

FRIDAY: LITTLE FLY

Friday jazz comes to us from vocalist and bassist Esperanza Spalding, one of my personal favorites. She's the first jazz musician to ever win the Grammy Award for Best New Artist, awarded only a handful of months after this featured performance from 2010.

My favorite tune of the three she performs here is Apple Blossom – it never fails to make me snuffle. Spalding plays more than just the double bass; sample her more progressive work on electric bass here. Want something a bit more traditional? Try her upbeat bluesy rendition of On the Sunny Side of the Street. Or maybe a little pop rock slice with her tribute to Stevie Wonder, Overjoyed.

Wheels and steals

Volkswagen:

- Whiny op-ed complains about poor, poor Volkswagen (WSJ) – Aw, poor fraudulent enterprise lied and ripped off the American public for a decade while other automakers in the U.S. complied with emissions laws. Murdoch-NewsCorp outlet Wall Street Journal wants us to take pity on the bastards who did not care one whit they were literally poisoning U.S. citizens while lying to customers and dealers, let alone poisoning and lying to tens of millions of customers abroad. Look, they broke U.S. laws for nearly ten

years. They made interest and capital gains on the money they gained from their illegal efforts. They can make the customers they defrauded whole and they can do something to fix the damage they wreaked on our environment. And they should be punished for breaking laws on top of reparations. Anything less is a neoliberal blowjob to a company which cannot compete fairly inside the U.S.

- VW passenger diesel owners need additional protections (Reuters) – The current settlement offered by VW in federal court does not provide a secondary level of protection to consumers says the consumer advocacy journal, needed if the proposed fix to the emissions cheating diesel vehicles does not work. These vehicle owners should be able to opt for buy-back. The amount offered also undervalues retail prices on alternative replacement vehicles, Consumer Reports said in its submission during the public comment period which ended today.

■ Consumer Reports said it

generally supported the settlement, but urged “regulators to wield robust oversight of Volkswagen to ensure that the company implements its recall, investment, and mitigation programs appropriately” and it called on “federal and state officials to assess tough civil penalties and any appropriate criminal penalties against the company in order to hold it fully accountable.”

- South Korea halts sales of 80 VW vehicle models (NBCNews) – This is what the U.S. could have done to VW given the scale of fraud, emissions cheating, and the lack of actual “clean diesel” passenger technology available to remedy both 2.0L and 3.0L engine vehicles. The 80 models now banned for non-compliance with emissions and noise pollution laws as well as document forgery include VW, Audi and Bentley vehicles. VW has also been slapped with \$16.06 million fine, which is extremely light considering VW broke not only emissions laws while fraudulently misrepresenting the vehicles’ attributes.
- West Virginia’s suit against

VW amended (Hastings Tribune) – WVa Attorney General expanded the suit to include VW parent group as well as Audi and Porsche brands. Bosch, the manufacturer of VW's electronic control units which were programmed to defeat emissions controls, is included in the lawsuit.

- Fewer Americans buying VW vehicles (Business Insider) – No surprise, given the emissions controls cheating scandal, the pricey labels, iffy reliability, and a product lineup that doesn't match the U.S.' market demand. It may be a long time before VW digs itself out of its hole here.

NOT Volkswagen:

- Two Houston thieves hack Jeep and Dodge cars (Phys.org) – Hacking pirated computer software used by auto technicians and dealers, two men tweaked Fiat Chrysler model vehicles' security codes so their key worked. The thieves were picked up driving a stolen Jeep Grand Cherokee after police focused on an area where a

high number of vehicle thefts occurred.

- White hat hackers proved Chrysler's anti-hack update breachable (The Register) – Last year Charlie Miller and Chris Valasek showed Fiat Chrysler's wireless feature could be hacked remotely to take control of a car. At Black Hat 2016 this week the same duo showed how they could defeat Fiat Chrysler's firmware update which the automaker pushed to patch the vulnerability. But in terms of ease and speed, the two thieves in Houston might actually have a faster approach to taking control of a vehicle.
- 28-year-old cracks up his brother's car while playing Pokémon GO (The Guardian) – Dude. Really? You're lucky to be alive or that you didn't kill someone else. This is the kind of generational stupid old-man-yelling-at-clouds Clint Eastwood should take a poke at instead of doubling down on his closeted racism.
- Self-driving feature in Tesla X may have saved its driver (CNBC) – Driver suffered a pulmonary

embolism while on the road; the vehicle took him to the hospital. Article says the driver “was able to steer the car the last few meters” suggesting he was conscious and in control if limited in capacity. No further details were included to describe how the vehicle switched from its original route to the hospital.

Because opening ceremonies begin tonight at the Rio Olympics, I’ll leave you here. Catch you Monday – have a safe and restful weekend!