

Duke Ellington Jazz Festival 2005

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By [Franz A. Matzner](#)




As if to drive home this point, one of the festival's finest moments took place during its final hours, in the two-level restaurant and club, the Bohemian Caverns. It is one of the distinct pleasures of jazz, and all live music, to witness first-hand a band's evolution, especially when that evolution entails great leaps forward. Merely a year ago, and after many years of separation, the twin brothers Francois (bass) and Louis (drums) Moutin reunited to form a new band, and release an album under the name the Moutin Reunion Quartet. As part of the tour for that album, the band played at D.C.'s [Blues Alley](#) and though they blew the audience away with their stunning instrumentalism, it was clear that the band

member's were still new to each other and had yet to unlock their full potential. Now, a year later, that promise has come to fruition. Playing a whole new range of material composed by the brothers for their latest release, *Something Like Now*, the band has reached a new level of expressiveness fueled by compositions of greater clarity, complexity, and daring. Whereas previously the Moutin brothers at times expressed their virtuosity at the expense of the whole, leaving pianist Pierre De Bethmann and saxophonist Rick Margitza by the wayside, the band now plays as a tight unit devoted to their group sound. On tune after tune, all four musicians not only contributed blistering solos, but urged each other forward with intermittently subtle and aggressive accompaniment. In short, in the brief span of a single year, the Moutin Reunion Quartet has risen to the artistic challenge of surpassing oneself, even when that means taking the risky leap beyond already proven excellence into the uncharted territory of experiment.

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