph.D. in physics. They turned their backs on careers and almost certain financial security in favor of one of the most problematic occupations out there, a life in jazz.

"For us, music has always been fun," said Francois by phone from Paris. "Then it became a passion, so we knew we had to do it to be more in touch with ourselves, although we realized our lives would be less comfortable."

The siblings, 43, played together until age 20, then separated to become sidemen with folks such as John Abercrombie, Albert Mangelsdorff, Michel Legrand, Martial Solal, Toots Thielemans, and Archie Shepp.

In 1999, they decided it was time to be together again, and formed a band. Current members include pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza, who's played with Miles Davis, Maynard Ferguson and Maria Schneider. Francois can't say enough about Margitza.

"He's one of the few saxophonists who could handle what we're playing," he said. He praised his "poetic sense of phrasing," and called him "soulful and energetic, but controlled."

The twins are enjoying considerable success -- working often, recording regularly, and getting generally excellent reviews for live shows and CDs.

Firmly established abroad, the Moutins and their band have toured the U.S. several times annually for the past four years. The visits are paying off.

"It's hard work, but rewarding to succeed on two continents," Francois says. "In jazz, America has always been considered the real thing, so our success in the U.S. makes the French and other countries proud and has increased our notoriety there."

From the opening notes of the title tune of the quartet's new CD "Something Like New" (Nocturne), the experienced jazz listener might think, "Sounds like Weather Report."

"Yes, we did connect with them in those days, but if you listen closely, I think you'll notice that the similarity is mostly in the writing (done primarily by the brothers), rather than the sound of the group," Francois says.

He makes it clear that he and Louis learned jazz and its history from listening to their parents' exhaustive record library. They've also played the music since age 5, so that they've incorporated elements from many great figures.

The result? Their music -- mostly acoustic, except for the occasional use of electric piano -- is high energy, free-wheeling, yet also lyrical and terrifically interactive.

However it is labeled, Francois says the band's music is about "intimacy" and "sharing our emotions" with one another and listeners.

"After all," Francois says, "music expresses life."

Moutin Reunion Quartet will perform Saturday at 8 p.m. at the Erie Art Museum Annex, 423 State St. Admission is \$10 for Erie Art Museum and JazzErie members; \$12 for general public; \$6 for students and seniors.

URSULA K.



From left: François Moutin, Baptiste Trotignon, Rick Margitza and Louis Moutin

Moutin Reunion Quartet

What do you get when you combine twins separated by an ocean—bassist François (in New York) and drummer Louis Moutin (in Paris)—with expat saxophonist Rick Margitza and young firebrand pianist Baptiste Trotignon (both in Paris)? A band with feet on both sides of the Atlantic that ably defies distance, manages to remain creatively in sync and employs long-distance phone lines to compose material.

Moutin Reunion Quartet's music might be called acoustic fusion because the band uses structural devices and sonic elements reminiscent of various '70s groups. In performance, improvised mini-suites—with smoothly executed interstitial passages—are the group's trademark. At times the syntax seems slightly off: solo, head, drum and bass dialog, head, solo and out. But the Quartet never loses the compass. The group consistently shows instrumental confidence (François' bass prowess is a marvel in itself) and a unified approach rare even among groups with all its members residing in the same postal code.

Born on Christmas Eve and raised in Paris, Louis says the brothers "shared the energy of all those jazz records at home and together we found how to play. François was good with things like chords and harmony, and for me it was rhythm. I came to play piano, he came to play guitar and then went to the bass. Then way after that I went to drums." That they would form a rhythm unit seems inevitable.

By the late '80s, the brothers became the go-to backup team in the Parisian jazz scene for both the established (like Martial Solal) and the up-and-comers (pianist Jean-Michel Pilc.) They formed their first group to critical acclaim but disbanded when François relocated to New York City in 1996.

But in 1999 the brothers were talking on the phone, as

François recalls: "Louis played for me a composition he had just written. That's when I went, 'Hey, we need to do a band again.' So we got these two French guys—the sax player Sylvain Beuf and Baptiste Trotignon on the piano—and that went really great. Actually, the composition my brother played to me—'Sailing Through the Clouds'—is on our new record."

With Margitza replacing Beuf, the MRQ stand poised to win American praise. Their new album *Red Moon* (Sunnyside)—the group's third—received veteran production input and guidance from George Avakian, is elegantly packaged in a striking, die-cut case and is filled with compelling musical moments. "Elle Aime"—a pun on Louis' and his son's initials—skips along lightly and smartly. The opening of "Apollo 13th"

and the title track both conjure the fusion era. "Sailing Through the Clouds" receives its first recorded outing.

François: "All the tunes that are here we work on by ourselves—"

Louis: "—and in the three months before we went into the studio, we played all these tunes in 20 concerts or more."

François: "On the road we talk about it, play them and change them. Actually the more we change them the more they become open and the more you can feel the influence of Baptiste and Rick on it."

Revising and recording Chick Webb's "Stompin' at the Savoy" was, according to Louis, "Typical François. He loves to do kinds of things like that—he's the guy who has those ideas on standards."

If one tune serves as a fraternal emblem, the bass-and-drum treatment of Charles Trenet's classic chanson "La Mer"—replete with Louis' hands-on-snare drive and François' voicelike exhortation of the melody—fits the bill and also contrasts their supportive role for the band's other half. Says Louis: "You can find our relationship in the first track—"

François: "—and it's not about that tune specifically. It's more about the interaction between us when we are free to play together. That track is very representative of how we can really work in telepathy almost."

Louis: "But on the rest of the album, we are just like the rhythm section that is comping beside those two marvelous guys, who are not twins. I mean, they are marvels. Baptiste is so great and so young, and Rick's way of playing—the sound he's got, and the phrases he plays—it's so poetic."

Asked separately to describe how *Red Moon* stands out from past efforts, Louis answers, "I think that we are—how can I say it?—a little bit more in the center of ourselves."

François echoes, "On this one I can hear that we have reached a certain style, some kind of center."

Se centrer is the French verb both were referencing, they later admitted. In English, the verb translates to finding one's spiritual—possibly musical—identity. In the far-flung world of Moutin Reunion, the creative center—to paraphrase an old spiritual saw—lies within. **ASHLEY KAHN**



all about jazz



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Column: Interviews

Power Twins Unite: Francois and Louis Moutin

Posted: 2004-03-03

By [Franz A. Matzner](#)

Twin brothers, bassist Francois Moutin and drummer Louis Moutin came to jazz early. Born to jazz enthusiast parents in Paris, the two began playing together as young children, forming the deep musical bond that has led them to their present day international recognition, both as individual players and a team.

Though Francois currently resides in New York and Louis in Paris, they continue to work together often, having recently released the critically acclaimed album, *Red Moon*, for which they will be touring through the U.S. in the near future.

It was my distinct pleasure to speak with the Moutins about their current projects, musical



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development, and unique musical relationship. While Francois and I were able to speak on the phone, Louis Moutin, having returned to Paris, was unable to join the conversation directly. Fortunately, Louis was able to respond in brief to several questions submitted to him in writing. These comments have been placed at the conclusion of the Francois Moutin interview.

FRANCOIS MOUTIN

All About Jazz: Your latest release, *Red Moon*, really highlights your working relationship with your brother. [ed. note: Louis Moutin] You both contributed four compositions, and you can just hear it on the album that you guys play together seamlessly. I wanted to start there and ask how you both became so involved in music.



FM: We started listening to jazz as soon as we were born because our parents were jazz fans. Our father had thousands of jazz records and we picked the early jazz. He had records going form Jelly Roll

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Morton to whatever was the most modern stuff in the sixties when we were born. So we were listening first to Jelly Roll and Bix Beiderbecke. We were big fans of Fats Waller. Also my mother played piano by ear. Not professionally at all. She was a photographer, a fashion photographer actually. Her father also played piano by ear so there was a kind of tradition of listening and playing music in the family. She also played a little bit of guitar. She had the basic chords and she showed that to me. So I picked up the guitar first and my brother played piano. We would listen to Fats Waller and Bix Beiderbecke and we'd play them. You know, trying to pick the chords, you understand. I would say we started playing together when we were five years old. We started playing early jazz the way we could because we had no real training really except for the fun of doing it. But I would say that playing together, at least we had to play in rhythm.

(Laughing)

FM: What I mean is the starting point was having fun and we've kept that through all these years.

AAJ: So you've always been involved in jazz music—it wasn't a turn towards jazz?

FM: Right. We didn't—like many people—begin with listening to rock and roll or pop music and then go to jazz from that. Louis and I started listening to pop and rock when we were something like 18 years old. Not before. Before that we hated it. We only thought that jazz was the real music. Also with classical. It took us a long time to like classical. We were really jazz freaks. Maybe it was also a reaction against the fact that no one else knew a bit about

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jazz . I mean, you know, then all of France didn't know about jazz. They were only listening to pop music and we were so much in love with jazz.

AAJ: Were you always both equally interested in playing?

FM: Oh yeah, yeah. At one point I kept playing guitar and my brother stopped playing piano for a little while because he had been offered by our parents as a birthday present a little snare drum and a little hi-hat and a little cymbal, so we had this duet. I was playing guitar and he was playing drums and we were both singing...By the time we were seven years old, our parents started bringing us to jazz clubs. The first sets. We were not hanging until two in the morning.

But we could see people play live. Great people actually because some great musicians were coming to Paris from America to perform and also the French jazz scene was starting to be good in the late sixties and early seventies. We started learning how to play watching these guys and listening to them live because that's something different from the records. You have to have this sensation to really perceive what the music is all about.

AAJ: I agree. The industry can put out as many albums as it wants, but there still has to be a focus on going out and seeing people live. There's just something different. Everyone I've ever taken to a concert—even if they were professed jazz haters beforehand—they leave saying 'Wow. That was great.' You can play an album and that might not happen, but take them to a club and something changes.

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FM: Yeah. Exactly. You know, as a matter of fact, I read an article two days ago—I don't know where it was—commenting...that though the jazz record market has been down, the companies are collecting more copyrights because of the live performances. The audience knows. Maybe they buy a few less albums, but still they go to see the live performances. There is an eagerness about going to see the artists playing on stage and that's great.

AAJ: I'm quite interested in the development of the French jazz scene that you were talking about. First of all, we're seeing a stream of really fantastic players coming over from Paris. You and your brother. Jean-Michel Pilc. What's happening over there?

FM: For many years there's been a growing jazz scene in Paris. I would assume that it started after the war. There were a good deal of jazz lovers before the last world war, but then when the American army came in...they were like saviors. And jazz music became one of the symbols, so more and more jazz fans appeared in Europe and especially in Paris. Jazz clubs started to open. There were a good number of clubs in the fifties in Paris and because of that some musicians began to play jazz. At first it was, well, what it could be, but over the years it became more and more, and I think in the seventies we had some good players—though the seventies was a little hard for jazz players because of the whole rock and roll thing—but still people like Martial Solal were really great players proving the French could be the equal of American players.

It took a certain time, but through the eighties a lot

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of these older French jazz musicians managed to have conservatories and music schools trying to have jazz programs. This really opened the way for young musicians to play jazz and by the end of the eighties there were a good number of great young, French jazz musicians on the scene. Now the main conservatory in France has a very well-developed jazz program and there are new jazz musicians coming on the scene every year that really are astounding. So Paris is really a great jazz scene. Since the seventies there have been a lot of clubs. Some of them are closing, but it is a little bit like New York in reduction. It's not as many musicians, not as many clubs, but the quality matches, I think.

AAJ: At least from an American jazz fan's perspective there's always been a connection...

FM: ...with Paris.

AAJ: Exactly. There's always been this back and forth between the American and the Parisian jazz culture, and a very strong interest. Can we locate a French jazz stream? Is there any stylistic difference in what's coming out of Paris today?

FM: I wouldn't say so. I think jazz today has become a world phenomenon. It's not that much different. I mean, you find in Paris, just like in New York, you find modernists and people who are really like bebop enthusiasts—there are still people who would insist bebop is not jazz and that real jazz is the jazz of the thirties and the twenties, but of course there are modernists, musicians that want to open new ways and all these schools are existing in Paris as well as in New York. So I wouldn't say the different colors are because they are coming from Paris instead of

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New York. It's becoming a world phenomenon now. And it's not only Paris.

It's Stockholm, Tokyo, Africa. Jazz players have always been inspired by their popular musical culture...but there isn't a specific French way. I mean, to my ear. I know I disagree with some people in that. But to my ear, no. It's always been jazz. It actually varies all the time. I don't want to be from one style, or era, to focus only on the bebop area. It's very open to me.

AAJ: Why did you choose to come to New York?

FM: Yeah, yeah. It's a very good question. Although I told you the Paris scene is very rich, artistically very rich. First of all, I was lucky enough that about four years after I became a professional jazz musician, Martial Solal hired me...and this was the best jazz gig in France. In terms of combining good income and playing great music...So I was kind of comfortable. Doing great. But trying to have projects under my name, and with my brother, that was harder. I kind of got the message that, 'Hey, you're playing with Martial Solal, you've got the best gigs, why do you young guys want to have your own music? You're young. Wait. Take your place in the line.' You know?

“I wouldn’t be the musician I am without having had Louis there. Playing with a twin that I love.”

– Francois Moutin

That was pretty much what I felt as a response. And also, the thing is after a while being in Paris, being a French jazz musician on the Parisian scene we were treated—all Parisian musicians, especially when they are young—are treated like local musicians and don’t get the respect they deserve. Even Jean-Michel [Pilc] was totally ignored by the French press and the French jazz business until he came to New York... That’s really one reason he and I came here.

And the second reason is through all these years I was performing in France and I had these occasions to play with great American players... who kept telling me, ‘Hey, Francois, you really should go to New York and see how it is because you’ll like it.’ I came to see at last, in maybe ’95, and I immediately loved it. I felt like—what’s missing in the Paris scene, at least at the time I came to New York, was this fluidity that jazz musicians do sessions everyday in their apartments. That brings a real thing where people can meet, and have their music played. I mean, after just one month in New



York I could really do jazz sessions with a lot of great musicians, meet a lot of people, play music from other people, have other people play my music. I felt a great deal of enthusiasm and eagerness to play everyday from everyone here in New York. Then I started to have gigs. I really felt great and decided to stay.

AAJ: Was it difficult at first to play without your brother?

FM: It was. I was missing it. That's true. But it was a good thing also. It helped us to pass a point musically. At one point, before I came here, our playing together was only determined by our symbiotic relationship. Because we played less together for a couple years, we went in different directions and met a lot of different people, so now that we play a lot together again it has become different. There's still this symbiotic dimension, but it has acquired its right place and we came back into surprising each other more and that enriched our playing together. Not only in the music, but in the everyday life.

AAJ: I want to go back a little. We're talking about your relationship with your brother, growing up together. So going back to your childhood, what's the worst thing Louis ever did to you?

FM: Why do you want to know that?

AAJ: It could be funny?

FM: It is. It's a funny story...there was this time when we were playing, I think we were ten years old or so, and we were big Oscar Peterson fans. We kept

playing these duets. We were playing every day at home, and he was playing piano and I was playing guitar. I was a big fan of Wes Montgomery at that time. One day we were playing over a blues and his solo became too long to my ears and instead of being quiet and not saying anything I said, 'Hey, can you end it so I can do a solo?' And that made him very mad—this is so funny—so he stood up and punched me in the face.

[Laughing]

FM: When we talk about it now we are laughing. But actually, he broke one of my teeth. We keep that as a symbol. Then, not long after that, I saw that Oscar Peterson was playing in Paris and I told my dad and asked if we could go...That was the first time I saw Ray Brown playing live. I was amazed. That changed my life. Seeing Ray Brown play with Oscar Peterson, I think that night I decided I would be a bass player... He was so swinging. There was so much pleasure listening to him and seeing him play. That's what put the virus in me.

AAJ: So maybe it's a good thing your brother punched you?

FM: I think it is. That's true. It turned me to play bass. It helped me find my vocation.

But you know, all these things. Twins growing up together is a beautiful thing. Of course, I don't know what it is not to have a twin brother. The benefit was to have always had this partner all these years, to [have] this feeling that you have this person you can always fit with...

AAJ: It's such a special relationship. You can hear it, I think, in the music, that there's some other level of understanding that you share.

FM: I wouldn't be the musician I am without having had Louis there. Playing with a twin that I love. It's true. I wouldn't have been able to play jazz with someone since I was five years old. Which is different. When you approach an instrument at home and you are the only one, and you're working on it by yourself I think it is less fun then having someone there who wants to do the same, wants to have fun like you. I think it is less painful.

LOUIS MOUTIN



All About Jazz: How did you and your brother become so involved with jazz?

Louis Moutin: As children, in the sixties, we had the chance to have many jazz records at home. From the earliest jazz (I was personally a big Fat's Waller

fan when I was six years old) to Miles, Coltrane, etc. We also had a natural instinctive relation with this music.

On top of that, as twin brothers, we could share this and play with it like kids play. Having fun and that's it. Then, when growing up, we discovered one jazz artist after another, one "jazz-style" after another, following the actual chronology of the historical creation of this music. So we could clearly see the tradition of jazz as pushing each artist to bring his "thing" as a part of the whole process. That made us more and more involved.

AAJ: Were you always both equally interested in playing?

LM: Yes.

AAJ: Francois spoke about how important it was that your parents took you to see live jazz when you were young. Do you agree? How is live jazz different from recorded jazz?

LM: I agree, of course. The difference as a player is obvious to me. When playing live, I'm not only connected with the other players, but also with the energy of the audience. I can physically feel it. It's very exciting.

It's also true as an audience member. You share and exchange directly the emotions with people around you (musicians on stage or other audience members).

But this is not to say that live is better than records. Jazz became what it is also because of the invention

of the recording technology. I mean that improvisation has always existed in music. But the 20th century made possible that a musical improv created with three people in the room, can be listened to by thousands (millions?) of persons. This changed the music.

AAJ: Francois spoke a little about the current French scene, and the history of jazz in France. Could you give me your perspective? Is there a difference between French jazz and American jazz?



LM: About the history of jazz in France, let's just say that jazz has been important to this country in many ways since the twenty's. There are a lot of great jazz players in France, and that makes a real French jazz scene.

To me, you can find stylistic differences from an artist to another artist. It's less obvious from a country to another country, since there is not ONE American jazz or ONE European jazz or ONE French jazz. I mean that style belongs to the artists more than to the countries.

AAJ: Francois explained that after he came to New York you visited him and enjoyed the New York jazz scene, but were unable to move because of family commitments. Did it effect your playing to be separate from Francois after having played together for so many years?

LM: Being a twin brother is something really special, from a psychological point of view. To be

physically separate from François for a few years helped me to get more self-confidence. In that way, it changed something in my playing.

AAJ: I spoke with Francois a little about your childhood. I asked him what was the worst thing he ever did to you when you were kids. To be fair, I'll ask you the same question. What was the worst trick you ever played on Francois?

LM: No comment.

AAJ: You began as a piano player. What made you choose the drums? What about drumming made you focus on the instrument?

LM: I felt that I was gifted for drumming.

AAJ: Were there any particular drummers who inspired you?

LM: Elvin Jones, Tony Williams....

AAJ: I know Francois was at university for physics. Did you study sciences as well?

LM: Yes, I studied math and physics as well. For music I'm totally self-taught, like François.

AAJ: What do you do in your free time?

LM: I try to keep some free time for my family. But, this expression, free time, sounds strange to me since I feel free even when I'm working.

Visit the Moutin Brothers on the web at www.moutinbrothers.com.

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Jazz Notes

Drum/bass duo a pair since birth

By Bob Blumenthal
GLIDE CORRESPONDENT

While fraternal bass/drum teams are not unheard of (think Percy and Albert Heath, or the Wooten brothers of the Flecktones), a rhythm section of twin brothers is truly an anomaly. It exists in the persons of Francois and Louis Moutin, the Paris natives who bring their Moutin Reunion Quartet to Scullers on Wednesday in support of the new CD "Power Tree" (Dreyfus Jazz).

According to Francois, the bass-playing member of the team, the Moutins have been into making music together for most of their 40 years. "But when we started playing music at age 5," he explained in a conversation from his Manhattan home, "my brother was a pianist and I played guitar."

"But Louis has really played drums all his life, in a sense. Our parents were big jazz fans and took us to see everyone who came to Paris. When we were 6 or 7, we saw [blues pianist] Memphis Slim; Louis started drumming on the table during the set, and Mem-

phis Slim started jamming with him. Then he came to our table afterwards and told Louis, 'Man, you're a drummer!'"

Yet it was Francois who first formally changed instruments. "A few years later, when we saw Oscar Peterson's trio, I became totally fascinated by Ray Brown. But I was still too young to pick up an upright bass, so my father bought an electric to start learning on. I finally got my own upright when I was 18."

Outside of the family, the Moutins found few friends or teachers who shared their passion for jazz. "There was one open-minded high school music teacher," Francois recalled. "He would jam with us on clarinet secretly, in a hidden room. Louis was still playing piano, but during our senior year he ended up drumming in a school rock band, because they found out that he sounded better than their trained drummer."

Louis's fate was finally sealed after graduation. "When you're a musician, you want to share," Francois explained, "and after high school we decided to form a trio. In looking for a third musician, we decided that Louis would

stay on piano if we found a drummer, or switch to drums if we found a pianist first. We found [pianist] Jean-Michel Pilic, and that was it."

The brothers' rhythm-section affinity was immediate, and has grown over the past two decades through work with piano giant Martial Solal as well as their own bands. As the primary composers for their quartet, they even write tunes together on the telephone. "We have always been complementary," Francois reported, "and I don't think we chose our ultimate instruments by chance. I've always been the empathic guy, which the bass has to be in a band, and he's been more upfront. That dichotomy exists with many twins, with the first-born being more of a fighter, and it certainly holds true for us."

The brothers' current group is their second — hence the name Reunion Quartet. "We had another band 10 years ago, a quintet," Francois said. Saxophonist Sylvain Beuf was in that band, and was so great that it was obvious to include him when we reformed. We didn't have guitar or piano in that first band, though, and wanted something more classic this time. I had met Baptiste Trotignon shortly before I moved to New York in 1996, and he made a strong impression. He was the first pianist we tried, and he sounded so great we didn't look any further."

The Reunion Quartet under-

takes its first US tour with a four-year history of roughly 40 concerts per year, even though the brothers now live on different continents. "I joined France's subsidized national jazz orchestra in the mid-'80s," Francois explained, "and several of the band's guest soloists, as well as some American musicians who live in Paris, encouraged me to come to the US. I had good gigs at home, though, and didn't feel the urgency."

"It took me 10 years to make the decision, and by that time my brother was married and had four kids. It wasn't so simple for him to pick up and move to New York, but it turns out that our current situation is even better. I promote the band here, and he does it in Europe."

I've always been the empathic guy, which the bass has to be . . . and [Louis has] been more upfront. That dichotomy exists with many twins.'

FRANCOIS MOUTIN

Old South cool

— Yesterday afternoon saw Semanya McCoed in the first of five "Cool Jazz" events at the Old South Meeting House. The series, cosponsored by WGBH, brings music to the historic Boston church at 12:15 p.m. each Thursday in January, with Cercle Miller and Tim Ray dueting this week, followed by DJ Eric Jackson's survey of jazz styles; singer/pianist Ferdinando Argenti's set of jazz and Latin music from Italy; and swing tunes from Jim Porcella, Dick Johnson, and Jack Senior.

Other week moments — Tonight-tomorrow (and Tuesday through next Saturday): Bob Nieske (Top of the Hub). Tonight:



Twins Francois (left) and Louis Moutin bring their Moutin Reunion Quartet to Scullers in support of "Power Tree."

RIP — Word of the following passages arrived too late for inclusion in last week's 2001 memorial column. Joseph Arena, a.k.a. Lester Parker, tenor saxophonist and one of the true characters on the Boston jazz scene for more than 30 years, died Oct. 10 at age 72. Herbert "Hank" Hankinson, a bassist who formerly taught at Berklee and performed locally with the Blue Horizon Jazz Band and others, died Dec. 17 at age 64. Ralph Sutton, a latter-day giant of stride who billed himself as the Last of the Whorehouse Piano Players, died on Sunday at age 79.

SOUNDCHOICE
JAZZ

When guitarist Marc Ribot found an audience and an Atlantic Records contract with his Arsenio Rodriguez cover band **Los Cubanitos**, he vowed not to allow success or a major-label contract to stifle his more iconoclastic notions. After two successful albums of Latin jamming, Ribot proved the point with "Saints," the recent solo effort that finds

him playing bottleneck and even singing a bit in a program that draws upon Albert Ayler, the Beatles, John Zorn, and "West Side Story." No compromise here — but some spellbinding sounds that Ribot will reprise in a solo appearance at Johnny D's on Thursday.

BOB BLUMENTHAL

CONCERT REVIEWS



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BOSTON HERALD

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Concert review Washington – Mike Joyce

Concert review Saratoga – Greg Haymes

Concert review Boston at Scullers – Robin Vaughan

DOWNBEAT

Moutin Brothers Electrify Chicago's Green Mill

The scene outside Chicago's Green Mill on June 20 gave advance notice of what the Paris-born Moutin twins, François and Louis, are all about. During intermission after the first of three sets, they were taking some air outside the crowded club and were drenched in sweat. Though their recent *Sharp Turns* (Blujazz) is full of energy, it has a slick sheen that contrasts with the supercharged double-act's live set.

New York-based bassist François and drummer Louis (who still resides in Paris) preferred close proximity on stage, and occasionally shot each other approving glances. The rest of the time, they hurled every ounce of their beings into the music. Louis, with eyes often screwed shut, never let the polyrhythmic kick lag, while François attacked the bass with the articulation and booming, decisive sound associated with Dave Holland, yet with a different posture—crouching over the instrument, often plucking the strings with both hands near the bridge.

Though the music was heftily acoustic, given the flat-out techy assault of the quartet jazz-rock fusion was not outside their agenda. Much of this impression had to do with the Michael Brecker-like chops of tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza, who, despite the demands of the Moutin compositions and his gymnastic solo arcs, barely perspired, even during the most climactic moments. Periodically, wiry pianist Pierre de Bethmann watched Margitza as if to see if he would hit expected notes scripted in the charts, only to be rewarded by the tenorist's



François Moutin

remarkable consistency.

As respite from the sparky quartet interplay, the twins performed a duo medley of John Coltrane tunes. As he has done before with Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee," François relished the more finger-busting lines of "26-2," while Louis sheathed sticks in favor of the palms and fingers of his hands on the drumhead. "Something Like Now" began with Louis maintaining the ride with a rim click redolent of Alex Acuña's pulse on Weather Report's "Birdland," and other elements, breaks and shadings suggested this association, as well as a rangy piano solo from the long, strong fingers of de Bethmann.

An encore ensemble rip through "MRC" contrasted with self-contained a cappella blowing from Margitza earlier in the set. With intervallic leaps from bottom to top and top to bottom of the horn, subtle use of cycle breathing, gutsy altissimo shrieks and judicious bluesy smears, Margitza pushed the sonic architecture to the brink, while always locked in the Moutin pocket. —Michael Jackson

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Article published Jun 22, 2008

Review: Moutin Reunion Quartet redefines jazz at Trio's

By JACK WALTON

Tribune Correspondent

SOUTH BEND — The Moutin Reunion Quartet came out gangbusters and proceeded to keep firing. Sunday night at Trio's Restaurant and Jazz Club in South Bend, the band performed two long sets of relentless, propulsive jazz. Scarcely ever falling back on sturdy or predictable patterns, the band provided a continuous and awe-inspiring flow of ideas, driving home intricate compositions with endlessly creative improvisation.

Turning conventional jazz ensemble hierarchy on its head, the group is led by its drummer and bassist, French twin brothers Louis and François Moutin. Tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and pianist Pierre de Bethmann would have dominated most normal quartets, but the brothers remained the center of focus — only one of the unusual dimensions of an electrifying approach.

The musicians could easily have played "Stardust" or blues riffs all night and still made everyone happy, yet they performed exclusively material written by the Moutins, along with one Margitza piece, and a bass and drums duet medley of John Coltrane compositions. Even that was unique, François conjuring Coltrane's vast tonal world on merely the four strings of the bass.

A truly distinctive voice, François has mastered the spectrum of bassists before him, while creating new music that sounds like only himself. Brother Louis steered clear of the tacky razzle-dazzle of previous drummer-leaders, ceding solo space to the melody instruments and never hoarding long intervals for drum solos.

Showing similar tact, Margitza steadfastly avoided the honking histrionics to which lesser tenors often resort. He has too many ideas to fool around with

that routine. Instead, he pursued his melodic lines up paths of labyrinthine mystery, all the while maintaining an authoritative tone and confident forward motion.

De Bethmann served the others blocks of interesting chords under their solos, coloring and shaping their work with an architectural soundness, and painted his own shimmering impressionistic solos calmly and with the unforced delicacy of a Debussy or Ravel piano piece.

At times, the players would appear to be in a wholly free improvisation, only to lock suddenly into a complex unison structure, revealing that there had been an underlying interior logic in place all along. Their telepathic sympathy in complementing each other's ideas implied that all four of them were brothers, not just the Moutins.

The banishing of standard repertoire helped ensure an emotional tone devoid of sentimentality: This was a cerebral and visceral head-first dive into the next measure, the next musical frontier. The split-second decision-making was more striking from one moment to the next, and all the while the briefest mental lapse from any one of them would have derailed the driving, kinetic impact.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet's jazz is never a museum piece, but a living, twitching spurt of nervous energy and ravenous mental appetite. The band treated its audience to as adventurous a concert as we are likely to enjoy this year. Or any year.

THE SEATTLE JAZZ SCENE

[Review: Moutin Reunion Quartet at Jazz Alley](#)

Posted 12 December, 2007 in [Jazz Alley](#), [Review](#), [Seattle Jazz](#) - (1) comments

THE MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET AT JAZZ ALLEY

Tuesday, December 11, 2007



Tuesday night at **Jazz Alley** the **Moutin Reunion Quartet** showed why they are one of the best working bands in jazz today with an amazing 90 minute set that kept the audience engaged throughout. Their current lineup has been honing their sound over the past few years and are now on tour in support of their new CD/DVD release, *Sharp Turns*.

Twin brothers **Francois** (bass) and **Louis** (drums) are always an engaging pair to watch on stage. They move fluidly between grooves and time-feels like they are, well, twins! Saxophonist **Rick Margitza** is all business and a monster on the tenor saxophone. Pianist **Pierre de Bethmann**, who was not at the performance during the Ballard Jazz Festival, is the perfect lyrical balance to the Moutin brothers.

Seattle is the final stop on a west coast tour that ends tonight (Wednesday, December 12). Make sure and catch this group before they head back to Paris.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet perform at Jazz Alley on Wednesday, December 12 starting at 7:30pm. For tickets and more information, visit <http://jazzalley.com>



Entertainment > Concert Reviews

Concert reviews: Moutin Reunion Quartet

by Blair Bordelon

Moutin Reunion Quartet, a massive name in French jazz, and a rising name throughout Europe and America, began the fall tour of their album "Sharp Turns" with a bang in Angelle Hall Sept. 30.

The concert hall was more than half filled with many students and locals who caught wind of the show from either their professors or The Daily Advertiser. Several music students attended to critique and take notes for thesis papers, and some people simply came to enjoy a bit of contemporary jazz.

Ads by Google

The band's founders, twin brothers Louis Moutin, the drummer, and Francois Moutin, the bassist, have been playing jazz since they were 5. It is easy to see in every smile, every gesture and every time they appear to get lost in the music that the brothers truly love what they do.

"The band has so much energy," said Eric Rohner, freshman. "Especially the bassist."

According to freshman Jonathan Kim, "Compared to Francois and Louis, Rick and Pierre appeared lifeless as they were performing, although the saxophone did have its moments."

James Marshall, however, disagrees. He believes Rick Margitza, the saxophonist, and Pierre de Bethmann, pianist, help to add some structure to the brothers' enthusiasm.

"The band was great, and the overall experience [was incredible, but the drums were a little over-the-top," said Marshall.

This "over-the-top" style was exemplified by the fifth song of the concert, The Twin's Duet, a cover of a Coltrane song with added improv. The song consisted of only the drums and the bass and the seemingly limitless energy of both brothers.

In addition to their love for music, Louis and Francois also divulged a great love for Louisiana.

"This is a dream come true," Louis said to the audience after the first song.

"We grew up listening to music played in Louisiana," Francois added. But this was first time they had actually had the chance to see it.

After the seven-song set that ended with an enthusiastic crescendo and a loud final bang of the symbols, the Moutin Reunion Quartet bowed to a standing ovation and exited the stage looking quite proud.

Backstage, Louis, still out of breath from the speed at which he had been drumming, shouted happily they had "exploded on stage" to a chorus of agreement from the adrenaline high crew.

Excited and happy with the outcome of the show, the band quickly left to celebrate at Prejean's Restaraunt, feeling "more than ready" to take on their next stop - New Orleans.

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Roberta on the Arts

The Moutin Reunion Quartet at Cachaça, Jazz 'n' Samba Club

The Moutin Reunion Quartet at Cachaça, Jazz 'n' Samba Club

Moutin Reunion Quartet
Featuring:
François Moutin on Acoustic Bass
Louis Moutin on Drums
Pierre de Bethmann on Piano
Rick Margitza on Saxophones

At
Cachaça
Jazz 'n' Samba Club
35 West Eighth Street, West Village
New York, NY
(212) 388-9099
Dr. Roberta E. Zlokower
December 1, 2007

The Moutin Reunion Quartet, led by twin brothers, Louis Moutin and François M formed in 1999 to showcase their original compositions. The Moutin brothers, François on bass and Louis on drums, wanted to present music with energy and passion, both in Straight Jazz and Samba genres, and they chose Pierre de Bethmann as their pianist and Rick Margitza as their saxophonist. Both Margitza, who played with Miles Davis, and Bethmann, who had a prolific career, brought creativity and audience acclaim to the fledgling band. The Moutin Reunion Quartet has toured Europe and the US ever since it was formed, and they just released their fourth album on Nocturne/Blujazz.

The Moutin brothers chose "Push Me", "The Speech", "Time Apart", and "Somebody" (the title song of their new CD) as the featured four original compositions for the second set at the dazzling new Village jazz club, Cachaça. "Push Me" is a new work by François, wild and driven. "The Speech" has atonal, dizzying sax solos, and the quartet exemplified the sleek Village ambiance in which it was performing. Margitza reared a mellow melody, as Louis backed him on playful percussion and as de Bethmann played some rich keyboard chords. The next piece was classically infused, yet dissonant, with Bethmann leading on piano and Margitza taking a long, cool riff. The momentum of the two Moutins created a bass-drum duet, with François developing a new dynamic, a deep, dramatic bass pulse that enhanced this extended duet. The brothers fed on energy and enthusiasm, as Margitza wowed the fans with exuberant blasts on sax.

Cachaça, in the heart of Greenwich Village, is close to two fine Italian restaurants, *Villa Mosconi*, both on MacDougal Street. Ask for Chef/Owner Pietro Mosconi to make a reservation for dinner before taking in the jazz at Cachaça. Tell him you saw RobertaOnTheArts.com.



Rick Margitza on Sax, François Moutin on Bass
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Louis Moutin on Drums
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



François Moutin on Bass
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Pierre de Bethmann on Piano
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Louis Moutin on Drums
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Cachaça Stage
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Rick Margitza on Sax



Louis Moutin on Drums
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



François Moutin on Bass



François Moutin and Louis Moutin
Photo Courtesy of Roberta E. Zlokower



Rick Margitza on Sax

Wanted: A Minnesota Reunion With the Moutin Quartet

Contributed by Andrea Canter, Contributing Editor

Tuesday, 09 January 2007



Moutin Brothers © Pamela Espeland

My friends Jay and Elizabeth and I always try to find something interesting musically for our annual holiday gathering, which usually comes a little after the holiday rush. So they were game when I suggested this “jazz violin duo at the Dakota, and oh, yeah. There’s a second set with some French quartet. It will be fun.”

Oh, yeah. The jazz violin duo (Diane Delin and Dennis Luxion) was derailed by Delin’s illness, leaving the double header fully in the hands of the Moutin Reunion Band. And I’ll go to their reunion any time. As John Kellerman (*All About Jazz*) noted after hearing the French quartet at the 2005 Ottawa Jazz Festival, “While most people didn’t know who the Moutin Reunion Quartet was walking into the show, it’s a sure bet that they’ll be remembering them for a long time to come.”

The Moutin Reunion Quartet is the “reunion” of bassist Francois and drummer Louis Moutin, twin Parisian jazz artists touring in partnership with pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza. Their stop in Minnesota was also a reunion of sorts, with pals Mike Lewis, Adam Linz and JT Bates—aka Fat Kid Wednesdays, who were largely responsible for ensuring that Minneapolis was on the Moutins’ North American tour this winter.

Moutin Reunion wasted no time endearing themselves to the Dakota audience. Sure, those French accents are charming, and having a bass/drum pair that are mirror images of each other adds a “Je ne sais quoi” quality, but from the first percussion splash to the last glissando, the quartet engulfed us in 75 minutes of explosive invention, from original masterpieces like “MRC (Minor Rhythm Changes)” to an amazing bass/drum duel based on Charlie Parker covers. Collaboration was the theme throughout, and while the arrangements generally might have been pre-ordained, the free-wheeling nature of both collective and

individual improvisation made for an ever-evolving journey through sight and sound. And it's all acoustic, although if you closed your eyes during some of Francois' bass antics, you might swear he was using some pedal effects. But no, it's entirely sleight of hand... and fingers.

The opening "MRC" covered far more than "Minor Rhythm Changes," introducing the audience to the range and experimental joi de vivre of each musician. And the most memorable bass solo I ever heard—until tonight—was Charnett Moffett's 8-minute ramble a few years ago with the McCoy Tyner Trio. But I had never heard Francois Moutin. His extended prelude to "Echoing" was not only a master class in prestidigitation for acoustic bass, but further an exhaustive demonstration of how to use every one of the 27 bones in the human hand to coax layers of sound from a mere four strings, with clusters of double-stops, sinewy slides, and staccato punctuations yielding aural delights ranging from buzz to whine to sigh to pop, from melodic to malicious, orchestrally multiphonic and polyrhythmic. No accompaniment needed. Anyone who thinks the bass solo is a mere break between acts must meet Francois Moutin.



Francois and Louis Moutin

Brother Louis Moutin creates a similar sonic (and visual) menagerie with his drum kit, and like his brother, he can use his hands alone to create symphonic layers. The brothers' duet in the first set was billed as improvisations on a medley of Charlie Parker tunes, including "Confirmation" and "Donna Lee," quite a feat without a traditionally melodic instrument to carry the themes. Yet there was no doubt this was Parker, albeit a Bird with a new set of feathers. Louis played hands-on throughout, and like Francois, his hands have infinite capacity to shape and transform sound in an evolutionary pattern of rhythms and dynamics, totally in sync with the bass' explorations. Immersed in music since early childhood, the brothers also excelled in math and science, both obtaining graduate degrees in physics and engineering before their passions solidified in jazz. That mathematical precision and inner sense of structure may explain the cohesiveness of their experiments, but there is nothing mechanical or formulaic in their expression.

Pianist Pierre de Bethmann also followed a dual path of music and business, trying his hand at management consulting before music called him back. The most recent addition to the Reunion Quartet, his contributions are pivotal, his spiraling solos often a melodic and introspective contrast to the explosive duo downstage right, yet he too can evoke a firestorm of cascading notes and tumbling chords, particularly abundant in the first set's unnamed closing composition.

Were this but a trio, it would be a most successful one, but the Moutin Reunion features one of the most under-rated modern saxophonists on the planet, tenorman Rick Margitza. One of the most respected if not most recognized horn players of his generation, Margitza comes from the Coltrane/Shorter tradition like a sleeping volcano prone to eruptions that exude power and poetry, somewhat reminiscent of the best of Chris Potter.

The energy and finesse of the Moutin Reunion Band warrants many return visits. Ooh-la-la.

JAZZ REVIEW

France's Moutin twins double the pleasure

The rhythm team returns to the Jazz Bakery fronting a venturesome ensemble.

By DON HECKMAN
Special to The Times

Twins are a jazz rarity. But the novelty that Francois and Louis Moutin are twin brothers fades into the area of intriguing background information after they begin to play. And their per-

formance at the Jazz Bakery on Thursday night had less to do with their fraternal identity than it did with the quality of their music.

Two years ago, the Moutins startled Southland jazz listeners with their capacity to match the free-flying improvisations of pianist Martial Solal during his run at the Bakery. This time out, they have arrived with their own ensemble, which also features tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and pianist Pierre de Bethmann.

It was apparent, from the

opening phrases of "M.R.C." (a whimsical title for a work structured over minor-key harmonies of the song "I Got Rhythm" — i.e., minor rhythm changes) that it was going to be an adventurous evening. Written by bassist Francois Moutin, the piece began with an arching figure doubled on bass and piano, with Margitza playing a disjunct melody filled with wide, leaping intervals as drummer Louis Moutin stirred up a cauldron of simmering rhythm.

This was a pattern that surfaced frequently in other numbers, setting the stage for improvising from Margitza and De Bethmann that consistently skirted the edges of the jazz avant-garde. But no matter how complex the musical interchanges — and there were times when they were very complex indeed — the constant feeling of musical togetherness, of players

deeply in touch with each other, brought everything vividly to life.

That contact was energized by the symbiotic linkage between the two brothers, by their sense of rhythmic flow, by improvisational ideas germinated and fulfilled together. On a duet version of "La Vie en Rose," for example, they began with an utterly deconstructed view of the familiar song, gradually pulling its pieces back into something resembling coherence but very different from anything that Edith Piaf might have imagined.

Like all siblings, the Moutins undoubtedly endured (and endure) periods of rivalry and competition. But, at 44, they have transformed their brotherly connection into an extraordinary and admirable creative partnership.

They continue at the Jazz Bakery with shows at 8 and 9:30 tonight. Admission is \$25.

THE SANTA BARBARA **Independent** The County's News and Entertainment Paper

issue: Jan. 19, 2006

TWIN ENGINEERING: One sure sign that Santa Barbara is becoming a solid jazz town, beyond its higher profile concert life, is the buzz on the periphery, the chance to hear world class jazz on an 'off' night. Take the respected band Moutin Reunion Quartet, who stopped by to light SOhO on fire, on a recent Wednesday night. The group, with two impressive records out, is led by the stellar rhythm section of twin French brothers, drummer Louis and bassist Francois Moutin. The siblings supply a hot, tight rhythmic molten core over which pianist Pierre de Bethmann and the underrated tenor saxist Rick Margitza stretch out, mostly on Moutin originals taking a cue from cerebral post-hard bop and touches of Weather Report.

At SOhO, the band gave the crowd plenty to rave about. Margitza, in particular, is ideally suited for the job. A Miles Davis alumnus who can blow up an elegant storm, he brought his talent, range, and ferocity to bear on tunes like 'M.R.C.', 'Echoing' (from the band's latest CD, *Something Like Now*), and a feisty tête à tête with drums. The quartet closed a power-packed evening with the charming yet brainy 'Something Like Now', with its Zawinul-esque melody snaking beneath a counter bass line and an all-over musical massage effect. Word has it the band may return in September: Don't miss 'em. —*Josef Woodard*

Detroit International Jazz Festival: Part One

Venue/ Various Venues

Location: Detroit, MI USA

Date(s): September 1, 2006 - September 4, 2006

Written By: Bill Milkowski



So often I have heard the complaint from fellow critics and assorted curmudgeons: "Why can't an American city put on a festival as efficiently run, impressive and FREE as the Montreal International Jazz Festival?"

Note to colleagues: It's already happening in Detroit.

... / ...

Tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza, another Detroit native currently living in Paris, played to an enthusiastic hometown crowd at the Ampitheatre Stage on Saturday evening with the Moutin Reunion Band, co-led by twin brothers Francois on bass and Louis on drums and featuring Pierre de Bethmann on piano. An underrated tenor man since his days at Blue Note in the late '80s-early '90s, Margitza seems to have taken his game up a notch or two, as evidenced by his incendiary breakdown with drummer Moutin on the ironically titled "Take It Easy," on which they both unleashed with ferocious abandon in the spirit of Trane and Elvin Jones. Margitza, who played his first Detroit Jazzfest 25 years ago, also revealed the depth of his ballad playing on his own melancholy composition "Dark Blue." The twin brothers then united on a freewheeling drum 'n' bass duet that gradually evolved into an extrapolation on Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee," with Louis playing the kit with his hands and Francois demonstrating astounding facility on his deep-toned upright. Bass players and aficionados who haven't yet caught Francois in concert with either the Moutin Reunion Band or with pianist Jean-Michel Pilc's trio would be well-advised to check him out. He is indeed a real bona fide bass monster.

Jazz Columnist Louisville Music News, review concert par Martin Z. Kasdan Jr

Twin brothers Francois Moutin (upright bass) and Louis Moutin (drums) anchor the Moutin Reunion Quartet, featuring Rick Margitza (saxophones) and Pierre de Bethmann (piano). The group appeared at the Ruyard Kipling on Wednesday, September 28, for a small but attentive and most appreciative audience, including several of Louisville's premiere players, such as Jason Tiemann and Mike Tracy. While the instrumentation may have been standard, the setup was not. Francois' bass was at the back, in the center, while Louis' drums were set up on audience right, facing de Bethmann's vintage Fender Rhodes, while Margitza was just to the treble end of the keyboard. The group opened with Francois' "MRC," featuring a strong opening statement by the brothers, who were joined in turn by de Bethmann and then by Margitza. The "piano trio" then began soloing together, before Margitza returned with a fast Shorter-esque solo. This led to a bass solo, gently supported by piano and drums, before the tune ended. Another Francois original, "Echoing," was next, introduced by a long bass solo. The music grew as de Bethmann and Louis (using brushes) joined in, before Margitza began a unison line with the piano, reminiscent of some of the work on "In a Silent Way." A French standard, "La Vie en Rose," was a showcase for the brothers, demonstrating how bass and drums could become a full band. A piano introduction led into the first Louis composition of the evening, "Take It Easy." As the song developed, the brothers added bass and drums before Margitza entered with a statement of the theme. After a brief trio segment, Margitza and Louis engaged in a duet reminiscent of some of the John Coltrane//Rashied Ali performances. The spirit seemed to overcome Francois, as he danced ecstatically with his bass. "Surrendering," by Francois, was next and the set ended all too soon with the title track of their new CD, "Something Like Now." This composition, by Louis, began with a bass and drums segment which also seemed to invoke the "Silent Way" vibe without being merely imitative. When the brothers were joined by de Bethmann, the pace turned to fast swing and Margitza's solo took the group even higher. They had to bring their set to a close after a little more than an hour, due to the previously scheduled weekly jam, dubbed the Open Air Transmissions, which got off to a good start after a brief interlude. Although the audience was small, the group played its collective heart out, reminding me of a performance some 30 years ago by the Sam Rivers Trio (with Dave Holland and Barry Altschul), in a long-defunct Main Street club, during which the audience was hardly larger than the trio itself. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Francois with the song titles.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet was touring in support of its third album: ***Something Like Now*** (Lightyear/WEA). Jazz fans seeking music which is progressive yet not so "outside" as to seem chaotic should check this out. For additional information, see www.moutin.com.

JAZZ IMPROV **FREE**

Live Performance Reviews

Moutin Reunion Quartet

Live at Jazz Standard
September 2005

By Gilles Laheurte

Any chance to see/hear the Moutin Reunion Quartet in New York City is precious. To this writer, this powerful group should always be on everyone's priority list when they are in town, especially since the city's jazz community does not have frequent opportunities to see this wonderful exuberant quartet "live" often. With François in NY and Louis in Paris, their several "reunions" since 1999 have always been widely praised for their incredible dynamics and interplay. With the incisive Rick Margitza on saxophones and with brilliant new pianist Pierre de Bethmann providing a solid melodic support for the group's many inventive directions, it was a splendid way to end their 2005 North American tour (after Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Washington, DC), and a party celebrating their new third CD release *Something Like Now*.

The evening started with no fanfare on a furiously fast tempo piece, "MRC," and was sizzling instantly: Lots of notes, lots of waves, lots of energy and lots of clever phrases. When the pianist quietly sat out, the trio format gave Margitza a field wide open for atonal developments reminiscent of Coltrane. Ebulient energies were released through a series of colorful polyphonic choruses on a bed of blistering drums and fast descending bass chords and counterpoints (mostly on the upper register of the 4th string)—François' first virtuoso tour de force of the evening.

"Echoing" featured a long, slow, introverted bass solo, showing a soul totally absorbed in his deep inner private world, gliding over the entire length of the fingerboard—a total contrast with the first piece. A very moody piece, it enabled the audience to appreciate De Bethmann's subtle mix of left hand chords / right hand melodic patterns, and Margitza's soft, poetic warped notes dissipating in half blown clusters, closing in great tender beauty.

Both dropped out to make way for a splendid duo piece between the two brothers, showing their profound empathy and great sense of humor over a Bird medley ("Confirmation, Donna Lee and Ornithology"). Like two young cubs "challenging" each other (Louis using only his fingers and palms between snare, toms and occasional cymbals), their fraternal interaction was great fun to watch: staring at each other's sparkling eyes, obviously enjoying their bold complicity, their

private joyful game showed a happy communion between two loving souls. "I told you he's great!" said François of his brother. The fourth piece ("Take it Easy") featured an elegant solo piano intro made of smooth long phrases, and an exciting fiery duo between tenor sax and drums with shifting modes and openly Coltrane's overtones (polyrhythmic and polyphonic), bringing the group to a splashing crescendo finale.

Although plagued by some sound problems that the club had some difficulties to resolve, the second set was just as vigorous and colorful, at times funky and "Blue Note" like ("Tomcat"), at times mildly middle-eastern and exotic, at times pensive and mellow not unlike some 20th century "classical" chamber music of Poulenc and Ibert ("Surrendering"), all in subtle shades full of intense emotions. Although each musician was given ample time to shine—particularly during "Surrendering," which included a delicate introduction by Bethmann and Margitza's masterful control of soft polyphonic explorations in ending the piece—it seemed to give more focus to the brothers' extraordinarily inventive duo interplay, especially in the second ("Africa") and the concluding piece ("Something like Now"). Each time, both pianist and saxophonist watched attentively, a radiant smile of appreciation on their faces, marveling at the twins' buoyant bursts of energy.

With the incredible rapport that shines between the four of them, this quartet revealed a magnetic unified vision of its highly original compositions. Catch them next time they are in town. You'll be glad you did!

Keith Jarrett

Live at Carnegie Hall
September 26, 2005

By Larry Gelb

In Keith Jarrett's liner notes for his recent recording *Radiance*, he says, "I've taken you places before and I'm not aiming to disappoint." How fortunate, then, for an audience to fill Carnegie Hall and be so willing to go with him on the musical journey of September 26, his solo concert.

For the first twenty minutes, he seemed to be stating that if we have no limitations, we must invent some in order to transcend them. There must be a jumping off point.

Musically, this consisted of a complete keyboard exploration of a dissonant nature. Some hint of Charles Ives was very appropriate for the landscape of the recent American consciousness—with the dynamics surging into triple forte hurricanes. This gave way to a



by Lucy Galliher
NOTES FROM THE APPLE

November 14, 2005

<<http://www.jazznow.com/1105/1105Notes.html>>

The Moutin Reunion Quartet performs at Jazz Standard

There was excitement in the air at the Jazz Standard at the thought of hearing the French Moutin twin brothers! The band consists of François Moutin, bass; Louis Moutin, drums; Pierre de Bethmann, piano; and Rick Margitza, tenor sax. On the tail end of their American tour to celebrate their new CD, "*Something like Now*," the musicians were relaxed and played with extreme precision.

The brothers composed all of the music that they played that evening. Despite the lack of a synthesizer (which was used in conjunction with a piano on the Moutin Reunion CD), the pianist was able to recreate the essence of the music on the CD.

The first tune of the set was "Tomcat," which started as a groove, and quickly built up to a very hip tenor sax solo. Drums and piano kept a syncopated rhythm going underneath the one American in the group, saxophonist Rick Margitza. Pierre de Bethmann is an accomplished pianist and played fluidly, with fingers flying.

On the second piece, "Africa," one could really start to notice the interplay connecting bass and drums. François's virtuosity on his bass was evident in his solo at the beginning of the tune, and intuitively Louis gradually increased his involvement on his drumming until the phrases were amazingly synchronized.

The angular lines and unusual chord combinations of this music led the pianist into a solo that veered from swing to polyrhythms, and once again Louis Moutin was able to maintain the phrase endings with Pierre. Margitza topped the tune off by playing outside the tonality on tenor sax.

At this point, it was refreshing to hear de Bethmann play a piece called "Surrendering" quietly on the grand piano. This tune is a beautiful ballad that is also featured on the CD. Pierre played eighth-note lines in his right hand, with pretty harmonies played by his left. After awhile, Margitza took over, and on cue the band dropped out. A beautiful soft tone on tenor led to overtones, and he was able to create his own harmonies on the sax.

"Touch and Go," the closer of the set, was a fusion rock piece. Once again the rhythm section was really tight, playing phrases together behind the piano solo, and working the room with increasing dynamics. The crowd responded with a huge applause, and the Moutin Reunion Quartet finished the set exhausted but upbeat. This is a very exciting group, and I recommend readers to keep an eye out for these musicians.

Lucy Galliher
East Coast Editor
Jazz Now Magazine
www.jazznow.com

Duke Ellington Jazz Festival 2005

[Duke Ellington Jazz Festival](#) - Published: October 18, 2005

By [Franz A. Matzner](#)



As if to drive home this point, one of the festival's finest moments took place during its final hours, in the two-level restaurant and club, the Bohemian Caverns. It is one of the distinct pleasures of jazz, and all live music, to witness first-hand a band's evolution, especially when that evolution entails great leaps forward. Merely a year ago, and after many years of separation, the twin brothers Francois (bass) and Louis (drums) Moutin reunited to form a new band, and release an album under the name the Moutin Reunion Quartet. As part of the tour for that album, the band played at D.C.'s [Blues Alley](#) and though they blew the audience away with their stunning instrumentalism, it was clear that the band

member's were still new to each other and had yet to unlock their full potential. Now, a year later, that promise has come to fruition. Playing a whole new range of material composed by the brothers for their latest release, *Something Like Now*, the band has reached a new level of expressiveness fueled by compositions of greater clarity, complexity, and daring. Whereas previously the Moutin brothers at times expressed their virtuosity at the expense of the whole, leaving pianist Pierre De Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza by the wayside, the band now plays as a tight unit devoted to their group sound. On tune after tune, all four musicians not only contributed blistering solos, but urged each other forward with intermittently subtle and aggressive accompaniment. In short, in the brief span of a single year, the Moutin Reunion Quartet has risen to the artistic challenge of surpassing oneself, even when that means taking the risky leap beyond already proven excellence into the uncharted territory of experiment.

Photo Credit

Franz Matzner

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Ottawa International Jazz Festival – Day Four, June 26, 2005

By [John Kelman](#)

When it comes to delivering some of the real surprises of the festival, the 4 pm Connoisseur Series is the one to consistently deliver. The performance of Moutin Reunion Quartet will surely go down as not only a highlight of this season, but of any year. Co-led by twin brothers Louis on drums and François on acoustic bass, the group also features saxophonist Rick Margitza and Pierre de Bethmann on piano and Fender Rhodes. Margitza played briefly with Miles Davis in the late '80s, and he's one of those players who slowly but surely just keeps getting better and better and has, curiously, remained farther below the radar than his prodigious talent deserves.

People often talk about twins sharing a special connection, and the two brothers indeed demonstrated a beyond-telepathic oneness during their 75-minute set. François relocated from France to New York City ten years ago, and this quartet came about a couple of years back, when they decided they just *had* to play together again. The incredible interplay between the two—especially highlighted three songs in, when they performed a bass and drums duet that incorporated a number of Charlie Parker tunes, including “Donna Lee”—was all the more remarkable in that, while Louis’ kit faced the rest of the group, rather than the audience, his head was usually turned out, and so there was very little eye contact with François. The way that the two would converge from the midst of unfettered free play into a single voice was nothing short of magical.



The compositions, written by Louis and François, are heavily in the contemporary post bop camp, with clear respect for the kind of open-ended experimentation that defines the music of artists like McCoy Tyner and Tony Williams, although their writing is often more complex. The title track, from their forthcoming third release, *Something Like New*, is a prime example, with plenty of solo space, but adjoining passages found the group navigating through a number of rhythmic feels and harmonic centres. Margitza, a creative musician who moved from the US to Paris a couple of years back, played with the kind of conviction and a constantly-searching aesthetic that constantly begs the question of why he isn't better known. Both he and Bethmann performed with the kind of imagination that breaks through more restrictive bar lines, creating solos rife with broader narratives.

What made Moutin Reunion Quartet's set so invigorating was their clear and uncompromising spirit of “going for it.” As the group charged out of the gate, the audience knew it was in for something special from the first few notes. François' rich tone and harmonic flexibility—reminiscent of Dave Holland at times—along with Louis' almost reckless Tony Williams-like abandon, created a relentlessly exciting and ever-shifting backdrop for Margitza and Bethmann. At the end of the show, the audience seemed as paradoxically energized and spent as the group itself. While there was no encore despite the audience's enthusiastic response, the Moutin Reunion Quartet's performance couldn't have been better. Satisfied yet at the same time hungry for more, everyone was talking about this performance well into the evening and, like guitarist [Kurt Rosenwinkel's performance](#) at last year's festival, this will undoubtedly be one of those shows that everybody's raving about long after the festival has ended.

L'hebdo des francophones du Grand Toronto

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Semaine du 28 juin au 4 juillet 2005 • www.lexpress.to

L'EXPRESS

En français dans le jazz

SOPHIE HAUTCOEUR

shautcoeur@lexpress.to

Les francophones se font entendre au 19^e Toronto Downtown Jazz Festival. Les festivités entamées la fin de semaine dernière, avec notamment le Moutin Reunion Quartet et Keren Ann, se prolongent toute cette semaine jusqu'à dimanche.

Compositrice également, Keren Ann, de passage à Toronto, a sorti sa guitare et bercé le public de ses mélodies envoûtantes. La chanteuse vivant entre Paris et New York et beaucoup sur les routes, a joué en première partie d'Arturo Sandoval samedi soir au Nathan Phillips Square.

On a pu y entendre des airs en français et en anglais de son dernier album intitulé *Nolita*. «Je compose à la guitare car c'est mon instrument.

Le Moutin Reunion Quartet: tout en énergie

Quelques heures plus tôt, les Français du Moutin Reunion Quartet enflammaient le public.

Sous une chaleur déjà écrasante, le groupe n'hésite pas à se donner à fond, même avec beaucoup de kilomètres et peu d'heures de sommeil au compteur. «C'est justement ce qui est éclatant je trouve», affirme Louis Moutin, l'un des jumeaux du groupe, «se retrouver chaque soir dans un endroit différent avec une énergie différente. Une vraie histoire se forme entre nous et tout ça dans une très bonne ambiance de groupe.»



Le Moutin Reunion Quartet a enflammé le public lors de sa prestation au Festival de Jazz.

Les deux frères Moutin, autodidactes, Louis à la batterie et François à la contrebasse, n'auraient pas rêvé meilleur *casting* pour les deux autres membres du quartet: Pierre de Bethmann au piano et Rick Margitza au saxophone.

Louis et François, enfants, bercés par le jazz que leurs parents écoutent, se mettent à reproduire ce qu'ils entendent. Pierre, commence par le piano classique et se forge sa propre culture du jazz, influencé par son grand-père.

«Le jazz est une musique très intuitive mais on a quand même besoin d'un minimum d'apport théorique», précise-t-il. Louis et François acquiescent. L'aventure du quartet commence en 1998 lorsque François, parti vivre aux États-Unis reçoit un appel de Louis. «Il me joue au téléphone un morceau qu'il a écrit dans le RER parisien et j'adore.» Sept ans plus tard, le groupe se prépare à sortir son troisième album de compositions originales, *Something like now* disponible à la fin de cet été.

FESTIVAL

Moutin Reunion Quartet is doubly pleasing

BY ALEX HUTCHINSON

The empathy — or is it telepathy? — between twin brothers François and Louis Moutin is at the heart of the Moutin Reunion Quartet's appeal.

As a tradition, they showcase this bond by playing a duet as the third number of every performance. "Do you remember when we were still in our mother's belly, and our parents put on that Charlie Parker record?" bassist François asked drummer Louis yesterday's performance at Library and Archives Canada.

"OK. Let's try to catch the same vibe."

What followed was a free-flowing *tour de force*, as the brothers bounced ideas back and forth, and occasionally converged in joyous synchronicity.

Louis put away his drumsticks and used his hands and wrists to elicit a dazzling range of sounds from his drum set. The tribute to bebop legend Parker became apparent later as François displayed dexterity worthy of the great saxophonist in quoting long swaths of Parker tunes like *Donna Lee* and *Ornithology*.

That's not to say the band was any less exciting when the other two members were playing. Pianist Pierre de Bethmann merged seamlessly with the Moutins to craft a rhythm section that surged forward relentlessly behind former Miles Davis sideman Rick Margitza on tenor saxophone.

The Paris-based quartet will release its third album in August, and they saved the title track, *Something Like Now*, for a rousing closer.

The Washington Post

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2002

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PERFORMING ARTS

Moutin Reunion Quartet

When twins Francois and Louis Moutin decided to take the Moutin Reunion Quartet to Washington, they didn't have to think twice about where to play: Twins, the U Street jazz club, of course.

The French jazz ensemble didn't have to contemplate what to play, either. Tunes from the new CD "Power Tree" provided a wide range of original and familiar material. Among those performed Saturday was the Edith Piaf signature song "La Vie en Rose," which featured the brothers Moutin—Francois on upright bass, Louis on drums—recasting the tune as an exceedingly nimble and thoroughly modern jazz duet. Common genes aside, they clearly are on the same musical wavelength.

"What Is This Thing Called Love" was the first tune to reveal the quartet's fluid chemistry and dramatic flair. Sylvain Beuf, playing tenor sax, took the lead role, combining sly melodic variations with bold harmonic leaps until the romantic theme took on a compelling thrust and urgency.

"Toutes Directions," composed by the Moutins, found the group exploring a funk groove without once resorting to a heavy-handed backbeat. Instead, the brothers created a weave of tricky syncopations before pianist Baptiste Trotignon colored the mood with blues-tinted runs and Beuf's tenor soared over a coiled rhythmic vamp.

The minor-key portrait "Song for a Cat" proved similarly engaging. In addition to being a splendid showcase for Beuf's stealthy soprano sax, it offered yet another example of the rhythm section's elasticity and prowess.

—Mike Joyce

Women in spotlight as jazz fest closers

By GREG HAYMES
Staff writer

SARATOGA SPRINGS — Sisters were doin' it for themselves at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center on Sunday for the final day of the annual Freihofers Jazz Festival. Natalie Cole, Angeliqe Kidjo and Cassandra Wilson ruled the stage with impressive vocal prowess and charisma to match.

Kidjo was up first, and she proved to be the biggest crowd pleaser of the day. The West Africa-born, Paris-based singer dished up a global groove of world beat-in-a-blender, and it was just perfect for a summer afternoon dance party. In fact, at one point, Kidjo had 50 members of the audience onstage dancing with her, and if that wasn't enough, she brought her buoyant Benin-meets-Brazil sound directly to the fans as she strolled through the crowd.

Wilson drew on her Southern heritage for a splendid set of

MUSIC REVIEW

FREIHOFFER'S JAZZ FESTIVAL

- **When:** Sunday
- **Where:** The Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Route 50, Saratoga Springs
- **Musical highlights:** Cassandra Wilson, Angeliqe Kidjo, the Steve Turre Quintet, the Moutin Reunion Quartet
- **Upcoming:** Next up on SPAC's pop music schedule is Torn Petty and the Heartbreakers on Friday night with the Brian Setzer Trio.

dreamy, drowsy blues. The music was so sensuous and sweltering, you could almost taste the dust of a country road. Backed by acoustic guitar, bass and percussion, the barefoot Wilson explored the worlds of pop (songs by The Band and James Taylor) and the blues (Son House's "Death Letter" was hypnotic), as well as showcasing her own songwriting skills, most

notably on "Drunk as Cooter Brown," laced with intoxicating Cuban rhythms.

The elegant, confident Cole wrapped up the fest with her surprisingly effective big band headlining performance. She purred through "Teach Me Tonight," glided through Count Basie's "Two for the Blues" and did the samba with Michael Franks' "Tell Me All About It." She did a fine job on Dinah Washington's signature hit, "What a Difference a Day Makes," and, of course, she duetted with her late father (via recording and video screen) on her smash hit, "Unforgettable."

And there was lots more jazz, too. Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis delivered a blast of neotraditionalist swing with his usual aplomb. Of course, all of the members of the septet are superb soloists, with drummer Herlin Riley and tenor saxman Victor Goines earning special kudos, but they were at

their most powerful playing as an ensemble, especially with the high-velocity "Speed."

The brightest discovery of the fest was the Moutin Reunion Quartet, a French bop combo led by twin brothers Francois and Louis Moutin, on bass and drums respectively. Accompanied by saxophonist Sylvain Beuf and pianist Baptiste Trotignon, the band dished up energetic performances of such aptly titled tunes as the swinging "A Batons Rompus" and "Toutes Directions" on both stages on Sunday. But the other musicians weren't required for the Moutins' tour-de-force — a mindboggling bass 'n' drums duet on Edith Piaf's classic "La Vie en Rose."

Other highlights included pianist Vijay Iyer and his band melding avant gardisms with South Asian classic and folk melodies and trombonist Steve Turre's hauntingly beautiful conch shell solo on Miles Davis' gem, "All Blues."

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Places; French quartet gives fans the ooh-la-la Boston Herald; Boston, Mass.; Jan 18, 2002; ROBIN VAUGHAN;

The Parisian twin brothers in the Moutin Reunion Quartet are so physically attractive that it's almost difficult to look at them - sort of like staring directly at the sun, if you like the Aidan Quinn type. The Moutin brothers are actually a little more handsome than the American actor, if such a thing can be imagined. (The other two in the band aren't tough on the eyes, either.)

"How can those women be sitting in the front row, chowing down on French fries right in front of them!" a (albeit happily married) friend whispers at the band's Scullers gig Wednesday night.

The show is the second-to-last stop on the band's debut American tour in support of its new CD, "Power Tree" (on the Dreyfus Jazz label). Bassist Francois Moutin, a regular on the New York jazz scene, and his identical twin brother, drummer Louis, who lives in Paris, are critically hailed phenoms, highly sought-after as session and touring players by heavyweights such as legendary pianist Martial Solal.

Saxophonist Sylvain Beuf and 26-year-old keyboardist Baptiste Trotignon also have made their names in Europe, both as band leaders and sidemen. But stateside, the quartet has yet to claim brand recognition, and tonight's Boston audience is small.

Women are in the majority, as it turns out.

"Yes, yes, of course women show up," says their manager, Dan Doyle, when he's asked a few days later if there has been a big turnout of female jazz fans during this tour, especially in cities where he's managed to place a photo in the local paper. (Mentions of the Moutins' married status don't diminish the impact.) Doyle admits he's not unaware of the group's marketing potential, which has next- big-thing written all over it for better reasons than beauty.

These guys aren't exactly bimbos, and that's not even considering Louis Moutin's master's degree in mathematics or Francois' doctorate in physics.

At the Scullers show, it feels a little shameful to be distracted by their looks and blushing Gallic charm (they are shockingly nice, as it happens), especially as it becomes apparent that the music is as stunning. It gives modern jazz a good name, even if you think it needs one; their spontaneous integrations are breathtaking at points.

Obviously, the members of the rhythm section, who have been playing music together since they were small children and share the natural connectedness of twins, are the driving force in this musical communion. The band's improvisational adventures on the album pieces clearly are thrilling to the musicians, particularly the Moutins, who seem to be engaging in some spirited telepathy throughout their improvisational rides.

For the band, the Scullers gig can't be considered the high point of this tour - certainly not after stops such as Philadelphia, where an audience of 600 included Coltrane kin. There are a couple of important jazz scenesters in the crowd at Scullers, but this gang can't compete with the real-life "Cousin Mary" of song.

"Yes, it was only about 15 people, but they gave us a standing ovation," Francois says brightly of the Boston show, which he considers as worthwhile a gig as any on the tour, by way of breaking the ice with American jazz audiences. It's a memorable introduction, for sure, if not the farthest-reaching.

In promoting the band, Doyle admits he's not opposed to taking advantage of certain obvious commercial assets, when the time comes. The jazz world's attention comes first, he says, expressing hope for a nice slot at Newport.

But advertising opportunities, preferably in a "high-fashion context," might serve them well, says Doyle. He mentions that because the Moutins' parents were prominent in Parisian haute couture, there's a certain integrity to this idea. Had Moutin PERE, a fashion editor, not turned down an offer to work at Vogue in New York, the twins might have grown up in the Manhattan jazz scene.

As it was, their jazz-mad elders (the family library numbered some 3,000 American jazz and blues records) had them soaking up Sunday afternoon live-jazz programs at age 5; by 7 they were going to nightclubs to see such greats as Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Brown and Memphis Slim.

The Moutins' style of jazz is complex but musically natural, virtuosic but not flashy, and never, never cheesy. The rhythms cook. Beuf's soprano sax makes you forget you ever heard Kenny G. play one. Trotignon travels with an old Fender Rhodes. The "Power Tree" material ranges from such invigorating original pieces as "Africa" and "Free Climbing" to interpretive covers of Georges Brassens and a way-out take on "La Vie en Rose."

And then there's that old JE NE SAIS QUOI. . . .

Stepping up to the mike at one point, Louis explains that unlike Francois, he hasn't spent the past five years living in New York, and apologizes that his English is "not so good as my brother's one." He fearlessly goes on to note that the last song was "written for a woman, his name is Ursula."

Francois quietly alerts him to the flub. "HER name is Ursula, sorry," says Louis, with a smile.

Beuf pipes up, "Nobody's perfect!"

Maybe not. But it's a pretty close call. (Sigh.)

CONCERT PREVIEWS



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Jazz Setlist, Apr. 22-28: Sherman, Moutin, and the Big Bands

Posted by [Michael J. West](#) on Apr. 22, 2010 at 01:31 pm

Tuesday, April 27

Francois Moutin is one of the giants of jazz, European Division. Though he now lives and works in the United States, he was perhaps *the* bassist in his native Paris, and it's obvious in the tremendous skill and unique sound (with a special love for its highest notes) that he displays on his ax. He is also, along with his drum-playing twin **Louis**, an accomplished composer, and the brothers Moutin have for a decade led the **Moutin Reunion Quartet** as a vehicle for their wonderful original material, as impressive on its own as their playing—contemporary, catchy, and deceptively complex in scope. Indeed, some of the tunes on their latest disc *Soul Dancers* (Plus Loin) could, in another context, have indie-rock potential, but even in this context they're intriguing and just plain fun to listen to. The Moutin Reunion Quartet performs at 8 and 10 p.m. at Twins Jazz, 1344 U St. NW. \$15.)



CityPaper



Moutin Reunion Quartet

Tuesday, May 4 & Wednesday, May 5, 8 & 10pm

Snug Harbor, 626 Frenchmen St., 949-0696

Rounding out their six-city US tour, the French jazz outfit Moutin Reunion Quartet will return to Snug Harbor, where they last performed in October 2008, to promote their fifth album, *Soul Dancers* (March 2010). The quartet is comprised of twin brothers Louis (drums) and Francois (upright bass) Moutin, who have performed together since the age of five and founded the quartet with pianist Pierre de Bethmann and saxophonist and former New Orleans resident Rick Margitza in 1999. Perhaps most striking and innovative about this group are the roles of the brothers' generally rhythm-based instruments—bass and drums—which tend to lead their compositions in contrast to the more common leading melodies from piano, guitar, or wind instruments often heard in other jazz ensembles. Their sound meanders about the norms of jazz—at times soothing and sweet, at others progressive and bright—for an overall feeling of highly developed but still spontaneous and original jazz music, perfectly suited for the Snug Harbor atmosphere.
—Carolyn Heneghan



[Mark Stryker](#)

Posted: April 29, 2010



JAZZ

BY MARK STRYKER
FREE PRESS COLUMNIST

Paris in Detroit: French-born brothers François Moutin on bass and Louis Moutin on drums are the heart of the Moutin Reunion Quartet, but this highly intense, contemporary post-bop band has a Detroit connection too, with former local hero Rick Margitza tearing it up on tenor and soprano saxophone. The pianist is Pierre Bethmann. The cozy confines of Cliff Bell's should add an extra jolt to the band's appearance. 9 tonight, 2030 Park, Detroit. 313-961-2543. cliffbells.com.

Contact MARK STRYKER: 313-222-6459 or
stryker@freepress.com

April 23, 2010

Jazz Listings

By NATE CHINEN

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET (Monday) The brothers François and Louis Moutin, a bassist and a drummer, lead this dynamic trans-Atlantic postbop ensemble; the other half consists of the tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. At 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Frederick P. Rose Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, 60th Street and Broadway, (212) 258-9595, jalc.org; \$20, with a minimum of \$10 at tables, \$5 at the bar; \$10 for students. (Chinen)

The New York Times

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 03, 2008

October 3, 2008

Jazz Listings

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET (Monday) The brothers François and Louis Moutin, a bassist and a drummer, lead this dynamic trans-Atlantic post-bop ensemble; the other half consists of the tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. At 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Frederick P. Rose Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, 60th Street and Broadway, (212) 258-9595, jalc.org; cover, \$30, with a minimum of \$10 at tables, \$5 at the bar.

(Chinen)

The New York Times

Sunday, September 28, 2008

Event

Moutin Reunion Quartet

From 10/06/08 to 10/06/08

Jazz, Live Music in Bar/Club

Lincoln Center - Frederick P. Rose Hall: Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola
Upper W. Side
33 W. 60th St.
New York, NY10019
(212) 258-9800

These Paris natives present their Moutin Reunion Quartet featuring identical twins bassist Francois Moutin and drummer Louis Moutin, pianist Pierre De Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza. Louis and Francois Moutin created the Moutin Reunion Quartet ten years ago as an outlet for performing their original compositions, a goal shared with de Bethmann and Margitza. Over the past five years, the Quartet has toured throughout Europe and the U.S., generating high praise wherever they go.

Admission

\$20 cover; \$10 minimum at tables; \$5 at the bar

Ticketing Information

212-258-9595; <http://www.jalc.org>

Syracuse Jazz Fest

[The Moutin Reunion Quartet, 4:30 p.m. Saturday](#)

Posted by [Mark Bialczak](#) June 22, 2008 6:03AM



Categories: [Jazz Fest](#)

Photo by Ursula KTwins Louis, left, and Francois, right, make the Moutin Reunion Quartet thrive with a bi-continent existence.

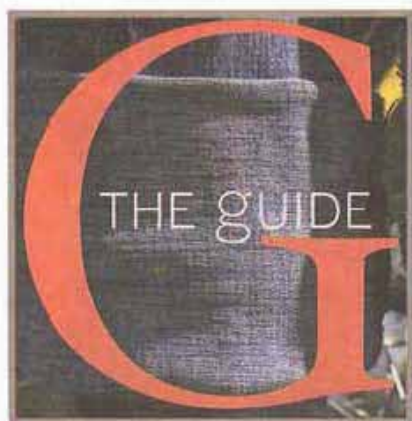
Francois Moutin lives in New York City. Louis Moutin lives in Paris. Here's what Francois told music writer Mark Bialczak about [The Moutin Reunion Quartet's](#) popularity here and there:

"I think we're more popular here. I think in the States. Maybe because our names sound a little more exotic. Probably not. My brother and I, we grew up listening to jazz from the very early stages of jazz, and chronologically. We started listening to Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller and then catching on every flowing master gradually through our lives. We could catch on the thead that is the essence of jazz, the soul of jazz. This is thing that this country has brought to the world. That is one of the richest things that the United

States has brought to the world. That is jazz. When people see two French dudes that are familiar to their own idiom, they really like it."

[Continue reading the entry...](#)

Los Angeles Times



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calendarlive.com/submit.

Jazz TODAY

Moutin Reunion Quartet Bassist
Francois Moutin, drummer Louis
Moutin, saxophonist Rick Margitza
and pianist Pierre de Bethamnn. Jazz
Bakery, 3233 Helms Ave., Culver City.
Today-Sat. (310) 271-9039.

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2007

Jazz Listings

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

(Friday) François and Louis Moutin, a bassist and a drummer, spearhead this dynamic trans-Atlantic post-bop ensemble, which has an aptly titled new album, "Sharp Turns" (Blujazz). The group's other half consists of the saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. At 9, 11 and 1 a.m., Cachaça, 35 West Eighth Street, West Village, (212) 388-9099, cachacajazz.com; cover, \$20, with a \$15 minimum. (Chinen)



**THE MOUTIN REUNION &
FRANÇOIS MOUTIN & LOUIS
MOUTIN & RICK MARGITZA &
PIERRE DE BETHMAN**

Cachaca

35 W 8th St

New York, NY 10005

Greenwich Village

Phone: (212) 388-9099

Jazz, Arts, Where to Hear, By Day

Price Info: \$20 plus \$10 minimum

Call for this event: 212-388-9099

Fri, Nov 30, 09:00 pm

Sat, Dec 01, 09:00 pm



Moutin Reunion

Price: \$20 plus \$10 minimum

Venue: Cachaça

Times: Dec 2 2007 12:30am.

Address: 35 W 8th St between Fifth and Sixth
Aves Greenwich Village

Phone: 212-388-9099

Travel: Subway: A, C, E, B, D, F, V to W 4th St.

Bassist François Moutin, linchpin of groups run by the likes of Jean-Michel Pilc and Rudresh Mahanthappa, presents his own combo featuring his twin brother, drummer Louis Moutin.

WWW.JAZZIMPROV.COM DECEMBER 2007

JAZZ IMPROV[®] NY

The Ultimate Directory of NY Area Jazz Club, Concert & Event Listings

Noteworthy Performances



Moutin Reunion

www.moutin.com

Cachaça: Fri 11/30 & Sat 12/1

In 1999 Parisian-born brothers Louis & François Moutin formed The Moutin Reunion Quartet to perform their original compositions. Moutin's music expresses the energy of life; full of emotion and spontaneity - inviting listeners and musicians to celebrate beauty and imagination. The band is touring America and Europe, performing for enthusiastic audiences. Their new CD release, *Sharp Turns*, is on Nocturne / Blujazz labels.

With a new CD released in earlier this month, the Moutin Reunion Quartet continues its American tour with a stop at the Jazz Bakery in Los Angeles (December 5-8), followed by gigs in San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle (see below). The Moutin Reunion ensemble is led by bassist Francois and drummer Louis Moutin, twin Parisian jazz artists touring in partnership with pianist Pierre de Bethmann and American saxophonist Rick Margitza. This weekend the quartet celebrates its release of *Sharp Turn* (Blue Jazz), recorded earlier this year at Systems Two in Brooklyn.

Louis and Francois Moutin created the Moutin Reunion Quartet in 1999 as an outlet for performing their original compositions, a goal shared with Pierre de Bethmann and Rick Margitza. Over the past four years, the Quartet has toured throughout Europe and the U.S., generating high praise wherever they go.

The Paris-born Moutin brothers were encouraged by their parents to pursue music from early childhood. **Francois** first studied guitar from age 5, adding piano at age 11 and finally realized his lifelong love for the acoustic bass as a teenager. Studying mathematics and physics in college, Francois earned an undergraduate degree in engineering and a doctorate in physics at age 24. Music was the stronger calling, however, and at age 29 he formed the Quintet Moutin with twin Louis, by then a top echelon jazz drummer. In November 1997, Francois relocated to New York where he has found steady work in live performance and studio sessions with the premier artists on the New York Jazz Scene, and where Quintet Moutin evolved into the current Moutin Reunion Quartet.

At age 7, **Louis Moutin** began teaching himself to play piano, turning to jazz drumming at age 20. Trained as an engineer at the prestigious Ecole Centrale and receiving a Masters Degree in Mathematics, Louis, like his twin brother, decided to abandon a career in technology to pursue music fulltime. He became a member of the very successful Machado Trio,



performing frequently in the international jazz festival network. Collaboration with brother soon Francois followed.

Pierre de Bethmann began classical music studies at age 6, and by age 12 had discovered the world of jazz. He earned degrees in classical and jazz studies, including a year at the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

After working in management consulting from 1990 until 1994, he too switched careers to become a professional musician in 1995. A year earlier, he had founded the trio Prysm with Christophe Wallemme and Benjamin Henocq, which won the first prize of the National Jazz Contest of La Defense. deBethmann

continues to perform with Prysm, touring internationally and recording four albums on Blue Note.

A highly regarded saxophonist on the international jazz scene, **Rick Margitza** is one of the most respected musicians of his generation. Inspired by John Coltrane, Michael Brecker and Wayne Shorter, he played oboe before switching to tenor sax in high school, attended Wayne State University, Berklee, the University of Miami, and finally Loyola University in New Orleans. For four years he worked in New Orleans and toured with Maynard Ferguson before moving to New York in 1988. There he joined Miles Davis' group, appearing on three albums - *Amandla*, *Live Around the World* and *Live in Montreux*. After cutting three albums for Blue Note during 1989-1991, he recorded five more solo albums and collaborations with such artists as Maria Schneider, Chick Corea and McCoy Tyner.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet was nominated for the French award, "Les Victoires du Jazz 2006" (as French Jazz Artist of the Year); Francois and Louis Moutin won the prestigious "Prix Django Reinhardt 2005."

A gig by the Moutin Reunion Quartet will be filled with explosive invention, from original masterpieces to creative interpretations of the great bop masters. Collaboration is their prevailing theme, and while the arrangements generally might be pre-ordained, the free-wheeling nature of both collective and individual improvisation makes for an ever-evolving journey through sight and sound. And it's all acoustic, although if you close your eyes during some of Francois' bass antics, you might swear he is using some pedal effects. But no, it's entirely sleight of hand... and fingers.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet's West Coast tour:

- December 5-8 in Los Angeles at the Jazz Bakery, 3233 Helms Av; www.jazzbakery.com
- December 9 in San Diego at the Anthology Jazz Club, 1337 India St; www.anthologysd.com
- December 10 in San Francisco at Pearl's, 256 Columbus; www.jazzatpearls.com
- December 11-12 in Seattle at Jazz Alley, 2033 6th Av; www.jazzalley.com

The San Diego Union-Tribune.

EARTHLY MUSICAL MUSINGS BY GEORGE VARGA

A PAIR OF TREATS ARE ON TAP FOR JAZZ FANS

Discerning jazz fans (are there any other kind?) have two intriguing options to pick from this weekend.

Alto saxophonist Oliver Lake performs Saturday night at the Athenaeum Jazz at the Studio in University Heights, while France's Moutin Reunion Quartet plays a late afternoon gig Sunday at downtown's Anthology.

If memory serves, World Saxophone Quartet co-founder Lake last appeared here in 2000 at the now sadly defunct Spruce Street Forum. The Moutin band, co-led by identical twin brothers Louis and Francois Moutin on drums and bass, respectively, made its area debut last year at Dizzy's.

The Moutins will be joined by ex-Miles Davis saxophonist Rick Margitza and fellow Frenchman Pierre DeBethmann on piano. The brothers rose to prominence in the bands of the great Algerian pianist Martial Solal and French keyboard wiz Jean-Michel Pilc before striking out on their own in the mid-1990s.

The brothers' music eschews electronic instrumentation but still owes a debt to the pioneering electric fusion band Weather Report, a major influence on both Louis and Francois. The sibs also have enough respect for tradition to have recorded Chick Webb's "Stompin' at the Savoy," so expect the unexpected when the Moutin Reunion Quartet plays Sunday at Anthology (there is no cover for this show).

Lake is an unusually versatile saxophonist, equally adept at gutbucket blues and the avant-garde, R&B, bop, reggae and nearly everything in between. He delivers each with equal verve and authority, and few other saxophonists play as well both inside and outside the conventional parameters of jazz.

▪ George Varga: (619) 293-2253;

Subj: **MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET New York Times Jazz Listings**
Date: 1/5/2007 1:48:58 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: jazzpromo@earthlink.net
To: jazzpromo@earthlink.net

January 5, 2007

New York Times Jazz Listings

By **NATE CHINEN**
JAZZ

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET (Thursday) The brothers François and Louis Moutin, a bassist and a drummer, lead this dynamic trans-Atlantic post-bop ensemble; the other half consists of the tenor saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. At 8 and 10 p.m., Sweet Rhythm, 88 Seventh Avenue South, at Bleecker Street, West Village, (212) 255-3626, sweetrhythmny.com; cover, \$15, with a \$10 minimum. (Chinen)

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2006

January 6, 2006
Jazz Listings

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET (Thursday) François and Louis Moutin, bassist and drummer respectively, lead this dynamic trans-Atlantic post-bop ensemble; the group's other half consists of the saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. 10:00 and 11:30 p.m., Smalls, 183 West 10th Street, Manhattan, (212) 675-7369; cover, \$20. (Chinen)

June 24, 2005

Jazz Listings

By **THE NEW YORK TIMES**

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET (Tonight) François and Louis Moutin, bassist and drummer respectively, lead this dynamic trans-Atlantic postbop ensemble; the group's other half consists of the saxophonist Rick Margitza and the pianist Pierre de Bethmann. 7 and 10 p.m., 55 Bar, 55 Christopher Street, West Village, (212) 929-9883. Cover: \$10. (Chinen)



ROCKY MOUNTAIN JAZZ

Saturday, June 23rd, 7 & 9pm :: The Moutin Reunion Quartet ::
Featuring Francois Moutin (upright bass), Pierre de Bethmann (piano), Rick Margitza (saxophones), and Louis Moutin (drums). The band has been nominated for the french award "les Victoires du Jazz 2006" in the category french jazz artist of the year, and François and Louis Moutin have won the prestigious "Prix Django Reinhard 2005". Don't miss this amazing international jazz sensation in their first **Dazzle performance! :: <http://www.moutin.com/>**
Contact Information email: info@dazzlejazz.com phone: 303.839.5100 web: <http://www.dazzlejazz.com> Contact Information email: info@dazzlejazz.com phone: 303.839.5100

JANUARY 21–27, 2004 **VOICE CHOICES**

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

Iridium, 1650 Broadway, 212.582.2121

When siblings comprise the rhythm section, groove alignment gets a leg up. The new *Red Moon* finds the freres Francois and Louis approaching their bass and drum duties with a quicksilver vibe. Onstage it will surely provoke their mates, Pierre de Bethmann and Rick Margitza. At 11:30. **MACNIE**

VOICE CHOICES NOVEMBER 5-11 2003

MOUTIN REUNION QUARTET

Jazz Standard, 116 E 27th, 212.576.2232

These are the brothers, bassist François and drummer Louis, who work with Martial Solal's trio, and are quite remarkable in their own right. This quartet includes saxophonist Rick Margitza and pianist Baptiste Trotignon — François Moutin's lightning arpeggios are a meal in themselves. At 7:30 & 9:30. GIDDINS

VOICE CHOICES JAN 15-21 2003

MOUTIN REUNION Bassist
Francois Moutin, best known
for his work with Martial
Solal, is an astonishing
technician who makes the
instrument swing, rumble,
and soar. This is a chance to
hear the quartet he co-leads
with his twin brother Louis
on drums, Sylvain Beuf on
saxophones, and Baptiste
Trotignon on piano, which
recorded the impressive
Power Tree (Dreyfus) a couple
of years ago. **Jazz Gallery,**
at 9 & 10:30. (Giddins)

THIS JUST IN

Jazz quartet to stop here on its first U.S. tour

French-born bassist Francois Moutin says he loves the variety of the New York music scene, but is even more thrilled at working with his Reunion Quartet.

"It is a band that thinks like a band, and that is rare," he says of the group that also features his twin brother, Louis, on drums. "Staying together is what we want to do."

The quartet will bring its forward-looking style of jazz to the James Street Restaurant on the North Side on Thursday in its first trip to the United States. The gig also is a preview of a possible festival swing in the summer.

Moutin says the six-city tour is promoting the band's first album, "Power Tree," which will hit the stands this week as well as being on sale at gigs. The titles also are designed to increase familiarity with the band, which is being considered for festival appearances, including the Mellon Jazz Festival here.

But more than anything else, the trip is another step in the growth of the band, which was put together in 1998 and also features saxophonist Sylvain Beuf and pianist Baptiste Troitignon.

The band plays a lively form of jazz that gives strikingly new life to old songs such as "La Vie en Rose," or new tunes by the Moutins that range from funky to rhythmically challenging.

"When Louis and I called Sylvain and Baptist, we knew from the very first session together that we had called the right people," Francois Moutin says. "I can write chord patterns on a piece of paper and tell them the basic idea of the groove, and they all get it."

Moutin, 40, has been playing bass since he was 5. While working on his studies in physics — in which he has a doctorate — he performed with pianists such as Martial Solal and Michel Portal. He also worked with his brother, who has a master's degree in math.

In 1996, jazz musicians Solal, trumpeter Randy Brecker and bassist Steve Swallow urged Moutin to move to New York City to center his performance career here.

"I love being in the New York scene," he says, mentioning his enthusiasm at working with players such as saxophonists Oliver Lake and David Liebmann. "But I still like playing with the Reunion Quartet the best."

By meeting a steady stream of fellow jazz players in New York, Moutin says he has begun to develop the sort of reputation that



Ursula K./Dreyfus Records

French natives and twin brothers Francois (left) and Louis Moutin play together in Reunion Quartet, which will play at 8 p.m. Thursday at James Street Restaurant on the North Side.

keeps him working when he can't get together with the other three members of his trio, who all still live in France.

"This is our first time in the United States, but let's hope it is not our last time," he says.

The Moutin Reunion Quartet will play at 8 p.m. Thursday at the James Street Restaurant on the North Side. Tickets are \$10.

Details: (412) 323-2222.

— Bob Karlovits

JAARED'S JAZZ

None of us will forget where we were the day those planes smashed into the nation's psyche. For saxophonist Jaared Arosemena, Sept.

11 holds a resonance both personal and professional.

Arosemena, who prefers to be called simply Jaared, was apartment hunting in New York when he and his girlfriend heard sirens and noticed emergency workers rushing toward the World Trade Center.

"We walked by a bank and a shopping center, and we saw a TV (in the window), and we heard that a plane had just hit the first tower."

Incredulous, the pair looked up and saw the second plane smash into the south tower.

"That's when ... we ran to the ferry boats" bound for New Jersey, he says. As they boarded the ferry,

"we looked back and saw the second tower fall. It was the sickest sight I have ever seen in my life."

But New Jersey was no refuge for Jaared. The Washington, D.C., native, who has Italian roots, returned to the city to volunteer — talent — but his brawn. He do grunt work at a maker and soup kitchen in the following the national tra

And that's when he began New York radio station repeatedly playing his version of the "Star Spangled Banner" on his debut album "Foreward." "At first, it upset me, but I didn't want people to think I wanted to make a buck off it," he says. "I want my share of the Sept. 11th Fund."

In addition to the patriotic frenzy, the National Smooth Association has nominated Jaared Best New Artist of the Year, competing with the likes of Aja and Joe Fuentes, among others. His CD, a cross between the style of Incognito and his idol Miles Davis, has flown up jazz charts, fueled by his version of the national anthem and his cover of Chante Moore's "Love's a Wonderful Over." Still, Jaared is taking it in stride.

"Oh, my gosh, it's a wonderful feeling just to be on the list," he says, adding that "you've got people like Lenny Kravitz, Sade, Bone Thugs-n-Harmony, and others nominated for awards. I'm in awe."

As for the many remarkable albums — there are five — says his next venture will be more original material.

"I didn't want to be known as an artist who was a cover artist," he says. "But if you really like smooth jazz stations now, 90 percent of the music played covers."

"There are polls that say a majority of people want to hear something they are familiar with."

And with the nation at a patriotic tunes are now doing. To vote for Jaared for the Jazz Award through Feb. 15, visit www.nationalsmoothjazz.com. To download a free Jaared's "Star Spangled Banner" visit www.marimel.com.

— Gannett News