



A backward look forward

Pity the young jazzman who's trying to make the world aware of his notes and tones through his MySpace page. The ghosts of his predecessors keep reappearing in buried-treasure recordings, with sounds and stories so fresh, they make today's music feel quaint, like a daisy before a rose. Case in point: this month's release of *Mosaic Select: Denny Zeitlin, The Columbia Studio Trio Sessions*, the studio sides of local pianist Denny Zeitlin (above, in Sausalito in 1964). He's 70 now, but these four sessions date from '64 to '67, when he was a pup moonlighting during his medical residency at San Francisco General. A balance of tenderness and chaos, these important records showcase the ideas taking flower in mid-'60s jazz—and, in a way, in San Francisco—at the moment when corporate skinny ties and the notions that accompanied them were about to fly out the window.

Zeitlin has continued to travel a singular path between music (a soundtrack here, a concert there) and clinical psychology (private practice, a UCSF professorship), but these collected tracks, especially the ones with bassist Charlie Haden and drummer Jerry Granelli, are a milestone in his walk along the edge between blossom and thorn. They make the perfect soundtrack for talking to your friends about life, liberty, and the new presidency. ■ SCOTT ADLER