TONY BENNETT & BILL CHARLAP

The Silver Lining: The Songs Of Jerome Kern
RPM/Columbia Records.........................Dec.

Pianist Bill Charlap and vocal legend Tony Bennett unite for a moving tribute to an icon of the Great American Songbook. Charlap’s fabulous playing and Bennett’s profound voice are supported by three exceptional musicians: pianist Renee Rosnes, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington. The resulting album is sublime.

DYLAN HOWE

Subterranean
Motorik .........................April

Dylan Howe’s Subterranean embraces sizzling electronics and moody, time-chopping drums. The beautiful, shape-shifting album is colorful and consistently surprising, leading listeners on a journey where the destination is no more important than the ride itself. Stunning, essential.

KENDRICK LAMAR

To Pimp A Butterfly
Top Dawg .........................July

A political commentary on racism and capitalism in America filtered through 21st-century black counter music, To Pimp A Butterfly is more prescient and ambitious than almost anything else out there. The album’s massive length complements the weight of its achievement.

JOSÉ JAMES

Yesterday I Had The Blues: The Music Of Billie Holiday
Blue Note ...................... May

Marking the centennial of Billie Holiday’s birth, Yesterday I Had The Blues finds José James embodying the range of human emotions related to love, loss and desire. The smooth-toned vocalist succeeds beyond creating great music; he truly captures the essence of Holiday’s spirit.

MIT WIND ENSEMBLE & MIT FESTIVAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Infinite Winds
Sunnyside .........................June

Two MIT ensembles perform with poise and conviction on demanding suites by Guillermo Klein, Chick Corea and Don Byron. The entire celebratory undertaking—world premieres, MIT’s debut commercial jazz venture, exemplary playing—merits serious recognition.