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the original LP is the mysteriously titled *The Tattooed Bride*, a multi-tempo composition featuring clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton. These four pieces were among the last to be recorded by the classic Ellington orchestra just before the exodus of Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown and Sonny Greer. The music, well-recorded in the first place (Columbia always had great engineers), sounds even better now. The CD reissue has three bonus tracks by the 1951 band - *Vagabonds*, *Smada* and *Rock Skippin'* at the Blue Note.

Three different versions of *Ellington Uptown* were issued on LP. Now, for the first time, the music from all three is on a single CD. *Skin Deep*, *The Mooche*, *Take the 'A' Train*, *A Tone Parallel to Harlem* and *Perdido* are from the original LP. *The Controversial Suite* comes from the second, *Hi-Fi Ellington Uptown*, while the 1947 classic, *The Liberian Suite*, was part of the third LP issue. The *Uptown* material was recorded in 1951 and 1952 and marks the crowning glory of that edition of the Ellington orchestra. The highlight, *Harlem*, one of Ellington's most successful longer works, takes the listener on an evocative musical tour of uptown Manhattan. Three other selections, *The Mooche*, *Perdido* and *'A' Train*, have been pulled from the vast Ellington library, given fresh new settings, and showcase some of the band's great solo voices. The digital remastering of this magnificent music is simply gorgeous. If you have the earlier CD issue of *Ellington Uptown* get rid of it and pick up this one. There's no comparison in the sound and the earlier CD doesn't have *The Liberian Suite*.

Don Brown

**Under A Tree**  
Toronto Jazz Orchestra  
TJO002

The Toronto Jazz Orchestra's second CD is a welcome addition to my big band library. Conductor Josh Grossman and the band have recorded a program of ten original compositions by Canadian jazz composers, and what's more, did the session live.

The band continues to play ensem-

bles with great precision and strength, and the work of the soloists has if anything, gotten better since the band's first recording.

The title track, *Under a Tree* is by the dean of Canadian jazz composers, Phil Nimmons. It's quite possible that's the only name many people will recognize on the list of writers on this CD, but don't worry, many of the others will probably be known to you in a few years time. This is a great chance to hear the emerging voices of some very promising jazz composers.

One of my favourite tracks is *First X's Free*, by the TJO's bass trombonist, Chris Hunt. The soloists on this track, soprano saxist Mark Laver and trombonist RJ Satchithanathan both play with great energy and fluency.

The Toronto Jazz Orchestra is currently sponsoring a jazz composition competition to encourage young composers to write new works. There's nothing as inspiring to a writer to know that what you write will actually get played. My hat's off to Josh and the band - you guys are doing it right!

Merlin Williams

**POT POURRI**

**Klezmer**  
Kleztery; I Musici de Montreal;  
Yuli Turovsky  
Chandos CHAN 10181

Klezmer, a hybrid of the traditional music of Eastern European Jews and North American jazz and popular influences, is characterized by poignant, highly ornamented melodies and lilting, semi-inebriated rhythms. It is not a spirit that lends itself easily to orchestral adaptation - and I must confess to feeling a bit dubious when



I first picked up this disc. Surely, serving up a chamber orchestra with a Klezmer band could only be like drizzling warm béchamel on a plate of gefilte fish - too rich an accompaniment for a delicacy best enjoyed with strong horseradish.

Happily, the results of this collaboration between I Musici de Montreal and emerging Montreal ensemble Kleztery are extremely satisfying and very easy to digest. If not especially innovative, the arrangements of traditional melodies (plus two original tracks) are tasteful and refreshing. Although at times I Musici's performance is perhaps a little measured for the idiom, on the whole, director Yuli Turovsky executes the musical crossover well. The strings are used to especially good effect in some of the more introspective tracks where sensationally gut-wrenching solos from Kleztery clarinetist Airat Ichmouratov and violinist Elvira Misbakhova are accompanied by haunting, Arvo Pärt-like harmonies in the orchestra.

The real highlights though, come in the few intervals when, audibly counter to their instinct, the musicians of I Musici forgo their renowned precision and lean into their instruments like real *Klezmerim*. At these points, the music is joyously hoisted out from under glass and reclaims some of the spice it deserves.

Sarah Namer

**John and The Sisters**  
Kevin Breit and the Sisters Euclid  
with John Dickie  
Independent



When people first hear groundbreaking musicians and singers, people such as Buddy Bolden, Billie Holiday and Bob Dylan, their first reaction is often "What the hell is that?" Well that's pretty much my reaction when I first listened to guitar player Kevin Breit's latest disc "John and the Sisters". The answer, in part, is Blues, that much is clear. But it's Blues that seems to have come from the Mississippi Delta via Mars. This is a crazy mash of sounds overlaid on a solid, funky rhythmic foundation. If the Sisters Euclid were a building, the rhythm section would