

**Benny Green/
Russell Malone**
Bluebird

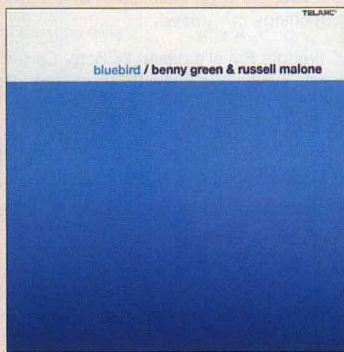
TELARC 83604

★★★★

One of the beauties of a long-lasting friendship is the sense of instant rapport that can manifest itself between two kindred spirits. It's readily apparent from the

start of *Bluebird*, pianist Benny Green and guitarist Russell Malone's follow-up to 2003's *Jazz At The Bistro*. Within the disc's first two cuts, Milt Jackson's "Reunion Blues" and Cole Porter's "It's Alright With Me," Green and Malone waste little time in finding a comfortable but brisk conversational pace that can only come with a deep sense of respect and mutual admiration.

The jaunty funkiness of their take on another Porter standard, "Love For Sale," reveals the more playful side of their camaraderie as Green steps to the fore with a determined sense of hipster daring. In contrast, Malone's languid



contributions to "Moonglow" render the cut less of an exchange and more of an opportunity for the gifted guitarist to shine on his own, with his cohort sounding more than pleased to be along for the ride. While the talented twosome have little

trouble finding their way through some wildly winding contrapuntal conversations, the deepest dialogue doesn't take place until *Bluebird's* closing minutes with Oscar Peterson's "Wheatland," on which Green and Malone wind down in sublime style.

—John Kreichberg

Bluebird: Reunion Blues; It's Alright With Me; You Are The Sunshine Of My Life; Who Can I Turn To?; Love For Sale; Flowers For Emmett Till; Bluebird; Feel Like Makin' Love; Passport; Moonglow; Where Is The Love?; Wheatland. (57:05)

Personnel: Benny Green, piano; Russell Malone, guitar.

Ordering Info: www.telarc.com

62 DOWNBEAT September 2004



Count Basie's Centennial Jamie Cullum Karrin Allyson

DOWNBEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

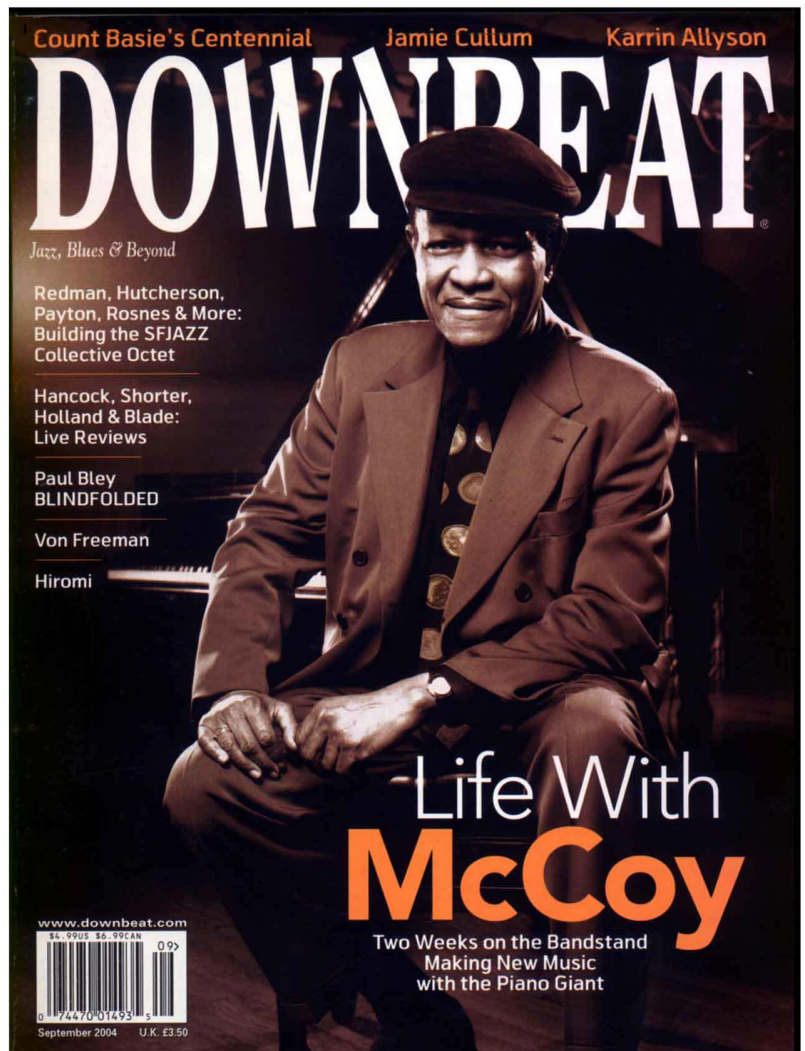
Redman, Hutcherson, Payton, Rosnes & More: Building the SFJAZZ Collective Octet

Hancock, Shorter, Holland & Blade: Live Reviews

Paul Bley
BLINDFOLDED

Von Freeman

Hiroimi



Life With
McCoy

Two Weeks on the Bandstand
Making New Music
with the Piano Giant

www.downbeat.com

0 74470 01493 5

September 2004 U.K. £3.50