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# Baker's Dozens

By [Josef Woodard](#), January 3, 2007

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**YEAR IN REVIEW:** Years come, years go, and as one number yields to the next, music scribes struggle to make sense of the beautifully anarchic flow of culture, recorded and live. It's just the way of things, an attempt to put the inherently mad and subjective world of culture in a tidier perspective. What follows, then, are two "Baker's Dozen" lists of 2006 recordings and local live shows most likely to stick to the overworked memory banks of one professional music addict's mind.

**ON RECORD:** Tom Waits, *Orphans (Anti-)*. In which the friendly, growling artist musters yet more remarkable music from multiple angles — bittersweet quasi-jazz, street corner babble, faux roadhouse roughhousing — onto a three-disc opus worth sinking into.

Marisa Monte, *Universo ao meu Redor* (Metro Blue). This sparkling and smart Brazilian charmer pays tribute to the samba culture, in ways simultaneously seductive, traditional, and fresh.

John Coltrane, *Fearless Leader* (Concord/Prestige). Before Coltrane's ventures eastward and inward in the '60s, he was producing some brilliant variations on the slightly bent "straight ahead" jazz for Prestige, culled here in a must-own package.

Trio Beyond, *Saudades* (ECM). The best "electric jazz" album of the year finds guitarist John Scofield, drummer Jack DeJohnette and organist Larry Goldings recasting the influence of Tony Williams's old Lifetime band with a masterfully personalizing touch.

Sonny Rollins, *Sonny, Please* (Doxy). As a full house at Campbell Hall witnessed this fall, the great tenor saxist, at 76, is back on the scene with a sweet and soaring expressive power, not to mention emotional generosity.

Ben Riley's Monk Legacy Septet, *Memories of T* (Concord). Monk's old drummer revisits his boss/colleague's towering songbook, in an intriguing piano-less septet format, with ear-massaging results.

Paul Motian Band, *Garden of Eden* (ECM), Paul Motian, *On Broadway, Vol. 4* (Winter & Winter). The poetic, time-goosing drummer/bandleader Motian, now 75, has been a critic's fave for years and is expanding his audience of late, while continuing to make some of the greatest "new" jazz on the scene. For the uninitiated, these two albums — one new, one reissued — offer a strong introduction to his genius.

Gonzalo Rubalcaba, *Solo* (Blue Note). This Cuban-born legend has a command of his instrument and musical material, not to mention an increasingly subtle touch, which he brought in solo form to Campbell Hall two years ago and ensnares for perpetuity on this amazing album.

Weather Report, *Forecast: Tomorrow* (Columbia/Legacy). Wrongly typecast as a '70s "fusion" band, Weather Report, in retrospect, was one of the finest and most distinctive groups in jazz history, resistant to easy labeling. This three-disc set reminds us of the power and inventive ingenuity of the band that Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter built (with ample help and charisma from Jaco Pastorius during his memorable tenure).

Charles Lloyd, *Sangam* (ECM). Santa Barbara-based tenor man Lloyd's special, free-spirited trio project, with percussionists Eric Harland and Zakir Hussain, began its life as a tribute to the late Lloyd ally Billy Higgins, in a concert at the Lobero. That performance was recorded and released by ECM this year: besides being one of the best albums in Lloyd's discography, it is the first major live jazz album recorded in Santa Barbara (unless we grant at least semi-jazz status to Joni Mitchell's *Shadows and Light*, recorded at the Santa Barbara Bowl and featuring Pastorius, Pat Metheny, and Michael Brecker).

**LOCAL CONCERTIZING:** What follows is a blur of the happiest memories from the live music arena, of all genre stripes: John Prine/Jim James, Arlington; Sonny Rollins, Campbell Hall; Paul Galbraith, Museum of Art; Jeff Beck, Arlington; Fiona Apple, Damien Rice, Bowl; Jean-Michel Pilc Trio, SOhO; Ojai Festival: opening night, Trimpin's realizations of Conlon Nancarrow's "Player Piano Studies," Robert Spano reading John Cage's "Lecture on Nothing"; Gary Burton Quartet Revisited, Lobero; Chick Corea & Touchstone, Campbell Hall; Dee Dee Bridgewater, Campbell Hall; Brad Mehldau, Lobero; Tierney Sutton, Lobero; Moutin Reunion Quartet, SOhO. (Got e? [fringebeat@independent.com](mailto:fringebeat@independent.com).) □