

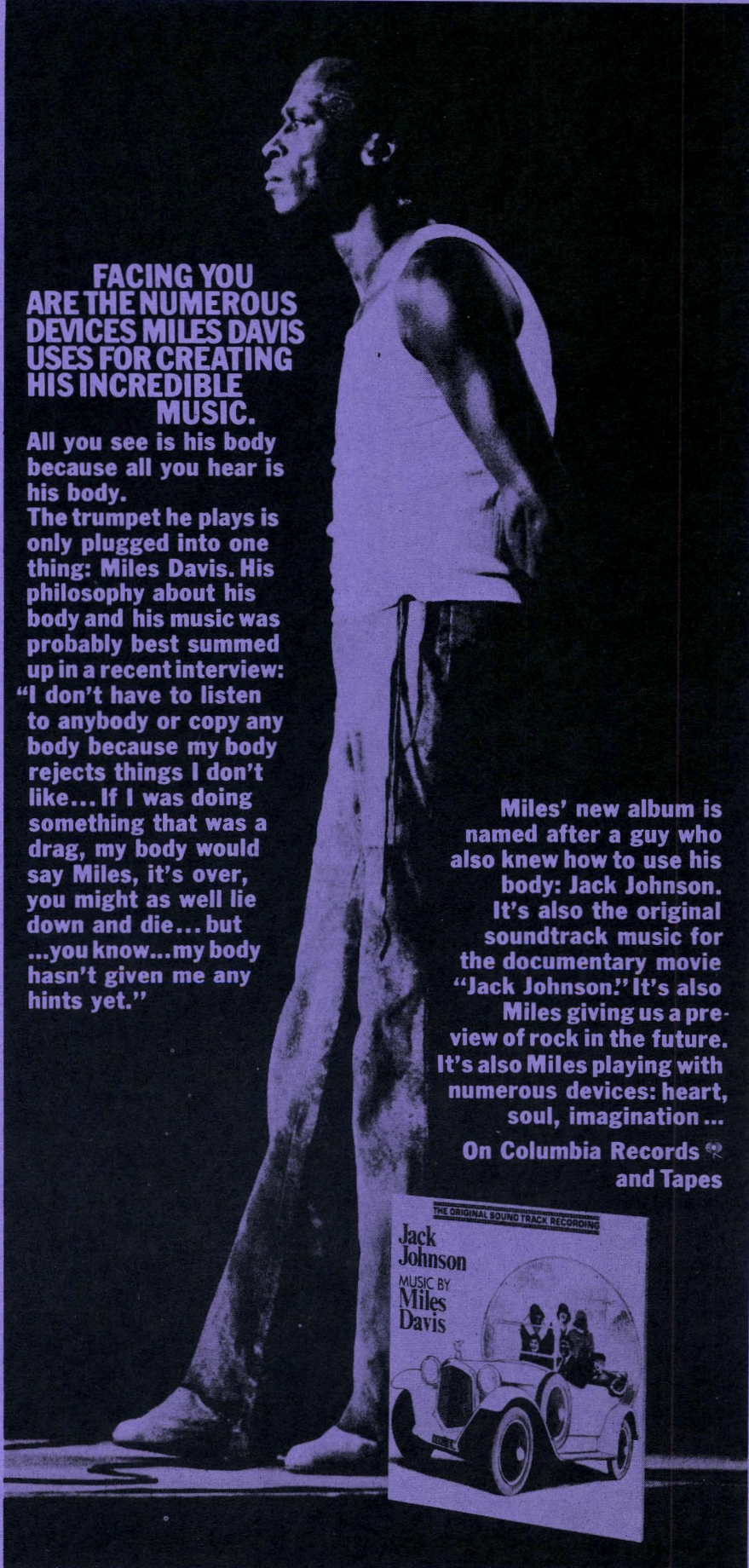
CANADA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE  
JUNE 1971

# COOL

SIXTY CENTS







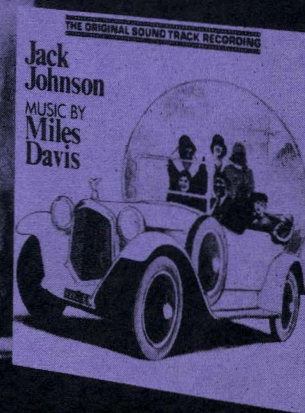
**FACING YOU  
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All you see is his body because all you hear is his body.

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Miles' new album is named after a guy who also knew how to use his body: Jack Johnson. It's also the original soundtrack music for the documentary movie "Jack Johnson." It's also Miles giving us a preview of rock in the future. It's also Miles playing with numerous devices: heart, soul, imagination ...

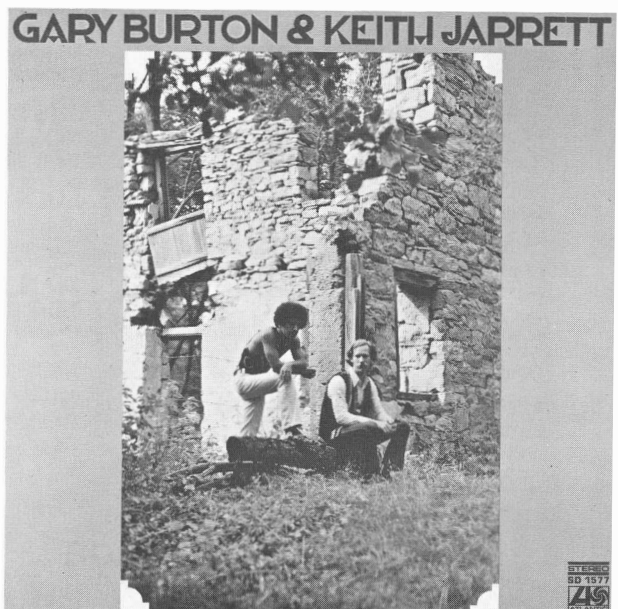
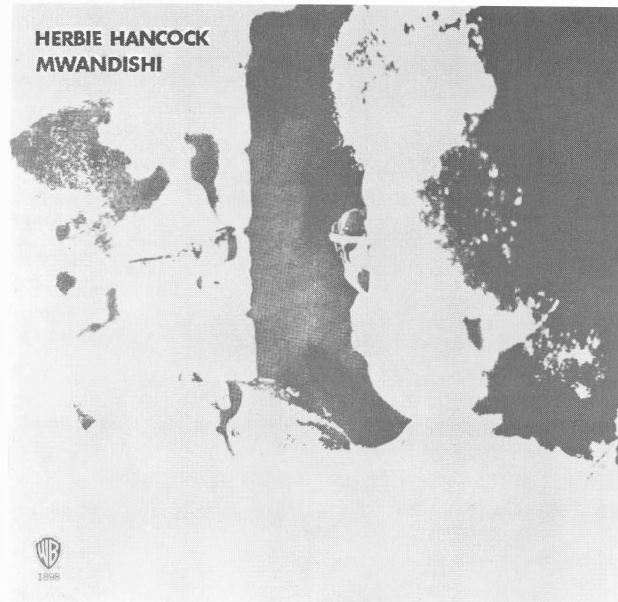
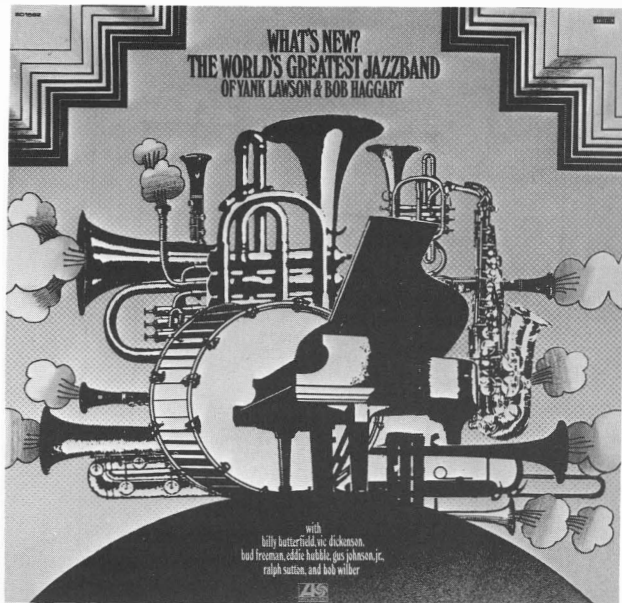
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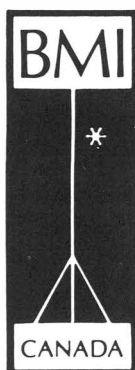
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# Coda

CANADA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE May/June 1971 Volume 10 No. 1

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## FEATURES

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ETHEL WATERS: ON RECORD..... page 2  
article by John Nelson  
CHARLIE HADEN: LIBERATION MUSIC..... page 6  
A Ted O'Reilly Interview  
HERBIE COWENS: MR. METRONOME..... page 9  
by Johnny Simmen  
FROM THE INSIDE OUT..... page 31  
Bob Palmer interviews Bob Thiele  
WYNTON KELLY..... page 37  
by Mark Gardner

---

## DEPARTMENTS

---

THIS IS THE BLUES..... page 13  
RECORD REVIEWS..... page 15  
AROUND THE WORLD..... page 38  
HEARD AND SEEN..... page 43

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## COVER

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WYNTON KELLY..... photographer: unknown

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## EDITORIAL

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It was something of a shock to read recently that Jazz Monthly, one of the few magazines in the English language to treat the subject of jazz seriously, had folded. There is still some hope that it will be reborn in the guise of a blues and jazz monthly but it accentuates the inherent difficulties in the publication of jazz periodicals. One of the principal factors in the collapse of Jazz Monthly would appear to be the lack of advertising. In most recent issues this was virtually non-existent and until such time as there is subsidy for magazines it is virtually a necessity to have advertising.

There is one other direction for a jazz publication to take if it intends surviving. It can broaden its scope and assimilate some of the money floating round the periphery of the pop world. This has been the course of action taken by American magazines - but the hard-core jazz enthusiast is often disillusioned by this. So much so that it is safe to assume that only a small percentage of the readers of both Down Beat and Jazz And Pop are actually jazz fans first and foremost.

The question one might ask is - is there really enough people enthusiastic enough to support a periodical devoted to jazz? Well, Jazz Journal is still actively publishing and we have no intention of giving up our particular struggle to bring news and views about jazz to those who are fascinated by this great music. We value your patronage and appreciate what efforts you take in spreading the word about our magazine.

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# ETHEL WATERS



## ON RECORD

ARTICLE JOHN NELSON

In March 1921, Ethel Waters at the age of twenty-one made her first recordings for the Cardinal label. Four years earlier, in 1917, she had joined a vaudeville team appearing at the Lincoln Theatre in Baltimore. Subsequently, she toured the black theatre circuit in the south with another team, and soon became known as "Sweet Mama Stringbean". Coming to New York, she remained for several years at a speakeasy named Edmond's Cellar. It was while she was still at Edmond's that her first Cardinal records

were made. Two months later, in May 1921, she signed with the Black Swan Record Co. which had just been newly formed and which described itself as the "only genuine Colored Record". Ethel Waters became one of the stars of Black Swan Records which were produced by the Pace Phonograph Company. From some twenty-two titles made for Black Swan, thirteen have now been reissued on Biograph BLP-12022, Ethel Waters "Oh Daddy" 1921-1924.

The title of this LP comes from the name of the first tune by Ethel Waters which was issued on Black Swan 2010, coupled with Down Home Blues. (The label of this disc is reproduced in color in the TIME-LIFE series *The Fabulous Century*, Volume 3, *The Twenties*.) Accompaniment on these two titles is by Cordy Williams Jazz Masters: -unknown trumpets, Henry Brashear (trombone), Edgar Campbell (clarinet), Cordy Williams (violin), Fletcher Henderson (piano). For *One Man Nan*, *There'll Be Some Changes Made*, *Memphis Man*, *Midnight Blues*, *That Da-Da Strain*, and *Georgia Blues*, Ethel Waters is accompanied by her Jazz Masters with a collective personnel including: Garvin Bushell (alto, clarinet), June Clark or Howard Smith or Joe Smith (cornet), Clarence Robinson (clarinet), Fletcher Henderson (piano), Johnny Mitchell (banjo), Henry Brashear (trombone). Two titles (*At The New Jump Steady Ball* and *Oh Joe Play That Trombone*) have an unknown personnel - trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and piano. For a change of pace, a pianist alone, J.C. Johnson (NOT James P.) accompanies Ethel Waters on *You Can't Do What My Last Man Did*, *Ethel Sings 'Em*, and *Sweet Man*. In that J.C. Johnson is listed as the composer of two of these numbers, we can only wonder why Fletcher Henderson was not the pianist, as he was musical director for the Black Swan label. In 1924, Pace sold his Black Swan catalog to Paramount Records of Chicago and Ethel Waters continued to record for this company. The last title on the LP is from Paramount *Cravin' Blues*, and we can argue all day about the personnel if you wish - take your pick between Joe Smith or Tommy Ladnier (cornet), Johnny Dodds or Buster Bailey (clarinet), and Jasper Taylor or Kaiser Marshall (drums) - at various times all have been touted as members of pianist Lovie Austin's *Serenaders*, whose group this is.

This Biograph LP fills a large gap for the collector of the earliest and most historical recordings of Ethel Waters. As usual with Biograph, the "original sound qualities have been retained and no artificial echoing or rechanneling has been introduced". Chris Albertson's informative notes on the sleeve span Miss Waters' recording career from the twenties to the forties. Without a doubt this LP is essential to the recorded biography of the great Ethel Waters.

In 1925, Ethel Waters replaced Florence Mills at the Plantation Club in New York where she introduced the then new song *Dinah*. She then signed with Columbia records as an "exclusive artist" and her appearances on this label ran from April 1925 to February 1934 and included well over eighty titles. Before delving into Ethel Waters' records on Columbia, mention must be made of two important LPs of which most CODA readers are probably totally unaware.



These two outstanding recordings are on the WORD label, "The Finest Name In Sacred Music": Ethel Waters Reminisces (WST 8107) and His Eye Is On The Sparrow (WST 8044). On 8107, she is backed by her longtime friend and accompanist Reginald Beane. For years until her death in 1936, Pearl Wright had been Ethel's pianist on most of her performances. Reginald Beane then took over, and of him Ethel Waters has said: "You can feel understanding and help coming out through his fingers to you. He has a great gift of knowing what I want before I have a chance to ask for it." In effect, this recording is a generous second helping to the Monmouth-Evergreen LP by Ethel Waters which was so enthusiastically reviewed (with complete justification) by Wayne Jones in the December 1969 issue of CODA. One of the major differences is that the Word issue is a studio recording, whereas the Evergreen featured live performances. In further contrast, the Evergreen was devoted mainly to show tunes - the Word LP contains practically all traditional titles and spirituals. Six of these are in medley form: Here Is One/City Called Heaven, Choose Now/Shall You, Shall I, and Oh, How I Love Jesus/To Me It's Wonderful. There are two fine compositions by pianist Beane: He's With Me Each Step Of The Way and My Saviour Will Always Be There. The remaining titles are: I Am A Pilgrim, Motherless Child, He's All I Need, Little Black Boy, Cabin In The Sky, Crying Holy Unto The Lord, I Cannot Fail The Lord, Is It Well With Your Soul?

All these are sung in the inimitable Ethel Waters style - a moving mixture of deep reverence and humility, with a complete understanding of the meaning of all the words of each song. Beane's deft accompaniment is light and sparkling, or dark and sombre, depending on the happiness or sadness of each particular title.

On the Other Word LP, "His Eye Is On The Sparrow", Ethel Waters is accompanied by a choir and orchestra under the direction of Paul Mickelson who also made all the arrangements. Apart from the album title (also the title of Ethel Waters' autobiography, unfortunately out of print) this LP again concentrates on traditional Spirituals. On two of them, In His Care, and When The Trumpet Sounds, Ethel Waters sings duets with herself, by means of effective re-recording. The use of an ethereal and celestial choir on a slow version of Just A Closer Walk With Thee makes this a very moving number. In fact, the emotion felt by Ethel in recording the next two titles (I Just Can't Stay Here By Myself and Mammy) was so great that she broke down and wept, causing several re-takes. The use of rhythmic organ, piano, bass, and guitar on the happier spirituals such as Joy To My Soul are in sharp contrast to the choir and full orchestra featured on moving versions of Deep River, Nobody Knows The Trouble I See, and Stand By Me. As the liner notes point out, Ethel Waters artistically and reverently sings the songs of her people, and expresses their hopes and faith. This is very evident on the final three titles of this excellent recording: Crucifixion, I Do Don't You, Partners With God, and in a Gospel Medley.

I strongly recommend that you add these two Word recordings to your Ethel Waters collection. If you

cannot find them in your local Bible Book store, you can write direct to Word Inc., Waco, Texas 76703. The price is \$4.98 each plus \$0.50 postage per record. In Canada, write to Word Records Ltd., P.O. Box 6900, Vancouver 3, British Columbia. The price in Canada is \$5.98 each plus \$0.50 postage per record.

Now let us get back to the Columbia Story as it affects Ethel Waters. Back in 1961, Columbia was reissuing older material in boxed three-LP sets, and it was agreed that Miles Kreuger and Frank Driggs would co-produce an Ethel Waters album, Kreuger to concentrate on her show and film repertoire, while Driggs would take care of jazz and blues. At the end of 1961, Kreuger left Columbia, and Driggs had drifted off into other projects. Later, Columbia decided to go for a two-pocket Hall of Fame set, with Kreuger (now free-lancing) and Driggs splitting the contents fifty-fifty. But let Miles Kreuger relate the rest of the sad, sad story:- "Then someone in the sales department suggested that perhaps the two records should be released as two singles, so that someone who cares for show music need not have to purchase the other repertoire etc. We were upset, but perhaps foolishly agreed. I completed my half of the proposed pair of albums and discovered that although it was scheduled for release, the sales department had cancelled Frank's album. Naturally, I was angered that they would do such a thing without telling either of us; and I felt guilty that my album would be issued and not Frank's. He did graciously assure me that he had become inured to such corporate whims, and I shouldn't feel bad about it."

The single LP to which Miles refers is Ethel Waters On Stage & Screen 1925-1940 CL 2792 (CS 9592). This contains sixteen titles, six of which were originally issued on some obscure Liberty Music Shop 78s, and which, luckily for us, were acquired by John Hammond for the Columbia reissue. (A review of this disc is on page 18, of the August 1970 CODA.) However, this leaves only ten titles reissued from Ethel Waters' entire Columbia output - a far cry from the forty-eight titles originally planned. It is anyone's guess how long this LP will remain in the catalog, and I suppose we should all be thankful for small mercies. It is merely frustrating to dwell further on what might have been. There are three more Ethel Waters tracks, two in Epic reissues ("Early Thirties" and "Those Wonderful Girls") and one in the Columbia "Twenties" set, but it appears unlikely that more titles will ever be pried loose from this label's vaults.

Maybe Columbia redeemed themselves somewhat with their Blackbirds of 1928 (OL 6770). True, Ethel Waters is only heard on three titles - two with Duke Ellington (Porgy and I Can't Give You Anything But Love), and one with the Cecil Mack Choir (St. Louis Blues). The set is, however, beautifully produced (by our disgruntled friend Miles Kreuger!) and contains many items of interest. (See John Norris' comments page 28, August 1970 CODA.) I have often wondered if Columbia was prodded into issuing this LP by the appearance of the Sutton "drugstore label" reissue of basically the same titles. There is one important difference - the Sutton stuck to the original "A" takes of the ancient Brunswicks, whereas



the Columbia used different takes on four Ellington titles. (The three Ethel Waters takes are the same on both issues.) It is again problematical how long the monaural Columbia will remain available. The Sutton is long gone, but if you feel you must have a copy, drop me a line c/o CODA.

Mention must be made of Ethel Waters' version of I Can't Give You Anything But Love in the Blackbirds Columbia LP. She does an excellent vocal imitation of Louis Armstrong, and not content with that, uses her voice to impersonate his famous trumpet coda - something you might expect Adelaide Hall to attempt - but no, it's Ethel - demonstrating another facet of her vocal artistry, years before everyone and his sister found it fashionable to be "Copyin' Louis".

The remainder of Ethel Waters' recordings for other labels seem destined to remain in limbo, unless we can persuade Historical or any of those other (TOM) cats to come to the rescue. In the period of August 1934 to January 1938, eleven or twelve titles appeared on Decca (and English Brunswick), including a memorable Miss Otis Regrets. One title, Dinah, from September 5, 1934, has been reissued on The Wonderful Thirties, Decca DEA 7-2. In 1938-9, she recorded with Eddie Mallory's orchestra (on piano: Reginald Beane), and twelve tunes appeared on Bluebird (also on English HMV). These would have made an ideal package for the late lamented Victor Vintage label - along with two numbers she recorded with Herman Chittison in 1947.

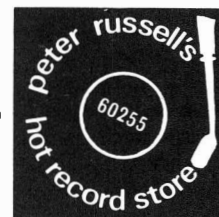
In 1946, Harry Lim had Ethel Waters in his Continental studio for four lumbering 78s, in which she is accompanied somewhat ruggedly (or raggedly) by J. C. Heard and his orchestra, the pianist again being Mr. Beane. In the early halcyon days of LP, these eight titles were nicely packaged on to a ten-inch Remington. Subsequently, Lim decided to get more mileage out of his original recordings, and trotted out just six of the eight titles on a twelve-inch LP in his Jazz Collectors Series (CLP 16008). He padded out his frustrating package with some tedious offerings by Sabby Lewis, Dorothy Donegan, and Cozy Cole.

In 1947, Ethel Waters recorded six titles for Mary Howard Records, which for some reason had no catalog numbers. These, along with a further six tunes, were issued on Mercury LP MG 20051. If anyone is willing to part with a copy of this recording, or can supply a tape, please let me know.

I have attempted in this article to sketch the recording career of Ethel Waters, and to highlight those records of hers which are currently available. This great artist has not only excelled in the recording studios but is equally famous for her great performances on the stage, in movies, and on television. Certainly, there is comparatively little available from her long recording career. The Biograph and the two Word LPs are perhaps an unexpected bonus to add to the outstanding Monmouth/Evergreen and the Columbia. Biograph has already released a second volume of her earliest recordings - let us hope for more good news from other sources.

My thanks and acknowledgements to Bob Fertig, Chris Albertson, Arnold Caplin, Gerry Scott, Miles Kreuger, and Dave Dixon.

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**1001—KENTON'S CHRISTMAS:**

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- O Tannenbaum
- The Holly and the Ivy
- We Three Kings of Orient Are
- Good King Wenceslas
- The Twelve Days of Christmas
- Once In Royal David's City
- God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
- O Come, All Ye Faithful
- Angels We Have Heard On High
- O Holy Night
- Christmas Medley

**1002—NEW CONCEPTS OF ARTISTRY IN RHYTHM:**

- 23°N · 82°W Bill Russo
- Young Blood Gerry Mulligan
- Portrait of a Count Bill Russo
- Invention for Guitar & Trumpet Bill Holman
- Improvisation Bill Russo
- Frank Speaking Bill Russo
- My Lady Bill Russo
- Prologue (This is an Orchestral)

**1003—CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTS:**

- What's New Bill Holman
- Stella By Starlight Bill Holman
- I Got You Under My Skin Bill Holman
- Cherokee Bill Holman
- Stompin' At The Savoy Bill Holman
- Yesterdays Bill Holman
- Limelight Gerry Mulligan

**1004—KENTON IN STEREO:**

(originally released on Capitol as "Kenton In Hi-Fi")

- Artistry Jumps Stan Kenton
- Interlude Pete Rugolo
- Intermission Riff Ray Wetzel
- Minor Riff Pete Rugolo
- Collaboration Pete Rugolo
- Painted Rhythm Stan Kenton
- Lover Pete Rugolo
- Peanut Vendor Stan Kenton
- Eager Beaver Stan Kenton
- Concerto To End All Concertos Stan Kenton
- Artistry In Boogie Pete Rugolo

**1005—LUSH INTERLUDE:**

Arranged by Pete Rugolo

- Interlude
- Collaboration
- Opus In Pastels
- A Theme For My Lady
- Artistry In Bolero
- Concerto To End All Concertos
- Machito
- Theme To The West
- Lush Waltz
- Artistry in Rhythm

**1006—THE CITY OF GLASS & THIS MODERN**

**WORLD:**

- Composed & arranged by Bob Graettinger
- Entrance Into The City
  - The Structures
  - Dance Before the Mirror
  - Reflections
  - A Horn
  - Some Saxophones
  - A Cello
  - A Thought
  - A Trumpet
  - An Orchestra

**1007—WEST SIDE STORY:**

Arrangements by Johnny Richards

- Prologue
- Something's Coming
- Maria
- America
- Tonight
- Cool
- I Feel Pretty
- Officer Krupke
- Taunting Scene
- Somewhere

**1008—CUBAN FIRE:**

Composed & Arranged by Johnny Richards

- Fuego Cubano
- El Congo Valiente
- Recuerdos
- Quien Sabe
- La Guera Baila
- La Suerte De Los Tontos

**1009—INNOVATIONS IN MODERN MUSIC:**

- Trajectories Franklyn Marks
- Theme for Sunday Stan Kenton
- Conflict Pete Rugolo
- Incident In Jazz Bob Graettinger
- Lonesome Road Pete Rugolo
- Mirage Bill Russo
- Solitaire Chico O'Farrill
- Cuban Episode

**1010—ADVENTURES IN JAZZ:**

- Turtle Talk Dee Barton
- Stairway To The Stars Bill Holman
- Limehouse Blues Bill Holman
- Malaguena Bill Holman
- Misty Gene Roland
- Waltz of the Prophets Dee Barton
- Body and Soul Sam Donahue

**1011—ADVENTURES IN TIME:**

Composed and arranged by Johnny Richards

- Commencement
- Quintile
- Artemis
- March To Polaris
- Septuor From Antares
- Artemis and Apollo
- Apercu

**1012—ADVENTURES IN BLUES:**

Composed and Arranged by Gene Roland

- Reuben's Blues
- Dragonwyck
- Blue Ghost
- Exit Stage Left
- Night AT The Gold Nugget
- Formula SK-32
- Aphrodisia
- Fitz
- The Blues Story

**1013—LOS ANGELES NEOPHONIC ORCHESTRA:**

- Fanfare Hugo Montenegro
- Prelude and Fugue Johnny Williams
- Passacaglia and Fugue Allyn Ferguson
- Music for an Unwritten Play Jim Knight
- Adventure In Emotions Russ Garcia

**1014—PRIVATE PARTY**

(Contents as described elsewhere in this brochure)

**1015—STAN KENTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA LIVE AT REDLANDS UNIVERSITY**

- Here's That Rainy Day Dee Barton
- Minor Booze Willie Maiden
- Tico Tico Bill Holman
- We Almost Made It This Time, Didn't We? Willie Maiden
- Chiapas Hank Levy
- MacArthur Park Dee Barton
- More Peanut Vendor Stan Kenton
- Bon Homme Richard Ken Hanna
- Hey Jude Steve Spiegl
- Tiare Ken Hanna
- Terry Talk Willie Maiden
- Granada Bill Holman
- Theme Stan Kenton

**1023—KENTON PRESENTS**

- Art Pepper Shorty Rogers
- Maynard Ferguson Shorty Rogers
- The Halls of Brass Bill Russo
- Evening in Pakistan Franklyn Marks
- June Christy Stan Kenton
- House of Strings Bob Graettinger
- Shelly Manne Stan Kenton
- Soliloquy Johnny Richards

**1024—KENTON/WAGNER**

Arrangements by Stan Kenton

- Ride Of The Valkyries
- Siegfried's Funeral March
- Prelude to Act I of Lohengrin
- Prelude to Act III of Lohengrin
- Prelude to Tristan und Isolde
- Love-Death from Tristan und Isolde
- Wedding March from Lohengrin
- Pilgrims' Chorus from Tannhauser

**1025—ADVENTURES IN STANDARDS**

Arrangements by Lennie Niehaus

- Some Enchanted Evening
- Begin the Beguine
- It's All Right With Me
- Make Someone Happy
- Old Devil Moon
- Gigi
- Come Rain or Come Shine
- Almost Like Being In Love
- Just In Time
- If I Were A Bell
- Bewitched, Bothered & Bewildered
- I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face

**1026—KENTON SHOWCASE**

Composed & Arranged by Bill Holman:

- Bags
- Hav-A-Havana
- Solo For Buddy
- The Opener
- Fearless Finlay
- Theme & Variations
- In Lighter Vein
- King Fish

Composed & Arranged by Bill Russo:

- A Theme of Four Values
- A Study For Bass
- Blues Before & After
- Bacante
- Thisbe
- Egdon Heath
- Sweets
- Dusk

**1027—COLLECTOR'S CHOICE**

- Southern Scandal Stan Kenton
- Santa Lucia Pete Rugolo
- September Song Stan Kenton
- Artistry in Tango Stan Kenton
- Dark Eyes Stan Kenton
- Sunset Tower Stan Kenton
- Pagliacci Pete Rugolo
- Laura Stan Kenton
- What's New Shorty Rogers
- Viva Prado Shorty Rogers

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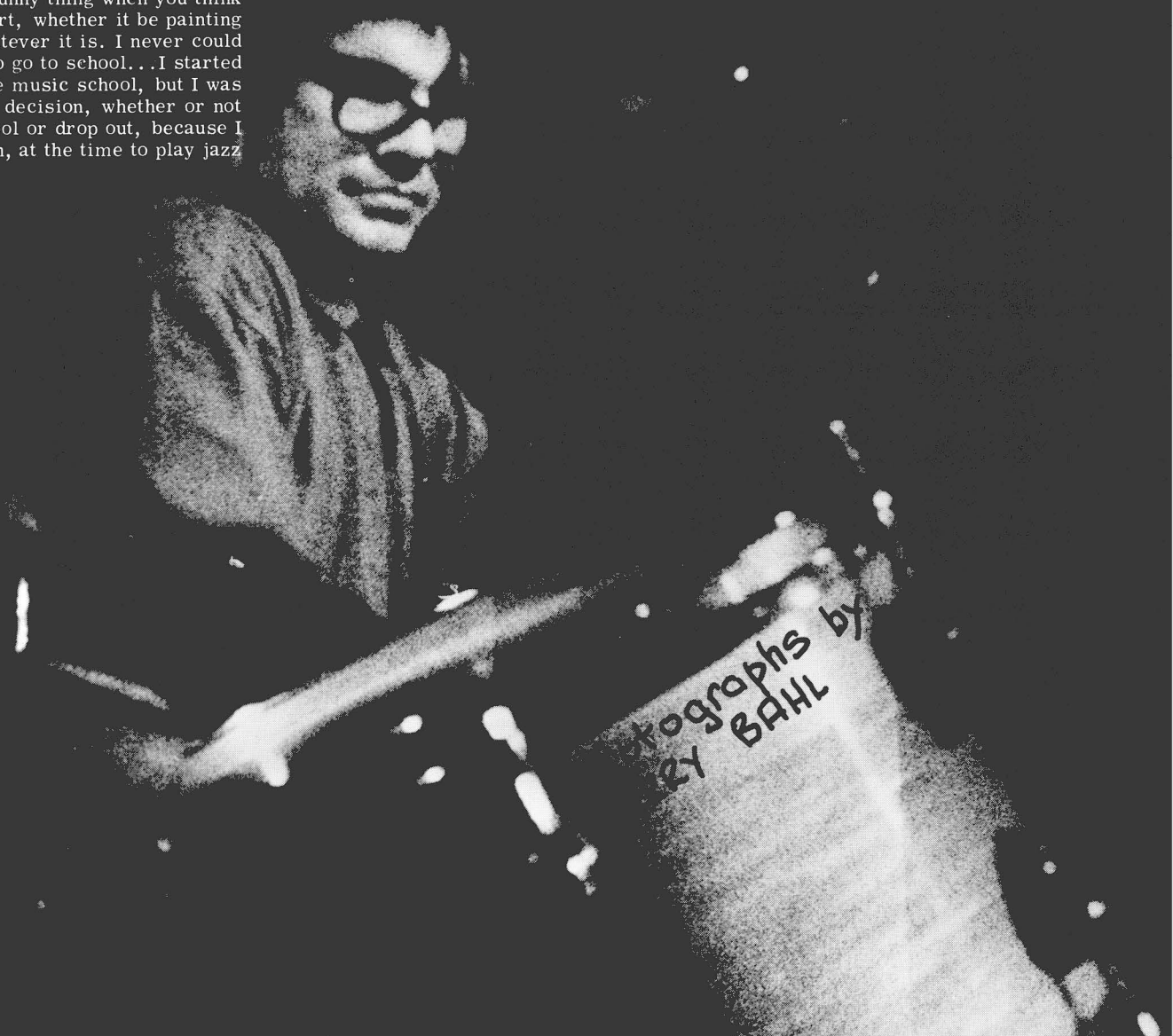
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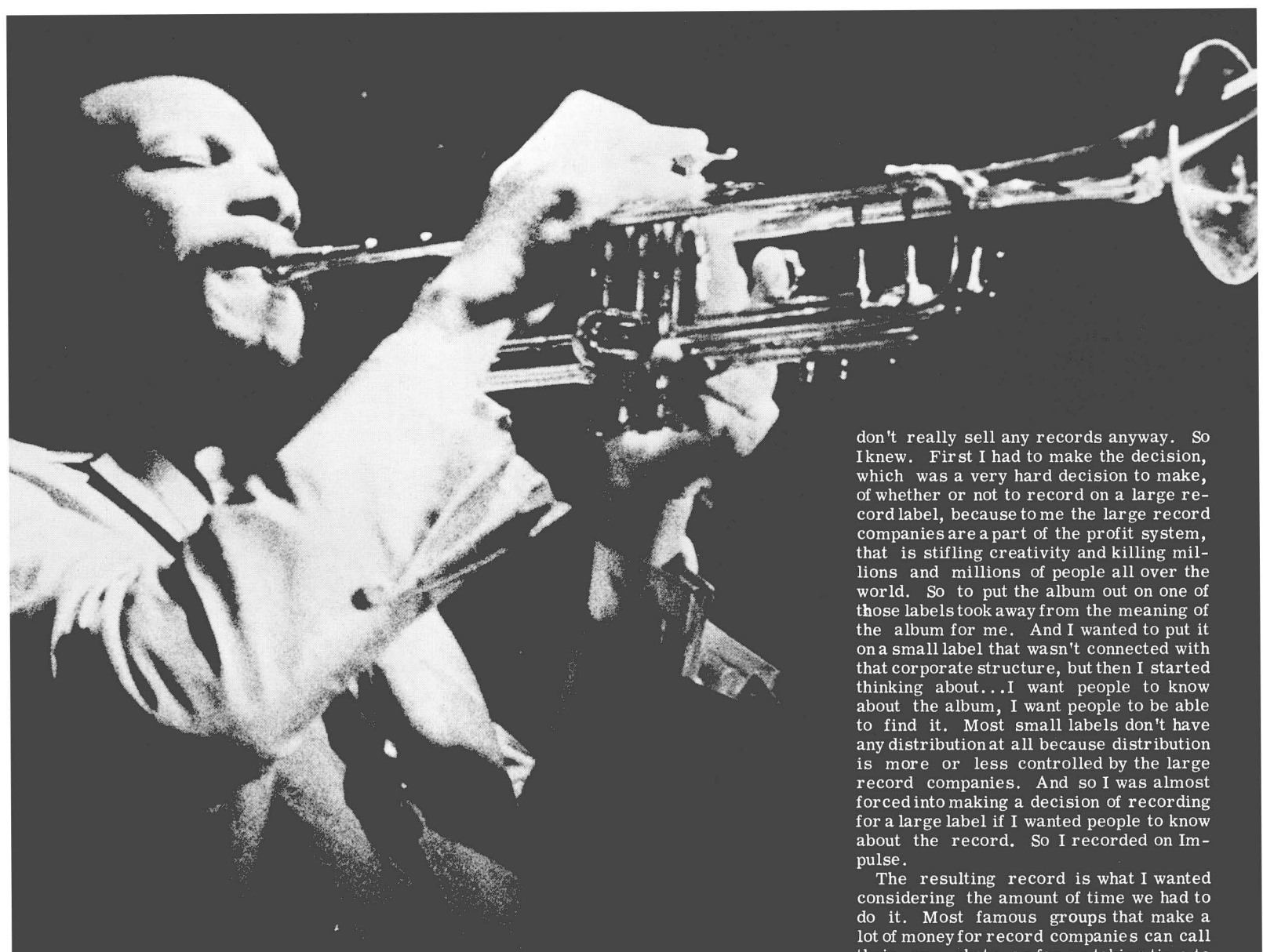


I was brought up with the language of jazz, from the beginning when I first started wanting to play the music, and learned the way a jazz musician learns how to play the language, by just playing with musicians. I started playing when I was about eighteen in Los Angeles. I played with Paul Bley, Hampton Hawes, Ornette Coleman in 1956/57. I met Ornette in 1957, but I guess I worked with almost every musician who was in Los Angeles. Most of the musicians in Los Angeles now are all in the studios and there isn't that much jazz there anymore. But there were very many great musicians in Los Angeles then, that you probably would never hear about. There was a fantastic bass player named Clarence Jones who is dead now. Carl Perkins, the pianist, is dead too and Elmo Hope was out there then, and of course, Harold Land was there. There were great drummers, Frank Butler and Laurence Marable, some great musicians, but it's not like that anymore. But we came east because it was like a calling. It was the time to go. We had been recorded by Atlantic already and Ornette and Don Cherry had gone to the school of jazz in Lenox the summer before and had been approached to play in New York and Ornette accepted it.

I know some of the younger musicians now playing in New York, are schooled and some aren't. I think it's about the same ratio as it was, or has been. Schooling is a very funny thing when you think about it in any art, whether it be painting or writing or whatever it is. I never could decide whether to go to school... I started it in school, in the music school, but I was trying to make a decision, whether or not to stay in school or drop out, because I wanted very much, at the time to play jazz

# CHARLIE HADEN LIBERATION MUSIC





and I had a feeling that what I was learning in school wasn't helping me to further learn the language of jazz improvisation. I found out later that that was true - in a way you almost have to learn it while you are playing.

I wish now that I had stayed or gone back later, but under the circumstances I didn't. But now I've been studying writing on my own, and I just got a Guggenheim fellowship for music composition this year, which I was very grateful to get and I'm applying for another one somewhere else next year. If you dedicate your life to playing creative music (we're speaking specifically now of the United States which is jazz), you almost have to resign yourself to the fact that you're not going to be very well off financially. So you have to make several decisions after you discover that, whether or not to play commercial music or go into the studios or apply for fellowships, try to keep playing the music that you've dedicated your life to. So that's what I've been doing because I don't feel right playing in the studios. I've tried it, since I've been back in New York, and it's another world, and it's not my world.

I never studied music other than about a half a semester at a college of music,

which was theory and piano. There was actually a bass teacher there but it wasn't really long enough to get anything happening with him, but I did later on study with a gentleman who had played the first chair bass in the Philharmonic under Toscanini. His name was Herman Reinzig and he's dead now. He was a phenomenal bass player, and he was in his eighties at the time. I know Charlie Mingus, Ray Brown and Red Mitchell studied with him, and I had several lessons with him but I didn't continue them. I wish I had.

For the last five years or so, I've been wanting to make some kind of musical statement and communicate to people the importance of changing the environment that's around us every day in the United States. I guess it was two years ago when I started playing the music on the Liberation Music Orchestra album. The songs were added as they were written and the thought of putting the album together came about. I was going to record companies with my feelings about what I wanted to do and as soon as I mentioned the political theme of the album, I was usually turned down. They wouldn't give that reason but they told me that they didn't think it would sell any records, but most jazz albums

don't really sell any records anyway. So I knew. First I had to make the decision, which was a very hard decision to make, of whether or not to record on a large record label, because to me the large record companies are a part of the profit system, that is stifling creativity and killing millions and millions of people all over the world. So to put the album out on one of those labels took away from the meaning of the album for me. And I wanted to put it on a small label that wasn't connected with that corporate structure, but then I started thinking about... I want people to know about the album, I want people to be able to find it. Most small labels don't have any distribution at all because distribution is more or less controlled by the large record companies. And so I was almost forced into making a decision of recording for a large label if I wanted people to know about the record. So I recorded on Impulse.

The resulting record is what I wanted considering the amount of time we had to do it. Most famous groups that make a lot of money for record companies can call their own shots as far as taking time to make an album. We had three sessions, each session being three hours; and the first session was completely lost because they brought in the wrong equipment. We did it remote at Judson Hall with an invited guest audience. I wanted members of different political groups to be there, and I also invited the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion who had fought in Spain in 1937, and their families to hear the music from the Spanish Civil War that we did. And the remote equipment that they brought in the first night was the wrong equipment. Everything that we recorded was lost. So that left two three-hour sessions to do the whole album in.

Almost all of the music was recorded in one take, and a lot of it wasn't even rehearsed. We had a couple of rehearsals just on our own, but it was very hard for some of the musicians to make rehearsals, because I wasn't able to pay anyone. We just had to more or less get together when we could on our own and do it. And a lot of other things went on at this session with the so-called producer who almost destroyed the whole thing. But it finally got recorded. And then after it was recorded I had to fight to get it released, because, Bob Thiele, the producer was in the pro-



cess of leaving Impulse then and starting his own company which is called "Flying Dutchman" now. And after the record was completed, he had broken away completely from Impulse, and he just sent the test pressing to Impulse in Los Angeles. They didn't really know what the record was about or anything, because they weren't involved in it. He wasn't actually producer, because I produced the record, I designed the cover, I wrote the liner notes, I got the musicians together. He was just there timing the takes, and making everything miserable for everyone. But as soon as they read my notes, which I was very polite in writing they called me up and said we can't release this, you have to change some of the notes, and you have to change the title. At my own expense, I flew to Los Angeles and I had to talk to them on their level which was a financial profit making level and finally talked them into releasing the album. If I had said what I really wanted to say, they would never have put it out. So I held back and was polite in what I said.

And then after it came out there was no promotion on it until it started winning awards. And then there was an article in Rolling Stone. Someone there had found out about Impulse not promoting the record and they wrote a whole thing about putting the executives of Impulse down for not supporting their recording artist, why does a label go to the trouble and expense of recording someone, and then not stand behind them, and promote the album. And as soon as they read that they called me and said they would give me two ads, and I was afraid even about the ads because there had been some political albums out that had taken advantage and almost exploited the peace movement. That's happening a lot in rock music, and I didn't want that to happen. So I told them how I wanted the ad, and they did it the way I wanted and it was okay.

The album hasn't done as well in the States as it's done in Europe and in Japan. It's sold ten thousand copies in Japan. It won best album of the year in Japan, and it won the Grand Prix in Paris, and I guess it's one of the best selling jazz albums in France, and also I just found out that it was the second best selling album in Denmark. When it was released in Europe, we were there at the time, and I got to see some of the response from it. It caught on to young people especially. I wish it could have a chance to do that in the States. It hasn't really had any promotion other than just the reviews that have been in different publications. Ramparts reviewed the album, and it's the first record that Ramparts magazine ever reviewed. The reviews have been rave notices and it also placed third in the Downbeat International Critics poll, which surprised me.

I had listened to a lot of music from different revolutionary conflicts to find music that was also conducive to improvising, and I found the music from the Spanish Civil War to be closer to that. My wife, Ellen, knew some people who had fought in Spain and the way I first heard the music from the Spanish Civil War was through her; and we didn't do nearly all



the songs that came out. These were mostly songs from the Abraham Lincoln Battalion - the Americans who volunteered to go there and they're all old Spanish Folk Songs that had new words added to them in wartime. But I wanted to use the songs not only because of their power and beauty but also because they're relevant to what's happening in the United States, as far as the people losing their freedom, just like the people in Spain. They had just voted in a democratic government and the Civil War broke out almost gradually. The five generals who were involved on the right, including Generalissimo Franco, with the help of Mussolini's troops and Hitler's troops outnumbered the people of the Spanish Republic. They asked for help and fifty-seven different countries sent volunteers. Not as countries, as individuals, right. The United States remained neutral by choice and made it known that they were remaining neutral. And then there were about 3,000 volunteers who went from the United States to fight. Over half of them were killed. The ones who came back went back again to fight Hitler a second time in World War II - as American soldiers. They were never sanctioned for their bravery or for their role in the Spanish Civil War at all, and most of them were black listed and called communists. It was difficult for them to find work when they came back.

I wrote Song For Che, when I learned about Che being murdered. After completing the song, and thinking about putting it on the record, I wanted to have something from Cuba on it, because it was very important to me, just the same as it was to have actual 1936 recordings, superimposed on the Spanish Civil War songs from Spain.

Barbara Dane has an enormous collection of Folk music, all kinds of music, and political music. She had taped Carlos Puebla singing in Havana and this was one of his songs that she had and it's also about Che, and I wanted to superimpose his song under mine and use the line where he sings Che's name. I wrote him a letter, in Havana asking his permission to do it, as one musician composer to another, and sent him the music to Song For Che. He

wrote me back, and he was very pleased to get my letter and he said Song For Che was very beautiful and he wanted me to send him the words to it so he could sing it on Havana radio. But he said as far as having his permission to superimpose his song on my album he said I didn't need his permission, because there's no copyright laws in Cuba, the music belongs to the people, which is the way it should be. So I was very grateful that I could put that on the album because it's very meaningful, as far as Che is concerned, to the song.

Carla Bley wrote out the horn parts. The songs in the Spanish Civil War were more or less as they were written on the original arrangements that we have from the soundtrack of an album from "Le Chant du Monde" in Paris, and the Song Of The United Front was a piano arrangement of Hans Eisler's which was changed just slightly and she and I worked together on that. Then she wrote the arrangements for all of her compositions and Ornette's War orphans and We Shall Overcome. She's a fantastic writer and arranger, and I'm glad that she was able to do it, because I don't think anyone else could have done it the way she did.

I had played with all of the musicians before in different groups, and I knew all of them, and was very close to them. So it wasn't very difficult to decide who I wanted to play with on the album. It usually works out that a person who has creativity inside of him also has an awareness inside of him and a sensitivity inside of him that's very close to the meaning of what life is, and that's politics too. Because of the oppression of people, the reality of racism, politics is almost forced on you, if you're a sensitive person at all! If you're aware or if you care about life, it's almost forced on you and you have to learn how to say the word because that's the word that describes what you're trying to do to try to change wherever you're living into a better place to live.

I hope my music is having some kind of impact. That's why I'm doing it. I'm certainly not doing it for me; I'm doing it for people, and the next album, if I ever get that one recorded, is going to be about what's happening right now in the United States. Different political movements that have gotten together because of the survival of our oppressed minority race, the Panthers, the Young Lords and the Chicanos and the American Indian. Also there's going to be a song by Theodorakis about what's happening in Greece.

I feel that as a leader, if I am presented as a leader on recording or concert performance, I have no choice but to play about what I feel is the most important thing to play about. I feel that I can't play about love and joy as long as there's racism and starvation going on. I'll never really be able to feel the full feeling of joy or love in its fullest potential as long as there are people dying and I know that I have to do something about it. I really feel that strongly.

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This article was originally an interview conducted by Ted O'Reilly of CJRT radio.

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# Herbie Cowens - MR. METRONOME



## johnny simmen

"I had seen "Kat" around The Apple for years. Then, one day in 1945 he hired me to go to the Philippine Islands on a U.S.O. show with his band. Herbie was one of the easiest leaders to work for. I remember he didn't drink or smoke and was, what I call, a really SOLID drummer. He also had much success everywhere doing a comical number as an attraction. One night, as we were going to do a show in Manila, he had his right arm badly injured in a car accident and if it had not been for the good army doctors, Herbie would have only one arm today. Because of that accident he received a priority on doing U.S.O. shows for as long as he cares to do them. "Kat" is a real fine person who loved to play poker anytime, anyday, anywhere." (Bill Coleman in a letter of spring 1969.)

What follows is the story of the superb

drummer, Herbert Cowens who also happens to be one of the most attaching and impressing human-beings it is my pleasure to keep in touch with. On several occasions in the past, I have stressed the late Ernest "Bass" Hill's great influence on me: Appreciation and better understanding of music, life and people. With regard to Herbie Cowens, once again Bass Hill was first to mention him, promising me to introduce us on the first opportunity. I must admit that Bass did not care too much for a few of the musicians I did hang out with on my various New York visits. (His critical sense was highly developed.) On the other hand, Bass INSISTED on introducing me to some musicians I had never met personally. And the man he wanted me to get acquainted with first and foremost was Herbie "Kat" Cowens to whom he often referred as "one of my two best friends". (Bass' other closest friend was bass-player, Henry Turner who played for many years with Claude Hopkins' Orchestra.)

When Bass Hill introduced us in 1961,

he said: "Herbie is not only one of the best drummers I've ever played with, he's also a most reliable and intelligent man. Our profession could stand plenty more of his kind."

Although I met Herbie many times since that day, I have never thought of interviewing him in order to write his "life-story". What follows is taken from some of the many letters I have received from him over the years. To me, this intelligent, thoughtful and philosophical man's story is a particularly interesting one. Herbie has gone to the very bottom of the many problems most colored musicians have to cope with. While many musicians, who had similar experiences, try to forget them as quickly as possible, Herbie, being "the deep man he is" (Bass Hill's expression), probably just cannot stay on the surface even if he tried.

I was born in Dallas, Texas on May 24, 1904 as one of five children. We all went into the music or entertainment fields: One of my sisters is a singer, the other



was a tap-dancer and all of us three boys became drummers.

I started working as a shoe-shine boy when I was still a small kid and I used to snap the shoe-shine rag to whatever they were playing on the gramophone. One day while I was shining a man's shoes, he said: "Boy, you would make a good drummer, you can really snap that rag with plenty of rhythm!" I was twelve years old then but that remark stayed on my mind. A bit later I started dancing in the streets for nickels and whatever was thrown to us kids. On the side I learnt the rudiments of drumming.

The first band I played with was a hometown group organized by the Murphy Brothers, Karl (tuba) and Fred (alto-sax). Incidentally, Fred is still playing in Dallas today. The band was called The Satisfied Five. I left them to play with Frenchy's New Orleans Jazz Band (still in Dallas) but, when a little later, Charlie Dixon's Jazzlanders offered me more money, I went with them. The Charlie Dixon I am speaking of was a tuba-player and not the Charlie Dixon who played banjo with Fletcher Henderson. While gigging with the bands mentioned, I was still in high-school. Like all the other musicians in Dallas, I had but one ambition: to follow Willie Lewis who had left earlier and made good in New York. This is the same Willie Lewis that people in Europe know particularly well: fine clarinet and alto-saxophone player. Willie is still in New York today.

All the above-named bands played strictly for dances. But a while later, a band from out-of-town performed at the Ella B. Moore Theatre on Central Avenue. Their drummer had taken sick and they hired me for that week. That was when I realized to my own surprise that I was also able to play a show. This is very different from playing for dances.

After having played with several other bands around Dallas, I was finally old enough - and had finished school - to leave and go to New York. I got \$45 a week (until then it had been \$4.00 - \$5.00 per night) which was big money then. I popped into New York with Cleo Mitchell's Shake Your Feet Company and on Christmas 1926 we played the Lafayette Theatre on 7th Avenue.

While working there, Jimmie Cooper, burlesque show owner and producer said he wanted me for his "Black and White Revue". I had to tell him about my contract to the Mitchell's and he gave me his card, advising to contact him when I would be free. This didn't happen for quite some time: The Shake Your Feet Company played the whole T.O.B.A. circuit (Theatre Owners Booking Association) which took us through all the South, Mid-West, and East. I came back to New York only after most of 1927 had elapsed, contacted Jimmie Cooper at the Columbia Theatre Building and was placed in his 1928 "Black and White Revue". There I was featured with Eddie Heywood's Kansas City Black Birds, a very fine band. Mr. Heywood, a great pianist, arranger and director, was the father of the present Eddie Heywood (who, these last years, was parti-

cularly successful as a composer.) Up to that time I had played strictly from ear - I could not read one note of music - but in 1929 I studied under the two only teachers I ever had: Mr. George Stone of Hanover Street, Boston and Mr. Bob Scott of the Royal Scots Bagpipes and Drums, who were then in New York.

Much was happening during the following years. I worked in and around New York with the bands of Doc Crawford, Billy Fowler, Lucky Millinder, Eubie Blake's Concert Orchestra, Charlie Turner's Arcadians, Charlie Johnson's Small's Paradise Orchestra, Ferman Tapps' Band and others. While I was with Charlie "Fat Man" Turner, the band was taken over by the great Fats Waller and we played a lot of good music and had much fun every night. However, when they went on the road - the South and all that - I left. Arnold "Scrippy" Boling took my place. Today I realize that I missed a chance then to get better known through the many records I would have made with Fats had I stayed on. But that can't be helped now.

When Cozy Cole left Stuff Smith to join Cab Calloway at the end of 1938, I got the job with Stuff and stayed with his fine group until 1941. We played mostly at the Edison Hotel and the Hickory House in New York, as well as at Hotel Sherman, the Three Deuces Club, various theatres and the Hotel La Salle in Chicago. We also had long runs at the Hollywood Onyx Club and the Carew Towers Hof-Braeu Haus in Cincinnati. While working at the latter place, one particular night the full orchestra from WLW Radio Station came to catch our show, occupying the entire first two rows. Now, Stuff was a man who really LOVED to play and often many of our up-tempo numbers went on for over twenty minutes. Stuff would play eight to ten choruses, then Jonah Jones would take about the same number, then George Clark, on tenor would wail a dozen more and by then, Stuff - "real gone" - would come in for about fifteen more and so on and so on! On that particular night, Stuff, in his greatest form (and that guy at his best got and gave just EVERYTHING!) kept playing and playing and with every new chorus we were swinging more. Our last number, I remember, was Joshua Fought The Battle Of Jericho. After having waited for close to half an hour, Stuff shouted: "Play, Kat, play" and I took a long drum solo after which the whole group jammed out the last choruses real hot and wild! When it was all over, one of the musicians of the WLW Orchestra - a violin-player - came running on the stage and said in his heavy German accent (it is amazing how many fiddlers in the States are of German descent): "Stuffy, if you knew what you're doing, you would bust out your brains! You put down the wrong finger but the RIGHT notes come out! And I want to touch your drummer to see if he's "real". After all that playing he has done behind the soloists, he still had the strength to play a really great solo! How can he do it - without any rest? He CAN'T be human!" I took this as a great compliment. (Note by J. Simmen: When I met Stuff Smith for the first time and we discussed the men of

his former bands, Stuff said: "Let's not forget "Kat" Cowens. He really did replace Cozy in my band and very few could have done that! Incidentally, Kat is one of the few musicians who doesn't drink and smoke but unlike most guys who insist on cutting themselves from these lovely pleasures, Herbie is NO drag to be with. I always enjoyed his company as much as with one of the guys who were balling with me!")

Then I went with Fletcher Henderson at the Roseland Ballroom - one of Fletcher's last great bands - but when it was decided to go on a Southern tour, I left. Walter Johnson took my place. My next job was with Garvin Bushell in Philadelphia after which I went with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontana's "The Pirate", a Broadway show.

I had also led my own bands twice but I was not satisfied with the results I got from either. The first were the Savoy Swingers that I was leading at the Checker Club on 145th Street and 7th Avenue for several months. My other band was working at the Bell Club, in New Jersey, on and off for five years, always between my USO tours. Of these I played nine around the world and almost as many in the United States. The first USO-band I had consisted of Shirley Clay, trumpet; Cliff Glover, alto-sax; Jimmy Wright, tenor-sax; Don Kirkpatrick, piano; Ted Giles, bass, and myself on drums. This group didn't leave the United States and played the Southern Military Camps for six months. The first band that went out of the country (to the Philippines) was made up of Bill Coleman, trumpet; Curby Alexander, alto-sax; Edgar "Spider" Courrance, tenor-sax; Edward Smith, piano; Ernest "Bass" Hill, bass, and yours truly on traps. This was the tour where I had that car-accident. Several musicians such as "Spider" and "Bass" were with me on several tours. Some more musicians, not yet mentioned, who made at least one trip with me were Merrill "Step" Stepter, Bobby Carroll, Frank Galbreath and Jack Wilson (trumpets), William "Sonny" Jordan (alto), Jimmy Holmes, Ruby Thrower (tenor), Nicholas Rodriguez, Fitz Weston, Lester Fauntleroy, Ted "Mohawk" Sturgis (who is as good on piano as on the bass) were the pianists and Lucius "Lucky" Fowler played guitar. Twice I played the US-camps with just a piano-player: Sam Price, the boogie-ace and Hughey Walk, a fine pianist from Boston.

I could relate many happenings from these (and my tours as a "civilian") trips but they all seem to have racial overtones. Get this for instance: In 1948, we played in Okinawa. We were billeted at the headquarters to stay in the same barracks as the whites. But the colonel responsible accommodated us with an all-Negro trucking company five miles away instead. I went to see the colonel and told him we were billeted the same place as the white performers and musicians and why were we now sent so far from the headquarters? His answer was: "I know you are supposed to stay here with the whites BUT I AM FROM VIRGINIA, UNDERSTAND?" This was the end of "our conversation". . .

One Sunday in Nogoya, Japan the following happened: We were to leave Nogoya



on that day for Hakata in a special car provided on the afternoon train. The officer who had to arrange the transportation forgot to do it and when the train came in, it dawned on him he had goofed. So he got an old ragged Japanese car and had the crew attach it to the train. I refused to board it. I told Bass Hill, who acted as my assistant in travelling and transportation, to stand guard on the baggage and instruments and not let anybody put them on the train while I made a call to Tokyo to file a complaint. While I was telephoning, the officer came back and told Bass to let the fellows put the things on the car. Here's the trend of the conversation between the officer and Bass: "Alright, let's get these things on board the train", the officer said. "Oh no", Bass replied, "Kat said NOT to put these things on the train and you better do not try to put them on board." The officer got furious and bellowed: "I am the R.T.O. officer and I said to put the damn things on that train!" But Bass Hill was not the kind of a man to give in easily and he said: "I don't care if you're the general. Kat said NO and NO it is!" Consequently, we did NOT board that train. This is the kind of cooperation I had from Bass all the time and under any circumstances. He was the only one I could depend on to help me in such situations. He was closer to me than any musician I have ever known. We thought alike and had the same idea of: I am my brother's keeper. My well-being was as much his concern as his own and vice-versa. Yes, we had THAT kind of friendship... Most of my other musician-friends, still alive, come out of the old Stuff Smith group, especially Jonah Jones and John Benjamin Peabody Brown, who has been Jonah's bass-player ever since the latter made his fantastic come-back (with the public, I mean, since musicians have ALWAYS rated Jonah as one of the greatest musicians of all time) ten years ago.

I go for all the older jazz styles if they are played well and by men who know what it is all about. But what they now call "modern jazz" is not jazz at all. Anything that does not have a beat that will cause you to pat your feet or clap your hands with the beat of the tempo is NOT jazz. I don't care what they call it but it is NOT jazz. So-called "modern jazz" of today is only for some musicians who want to show how well they know their horn, what they have learnt about chord constructions and how fast they can change from majors or minors and move from key to key: In fact,

using all the TRICKS. On the other hand, they forget everything about the beat and the melody. I do not see how the average layman can truthfully claim to understand and like what's happening, i.e. get any real PLEASURE from what's blasted at him. And I have heard a lot of musicians say - and this includes some of the greatest ever - that they do not dig it either. My idea of real jazz is a music where you can convey the glorious feeling of music from the performer to the audience and from performer to performer. Always remember: SWINGING is the thing that counts.

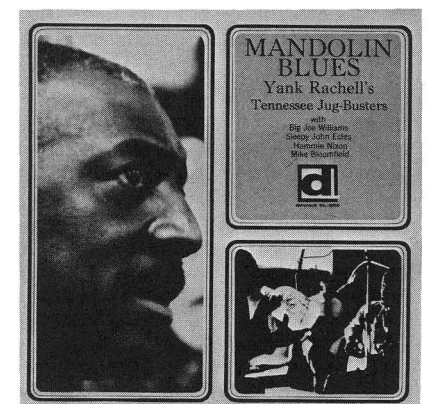
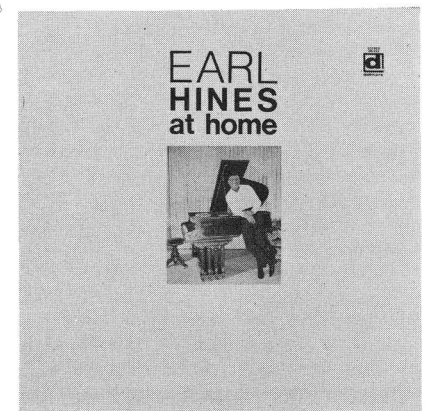
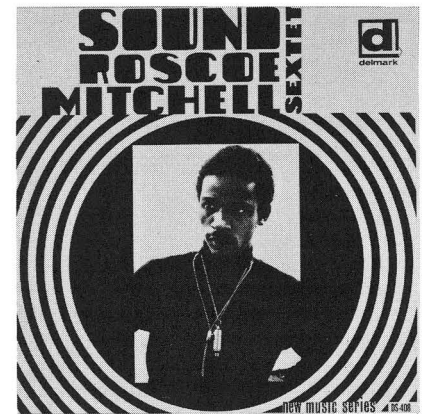
The trouble with jazz is that it has become such a big business. And the ones who run it are not the ones who love and understand it. When they took jazz out of the hands of the musicians themselves and the really DEDICATED listeners, everything went down the road. This is the case especially in the USA. The Negro will never overcome the color barrier. Especially the MEN. By this I mean WHOLLY overcome it. There will always be a few who can make it but as a WHOLE never in my life time.

If my wife, Rubye wasn't a "one in a million" lady and would not go with me in all my undertakings, I think I would have given up a long time ago. Rubye and I went to school together in Dallas. I was in high school when she was still in elementary school, Rubye being younger than I. Thanks to her help, understanding and inspiration, I continue to play and fight for what I know is right.

The man who has a special place in my heart is Jesse Aikens, unknown to everybody except musicians and music-lovers in Dallas. Jesse was my inspiration to become a drummer. He played every percussion instrument and was a great traps-drummer for silent movies. He worked for years in the Grand Central Theatre on Central Avenue, known as "Fat Jack's". My other foremost favorites are Chick Webb, Big Sid Catlett, Cozy Cole, Wilmore "Slick" Jones, Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Davie Tough and for the real New Orleans-beat - they call it "Dixieland" now - nobody can equal the old Master, Zutty Singleton.

Of course, life will always be what you make of it. In some countries one is allowed to be what one wants to be but in others one can go so far and not further. In some parts of the world we are recognized and get credit for what we are. However, here in the USA they take away from us what is originally ours. They get a substitute in our place - not as good as we are but SUPERFICIALLY close enough to fool the public. In one sentence: They claim the rights to our GOD GIVEN TALENTS. This has happened to the Negro in many fields and in jazz-music it has been done constantly for the past fifty years. Expressing myself bluntly: Many white imitators of Negro-jazz (I do not speak of the DEDICATED and TALENTED white musicians) are called great jazz-musicians while the true creators of real jazz have to work for peanuts... IF THEY CAN GET A N Y WORK AT ALL! It's a shame.

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DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME



My travels proved to me time and time again that real jazz is liked all over the world if it's played RIGHT and the performers are not drunks and fakers. I don't say this because I don't drink and smoke myself (this hasn't anything to do with what I'm trying to explain) but I think there is a certain amount of dignity that one owes to one's profession. If you happen to be an artist, you should carry yourself with the dignity of an artist. Only then you can demand the respect of others. Some American artists, once out of their own country, have misused the freedom they could enjoy and didn't behave like they should have. In a certain way, it is understandable - all that appreciation, admiration, cordiality and lack of racial discrimination came as such a happy surprise to them that some of them went "overboard" - but, of course, there's a limit to everything. Some American musicians have done more harm than good to the cause of our music (when they toured Europe), balling and messing it up in front of their audiences.

One of my strongest impressions musically was to play with Eubie Blake's Orchestra. I had never worked under such a competent director before. It was Mr. Blake who gave me the name "Mr. Metronome" and to this day he calls me this. He told me: "With you the tempo stays where it started until I give the change. That's the way it HAS to be." I always thought that this was a real honor coming from a great musician like Mr. Eubie Blake.

These last years, when I'm not on one of my USO-tours, I have worked often with Louie Metcalf's band. But what I would like most is to get a small jazz-band with some real swinging musicians of my own choice and play combined concerts and shows all over the world, especially Europe. But the "Don't call me - I call you" - guys (agents) and the red tape involved, have, so far, been standing in the way of the realization of this (ambitious?) dream.

When I'm in New York, I work as a messenger or courier for the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Bank. Nowadays this is a pretty dangerous job. Sometimes I have a guard with me but sometimes I'm on my own. So far I've been lucky.

Some of Herbie's best records are Do You Dig My Jive, Boogie Woogie Moan and I Know How To Do It with Sam Price's Bluesicians (Decca, 1941), and Were You There When They Crucified My Lord by Sister Rosetta Tharpe (Decca, 1949). However, one cannot speak of Herbie Cowens if one has not heard the following (where he is much better recorded): The eight sides he recorded with Stuff Smith (four in early 1939 and four in spring 1940, all for Varsity) on all of which his great drumming can be followed easily. Especially recommended are Sam The Vegetable Man, When Paw Was Courtin' Ma, My Blue Heaven, Joshua Fought The Battle Of Jericho and the Edgar Battle-Cozy Cole compositions Crescendo In Drums (in which his part is not only very prominent

but SPLENDID throughout). But his sensitive brush-work on the slow numbers (My Thoughts, It's Up To You and I've Got You Under My Skin) is also something to marvel at. His most marvellous record, however, is Happy Go Lucky by the Luckey Roberts Quartet (Period LP RL 1929, recorded in 1960). It is not exaggerated to say that here, Herbie equals such masters in New Orleans-drumming as Zutty and Minor Hall (to speak of "old-time" drummers, recorded since the advent of LP-recording technique). Ballin' The Jack, in particular, is sensational and Kat Cowens' SWINGING THE WHOLE GROUP must be heard to be believed! He is also heard in solos WHICH TELL A STORY (admirable in their construction and execution) on After You've Gone and Sweet Georgia Brown. With sticks or brushes - Herbie Cowens is a MASTER!

Here is hoping that European promoters, desirous to bring a GOOD "old-time-jazz" group to Europe, make a note of the name HERBIE "KAT" COWENS. They would not only hire a great musician but an equally able organizer with years of experience. This would be a tour without headaches for promoters because Herbie is the man to take care of EVERYTHING HIMSELF. And the public would be treated to first-class music and entertainment as few others could give it to them. I hope my suggestion is picked up by somebody who cares to give the jazz-fans and public-at-large the real thing, properly presented.

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When James Cotton says, in talking about his childhood, "I was a pretty nice kid", you just have to look at his friendly, boyish face to know that it was true. He was a nice kid with a mania for playing the harmonica that led him to run off from home before he was ten to find that blues gold mine, the King Biscuit Hour. The harmonica is still the center of his life, and if he has a regret it's that there are so few good harmonica players left, not enough to give him the competition he wants to keep him sharp.

There was no particular reason why he should have fallen in love with the harmonica. His family was decidedly non-musical. "They liked music, but they was kind of raised up more in the Church. Down there you had to have some hope, so they served God. They was all religious, but Sonny Boy was a bad influence on my soul.

"I don't know much about that farm bit 'cause I left home when I was nine years old, decided I didn't want to have anything to do with that whole scene. I just didn't dig it. I thought it was a bad scene; I thought it was the wrong thing to do. Like you had to go through all those changes. You had to work from six o'clock in the morning until dark at night, in the hot, boiling sun all day. I didn't like that. Then my father was working for three dollars a day. I remember they had this big bell that used to ring every morning and wake everybody up. They'd get up at four o'clock in the morning, and my mother'd get up and fix breakfast for them, and by six o'clock he's out there in the field and worked until dark, and he didn't get but three bucks a day.

"One day we was chopping cotton, and it was the first time I ever heard Sonny Boy. I won't never forget that. This was in July. It was real hot, and it was so hot that you see things, and we come in and eat at 12:00 and be back in the field at 1:00. And my mother was there playing the radio. Like she quit at eleven o'clock and went to the house to cook. So she's playing the radio, and I come in there and I sat at the table, and this cat say, now it's time for Sonny Boy Williamson and His King Biscuit Boys! And I was listening at that, and Sonny Boy started playing, and I said, what is this! What is this cat doing! And I just quit eating! I just sat there listening, and then I found which station it was, and Sonny Boy, said, we'll be back at 12:15, and I said, yeah, I'll be listening tomorrow at 12:15 too. So everyday I started listening to that. My two sisters, they would always like to listen to something else, so we had this thing set up. Everyday at 12:15 that radio was my radio. Nobody touched it. And after 12:15, I didn't care what they did with it just so long as they didn't tear it apart so that I could hear it again the next day at 12:15.

My mother went to town, and I told her to bring me back a harp. So she brought me a harp back, and I couldn't play it around the house, 'cause if I played blues on it they'd whup me to death, man. I'd listen to the radio, and then I'd get out of the house to get somewhere by myself and try to play it. I kept it in my head and I'd try to play it. And after I got where I

# THIS IS THE BLUES



BY

# PETER HATCH

could play the thing that he was playing when he be coming on the air, I thought I was moving a little bit. And then he'd sing this other song, "I Know She's Gonna Jump and Shout", and I didn't know how to play that and sing it.

"I stayed home about two weeks after I learned it - it took me about four months - but two weeks after I learned it, after I could just pick up the harp anytime and play it anytime I got ready - it would come out about the same every time or a little bit better - one Saturday evening my mother went to town and I run off.

"Like Mississippi and Arkansas, the onliest thing that's between them is the Mississippi River. They used to have this ferry line at Helena. You could pay 25¢ and go across there. We used to go to Helena; like Helena was the town that they'd go to if they wanted to get whiskey. At least my people didn't do it, but there was plenty of people around there that did, and some of the people knowed me. I could catch a ride with them because I was a pretty nice little boy.

"I knew about this ferry, so I went out and hitched a ride to the ferry to get across into Arkansas. I washed a guy's car and he gave me 35¢. I got a ride, and I got on that ferry and I had a dime left when I got over there, so I started asking about this radio station. Helena is a very small town and everybody that live there know about this radio station, and they just pointed me straight to it.

"I'll never forget the first day I seen Sonny Boy. He had on a pair of white overalls and a black chauffer's cap or something like that. I was sitting down in front of the radio station waiting on him. I had been there ever since about 11:00. They showed up - had an old '34 Ford - and as soon as they show up, I say, I want to ask you a question. I say, who is Sonny Boy, and they carried me through this thing. A cat said, I don't know, it must be him there, and some cat say, no, I ain't him, that's him over there. They carried me through that thing for a while, and then I finally found out who he was, and I grabbed some of the instruments and tried to help them take some of the instruments in, and they told me to leave them alone.

"After they came out I tried to help put them back in the car, and they didn't want to be bothered with me. They put me down as a nosy little kid just trying to get into something.

"I had a dime left, so I got a stick of peppermint candy and I went out and slept in the park that night. The next day they drove up and I was sitting right there waiting. I went and I got Joe Willie's (Wilkins) guitar and he just sat there and looked at me and laughed, and he let me carry it to the building but he wouldn't let me into the radio station.

"When Sonny Boy come out I said will he stop and talk to me, and I told him, I come over to play with you, and he looked at me and laughed. He said, well where's your people at? I say, I ain't got none, and he seen that I was a pretty nice little boy, so he took me home with him, and he told his wife, he said, Matty, we got a son. I was standing there, and I was pretty hungry, so



she cooked up something and fed me.

"Sonny Boy lived in this place called Gaines Alley. It was a bunch of old houses like this; houses on this side and houses on this side and a little street went down between them. They had a two room house. It had a bedroom and a kitchen.

"Iblewhis mind, man. What he'd do is just go down there and made his radio show and come back and sleep until the night and then go out and work somewhere. I'd sit back there on the porch and blow these things out for him. I'd say, this is what you been doing, and I'd reach back in my pocket and get my harp and did it. Well he sat there and looked, and it cracked him up. The next day he let me go down and take the instruments, and Matty told him, well why don't you take him along with you, and he let me go in the bars and sit on his knee and play two songs. When he'd go to work at night I'd go with him and help him get all the stuff together. I started caring for them, setting them up. I could set the drums up for him and all that, and he would let me sit on his knee and play two songs, and when I wanted to sleep I'd just go out in the car and go to sleep.

"He was a big gambler. He used to gamble all the time. Sometimes he would win and sometimes he would lose the money - all the fellows that worked in the group with him - he'd lose all their money too. He had problems like that sometimes. All the fellows'd get mad and quit, and he'd go sit on the corner. The next day he'd just go down to Cherry Street, just take his harp and go down to Cherry Street, sit down and play about two or three hours, make all the money back. Come back and pay them and get his band back again.

"He drank like a fish. That cat used to drink like a quart of whiskey every night. He used to have this little pan - like harps was kind of hard to get during the war - and he had this little pan, like a cooking pan or something or other. He could get a fruit jar full of corn whiskey for 50¢, and he'd stick this pan with the harps in it, he'd get this fruit jar of whiskey and pour it in there with his harps until it come up about that far over his harps. Like if you put water in a harp it pulls the pitch up, but he did it with whiskey all the time. He'd just sit there and drink whiskey all night and play them. And actually, blowing those harps you could get contact drunk, but I'm the onliest kid Sonny Boy had, and he never did allow me to drink.

"I got to where Sonny Boy would pay me. I used to help him take all the instruments in, and all of them would chip in and give me money. All the group would chip in and give me three or four dollars apiece, and when they got through I'd have about fifteen dollars. I was pretty slick about that. I figured that Matty was my mother. I figured that she could look out for me, and when I got this money, I wouldn't spend it or anything. I'd just take it and give it to Matty and she'd go buy me clothes and she'd save money for me.

"He taken me home when I was thirteen. You see it was a long time before I would tell him, and when I told him, he said, well one of these days I'm gonna take you there to see your people. So we got in the



Sonny Boy Williamson

car and we drove over there one Sunday, and I showed him where we lived at. I had a hundred dollars for to give my mother, and I bought my daddy a couple of shirts. I don't think they fit him 'cause I didn't even know what he looked like, but I bought them.

"I walked up there, and my mother, she didn't even know who I was. My mother thought I was dead or something, but my father knew me. Sonny Boy went and talked to him and told him what had happened, that he didn't know that I had a father, and my old man said that I had to stay at home. I stayed til Monday night and I left again. He came to Helena after me, and when he found me I was on the radio. We were broadcasting, and I sat up there playing, and I seen him when he walked in and I said, Wow! I know what this is! He just stood there and watched us. He said, well I give it up. He said, if this is what you want to do, well go ahead. He said, it looks like you're taking care of yourself.

"I stayed with Sonny Boy in Helena, Arkansas for about five years, and then we moved up to West Memphis, Arkansas and I stayed up there until 1954. Sonny Boy bought him a house there, and the house caught on fire and burned down. And about two weeks after that, one night he just walked out. He told me, well I think you can make it for yourself, handed me half a pint of whiskey, said, you can have the band, I'll see you later. I didn't see him no more til the far side of playing with Muddy.

"By me being young and not doing the right things, the band stayed together for about eight months and then it just fell

apart. Willie Love got a band, and J. Willie Wilkins started playing by himself, which he is still doing now down there. For a while I was laying around doing nothing.

"I was living in West Memphis. Memphis was the quiet side, West Memphis was where they did all the gambling and whiskey drinking and everything worth naming was in West Memphis, right on Eighth Street. Every Saturday evening we used to play at this little restaurant, me and this cat called L.D. Just the two of us. So this particular Saturday evening we was sitting in there playing and somebody said, Muddy Waters is in here. I said, Aw you're crazy; Muddy Waters wouldn't come into a place like this. I hadn't never seen the guy, and I didn't have any idea as to what he looked like or nothing. I just thought he was a big shot, and I didn't think he should have been in there. So I said, yeah? and he said, well that's him right there. He just sat there watching us play. So we got through playing, and I got up and went back to get a bottle of beer and he come over and said, look I want to talk to you. Well he told me he was Muddy Waters, and I didn't hardly believe it. I looked at him, and I said, this cat's putting me on. So he asked me did I want to play with him. He said he needed a harp player. Junior Wells had left him somewhere down in Florida. He got homesick or something and wanted to see his wife and he just split.

"I was ready to leave from down there anyway. I'd been down there all my life and always heard about Chicago. So I said, well when do I start? and he said, later that night. So I went and picked up my harps and caught the bus that went six miles across the bridge to Memphis. I had to be there at 9:00, and just as soon as I walked in, here it was: Jimmy Rogers, Otis Spann, Muddy Waters, Elgin Evans. I said, wow, looka here, and I was just standing there watching these cats. But I kind of had doubt. I said, this ain't none of Muddy Waters - cause people come in there using different people's names. I kept saying, this ain't none of Muddy Waters, but one thing is sure, if he sings I'll know this is him. So Muddy come up there and started to sing, and I said, yeah, this is him! So I'm there, and I don't know the first thing to do with him. I had heard some of his songs, and I could play a little of that. So I started from there and he brought me up to Chicago with him.

"Sonny Boy stayed with me in Chicago. I got a chance to let him stay with me. Like I got married and I had a house. He had been living in Cleveland and he come to Chicago to make records. I found out he was there so I went to get him. He was staying on the West Side in some cooked up hotel, and I said, say man, why don't you come on and go home, man. He said, what you talking about, go home? I said, to my house, and I seized him by the shirt. I say, I'm the same little boy that you picked up off the street out there in front of the radio station, nine years old, and he looked at me and started laughing. I took him to my house and he stayed there with me for about two or three months.

# record reviews



Ron Anger  
Mark Gardner  
Peter Hatch  
Wayne Jones  
Eugene Kramer  
John R. Nelson  
John W. Norris  
Alan Offstein  
Barry Tepperman  
Tex Wyndham

## TERRITORY BANDS

1929-1933  
Historical 24  
Volume 2 - 1927-1931  
Historical 26  
Classic Jazz Masters  
CJM 10  
Territorial Bands  
IAJRC 6  
Benny Moten/Harry Dial  
IAJRC 7

Musicians have always gravitated to the cities in their search for greater opportunities and many of the early New Orleans musicians, for instance, came in fact from surrounding towns and villages. It is fairly safe to say, though, that jazz activity focused first on New Orleans and then moved to Chicago and New York. The latter cities became important industry centres where much of the recording activity took place. International recognition often followed a move to one of these cities but the groundwork for this success was usually a local band in the musician's home area. In the Twenties and Thirties there were many such bands and the few who recorded have been loosely termed "territory bands".

Three main areas seem to have been tapped for recordings - the Southwest (Texas, Arkansas, Kansas), the Midwest (Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana) and the West (California). Important documentation of this musical activity has been slow in coming. There was Frank Drigg's pioneer work some ten years ago (and published in Hentoff and McCarthy's "Jazz") as well as thorough research on specialised topics by such dedicated historians as Theo Zwicky, Tom Stoddard and Johnny Simmen. It is now possible to hear a significant number of recordings made by these obscure bands and the results are often surprising.

Volume one of Historical's survey is particularly valuable for it contains all eight recordings by Zach Whyte's Chocolate Beau Brummels as well as five of the eight sides recorded by the Texas orchestra of Alphonse Trent. The Whyte recordings were made in 1929, while those by Trent's organisation were made between 1928 and 1933. The Trent band is particularly impressive with many excellent soloists (although positive identification of the trumpet and reed solos has not yet been made). Stuff Smith is audible while Snub Mosley's distinctive trombone sounds are prominently displayed. The Zach



Whyte band is well organised and, once more, contains a number of excellent, though unidentified, soloists. Both bands use intricate arrangements, lots of breaks and stop-time techniques and generally show their allegiance to the pioneer writing concepts of Don Redman (through Henderson and McKinney's Cotton Pickers). Both bands, if they had got the right breaks or had leaders ambitious enough to seek national prominence, could have made a greater impact on the music world. Many great musicians passed through these orchestras and gained much knowledge that was to be of benefit as the Swing Era gained momentum.

Completing the album are two selections (Dog And Cat and Old Man Blues) by the Washboard Rhythm Boys which are notable for contributions by Happy Caulwell and Red Allen. Good as it is to have these selections, it would have been more satisfying to have included the remaining titles by the Trent band. Then we would have had a most valuable reissue. Sound quality is only average but these selections are very rare.

Volume two is more diversified and offers a broader variety of music even though the overall approach is basically the same. It is apparent that by the end of the 1920's recordings had done their part in formalising musical styles. Trumpet players demonstrated their indebtedness to Louis Armstrong while the tight, intricate ensemble playing was typically characteristic. Probably the two most impressive sides are Blue Devil Blues and Squabblin' (the two tracks are reversed on this LP) by Walter Page's Blue Devils. Hot Lips Page, Count Basie and Jimmy Rushing are all heard in this 1929 recording. There is also some impressive clarinet playing

(Buster Smith?) and a relatively sophisticated feeling to the music. The key members were soon to be captured by Bennie Moten. George E. Lee's Orchestra, another Kansas City outfit, is represented by Down Home Syncopated Blues and Merritt Stomp, but they were a much rougher unit. In many instances, it seemed that the members of these bands were either older men with limited techniques or else youngsters on the way up. The combination often worked well and the performances by the obscure bands of Willie Jones (Michigan Stomp, Bugs), Floyd Mills and his Marylanders (Hard Luck, Chicago Rhythm) and Alex Jackson's Plantation Orchestra (Missouri Wabble) are worth hearing. Sonny Clay's Plantation Orchestra is a West Coast outfit which recorded in 1926. Both selections are pretty dated with shrill clarinets and staccato, on the beat, trumpet work.

The contrast between some of these bands and the sophisticated New York approach of Dave Nelson's Harlem Highlights is most marked. Such outstanding musicians as Buster Bailey, Wilbur De Paris, Glyn Paque, Wayman Carver and Danny Barker are heard from and the solidly swinging bass playing of Simon Marrero gives a pulsating flow to the music that is characteristic of such orchestras as Luis Russell. All three titles (Rockin' Chair, St. Louis Blues, Loveless Love), incidentally, are part of a German RCA album (LPM 10124) that includes all seven selections by this band. For those interested in such things it should be pointed out that Wayman Carver takes a flute solo on Loveless Love.

The CJM release originates in Europe and contains two of the Zach Whyte titles (It's Tight Like That, West End Blues) and three of the Trent selections (After You've Gone, Clementine, I've Found A New Baby). The sound quality is much better than on the Historical reissue. The remainder of this interesting LP contains three selections by Syd Valentine, the very good trumpeter from Indianapolis. Rock And Gravel is up-tempo and owes a lot to the Armstrong/Hines virtuosity on Weatherbird Rag - James "Slick" Helms is the pianist and there's additional support from some very solid banjo work by Paul George. Jelly Bean Drag is a blues - and includes some flowery piano as well as some King Oliverish trumpet. Singer Horace Smith joins the trio as the vocalist on Goin' Away And Leavin' My Baby.

There's obscurities here as well - Ted Smith's Rhythm Aces (Boogie Woogie, Jig Time); Dixie Serenaders (St. Louis Blues,



Cho-King) and Red Perkins and his Dixie Ramblers (Hard Times Stomp, Old Man Blues). The second of the three bands is another West Coast outfit but their 1931 performance is much more impressive than those by Sonny Clay on the Historical album. In all cases there are interesting arrangements and good solo work - further evidence of the all-round ability of a considerable pool of players in those years.

It is interesting to note that the emphasis had definitely shifted towards arrangements and organised riffs behind solos rather than the collectively improvised music of New Orleans by the late Twenties in most of these Territory bands. This is even true of material that would be familiar to exponents of the small-group style. Curtis Mosby's Dixieland Blue Blowers recorded eight titles in October 1927 and the IAJRC have reissued all eight. It shows a fine band with excellent internal balance, a good sense of dynamics and musicians who execute the arrangements with polished vigour. They seem to prefer faster tempoed numbers although their understanding of the slow blues is evident in Blue Blowers Blues. These recordings are on a par with many that are more famous and should be sought after by anyone in the least bit interested in hot jazz from the Twenties. The second side is a little different. It offers selections by Maynard Baird (Postage Stomp), Lloyd Hunter's Serenaders (Sensational Mood, Dreamin' 'Bout My Baby, Red Perkins (the same two selections as on CJM 10 plus Minor Blues), and Grant Moore (Mama Don't Allow, Original Dixieland One Step). The two Lloyd Hunter selections are the most impressive - good solo work, clean ensembles plus the benefit of a characteristic vocal from Victoria Spivey on Dreamin' 'Bout My Man. There are plenty of hot solos and vigorous ensemble playing from everyone and the music is similar in spirit to The Missourians and other better known bands of similar calibre.

The fascinating collection is enhanced by the generally clean sound and excellently annotated notes.

Under normal terminology the Bennie Moten Orchestra could hardly be termed a "territory" outfit and yet, for many years, it has been spoken of principally as the spawning-ground of the Count Basie band and, indeed, the Victor Vintage re-issue adopted that very principle. Unquestionably, though, it was one of the major big bands of the Twenties and by 1929/1931, when the eight selections on this LP were recorded, it was benefiting from the youthful concepts of Hot Lips Page, Eddie Durham, Harlan Leonard and Count Basie. The beginnings of the looser Kansas City rhythms are apparent and there's a floating grace to the band's approach. Except for three selections that were included in the limited edition Tax 10" LP, it would appear that these titles are new to LP. Everyday Blues, Boot It, Mary Lee, Sweetheart Of Yesterday, Here Comes Marjorie, Professor Hot Stuff, Ya Got Love and I Wanna Be Around My Baby All The Time are the tunes - which are bound to be of great interest to anyone who

collects recordings by the Bennie Moten band.

The second side of this LP is something totally different - a 1946 broadcast by Harry Dial's Quartet that stylistically epitomises the informal kind of small group jazz played in Chicago's South Side in the 1920's. Trumpeter Reuben Reeves (who was still playing well at the time), pianist Harris Prince and reedman Henry Jones are the musicians who join drummer Dial in six selections that are full of the gut-bucket blues sound so typical of his early recordings. The vocals are handled by the leader who plays spirited drums and the overall effect is a pleasing note. While these performances are not particularly important it is reassuring to know that people care enough to let a wider audience hear music like this. IAJRC records can be ordered at \$6.00 postpaid (membership in IAJRC lowers the price considerably) from the International Association of Jazz Record Collectors, Pine Tree Blvd., Ct. F-D, Old Bridge, New Jersey 08857, U.S.A. -J.W.N.

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1926-1929  
Swaggie S1258

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The term "Territory Bands" usually refers to those hinterland groups who did not get much of a chance to record. The fascination in listening to the few recordings by such groups lies in this very fact that there are so few records by which to judge these groups. This admirable Swaggie reissue, with its excellent notes by Brian Rust, contains a cross-section of the music of the territory bands in the late twenties. Several tracks have appeared on other LPs, but the selections included together here make a fine package. Sixteen tracks appear by the following groups (shown in parenthesis is the recording location): Blue Ribbon Syncopaters of Buffalo (Buffalo, New York); Eddie Heywood and his Jazz Six (recorded in New York, but band was based in Atlanta, Georgia); Jesse Stone and his Blue Serenaders (St. Louis, Missouri); Charles Creath and his Jazz-O-Maniacs (St. Louis); Troy Floyd and his Plaza Hotel Orchestra or his Shadowland Orchestra (San Antonio, Texas); J. Neal Montgomery and his Orchestra (Atlanta) and Roy Johnson's Happy Pals (Richmond, Virginia).

Jazz scholarship has in the last few years taken an interest in the once-neglected territory bands. In his Early Jazz, Gunther Schuller devotes a lot of space to the bands of the southwest, but does not neglect such Atlanta-based groups as J. Neal Montgomery and Eddie Heywood. Schuller has an extended analysis of Troy Floyd's two-part Dreamland Blues which is on this LP. He finds it a masterpiece. I agree. All that needs to be added is that it is almost certainly not Herschel Evans on tenor, despite the personnel listed on the sleeve. Frank Driggs has also written informatively about some of the territory bands in his essay in Jazz (edited by Hentoff and McCarthy). Driggs thought that the two Jesse Stone tracks included in this LP were great. So do I.

So what else is there to say? Plenty!

But I will limit myself to a few more observations, which follow. The two excellent tracks by J. Neal Montgomery (Atlanta Lowdown and Auburn Avenue Stomp) were cut on March 14, 1929. On the same day pianist Montgomery and his fine trumpeter, Henry Mason, backed the mysterious Cleo Gibson on her classic Okeh coupling of Nothin' But The Blues/I've Got Ford Movements In My Hips. The lowdown backing they gave Cleo helped to make this disc into an unforgettable blues performance, and gave both Mason and Montgomery a better chance to cut loose than on the band sides. Composer credits on both band sides are given to Mason, who contributes spirited horn solos. The Charlie Creath tracks give us a good chance to hear snatches of the magnificent trumpet of Dewey Jackson, whose horn is featured in solo on both sides. Creath is also present on trumpet, but his contributions can readily be distinguished from Dewey's. They are more old-fashioned and less incisive. On Troy Floyd's Shadowland Blues, Kellough Jefferson does an unusual vocal which has suggested "classical" training to some listeners, and has turned off others. But Jefferson's strong delivery and held high notes are of the sort that would (in a ballroom) carry over a band in pre-loudspeaker days - no mean feat. The two tracks by Roy Johnson's Happy Pals are terrific, and put many a performance by better known bands of 1929 to shame. Wabash Blues, by Troy Floyd, has apparently never been issued before. This release has also appeared on the Parlophone label. -E.K.

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## PEPPER ADAMS

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Encounter!  
Prestige 7677

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When the All-Time Blowing Date poll is held Up Yonder, this can't help placing in the Top Ten.

To Pepper Adams befell a chore most jazzmen dream of - pick the guys you want, play what you want, take all the time you want. Cunning devil, he picked two favorites of mine - Tommy Flanagan, the pianists' pianist, and Zoot Sims, who was most aptly described by the title of one of his own albums: Good Old Zoot. (I remember when he was in Chicago at the Plugged Nickel a few years ago, and I was playing a dixieland gig up the street, and I looked up one night and saw him sitting in the audience, and I thought, what the hell is he doing here? Come to find out, he was listening; he liked the band.)

I'd be jiving if I tried to sort this date out for you; nonetheless, I sense that it is true music, made by copasetic souls who dig each other and what they're doing. Would they be there otherwise? Of course not. Elvin the Great is cast in a more conventional role - perhaps not by his standards, but mine - than usual; I can only recall offhand one other LP (Brookmeyer-Getz-Hancock, Columbia) that, in recent years, can make that claim. Ron Carter, coincidentally, is on both records.

Pepper plays like a man delighted with his job, and contributed Inandout (a blues

that attracts the ear much as a tennis match would the eye) and Cindy's Tune; Serenity, and Punjab, are by Joe Henderson; Verdandi (a showcase for Elvin) is Flanagan's; Elusive is Thad Jones'; Star-Crossed Lovers is Billy Strayhorn's, and I've Just Seen Her, Duke's.

The notes are by Ira Gitler, who writes better about his assignments than I do. Prestige, incidentally, has knowingly, albeit prematurely, attached its "Jazz Classics Series" tag to this; I, personally, would like for Time and the Great Poll to decide about that. -W. J.

## MOSE ALLISON

...Hello There, Universe  
Atlantic SD 1550

Assemble a really good array of talent - Jimmy Nottingham, Richard Williams, Jerome Richardson, Joe Farrell, Pepper Adams, Seldon Powell, Bob Cranshaw, John Williams, Joe Cocuzzo. Have Mose Allison, on organ and piano, write some arrangements. Then let him sing in that flat, lifeless voice of his - on eight out of the ten tracks. If that makes sense then my name is Joel Dorn and I'm a producer for Atlantic Records.

To say that Allison's vocal range is limited is to be kind. His lyrics are often amusing first time around but you won't play any of these twice unless it is to catch a snatch of Joe Henderson or a snippet of Joe Farrell. The one number where Mose's curious voice sounds quite effective is Harold Arlen's Blues In The Night, perhaps because his style is quite close to that of Arlen's and the composer has himself recorded a memorable version of it.

Mose is an excellent pianist but we don't hear nearly enough of his playing on these sides, although he stretches out for a sensitive solo on Hymn To Everything. But the album as a whole is a sacrificial offering by excellent jazzmen at the altar of commerce. Allison is much more than the lightweight clown this record makes him out to be, apart from the two instrumental selections. As these are the fourth tracks on each side, many listeners may have given up by then.

These days we must seek jazz where we find it but this writer lacks the patience to sift through hours of dross for a thimbleful of the real thing which can still be obtained, unadulterated and in reasonable quantities, on the occasional LP that slips through the net. -M.G.

## LOUIS ARMSTRONG

The Definitive Album  
Audio-Fidelity AFSD 6241

Here are the "missing" titles Louis made with the Dukes of Dixieland in 1959. Seven years ago, in 1963, I was assured by Sidney Frey of Audio-Fidelity that these "will never see the light of day since the royalty advance required is not compatible with sales potential". In his book *The Jazz Life*, Nat Hentoff wrote that these ten titles "had been held up because Louis had

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used some tunes that he had recorded for Decca a few years ago and was not supposed to record again for five years.

Whatever the real reason for their non-release until now, this set definitely is not a "definitive album by Louis Armstrong", mainly because of the lukewarm support he receives from the Dukes of Dixieland. At that time the personnel was: Gerald Fuller (clarinet), Lowell Miller (tuba and bass), Norman Hawley (drums), Stan Mendelsohn (piano), and a covey of Assuntos - Frank (trumpet), Fred (trombone), and Jac (banjo). They all try hard, but when Louis is not singing or playing the overall temperature drops about forty degrees, and it is only when he plunges back in that the Dukes are galvanized into action. Nevertheless, it is an album well worth acquiring, as Louis' trumpet is positively fierce throughout and his voice is at its gravely best. The session was recorded in the Oriental Theatre in Chicago, and it must be a great cavern of a place, or else Audio-Fidelity has jacked up the echo. Several numbers end with an echoing cymbal crash (clash?) which evidently is patented by the Dukes and/or Audio-Fidelity.

Louis sings on six of the tunes: Back O' Town Blues, Sweethearts On Parade, Bill Bailey, Someday You'll Be Sorry, I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll, and My Bucket's Got A Hole In It. Frank Assunto also assists on vocal in Sweethearts and Bucket, the latter being just over two minutes in length, and Bailey just under three. Two of the four non-vocal numbers, Sugar Foot Stomp and Cornet Chop Suey, are also well under three minutes each. Sugar Foot is played at a fastish tempo with the result that the "classic" solo by Louis is somewhat ragged. Chop Suey features the famous breaks over stop-time chords, and Louis again seems a little unhappy with the climate. Offsetting this is a five minute version of Struttin' With Some Barbecue. Louis dominates the opening ensemble and slashes

into his own solo, after which a cooling-off period ensues featuring Mendelsohn's piano, Gerry Fuller's clarinet, Frank Assunto briefly on trumpet, before Satch stirs up the proceedings with another dazzling solo flight. This causes Fred Assunto to hold forth quite robustly on trombone.

Canal Street Blues is different, to say the least. Fuller is again featured, and Fred Assunto's trombone is suitably mournful. Louis takes advantage of the acoustics here to unleash a spine-tingling solo in the upper register, while that rhythm section just keeps clomping along.

The front of the sleeve of this album is devoid of any album title or other wording so that you can enjoy the full impact of Philippe Halsman's colour portrait of a bug-eyed, bow-tied Louis Armstrong. The back of the sleeve is gimmicked into a folding stand for the picture. Personally, I prefer my Polaroid enlargement. (U.S. edition only.)

According to Nat Hentoff, Louis was paid \$40,000 for his two Audio-Fidelity Sessions - the other being "Satchmo Plays King Oliver" which was re-packaged and re-released several times. Could it be that Louis and His All Stars sold better than Louis and the Dukes? OK, I'll quit carping. Any and all unissued records by Louis Armstrong should see the light of day. Here are ten. Get them. -J.R.N.

## BAY CITY JAZZ BAND

Golden Days!  
Good Time Jazz S10053

For over a decade, there had been a rumor floating around the Midwest, based largely on wishful thinking and the legend "Volume 1" on GTJ 12017 - and now, as we see, fact - that there was to be another album by the Bay City Jazz Band.

As time went by, it became easier and easier to debunk the proposition; after all, wouldn't GTJ have released it by now (whenever "now" happened to be)? But the vibrations began flying thick and fast late last year, when it was vouchsafed that the album would/did exist, someone had "seen" it, et cetera. The plot thickened.

I never saw an album go so fast, when it began trickling in. Jim MacDonald had a few, Bob Rippey had a few (in fact, it is widely known that both those gents have a few from time to time); now you see 'em, now you don't. Now, this is not to infer prejudgement, but when people are glomming an album at that rate it must mean something.

The sessions (three) that produced this album were held about fifteen months later than those for Volume 1, in mid-'57. The personnel is nearly the same; Al Cavallin had departed, moving Walt Yost from tuba to second cornet; Jack Beecher became the tubaist, and Lee Valencia replaced Tito Patri on banjo. So much does this new record sound like the first, though, that both could have come from the same sessions (many presumed, in fact, that they did). The musicians, deriving from their counterparts/idols in the '46-'47 Yerba Buena Jazz Band, had become "better"



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only in the sense that they were more accomplished in their imitations. The improvement is most noticeable in the work of pianist Don Keeler and drummer Lloyd Byassee; Keeler, a mercurial soloist, plays such a good pair of choruses on Yellow Dog Blues that one wonders if his mentor, Wally Rose, is not sitting in. Byassee takes a couple of swipes at his snare drum on the same track, revealing his progress toward achieving the style, and the drum sound as well, of Bill Dart (he may have held back a bit on recordings - that happens - for private tapes made a year or two later would defy belief that it was not actually Dart himself).

Yellow Dog may be the best track, all things considered - others are Yerba Buena Strut, Riverside Blues, Chimes Blues, Willie the Weeper, Skid Da De Dat, Coal Cart Blues, Angry, Terrible Blues, Kansas City Man Blues, and New Orleans Stomp. Ev Farey plays some blistering lead, Roy Giomi and Sanford "Mick" Newbauer are respectfully and respectively Helmlike and Murphylite (the recording is quite kind to them, for each has a sound that is difficult to record), and the Great Behemoth churns and plummets along in a manner we have come to know as that of the Watters band in full cry. (Newbauer, over the years, apparently seemed to want to sacrifice whatever speed and articulation he could spare in order to gain sheer weight of tone, volume, and the ponderous power inherent in the Turk Murphy style - a contemporary of Newbauer's, Jim Leigh, who also worked with the BCJB, took the opposite route out of Murphy, developing a lighter, more fluent style akin to that of the Salty Dogs' Jim Snyder.)

Yerba Buena Strut is another of Watters' unrecorded (until then) and therefore little-known compositions, more in a class with his recent San Andreas Fault than with his Big Four - Big Bear Stomp, Annie Street Rock, Sage Hen Strut, and Emperor Norton's Hunch. Even Bob Helm's Dawn Club Joys and Robin Wetterau's imitative Chelsea On Down seem more Wattersian.

Technically, the stereo recording - and this must be among the very first traditional-jazz stereo LPs - was reasonably good, with a tendency to shrillness in the uppers and thinness in the lowers. The monaural Volume 1 has a fatter midrange that is more flattering to the band and more indicative of its true sound. There is a splice in Terrible Blues, in the ensemble chorus following the trombone-clarinet duet, that preserves the beat count and rhythm but disconcertingly shifts the changes; and the cornets' entry midway through the two third strains of New Orleans Stomp is curiously delayed, suggesting splices there, though I suspect it to be a natural phenomenon.

I wonder, now, for whom I'm writing this endorsement; surely everyone prone to buy Golden Days! has known of it, if not actually acquired it, by now. It is a foregone must for those followers of Lu Watters who didn't lose interest when he did, and have remained partial to the West Coast way of doing things. Put this devil on your stereo and crank it up, and if you don't think it's one hell of a record, I'll

eat your left channel. -W.J.

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## **KARL BERGER**

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Tune In  
Milestone MSP 9026

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Karl Berger's accession to the new music elite began in Europe where he played with Don Cherry and Steve Lacy. In the U.S.A., Berger's affiliates are stalwarts of the free music explosion. On "Tune In" he performs with alto saxophonist and flautist Carlos Ward, bassist Dave Holland and the drummer best known for his work with Ornette Coleman, Ed Blackwell.

Berger plays hard and crisp, rarely softening to the featherlight tones Hutcherson uses. The first cut is very brief and all the players adhere to the melody line which is repeated and clear even amid the flurry of collective blowing. The title tune functions as an overture and is given a second treatment at the end of side two. Thematically, there appears to be little need for this structural device. The similarity between the pieces results from style rather than textual continuity. The connections, if there are any, have escaped this reviewer.

The lovely dissonance of With Silence is achieved by Holland, Berger and Blackwell quietly defining one minute and fifteen seconds, and differs sharply from Get Up which follows like a film run too fast: morningtoastandcoffeebrushteethcatchbusedorangegreenst-r-eeeeelights. Blackwell solos.

The two longer pieces on side one, Fly and Beyond the Moon, fit in like features after two short subjects. The quartet does capture the essence of "fly" as an aerial phenomenon. Ward's flute soars and flutters among the insect buzzings of sarangi (an Indian stringed instrument) played by Berger, and the heavy clouds of Holland's bass. Blackwell's rhythm provides a constantly moving and dramatic matrix at times conforming to the player's suggestions, at other times contradicting them like stormy cross-winds.

Beyond the Moon has further airborne connotations, more concretely elaborated as Ward selects alto. His tone is very good on this instrument, his attack rapacious and could be encouraging to the others who, for some reason, don't pay him much attention.

Impressions of this group are difficult to define. I doubt that it's a working band. Although each player is accomplished in his own right, there seems to be some distance between them. They play well together but with a lack of warmth which is necessary for a higher degree of achievement. Music as dependent as this is upon sympathetic vibrations from player to player cannot survive on token honesty. Mutual enthusiasm for the music cannot be shammed. In this respect the LP is perfectly un hypocritical: it doesn't try to disguise anything. So it's pretty cold.

There is a good understanding between Berger and Blackwell on Clarity. The others sound superfluous. In a very formal way the question "Why is he doing it That Way?" can be answered easily. The

requirements of the composition, the technical proficiency of the players, the unexpressed nature of free jazz.

Analogy: Why should a particular man be hired for a job? Answer, "Because his credentials are sufficient and in order." Then the question must be asked again, given his credentials. "Clarity" is sufficiently stated, but there is little inference of another dimension of meaning. Pure aesthetic beauty of form must bear some correlation to the human experience which draws a sense of immediacy from the emotions. Perfect lines of composition exist in infinite array, to be seen and heard by everyone countless times a day. It's the artist's human touch makes us suck in our breath. A satisfactory answer to the second question "Why?" is missing on this LP.

Generally, side two is better. Ward and Holland play good solos on the album's best piece, the very melodic and quickly paced, From Now On.

Closing the way it opened with Tune In, one detects the Berger trade mark, note clusters repeated around a single figure, like identical snowflakes of different sizes or colours. The second version is given a slightly different shading than the first, smoother and more relaxing where the opener is brittle and abrupt. Holland's phrasing, too, improves from a style of broken running to an easy lope.

"Tune In" is far from outstanding. But its excellence lies in the Germanic precision and detail of the leader's craftsmanship. Blackwell is the most sympathetic musician on the date, and were it not for his embracing drumming, the whole effort would have gone astray. -A.O.

## BARNEY BIGARD

Bucket's Got A Hole In It  
Delmark DS-211

In January, 1968, Channel 11 (Chicago) flew Barney Bigard in from Los Angeles to take part in one of Art Hodes' TV shows. Bob Koester took the opportunity to record him with a trio consisting of Hodes, Rail Wilson (bass) and Barrett Deems (drums) and then in another session adding Nap Trottier (trumpet) and Georg Brunis (trombone). As Koester points out in his very informative and personal liner note, Hodes has been collecting great clarinetists ever since he started to record. These were his first sessions with Barney.

This album is just so fine in every way that I really am somewhat at a loss about what to say about it. Let me begin in a still, small voice by saying that I think this is one of the half dozen greatest jazz records made in the last half dozen years.

One of the things that seem to be rather neglected in writings about jazz is the importance of tone. It has always seemed to me to be one of the chief glories of the music that jazzmen took the European instruments as they found them (except for the banjo) and then completely transformed them by the way they manipulated their tonal qualities. In the case of Barney Bigard, I think he has produced the most

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beautiful sound from his Albert system clarinet that any human being has ever gotten out of a piece of wood. It is as far superior to the tone of the classical clarinet as Johnny Hodges' alto sax tone was superior to the classical alto tone. Superior, because it enhances the expressive qualities of the instrument besides being lovely. This kind of creative improvement of an instrument is to me more amazing than the stylistic qualities of the music played on it. Barney's clarinet tone, the culminating flower of the great New Orleans reed teachers, besides its breath-taking purity is so warm and capable of varieties of expression and his technique is so full of effortless crossings of the "bridge" of the instrument, glisses, notes "in the cracks of the piano", that the instrument hardly seems to exist - the man seems to be speaking directly with no mechanical intermediary at all. And what a joy it is to find that after years away from the spotlight, his abilities are unimpaired. Granted, he plays a few things here that he might not have played if he were still in music full-time (or if there had been more rehearsal for the sessions), but these are irrelevant quibbles. I bow humbly to a great man and thank him for his wonderful music. The quartette sides are the most successful ones in the album in my opinion, which may seem surprising in view of the fact that Barney has spent a good proportion of his life playing in New Orleans and dixieland bands. Yet, I think the truth is that Barney's heart is really in the type of big-band jazz he played with Duke Ellington and Freddy Slack and the kind of combo swing he played with his own groups, rather than in the traditional clarinet role of a New Orleans ensemble. All of the quartette sides are truly won-

derful with Sweet Lorraine having the kind of breath-taking beauty that marks the very greatest of Bigard's playing, Hesitation Blues marking again his mastery of the blues form and Three Little Words epitomizing his swing. The last has a bit of nostalgia to it as Barney was featured in the recordings Duke Ellington made of it in 1930 and in the movie Check and Double Check of that year from which the tune came. The new version shows that Barney is playing even better today than he did forty years ago. This workout is urbane and both fluent and fluid.

Art Hodes? Well, he is also one of my all-time favorites and he does everything right in these sessions from masterful accompanying and rhythm playing to typically original, forceful, meaningful solos. The question of tone applies to him also because he has achieved a distinctive sound on that most tonally impersonal of instruments. Art is a truly creative artist and, if I have devoted most of my space to Barney in this review I know that Art, being the modest gentleman he is, will forgive me. And what a pleasure it is to find that Georg Brunis, like Barney, is still as great as ever, undamaged by the years, still the master of New Orleans ensemble trombone, still playing those short, but marvellously effective solos, still proving that Tin Roof Blues belongs to him. I first heard Nap Trottier when Art Hodes used some records of his as intermission music when he played a little club on Carlton Street many years ago and I have eagerly listened to everything he has recorded since. Every minute listening to him is pure pleasure. Rail Wilson is a find and Barrett Deems eschews all those annoying mannerisms that marred his work with Louis and just plays great drums.

I'm afraid this review just amounts to a lot of adjectives, but I can't help it. This is just so great. Despite getting a review copy, I went out and bought another. Greater praise hath no penny-pinching reviewer. If you do the same, you'll get listening pleasure today and forty years from now. It's that kind of record. -R.A.

## RAN BLAKE

The Blue Potato and Other Outrages  
Milestone MSP 9021

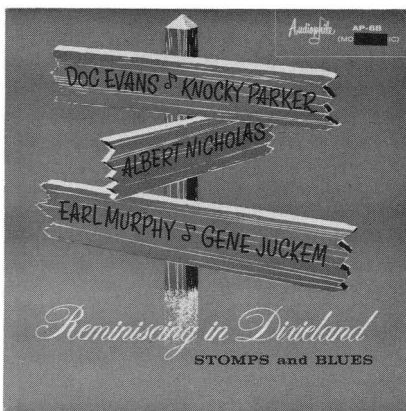
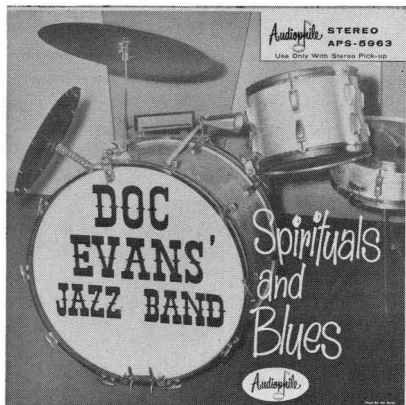
Ran Blake's selection of material for this album ranges from an original composition dedicated to three revolutionary heroes, to Italian folk melody, to popular American songs. His style is as eclectic as his taste. Sources and influences span the history of music. The life in his hands and feet draws the piano to the task of playing events and feelings. The instrument as an extension of the artist's voice assumes priority over the demands of tunes which for him exist only as nameable starting points and figural references.

Blake can persuade the music without overburdening it with violent emotion. The pale colors of Vradiazzi, Bella Ciaou, and Stars Fell On Alabama create a pensive mood in sharp contrast to the schizophrenic design of Chicago (a city which



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stumbles whereas before it used to stride).

God Bless The Child can be heard as a quiet tribute to Billie Holiday who symbolizes the black woman in the tragedy of Amerika. Rich chords interspersed with lightly pedalled notes combine in a wavelike rhythm which ebbs through this sensitive portrait.

Regis Debray is/was the aristocratic French journalist incarcerated in Bolivia for alleged revolutionary activity. Che Guevara is the slaughtered charismatic symbol of the guerilla. Malcolm X, the black emancipator, assassinated for preaching the truth of a different color. Three Seeds is a powerful, concentrated suite on the themes of struggle and sacrifice.

Brooding and highlighted with long-ringing single notes, arpeggios, conventional chords oddly fitted into passages of outrageous dissonance. The Blue Potato leads to All or Nothing at All and Fables of Faubus, a set of political obstacles and aims.

As the liner notes point out, the album's social references are decidedly aimed at the principal source of discontent in the U.S.A. (and it ain't dope, brother!). The artist as compassionate observer and interpreter is a role ably filled by Ran Blake. His images and attitudes are, from beginning to end, links between experience and instrument. His accomplished technique allows him to freely and effectively translate emotion into understandable music for those who listen. There is a multitude of avenues which lead towards Blake's mind; technique is one, harmony, discord, affection, irony are others. All these qualities are thoughtfully integrated with form in the execution of each piece.

For some, it's difficult to derive pleasure from solo piano. Listening to the solitary voice is challenging, but it can teach more about the group than can the group itself. New music is an ensemble of solitary voices; understanding collective playing surely depends on an ability to appreciate the contribution of each player as something far in excess of random and unpremeditated wailing.

"The Blue Potato" provides a study in variety of solo expression focused on a broad but pointed theme. Ran Blake is splendidly recorded and in excellent form on this LP. -A.O.

## BILL BORCHER

Euphonic Dromomania  
Oregon Jazz Band 1003  
Enjoy Yourself  
Oregon Jazz Band 1004

The OJB is a sometime thing, a fun-loving group of amateurs and semi-pros at whose nucleus is Bill Borchler, a self-taught clarinetist.

There are a couple of dozen people, more or less, involved in the two albums, though most of those from the first came back for the second. The one notable common denominator, however, is clarinetist Brian Shanley, who was once a third of one of the best front lines Bob Scobey ever had. Shanley left Chicago some years ago

to seek his fortune, after the advice of Mr. Greeley, in California, taking with him one of the last Albert system clarinets in active service outside New Orleans. Shanley is a beautiful clarinetist, with great swing and a tone that shows how much he likes Ed Hall.

Moreover, Joe Ingram, of the cornet and valve trombone, appears on 1003. Ingram may be remembered as the cornetist with the Webfoot Jazz Band, who were third place winners (Conrad Janis' Tailgate Jazz Band was first) in the first annual Record Changer Jazz Band Contest in 1949 (their Webfoot Blues is on Record Changer 102, wherein the group sounds quite like the Castele Jazz Band, and no wonder). Why, the Webfoots used to be on the radio, even! Ingram is pretty good, and so is trombonist Phil Brandt, who appears on both records, playing roughly and Teagardenly. Good work is turned in now and again by various others, excepting drummer Neil Hart, who is dull and ineffectual without being actually harmful; and for the fan who is looking for something a little different, Emma Moss, a mature lady banjoist, turns up on 1004, and doesn't do too badly. (That's quite a compliment, Emma - I don't like banjo players, most of them.)

A card to Borchler at 1451 Mission Avenue, Carmichael, California 95608, will bring you information you'll need to buy these albums, as well as some 45s, and a 7" LP under the pseudonym of the Delta Moonlighters. Shanley's on that one too. I ain't saying they're great, but you MIGHT like 'em. -W.J.

## AL BOWLY

By The Fireside  
Halcyon HAL2

One of the most interesting undergrounds that exist in the world of the record collector is the tight little group of Al Bowly enthusiasts. They are spread thin over many parts of the world and whenever they speak of their hero, there is a particular warmth in their tone. One senses that they know they possess in their memories a rare source of pleasure and that they are not in the least dismayed that most people have either never heard of him or have long since forgotten him (even his name gets spelled more different ways than you can shake a stick at). On this continent, he is best remembered as the singer for many years with Ray Noble's orchestra, but Brian Rust's knowledgeable memoir on the album sleeve tells me that he came from Lourenco Marques in Portuguese East Africa, via such equally unlikely places as Johannesburg, Calcutta, Singapore and Germany, to London. I cannot number myself among the magic circle of the Bowly underground, as I have always regarded his singing as rather corny. But it is corn of a particularly nice variety and I have never heard a Bowly performance I disliked. He sings in a rather high, slight tone, in a quite unassuming manner. His approach to popular songs has nothing whatever to do with jazz and I suppose the most descriptive clas-

sification for him would be "crooner", but there is an indescribable aspect to his singing that distinguishes him from American counterparts like Rudy Vallee. Perhaps, it is that he was genuinely sentimental.

These records were all made in 1932 in England. Among them are such forgotten songs as Now That You're Gone by Gus Kahn and Ted Fiorito which has a fine melody and lyric and which Bowly sings excellently. The epitome of Al Bowly is perhaps on Save The Last Dance For Me, where his very heartfelt, corny singing is utterly irresistible and, in a strange way unique to him, quite moving. The accompaniments (arranged by Lew Stone) are mostly something Bowly has to overcome, although Nat Gonella plays some hot trumpet, most notably on By The Fireside. Bowly's gentle, understanding treatment of Auf Wiedersehen, My Dear is remarkable considering the elephantine accompaniment and too fast tempo. However, the tempo is just too fast for any meaning on Ann Ronell's Rain On The Roof and the drummer presumably is imitating hail on a tin roof. Unless you're a member of the Bowly underground, you probably won't want this album, if you read Coda. Recording quality is undistinguished. -R.A.

## BOBBY BRADFORD

Flight For Four  
Flying Dutchman FDS 108

An artist is rarely embraced by his audience in his own time for his art alone. Occasionally, his novelty appeals so strongly to a jaded public that he becomes a darling and shortly thereafter is cast aside in favor of the next. His art always suffers from a wave of fickle followers whose imitations, posturing and interpretations in the master's name further obscure the originator and the original work.

Fortunately, some have been spared. The music on "Flight For Four" emerges from the sanctuary of the all but anonymous involvement Ornette Coleman has managed to conserve for his own art. The purely lyrical mode governed by a schooled imagination has resulted in much of the timeless poetry, painting and music available to caress our senses. It has inspired in other talented people the daring needed for intimate expression in a barely responsive arena.

Bobby Bradford (trumpet) and John Carter (alto, tenor, clarinet) both have benefited from personal contacts with Ornette Coleman, who since the fifties, has single-handedly nursed to maturity a new style. Now, living and playing in Los Angeles, they have recorded an album in the piano-less quartet style of Coleman which demonstrates competency beyond mere imitation.

Lonely and cat-eyed, sophisticated and cunning. Sensuous, bluesy and languid. The interplay of clarinet and trumpet on Woman. A portrait or tone poem with smears of innuendo from bass and drum (Tom Williamson and Buzz Freeman).

Abstractions for Three Lovers. Tempo is abandoned and in its stead, pace. Timing. Quiet and melodious patience with complex themes for alto, trumpet and bass.

Tempo returns for Domino, a rapidly moving construction. Particularly good Bradford and rhythm end the second side with flair and style.

Except for Woman (Bradford), all the pieces are John Carter compositions. Call To The Festival is certainly an excellent performance - exciting, surprising and sustained. What festival we are left to surmise; however, it and The Second Set really needn't be separated by a title. They seem well-mated; almost two views of the same idea. Structure here is registered by tolling chords from Williamson's bass. These pauses signal a fresh onslaught from the soloists. The connections slur from needlepoint and stabs of sound to crude growls and frantic admixtures of scathing invective. Again, great Bradford.

"Flight For Four" is an example of how good is much of the music we never get to hear; a fine piece of playing by men who obviously haven't recorded it for profit. It's on Bob Thiele's Flying Dutchman label, and the only part you need ignore is the fatuous liner note by Frank Kofsky. -A.O.

## CLIFFORD BROWN

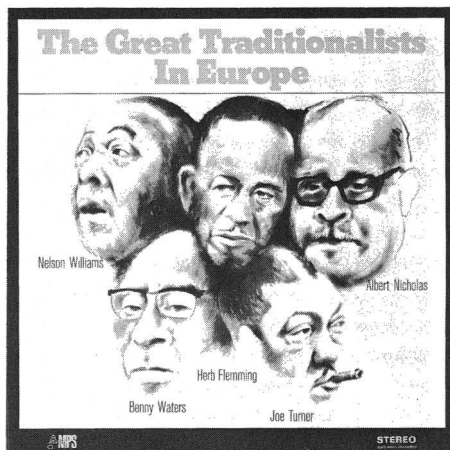
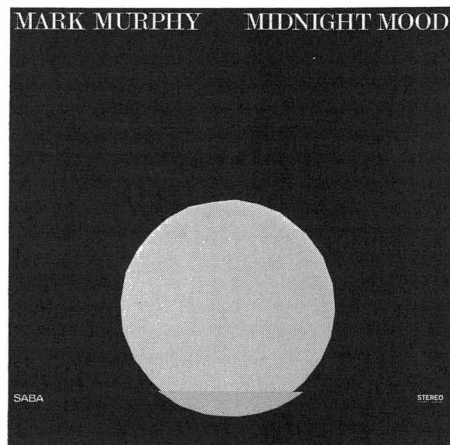
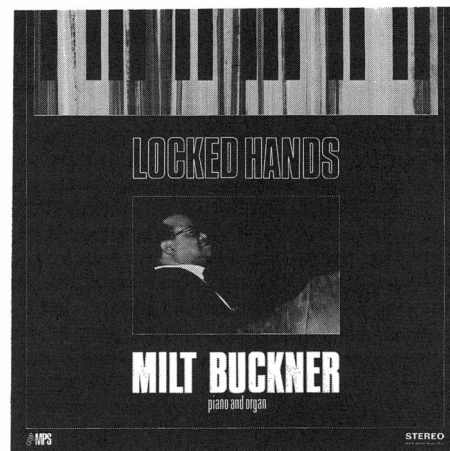
The Clifford Brown Quartet In Paris  
Prestige PR 7761

Once, writing about Django Reinhardt/Hot Club Quintet recordings, Andre Hodeir spoke of Stephane Grappelly as "a real improviser" - a comment which, as objective criticism, gets its main impact through what it leaves unsaid. It is, however, a favorable comment, in that - assuming that jazz is basically a music dependent on an improvised theme-and-harmonic-variations form of varying degrees of complexity - it still means that Grappelly knows fundamentally what jazz is about, even if he can't always work it with the expertise to be desired of him. This comment of Hodeir's is particularly a propos for this recording, not insofar as it concerns Grappelly (who is irrelevant to the proceedings here), as in that it opens the whole question of what an improviser ought or ought not do. On the basis of the alternate takes included here, I'm inclined to say that Hodeir's comment is too favorable to be applied to Clifford Brown.

Explanation: The "alternate" takes of various solos by (say) Charlie Parker, are ever fascinating, simply because Parker improvises continually - there is usually nothing any one interpretation of a selection has in common with any other take of the same except the underlying set of chord changes; in effect, for each version, Parker uses his knowledge of harmonies and his rhythmic and formal intuitions to create a vocabulary entirely different from every other version, and often to effect a totally different emotional and interpretative atmosphere from the same source.

# jazz BY MPS-SABA

for collectors &  
connoisseurs  
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the Jazz musician's  
paradise



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TORONTO 5, ONTARIO, CANADA

(The only exceptions coming to mind for Parker being his various four-bar breaks on Tunisia and his McShann and Swedish Body and Soul.) On the other hand, Clifford Brown seems to have come to this particular session with some characteristic motifs in mind which he felt would be suitable for the various selections to be recorded, and spends his solo space in the original and alternate takes rearranging the order of these motifs, perhaps altering embellishments and varying the lengths of elaboration of each preconceived idea (I Can Dream, Can't I, takes 1-3); but fundamentally - and especially so since Clifford's tone is sufficiently stable that little momentary expressive variation can originate in his sound alone - there is no change in environment or content from take to take. Not that this is totally unprecedented or objectionable in itself; Fats Navarro's recordings with Dameron reveal the same preoccupation with perfecting the solo beforehand, and since Navarro was in many respects Clifford's main determining influence, it's hard to see how such perfectionism could not have rubbed off after a while. And since Clifford's improvisations were usually uniformly good on any take, such a concern with the perfection of every note and phrase could only complicate the record company's tasks in choosing the take to be issued, and compound session expenses perhaps needlessly. The fact remains, though, that - especially in I Can Dream, but also in You're A Lucky Guy and the other selections for which alternates are provided herein - there is little enough difference between the various takes, such that the casual listener (as opposed to the analytically critical listener or the out-and-out Brownie fanatic) would not find the proceedings particularly interesting.

Before I have my head lopped off for the unpardonable capital sin of actually saying something bad about Brown, I should remark that at this early point in his career (late 1953), Clifford was still a very self-conscious player, and that this shows in at least one major respect other than his preoccupation with self-perfection on all takes. Namely, Clifford was at this point developing an extremely florid style, much akin to swing-period melodic embellishment of the melody, following to an almost baroque degree of filigree around his melody statements; and at several places - again, I Can Dream is a prime example - he gets himself so completely caught up in this process of delicate construction that he forgets completely about swinging until he hears the rhythm section behind him. Again, Clifford's sound was so completely stable that there was almost no motive force in his lines unless he swung himself consciously; and without his effort to that end, any impetus behind his solos dies completely. Although it's hard to tell - even in retrospect - considering the brevity of Brown's career, I suspect that he was still a relatively immature (or as immature as he could possibly seem to be) improviser when he made this date; at least, this is the only way (knowing the trumpeter's total lack of physical and mental hangups) I could rationalize the

bad things that happen here that just don't happen on most of his other dates (although perhaps much of it could be just that he wasn't, at this time, used to having to play straight ahead, by himself, without other horns to spell him after a couple of choruses as on most of his sessions from his Hampton period).

This, then, is one of the poorer Brown recordings from his prime period (although I'm sure that Mark Gardner and a number of others would take issue with me on that...). It would be unfair to say that it is a bad session, mind you - the original takes of the various titles are excellent, but the little errors of improvisation that creep in here and there and the totally monotonous effect of the alternate/original takes being juxtaposed combine to remove the impact of the music if you try and listen to it all at once (which, I guess, has as much to do with the way in which this reissue was programmed as with the session itself), since the alternate takes don't stand up well to the sort of comparative listening this programming invites. The two single take selections stand out, in my opinion, above all the others and possibly - just possibly, mind you - above most of Brownie's other recorded output. His performance of It Might As Well Be Spring is the most moving and most moved version of this ill-treated standard that I have ever heard; the trumpeter finds and draws out so much more beauty in his exploration of this line than in any other version of this ballad by anyone, that I'm almost surprised that anyone should attempt this again after this version, tempting an inevitably unfavorable implied comparison with Clifford Brown was not, also, a natural blues player (which is really not much of a disadvantage, since it puts him in the rather distinguished company of such as Hawkins and Benny Carter); but Blue And Brown is - surprisingly - the most unself-consciously funky and genuinely moanful blues performance I have ever heard in Brown's recorded work, and probably (when and if someone gets around to writing the definitive critical work on Brown) one of his masterpieces.

It isn't, I guess, really a bad session so much as a session programmed in a bad manner. Especially considering the great similarity of various takes, the multiple take of same selection adjacently dubbed format is going to appeal only to the fanatical collector, if at all, and there seems really no reason why the casual Brownieophile should have to bother with the alternates; he'd probably be better off looking for one of the original Vogue issues with only the original takes, and the originals from another session or two, dubbed on, and leave the rest for later, when his tastes for Brownie's playing (a very meticulous and finicky taste, to be sure) becomes more refined. The collector, since he's the only one to whose advantage this recording might be, may not be too happy with the fact that (according to discography listings of matrix numbers), the various tracks are dubbed out of order; but this still is the only North American issue containing the complete session, and that's something for him to consider. -B.T.

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## CAKEWALKING BABIES

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Volume 1: Country Style  
Matchbox 182

(Sara Martin: Jug Band Blues/Don't You Quit Me Daddy. Bernice Edwards: Long Tall Mama/Mean Man Blues. Madlyn Davis: Death Bell Blues/Gold Tooth Papa Blues. LuLu Jackson: You're Going to Leave the Old Home, Jim. Mae Glover: I Aint' Givin' Nobody None. Gladys Bentley: Red Beans and Rice/Big Gorilla Man. Lucille Bogan: Seaboard Blues/Troubled Mind. Annie Turner: Deceived Blues/Workhouse Blues. Memphis Minnie: I'm Not a Bad Gal/It Was You, Baby.)

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## LUCILLE BOGAN/ WALTER ROLAND

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Alabama Blues  
Roots 317

(My Georgia Grind/Sloppy Drunk Blues/Alley Boogie/T.N. & O. Blues/Hungry Man's Scuffle/You Got to Die Some Day/Lonesome Midnight Blues/My Man is Boogin' Me/Pig Iron Sally/Tired As I Can Be/Sweet Man, Sweet Man/Reckless Woman/Down in Boogie Alley/Man Stealer Blues/Stew Meat Blues/Skin Game Blues)

The distinction between country blues and city blues has always been a problem for blues scholars. There are, of course, artists who can clearly be placed in one group or the other, but most fall into a shadowy middle ground which defies definition and leads to classification, more from prejudice than fact.

Certainly this is true when one comes to consider the women who sang blues. In spite of individual differences, and occasional regional differences like the easily spotted Texas moan, there is a remarkable sameness of approach in a wide variety of artists, whether they are considered city or country.

I suspect, that the attitude of the record companies had a great deal to do with the forming of a female blues style in the early and mid-twenties. It was at this time that Bessie Smith was rejected at her first audition for being too crude and it is likely that there was a general attitude among A & R men that they didn't want to produce indelicate records by woman singers. A singer like Sara Martin, even though she was accompanied by jug, fiddle and banjo, produced a vocal which sounds decidedly tutored in comparison to most of the male singers of the time. The same is true of Bernice Edwards, who plays a rough Texas piano, much more down to earth than her singing. There seems to have been an emphasis on diction, smoothness of voice and the holding of notes which isn't found among the men singers. It was largely later in the decade that rougher female styles began to appear, as for example, on this record in the singing of Madlyn Davis or Mae Glover, and even in their singing the earlier emphasis on "good" vocals is still clearly present, whether or not the record companies still considered that style desirable.





**GEMS OF JAZZ**

reissue of first 10" lps recorded by dscb!  
margie/freeze an' melt/boogie trap/fidgety feet/see see rider/canal street/jazz me blues/apex blues/ them there eyes/mabel's dream/out of the gallion/cake walkin' babies back home. mono phi 6410 006 \$4.95 ppd.



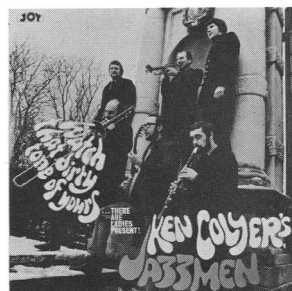
**DSC "ON TOUR"**

way down yonder in n.o./south rampart/apex blues/ory's creole trombone/king of the zulu's/opus 5/freeze and melt/please don't talk about me when i'm gone/carry me back/weary blues/jazz me blues/way down yonder. (same as previously issued "dixie gone dutch") phi 316py stereo \$4.95 ppd.



**TRIBUTE TO ARMSTRONG**

you're driving me crazy/melancholy someday you'll be sorry/mack the knife/when it's sleepy time down south/hello dolly/cornet chop suey/blueberry hill/potato head blues/two deuces/mahogany hall stomp/dippermouth blues. phi 396py stereo \$4.95 ppd.



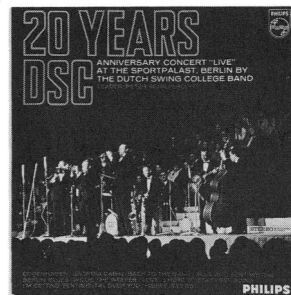
**KEN COLYER'S JAZZMEN**

"watch that dirty tone of yours" till then/one sweet letter/arkansas blues/poor butterfly/bugle boy march/if you're a viper/runnin' wild/my gal sat/black & blue/swipesy cake walk. joys 164 st \$4.25 ppd.



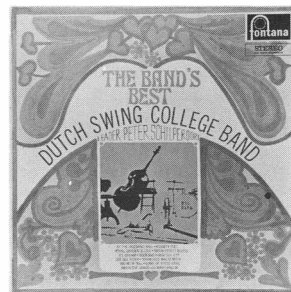
**DSC "AT HOME"**

sensation rag/riverside blues/at a georgia camp meeting/peter's swain's/south/weary blues/basin street/copenhagen/lazy river kitty's dream/the world is waiting for the sunrise/savoy blues/steamboat stomp. outstanding concert recording. recorded in 1955, the supply is limited. a must! mono only, phi 655001 \$4.95 ppd.



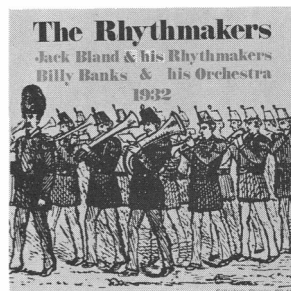
**ANNIVERSARY CONCERT "LIVE"**

copenhagen/georgia cabin/back to the game/blue and sentimental/berlin blues/willie the weeper/love is here to stay/get going/i'm getting sentimental/heebie jeebies. phi 385py stereo \$4.95 ppd.



**THE BAND'S BEST**

jazzband ball/fidgety feet/royal garden/basin street/ice cream/tiger rag/high society/see see rider/tennessee waltz/wilhelm tell/some of these days/saints. font. 056xpy stereo \$4.95 ppd.



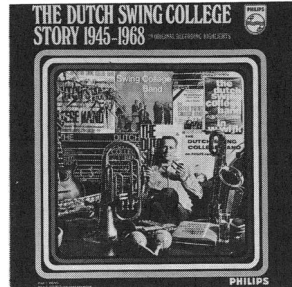
**THE RHYTHMAKERS 1932**

bugle call rag/oh, peter/margie oh, peter/spider crawl/who's sorry now/take it slow and easy/bald headed mama/i would do anything for you/mean old bed bug blues yes, suh/who stole the lock/shine on your shoes/H's gonna be you/someone stole gabriels horn. cc 14 mono \$4.95 ppd.



**DIXIE JUBILEE 25 YEARS DSCB**

valuable addition to story lps panama/jazzband ball/tin roof/snake rag/dippermouth/steamboat stomp/buddy's habit/butter & egg man/besame mucho/clarinet marmelade/melancholy/since my best gal turned me down. phi 6830015 \$4.95 ppd.



**DUTCH SWING COLLEGE STORY**

hodge podge/jelly roll/strange peach/royal garden blues/stealin' the blues/snake rag/dscb blues original dixieland one step/absent minded blues/1919 rag/b. bolden blues/frog-i-more rag/dr. jazz/weary blues/k.c. stomp/squeeze me/tennessee waltz/tiger rag/please don't talk about me when i'm gone/fidgety feet/shimmy like sister kate/butter and egg man/blues for soprano/brazil/last time/clarinet marmelade/cornet chop suey/story stomp.

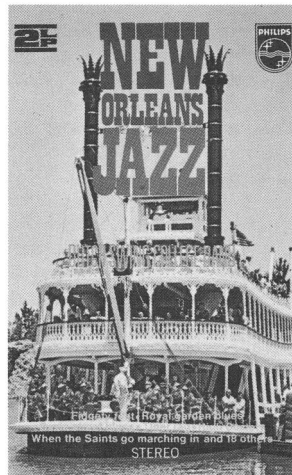
deluxe two record set includes book with complete story and many pictures taken during the 25 year history of the dutch swing college band. phi hb72 stereo \$7.50 ppd.



walk that thing/i'm crazy 'bout my baby/immigration blues/charlie johnson stomp/some of these days/freeze out/charleston's the best dance after all/miss hannah/milk cow blues/hot mustard trouble/mississippi wobble/paradise wobble. stereo \$5.95 ppd.



**STEREO CASSETTE**



**NEW ORLEANS JAZZ DUTCH SWING COLLEGE BAND**

way down yonder in new orleans/fidgety feet/beale street blues/mahogany hall blues stomp/royal garden blues/when it's sleepy time down south/big butter and eggman/high society/basin street blues/wolverine blues/i ain't gonna give nobody none o this jelly roll/tiger rag/at the jazzband ball/i wish i could shimmy like my sister kate/struttin' with some barbecue/just a closer walk with thee/see see rider/dipper mouth blues/some of these days/cornet chop suey/potato head blues/memphis blues/baby won't you please come home/when the saints go marching in. phi 7551 001 \$6.95 ppd.

this stereo musicassette gives genuine reproduction on mono equipment.

**Jazzpost Imports**

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No doubt it is true, as the writer of the liner notes for this album asserts, that the blues women have been too much neglected (off hand I can think of only two other collections devoted to woman singers, though there are quite a number of albums by single women artists), but his suggestion that any of the singers represented here are on a par with Charlie Patton just won't stand up when the record is heard. There were, of course, great women blues singers; they produced some of the greatest blues. But most of the singers here are from the second line (and one, Lulu Jackson, doesn't appear to have been a blues singer at all); and pleasant though they are, they don't present genius.

This is not to say that those interested in older blues styles won't find interesting performances in this collection. Sara Martin's ability to sing in two completely different ranges on Jug Band Blues and the brilliant combination of Mae Glover's rough, spirited voice and John Byrd's 12-string guitar are alone good enough reasons to have this record; the great accompaniment by Little Brother Montgomery and Walter Vincson on Annie Turner's numbers should also be heard. In addition, there are several records of considerable rarity here, though unfortunately the rarer items are in rather bad shape.

I don't think this is a record I'm apt ever to listen to straight through for the pleasure of it, but there are certainly some performances to which I'll return from time to time.

Lucille Bogan was an artist who slipped into undeserved obscurity, at least partly no doubt because she was never accompanied by jazz groups and so was not of much interest to the jazz collectors of the past two decades. The two selections on the Cake Walking Babies album only begin to give some idea of her range and versatility. Listening to a full record of her singing is the only way to appreciate how great she really was.

Over the noise of these old recordings, she projects her strong personality through the songs in the same way that Bessie Smith does through hers. She never suffers from a sameness of approach, but has the gift of being able to vary her performance to fit the requirements of whatever song she is singing.

Walter Roland's piano which accompanies her on all the numbers on this album matches her perfectly. His playing is as inventive and witty as her singing; they deserve to be ranked among the greatest blues duos.

If it weren't for the sound on this record, I could recommend it without reservation. Unfortunately, some of the originals are sufficiently rare that bad copies seem to be the best that can be had, and in some cases there is more noise and distortion than is pleasant. However, the record is well worth having for the numbers which are reasonably easy to hear.

Matchbox records are produced by Saydisc Specialized Recordings (they also distribute Roots in England), The Barton, Inglestone Common, Badmington, Glos., GL9 1BX, England. The price is 2/1/- post paid. Roots records are \$5.80 post

paid from Postfach 17, A-2345 Brunn a. Geb., Austria. -P.H.

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## C.J.'S ROOTS OF CHICAGO BLUES

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Volume 1  
Blue Flame 101

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(Hound Dog Taylor: Christine/Alley Music. Earl Hooker: Wild Moments/Chicken. Rudy Robinson: Bachelor Blues. Little Mack: Coma Back/My Walking Blues. Homesick James: Set a Date. Lee Jackson: Pleading for Love/Juanita. Morris (Jones) & Betty Everett: This House. Betty Everett: Why Did You Have to Go.)

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The C.J., Colt, and Firma labels are a one-man operation which has been issuing three or four singles a year for about the past dozen years. The labels are well known to Chicago Blues collectors, and those who don't already have most of this material on singles will probably find the collection interesting.

In spite of its rather limited output, the company has gained a reputation by including among its releases such artists as Homesick James, Little Mack, Earl Hooker, Detroit Jr., and Hound Dog Taylor, many of whom are included in this album. These names will no doubt draw attention to the record, but with a couple of exceptions, it is interesting less for the music included than it is as an account of what one of the small Chicago labels was doing during the sixties.

There isn't anything which could be described as the C.J. sound. Blues were included among the releases, but the term was broadly defined. It appears that anything which sounded interesting and had a chance of being a hit in the Chicago area was put out.

This collection reflects the diversity of C.J. releases. Rudy Robinson is a Wynonie Harris type blues shouter backed by a girl vocal group; Lee Jackson's numbers are both ballads, very different from the sort of thing he is now doing with the Chicago Blues All Stars; Betty Everett's songs are from her pre-soul period and are more blues influenced than the music she now sings.

The best blues on the record are by Homesick James and Hound Dog Taylor. Homesick James does a good Elmore James style version of Memphis Minnie's Please Set a Date, and Hound Dog Taylor, another Elmore James disciple, provides some great interplay with Lafayette Leake's piano on two instrumental numbers. Oddly enough, Christine, which was originally issued with a vocal by Taylor, is here presented with the vocal track removed. It makes a nice instrumental but stands up better with the vocal included.

Earl Hooker's Wild Moments is a good Chicago rock/blues instrumental featuring organ and tenor as well as Hooker's guitar, but the band falls apart on Chicken which is a reworking of You're So Fine and a dance theme (the Chicken). The vocal is pedestrian and the accompaniment worse. Little Mack Simmons, who is the

album's featured artist, has some strong moments of loud harmonica solo. The songs are nice but unexceptional.

Blue Flame Records are available from C.J. Records, 4827 Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60615, U.S.A. for \$4.98. -P.H.

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## CHOCOLATE DANDIES

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1928-1933  
Swaggie 1249

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Two talented arrangers, Benny Carter and Don Redman, were responsible for the best of the Chocolate Dandies recording groups, here all tastefully assembled in chronological order onto one LP. Redman started the ball rolling on September 29, 1928, when he found the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra in the studio, and recruited Tommy and Jimmy, Hank Stern (tuba), Stan King (drums), added such luminaries as Jack Teagarden, Frank Teschemacher, got George Thomas to sing the vocal and came up with Cherry. All these Big Aces might just as well have been out on the street, as the only solo is a short one by Tesch on tenor. But this number sets the mood for the Chocolate Dandies - a mood that might be described as playing lightly and politely. This was sustained on October 10, 1928, when the basic McKinney Cotton Pickers, with one major addition, found themselves recording as the Chocolate Dandies. The major addition is the late, great Lonnie Johnson who has guitar solos on Paducah and Stardust. This early jazz recording of Hoagy Carmichael's tune moves along at a commendable clip, and apart from Lonnie, features Milt Senior on clarinet and John Nesbitt on trumpet. The same group recorded an Ellington number (Birmingham Breakdown) and a tune associated with the Luis Russell orchestra, Four Or Five Times.

In September 1929, Benny Carter made his first appearance as a dandy Chocolate Dandy, teaming up with Don Redman and Coleman Hawkins to form a million dollar sax section, along with Leonard Davis (trumpet), Rex Stewart (cornet), and old Mr. Thomas Waller and all. If the tune Six Or Seven Times is a sequel to Four Or Five Times, then the other number recorded at this session is fully descriptive of the physical feats hinted at: That's How I Feel Today. After this date, Redman departed for other chores, and Benny Carter alone directed the remaining Chocolate Dandy recordings, the next five of which are my particular favorites.

Benny Carter used all Fletcher Henderson men for two dates in December 1930: Bobby Stark (trumpet), Jimmy Harrison (trombone), Coleman Hawkins (tenor), Horace Henderson (piano), Benny Jackson (guitar), and John Kirby (bass and tuba). Benny is featured on both clarinet and alto and he also sings on Goodbye Blues. Jimmy Harrison is the vocalist on an equally moody Got Another Sweetie Now. The sombre mood continues in Cloudy Skies and the classic Dee Blues. Only on Bugle Call Rag does the Blues motif disappear, and even then the tempo is subdued and there is none of the usual

flag-waving associated with this tune.

The final Chocolate Dandies session covered by this LP took place almost three years later, in October 1933. Swing was soon to become king, and the arrangements and drive of I Never Knew and Krazy Kapers reflected the new era. The rough-hewn trumpet of Max Kaminsky and the Chicago trombone of Floyd O'Brien brought a new kind of verve to the Carter scores. Carter also plays trumpet here, and on Once Upon A Time, leaving the saxophone duties to the magnificent Chu Berry. On Blues Interlude, however, Benny Carter is featured throughout on alto. The rhythm section featured the impeccable Mr. Wilson (Teddy, that is) on piano, Lawrence Lucie (guitar), Ernest Hill (bass), and Sid Catlett (drums) - although Mezz Mezzrow snuck in the studio to drum up a dollar on Krazy Kapers.

To quote from Brian Rust's admirable sleeve notes: "Redman and Carter besetride the admittedly narrow world of jazz arranging like colossi: the sixteen tracks here presented complete are a living testimony to their art." -J.R.N.

## DUTCH SWING COLLEGE

Swing College At Home (1955)

Philips 655 001 XPL

The Band's Best! (1959-60)

Fontana 857056 XPY

Dutch Swing College On Tour (1960)

Philips 840 316 PY

Twenty Years DSC Anniversary concert (1965)

Philips 840 385 PY

Tribute To Louis Armstrong (1966)

Philips 840 396 PY

The DSC Story 1945-68

Philips H-72-BG-205

American and Canadian collectors should be delighted to be able to obtain these selected DSC albums domestically (ie. simply and quickly) after all these years. The single LPs are priced at \$4.95 each, postpaid, and the two-disc set, with its stunning booklet of data and photographs, packaged in a handsome album box, is a most reasonable \$6.95 (for full description, see advertisement in February 1971 CODA). The stereos are compatible, too.

The majority of collectors of "revival" traditional jazz have at least two DSC albums - the early Epic, and the deleted "Dixie Gone Dutch" (Philips 200-010) which is identical to the "On Tour" album here. (A mysterious third American release, "Twelve Jazz Classics", turned up scattershot a few years past on the Epic subsidiary, Perfect (PL 12038). The boxed set (record #1 mono, #2 compatible stereo!) duplicates two titles from the old Epic and two from the Perfect, and one from each of the other albums (except Twenty Years, which has no duplications) for a total of seven, making the set, with twenty-eight titles in all (several from 78s, one previously unissued) not at all dispensable.

The DSC story, encapsulated, is an uncomplicated one: the original band, members of the "DSC (jazz) Club", swung to more traditional jazz forms after an initial

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involvement with small-group Ellingtonia (hear Hodge Podge, in the "Story" set). Under the direction of reedman Peter Schilperoord, the personnel and musical idiom shifted gradually until settling into a stable group of eight musicians - the customary seven, with banjo-bass (rarely tuba) rhythm, and Schilperoord playing second cornet, or second clarinet, or soprano sax (and, later, after a period away from the band, tenor and baritone saxes) to give each tune a somewhat more special treatment than is within the capability of those bands with non-doubling front lines. This built-in versatility through the early and middle years of the band made it far more attractive than the millrun, as you might imagine - two trumpets, after Oliver-Watters; two clarinets, in the manner of Graeme Bell's Australian band; a clarinet-soprano duet, as Bechet-Mezzrow. Terrific!

Time wrought many changes on the style and repertoire of the DSC, and not always for the better, though the devotion and conviction of its members never flagged. Upon Schilperoord's return in late 1959 (the "At Home" concert was his sendoff, in September '55), the piano was dropped, his clarinetist replacement, Jan Morks, was retained, and Schilperoord himself turned to baritone sax; this combination produced a series of recordings that were distinctively different from their predecessors and served to mark a rough midpoint between the early sound and the one ultimately achieved by 1968 (hear Story Stomp, written especially for the "Story" set). The music took on a relative "dixieland" (no semantical quibbling, gentlemen) cast; the cornetist Oscar Klein and trombonist Dick Kaart had replaced the veterans Wybe Buma and Wim Kolstee, and banjoist Arie Ligthart had refined his approach to a less rambunctious, "straight-four" one. Eventually Morks departed, leaving Schilperoord to return to the clarinet, and with Ray Kaart, cornet, and more modern drummers (Louis de Lus-sanet, Peter Ypma) a style generally similar to the neo-New Orleans "trad", as typified by Chris Barber's band, emerged. If the baritone-sax period was subdued, the later band seemed to re-possess the slam-bang enthusiasm of the early one, though with great discipline, refinement, and somewhat more "modern" methods; this, in contrast to, as well, the comparative rough-house attitude of Barber's band, and those who tried to pattern their bands after his.

Of this group of records, the "At Home" set illustrates the "old" style, taken to its endpoint in the chronology, with the titles Sensation Rag, Riverside Blues, Georgia Camp Meeting, South, Weary Blues, Basin Street, Copenhagen, Lazy River, TWIWFT Sunrise, Savoy Blues, Kitty's Dream, and Steamboat Stomp. The "Band's Best" and "On Tour" albums cover the baritone-sax period well, the former including Fidgety Feet, Jazz Band Ball, Royal Garden, Basin Street, Ice Cream, Tiger Rag, High Society, Tennessee Waltz Rock (these last four on the Epic-Perfect), See See Rider, Wilhelm Tell, Some Of These Days, and Saints,



and the latter with, like the American Philips, SRS Parade, Apex Blues, Ory's Creole Trombone, King Of The Zulus, Opus 5, Freeze And Melt, Please Don't Talk About Me While I'm Gone, Carry Me Back To Old Virginny, Weary Blues, Jazz Me Blues, and, as the "At Home" album, the DSC's opening and closing theme, 'Way Down Yonder In New Orleans.

The "20 Years" and "Tribute" albums bring us nearly up to date, and share a common personnel of the Kaart brothers; Schilperoort (on clarinet, soprano, and tenor); Ligthart (who joined the band at the start of 1952, and remained throughout the years), banjo and guitar; bassist Bob van Oven, who had joined in early 1950; and drummer Ypma. The first has Copenhagen, Georgia Cabin, Back To The Game, Blue And Sentimental, Berlin Blues, Willie The Weeper, Love Is Here To Stay, Get Going, I'm Getting Sentimental Over You, and Heebie Jeebies; the second, You're Driving Me Crazy, Melancholy, Someday, Mack The Knife, Sleepy Time Down South, Hello Dolly, Cornet Chop Suey (wherein Dick Kaart solos on baritone horn), Blueberry Hill, Potato Head Blues, Two Deuces, Mahogany Hall Stomp, and Dippermouth.

Finally, the box set contains Hodge Podge (Ellingtonia from '45), None Of My Jelly Roll (a very groovy slow '46 version), Strange Peach (their first 78 rpm release), Royal Garden and Stealin' The Blues ('50), Snake Rag, DSC Blues, Original Dixieland One-Step, Absent-Minded Blues, 1919 Rag (all '51), Buddy Bolden's Blues ('52), Dr. Jazz (with an elephantine vocal by Neva Raphaello, embarrassingly unaccomplished) and Frog-I-More Rag (both '53), Weary Blues ('55), Kansas City Stomps ('56), Squeeze Me ('58), Tiger Rag and Tennessee Waltz Rock (both '59), Please Don't Talk About Me, Fidgety Feet, and Sister Kate ('60), Butter And Egg Man and Blues For Soprano ('61), The Last Time ('62), Brazil ('63), Clarinet Marmalade ('65), Cornet Shop Suey ('66), and, especially recorded for this album, Story Stomp ('68), with new cornetist Bert de Kort, and drummer Huub Janssen. This pianoless guitar-bass-drums rhythm section has probably been standard ever since, and the entire band, while sounding quite as contemporarily fresh as possible within the idiom, seems a bit on the upsurge again after its Barber-Trad period. (Underlined titles indicate duplication, intramurally within the Philips group and/or with the three American releases.)

The DSC has recorded prolifically since 1948, this selection representing perhaps a quarter, or third at best, of their total output. Several albums with less attractive themes - "Party Favorites", "Goes Western", "Brazil", "Boys Meet Girls" (vocalists), "Dixieland High Life", etc. - are available, along with other "live" concerts, and if demand warrants, these will be imported also. Write Jazzpost Imports, Box 45412, Chicago, Illinois 60645.

If you're not familiar with the DSC but desire to investigate, begin with the Story set, and go from there. If one were to dwell on fine points, then each album could be considered as by a "different" band,

with the influence on the others that each new member brought. I sincerely recommend them all, and I'm sure every traditional jazz collector who fancies himself hard-core will want the lot. The recording and pressing are of high quality, and the transfers of the early sides are quite successful. If you were to order these from overseas, you'd expect to pay \$6.00 and more per copy - why, it's like finding them on the sidewalk. -W.J.

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## FLETCHER HENDERSON

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Featuring Louis Armstrong 1924-25  
Jazz Panorama JPLP 21

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Louis Armstrong's stay with Fletcher Henderson in 1924-25 was great for Fletcher's band, but I can't see that Louis gained anything from it musically - not a thing. When he joined up, he was on the verge of his maturity, and light years ahead of the others in the band from every jazz standpoint. By the time he left, he had planted a seed that in a couple of years would transform, with the help of arranger Don Redman, an ordinary sounding dance band into one of the best jazz bands of all. But I don't know of a single side cut by Fletcher during Louis' stay that is really any good outside of Louis' contributions, not even Sugar Foot Stomp or Copenhagen. Of course, he did get a chance, while in New York, to record with Bessie Smith, with Clarence Williams' Blue Five, and to make the smashing I Ain't Gonna Play No Second Fiddle with Perry Bradford - this last being much more exciting than anything Fletcher did at the same time with Louis. Compare the Henderson version of Everybody Loves My Baby on this LP with the immortal version by Armstrong with Clarence Williams to get an idea of how inferior some of Fletcher's discs were at that time, even when they had Louis on them. Still, no one seriously interested in discovering for themselves the genius of Louis Armstrong would want to miss this release. There is a lot of dull Fletcher, but there is also a lot of sublime early Louis. Irresistable attractions include three different takes of Why Couldn't It Be Poor Little Me, two takes of I'll See You In My Dreams, and a different take (#3) of Everybody Loves My Baby than that which appeared in the Fletcher Henderson Story on Columbia. Louis plays differently on different takes, and in all cases his horns sing out and transcend his environment much as Bix was to do a few years later on such sides as Sweet Sue with Whiteman. Whiteman's arrangers actually did a better job of setting up Bix's solos than Fletcher's arrangers did with Louis.

The three takes of Why Couldn't It Be Poor Little Me also have a slight interest outside of Louis' solos in that there are modifications in the stock arrangements from take to take. On one take, a chorus is split between a sax (alto?) and Charlie Green's trombone, while on the other two, a clarinet replaces the trombone solo. Each of the three takes have different introductions, one without Louis being heard, one on which he is prominent, and

one on which he plays the introduction as a solo break. The version of Everybody Loves My Baby is interesting in comparison to the one reissue by Columbia. It does not have the brief hollered, raspy vocal explosion at the end which is supposed to be Louis' first recorded "vocal".

Several tracks have appeared on other LP's, but no other reissue of this material has been as comprehensive or as well-produced. Not included are any of Louis' sides with Fletcher such as Sugar Foot Stomp, TNT, Go Long Mule, originally issued on Columbia 78 RPMs. Together with Volume 1 of the Fletcher Henderson Story, which does include most of the Columbias plus Copenhagen, it is now possible to get a nearly full picture of Louis with Fletcher. -E.K.

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## BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON

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The Immortal  
Milestone 2004  
Black Snake Moan  
Milestone 2012  
1926-1929  
Biograph 12000  
Master Of The Blues  
Biograph 12015

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The return to the catalog of a substantial portion of Blind Lemon Jefferson's repertoire has been long overdue. After all, he was one of the three or four most important blues musicians to be recorded during the 1920's and his influence has been widely felt since those days. In the upsurge of interest in the blues that occurred during the 1960's it seemed, for a while, that the neatly articulate voice of Blind Lemon Jefferson was destined for unjustified obscurity as first one and then another Mississippi singer was thrust into the limelight. Geniuses, fortunately, rarely disappear completely and the long out of print Riverside 12" albums were being sought assiduously by those who had gained knowledge of Jefferson's skills. With just one song of his (One Kind Favour) being recorded by the Staple Singers and the continued availability of Match Box Blues on RBF's Country Blues collection, a potential audience was reminded of the man's talents. Now, an almost embarrassing amount of his material has appeared.

These four albums contain an assorted forty-eight titles, all recorded between 1926 and 1929. No attempt has been made to issue them in any logical sequence and older collectors will be particularly frustrated with the tangle of duplications. The producers will probably claim that the selections were made to provide a balanced listening experience. However, with the blues, this rarely holds true. Jefferson's material, for the most part, follows a similar pattern and the interest lies in the exquisite guitar accompaniments and the authoritative delivery by the singer. The Texas blues were smoother, more orderly than those in Mississippi and Jefferson's high-pitched voice enunciated the words clearly. The quality of reproduction varies on these reissues, but the Milestone engineers seem to have done a slightly

better job in the transfers.

At this point there is little to say about these recordings. They are classics which should be in the homes of anyone seriously interested in the blues. Each in its own way constitutes a microcosm of the blues at their best and no one collection is better than the next. The repertoire is well balanced between variations on traditional themes and Jefferson's own highly original and poetic expositions. -J.W.N.

**KARIN KROG**

Joy  
Sonet SLPS 1405

Although the voice is at the root of jazz it has only played a small role in the changing course of jazz during the past two decades. Now, it is becoming more significant once again. Actually there has always been a very small, little-known nucleus of singers who were trying to change their voice into an instrument. The three who come most quickly to mind in the contemporary idiom are Sheila Jordan, Jeanne Lee and Patty Waters. Now a fourth female must be seriously considered.

Karin Krog is from Norway and has established herself on the European scene as an expressive artist who has successfully incorporated the newer forms of music into her art. The material is ideally suited to the subtle nuances of a singer who can slide from note to note and bring fresh meaning to each phrase. Her interpretation of Monk's Round About Midnight is unique while the moody eeriness of Lazy Afternoon is a striking interpretation. Both Maiden Voyage and Karin's Mode are wordless excursions into pure music as the singer utilises modern electronic techniques in the dramatic presentation of her moody feelings. The support she receives from Jan Garbarek's group is particularly effective and sympathetic to the overall conception of the music. Finally there is Mr. Joy, Annette Peacock's composition, with its lilting, graceful lines which are enhanced by the strong lines of bassist Arild Andersen.

The overall cohesion of the musicians and their complete understanding of the singer's direction give a splendid unity to the music performed here. Karin Krog is a voice that deserves to be known beyond the borders of Europe. This is an impressive addition to the contemporary music library. -J.W.N.

**JAMES MOODY/  
GEORGE WALLINGTON**

The Beginning And End Of Bebop  
Blue Note 6503

Underlying the innovative forces let loose by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie et. al. during the 1940's, was a serious musical growth that was a natural development from the work of musicians during the 1930s. Although, at the time, there seemed to be a sharp dividing line between the two musics, when we look back it seems, mostly, to have been a logical development.

These recordings by James Moody and George Wallington are as much a triumph for the writers - Gil Fuller and Quincy Jones respectively - as they are for the individual performers. Fuller, of course, was one of the principal writers during the bop era - he contributed significantly to Gillespie's successful big band and he demonstrates that his skills are equally good with the smaller eight-piece band assembled by James Moody. There's an excitement, a nervous energy that can be translated into a searching quest for fresh thoughts - bop was still an innovative, exploratory music at that time and the leader, Ernie Hanry and Cecil Payne are all excellent soloists. Above all, though, it is a group effort and no one musician dominates the proceedings. The latin numbers (Tropicana, Cu-ba, Moody's All Frantic) have the addition of Chano Pozo, the extraordinary Cuban percussionist, whose singular expression adds another dimension to the music. More straight-ahead are Oh Henry (a beautiful feature for Ernie Henry), The Fuller Bop Man and Moodamorphosis.

The Wallington date is much smoother and the even flow of the music emphasises the changes that had occurred in modern jazz. The abrasive edges of the music had been leveled out and even that pioneer bop drummer Kenny Clarke coalesces with bassist Oscar Pettiford in a light, graceful rhythmic undertow. George Wallington, the leader, plays solos that move effortlessly in the Bud Powell tradition without having the originator's urgency. The horn players are well chosen - Dave Burns (trumpet), was also on the Moody date, while Frank Foster and Jimmy Cleveland are younger musicians who grew up under the shadow of the musical directions of the 1940s. Four of the five selections recorded at this session (Festival, Bumpkins, Frankie And Johnny, Baby Grand) are included here and it's good to have such fine music available on LP once again. While neither session contains particularly earth-shattering music, its sheer proficiency and consistency is a reminder of how pervasive was the spread of the bop style. -J.W.N.

**JIMMY O'BRYANT**

Washboard Wonders 1924-1926  
Biograph 12002

**JIMMY LYTELL**

Headin' For Harlem 1926-1928  
Classic Jazz Masters 11

Although a few rugged individualists have dominated the growth and direction of jazz there have always been numerous important stylists, who for one reason or another, never quite achieved the same prominence. Two musicians who fall into the latter category are Jimmy O'Bryant and Jimmy Lytell.

The clarinet was an important instrument in the early days and the jazz players developed a unique method of expressing their feelings and ideas through an instrument that is singularly lacking in warmth

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when played with "legitimate" techniques. Unquestionably the dominant master of the instrument in the early twenties was Johnny Dodds. His thick, rich tone and sweeping grandeur was much admired and widely imitated. Only Sidney Bechet came close to equalling his tremendous power and passion for the blues. Jimmy O'Bryant, it is claimed, was heavily influenced by Dodds but we have no real way of verifying this for there is virtually no concrete information on this musician. Except for his numerous recordings, principally for Paramount, in the mid-Twenties there is a total absence of information on this "faceless" musician. He was good enough to fool the experts for years and many of his performances were long thought to be by Johnny Dodds. The Twelve Washboard Wonders sides issued on the Biograph LP are among the rarest and only some have been dubbed from above average originals. It does give us a better idea of O'Bryant's style and approach for he is the only soloist (except for Bob Shoffner's eloquent blues choruses on The Joys). His attack is slightly staccato while his tone in the upper register becomes a little shrill at times. In the lower register there is a full wood texture and conceptually he utilises all the instrument in a darting, probing vein that is full of imagination. The sometimes surprising shifts in register heighten the originality of his approach and there is no question that he was an imaginative, highly original stylist. Jimmy Blythe and Jaspar Taylor provide a robust but simple rhythm background for the clarinetist and the neat integration between the three is evident in the thoughtful arrangement of most of the material. Solo showcases were rare for jazz musicians in 1924 which makes these recordings all the more significant.

Changes in approach became more marked as such Creole exponents as Jimmie Noone, Omer Simeon, Albert Nicholas and Barney Bigard became heard more widely and clarinet players moved beyond the sheer power of blues playing. The novelty effects of Larry Shields, Bob Fuller and other followers of the ODJB style were dropped in favour of a more skilful musical approach. This was the style that was interpreted by a growing body of white clarinetists in the 1920's. They included such individualists as Benny Goodman, Pee Wee Russell, Fud Livingston, Frank Teschemacher, Jimmy Dorsey and Jimmy Lytell. The latter is best known for his many appearances on record with the New York studio clique who were known as The Original Memphis Five. On these recordings, however, he is showcased as a soloist with support from pianist Frank Signorelli (a fixture on jazz-oriented recordings at that time) and banjo/guitar rhythm from such noted players as Eddie Lang, Harry Reser and possibly (according to Rust) Dick McDonough. Lytell's fluent style is very well illustrated in all fourteen selections - and all but two (Down South Fling, Buggy Blues as by The Three Barbers) appeared originally under his own name on the Pathe Actuelle label. Rhythmically some of the numbers are a little hamstruck by the plodding banjo and four-

square piano accompaniments but Lytell overcomes these hindrances very well in the execution of above average performances. There is considerable variety as he swoops high in the register before dropping down with low guttural phrases that are handled without affectation. It is easy to see that he was among the foremost musicians of his day and it seems a pity that he chose to bury himself in the studios for much of his later career.

Both these records are important documents and should be listened to with care by anyone seriously interested in the development of jazz. They provide yet another footnote to the complex, intertwined story of the Twentieth Century's most energetic art form. -J.W.N.

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## PARLOUR PIANO

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Blues and Stomps  
Biograph 1001Q

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## FATS WALLER

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Parlor Piano Solos  
Biograph 1002Q

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## JAMES P JOHNSON

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Parlor Piano Solos (1917-1921)  
Biograph 1003Q

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## JELLY ROLL MORTON

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Blues and Stomps  
Biograph 1004Q

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Fats Waller, James P. Johnson, Luckey Roberts, Jelly Roll Morton! Legendary names of traditional piano, to be sure. All men whose early recordings come to us filtered through the surface noise and poor fidelity of the twenties' recording processes, and often submerged behind the work of terribly outdated vocalists.

Suppose we could have some additional "live" performances by these men of material they recorded back in the twenties, but this time with the high fidelity of the seventies? Not as impossible as you'd think, because back in the heyday of the player piano, these men all made hand-played rolls, many of which survive today and which, in the hands of a piano roll authority like Detroit's Mike Montgomery,

can produce performances so rich in dynamics and so "live"-sounding that the artists seem to have been resurrected for one more session.

In collaboration with Mike Montgomery, Biograph records has inaugurated a new series of LPs of piano rolls. The first four are now available, and they are delightful. Unlike most piano roll LPs, which present rolls played so fast and with so little attention to dynamics that the artist seems lost in the machinery, these LPs are generally successful in creating a feeling of 'presence' by the pianists.

1001Q is something of a sampler for the series, presenting twelve tracks by eleven of the top pianists of the twenties (James P. Johnson gets two tracks). All four LPs are excellent, but this one is probably the best of the bunch because of the variety of styles, and the particularly felicitous tempos chosen by Montgomery. Hock Shop Blues, Cliff Jackson's only surviving roll, is astonishingly "live" in effect. Mo'lassees, a stomping performance, clearly demonstrates why Luckey Roberts, who was greatly underrecorded on phonograph records during the twenties, was regarded as a giant of the keyboard by his contemporaries. Johnson and Waller are here too, along with others whose recorded output during the twenties was less prolific and whose roll performances are thus specially welcome - men such as Lemuel Fowler, Clarence Johnson and J. Russel Robinson.

Moreover, 1001Q contains more material that has never been previously released on LP. 1002Q is devoted entirely to rolls played by Fats Waller, and 1003Q to James P. Johnson, and many of these rolls were recorded under the supervision of J. Lawrence Cook for the now-deleted Riverside Jazz Archives Series. (By the way, Cook also has a track on 1001Q - an arrangement for player piano that is designed to sound hand-played, and it certainly succeeds.) Cook produced more piano rolls than anyone else in history and his choice of tempo on the Riverside rolls, a bit faster than Mike's choice, sounds more "right" to me than the same rolls on the Biographs. However, the Biographs are also satisfying, are recorded in high fidelity, and what's more, are currently available.

1004Q contains the work of Jelly Roll

# *matrix*

## **jazz record research magazine**

Matrix is the oldest discographical magazine in the world. Its contributors include the best-known names in the business. Each issue contains articles of lasting interest. Recently there have been label listings of DISC, BILTMORE and H. J. C. A.

There are six issues per year. The subscription rate is 10/- for Europe; \$1.50 for U.S.A. & Canada.

Editorial: George Hulme, 30 Hughes Road, Hayes, Middlesex, England.  
Subscriptions: Bernard Holland, 7 Aynsley Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 2RA, England.



Morton, and is thoroughly successful in calling Morton's shade to the keyboard. (As Mike mentions in his informative and interesting liner notes, some of Morton's rolls were not well edited by the roll manufacturer, causing a couple of slight hesitations in a few spots, but otherwise the performances are remarkably "live". Moreover, even this slight problem occurs only on a few tracks.) All but one of the Morton rolls are currently available on Swaggie S1214, but that one, Tom Cat Blues, has never previously appeared on LP.

In fact, all four of the LPs contain at least some tracks that have never appeared before on LP. For example, James P. Johnson's first (1918) roll of Carolina Shout, which sounds like a rough draft of the tune, appears on the track just preceding the more famous 1921 roll version which contains all the familiar routines. 1001Q includes a duet roll cut in 1915 which is probably one of Jelly Roll Morton's first two piano rolls. (The "probably" is meant to deal with the fact that, although the roll itself is a delightful performance, nothing on it has the characteristic Morton sound - despite the considerable evidence offered by Mike in his notes that Morton is indeed one of the artists.)

Mike is a pianist himself, and has taken the opportunity to examine the rolls and offer comments on special passages which demonstrate particular interesting tricks of the artists. Phonograph records do not offer this same opportunity, and the enjoyment of the rolls is enhanced by the added knowledge. (Besides, I suppose the traditional pianists will now begin working on a few of the ideas covered in the notes.)

These LPs are a fine beginning to a series that promises to have four more LPs of material by Johnson (just imagine!) more Fats, some Jimmie Blythe, Scott Joplin, and many others. They fill a considerable vacuum in the current catalog of piano material, and should be welcomed, encouraged and enjoyed by all fans of solid traditional piano playing. -T.W.

## OSCAR PETERSON

Hello Herbie  
MPS 15-262

When two heavyweight swingers like Oscar Peterson and Herb Ellis get together, you can be sure that there'll be some excitement generated. They are old comrades, of course, for Ellis was a regular member of the Peterson trio in the 1950s for several years. The feeling generated on this date, however, is more akin to those all-star jam sessions that Norman Granz used to produce where Peterson was an admirable foil for the many important soloists whose names appeared in lights.

Characteristically, the music is evenly divided between the blues and standard 32-bar songs - the kind of material that suits both soloists best. In fact, the kind of interaction and rapport between the two is often breathtaking in the blues numbers. There is tremendous joy in their playing - it's an exuberant, outward looking presence that reminds one of the joys that can

be shared in playing and listening to jazz. No one is really trying to prove anything here. They are just playing music that pleases them to the best of their ability and the overall quality of the music is enhanced by the superlative recorded sound. The clarity of each instrument is astonishing and yet, there is a tight empathy that is rarely heard in a studio.

Of course, this trio that Peterson had with Sam Jones and Bobby Bryant was one of the best, and on their good days the music simply rolled along with effortless abandon. All four players understand the meaning of tension and release and built up excitement in the development of a number - and there's a classic example of this in Exactly Like You.

Herb Ellis, of all the Christian disciples, has come closest to retaining the classic cleanness and directness of swing while generating tremendous drive all at the same time. This kind of session will surely drive away the blues and is a definitive example of the Peterson/Ellis approach to jazz. An all round beauty of a session - one of a kind rarely found today. -J.W.N.

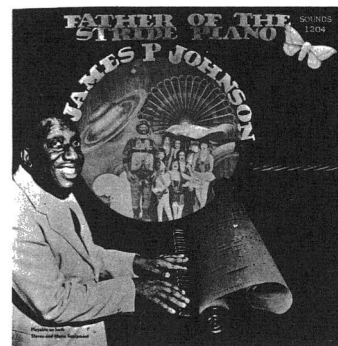
## PHIL WOODS

Early Quintets  
Prestige PR7673

The amount of interest this recording might hold for you depends primarily on your own feeling about the myriad altoists emerging in the early 1950s - immediately post-bop, each to reflect his own imperfect understanding of the essence of Bird. Personally, I've found only Woods' sides with Monk, his current European group, the unavailable "Rites of Swing", and very little else of his, satisfying for his urbane, witty individuality. The selections on this album do not figure in my "very little else"; like so much of Stitt, Adderley, or early Jackie McLean, they are professionally competent on Woods' part to the highest degree possible, but almost totally devoid of the informing genius vital to a good musical presentation.

The 1954 Jimmy Raney quintet date - Woods' first sides for Prestige - are done up in an abominable fake stereo that effectively takes the backbone out of the music. Raney is, as expected, in swingingly ebullient form, consistently upholding his stature as one of the period's major guitar voices. Woods comes on as a symmetrical Bird, having a reasonable command of the bebop harmonic vocabulary but getting hung far too easily on repetitive rhythms and phrasings. His finest solo of the set, Back and Blow, is interesting as a hint of things to come, but says little of its own; his most worthwhile contribution is a forward-looking (a la Teddy Charles) chart for his original, Joanna! John Wilson (trumpet) isn't worth the bother.

Side two, an unissued Dick Hyman date (1959) featuring Woods, is further distinguished by the presence of Howard McGhee during his time "away" from the music. The trumpeter sounds as if he were just getting his chops together again, and can't really do everything he'd like to try (the



### SIDE TWO

1. Loveless Love
2. Charleston
3. After Tonight
4. Down Home Blues
5. Joe Turner Blues
6. Cherry Time in Tokyo
7. Stop It

### SIDE ONE

1. Vamping Liza Jane
2. Black Man, Be On Your Way
3. It Takes Love To Cure the Heart's Disease
4. Got My Habits On
5. Don't Tell Your Monkey Man
6. Harlem Strut
7. Don't Mess With Me

### SOUNDS 1204

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unoccasional distortion in the recording - especially on Pee Wee's Dream - doesn't help him much, either); this is unfortunate - because some beautiful things could have happened in this mind meeting with Woods had McGhee been ready. Dick Hyman, pre-Moog, has a lot of Peterson, Previn, and Shearing under his fingertips (too bad). The great redeeming factor in the four selections is Woods himself, having made definite musical advances since side one. Like Navarro, he has developed a skill at interpolating quoted phrases into his solo passages without making them either banal or anticlimactic; he has managed to overcome his rhythmic problems by moving to a smoother and more definitely flowing attack, reminiscent (at points) of Benny Carter. Unfortunately, nothing he does here ever catches fire - and you can't explain away that. Teddy Kotick and Roy Haynes work appropriately, with Haynes' fours on Lemon Drop being probably the most concretely excellent passages of the whole set.

I dislike being non-committal about any recording, but I'm forced into that position on this one. I personally am selective enough when it comes to bop horns that I'd much rather go back to the source - Parker, from whom all blessings flow - than to have to persevere adaptation and imitation. Everything here is good, solid bop and pleasant listening; I find it lacking in personality, but you might think differently. The recorded sound is far and away the worst part of the album; as well, playing time is short, and Prestige has really no business asking so high a price for recordings whose costs must have been liquidated long ago. Think about it. -B.T.

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**Gotha**

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Ontario, Canada.

**Palmer:** First, can you give a brief run-down of your career, prior to your becoming involved with Impulse and with the New Black Music?

**Thiele:** Well, I got into the record business as a kid, in 1940 or 1941. And I got into the record business because of my interest in jazz, which really hit me when I was about fourteen years old. I felt I wanted to play and I really couldn't play that well, so I went into the record business.

I recorded Art Hodes and I recorded Joe Sullivan, and then I did some recordings with James P. Johnson, and the record company that I formed, which was Signature, just naturally kept expanding, until I was recording people like Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, just about anyone I could find that I liked. I think I was really satisfying myself by making these records. Then, as the company grew, I found myself in the pop business, and probably that was the downfall of the company, trying to compete with RCA and Columbia as a big pop record company, instead of sticking with jazz. The company lasted 'till about 1947, and we went bankrupt.

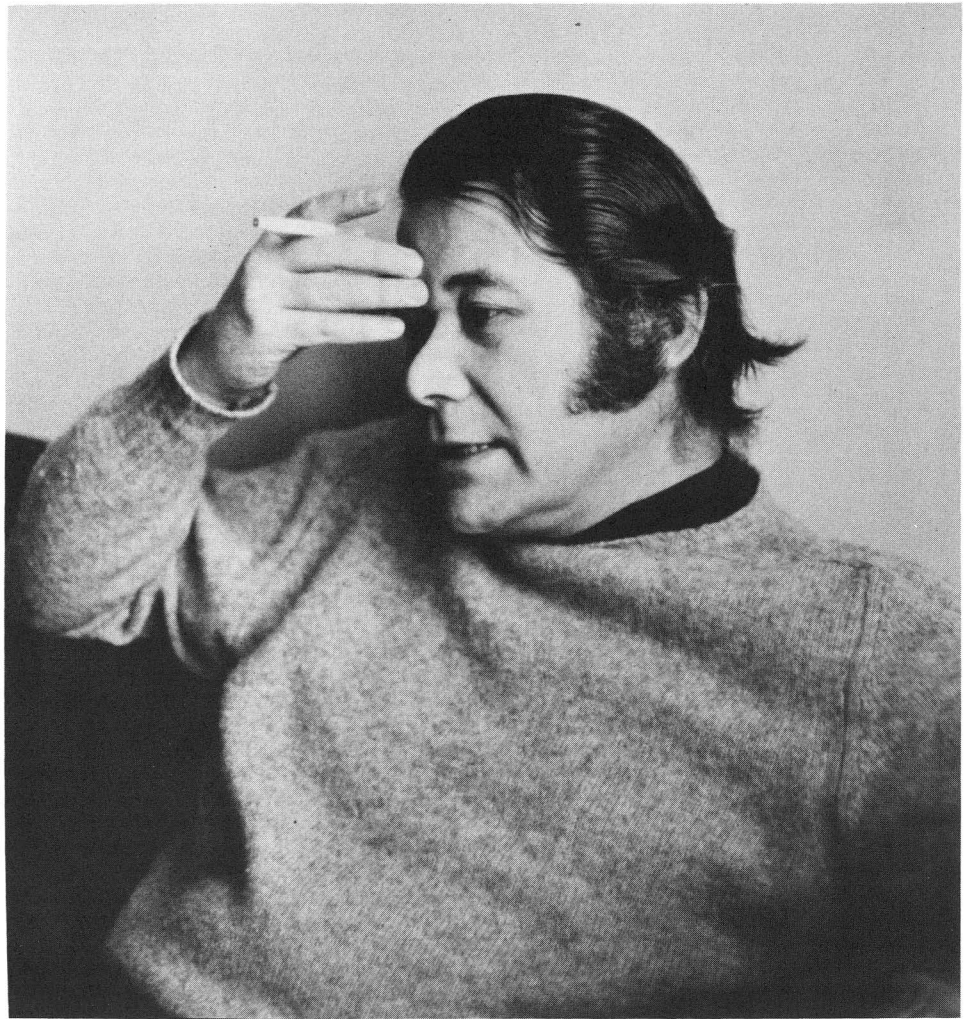
I went to work for Decca after that, and at Decca I did very little jazz recording, it was really all pop, and that was a very successful period as far as pop recording was concerned. In addition to the usual type of pop artists, like Teresa Brewer, the McGuire Sisters, and Lawrence Welk, two people that I did come across that were really great, were Jackie Wilson, and Buddy Holly and the Crickets. Holly really came about through a guy in Clovis, New Mexico, Norman Petty, who recorded the Crickets. I dug the record and I wanted to put it out, and everyone in the company was against it. They finally let me put it out provided I reformed Brunswick, which was an old trade name in Decca's possession; and that's how Brunswick was reactivated.

After Decca, I worked for Dot records, and I did some jazz recording there, the Red Nichols sound track recording, and something with Louis Armstrong. And I did some things with Manny Albam, we recorded Clara Ward, and there's an unreleased album with Tony Scott and Bill Evans. From Dot, I took another crack at the recording business, went into business with Steve Allen and we formed a company called Hanover Signature. That company lasted about a year and a half, and there again, there wasn't too much jazz.

That was sort of a bad period in my life, lots of personal problems, and when that company folded I went to work for Roulette for about six months. There I did the Louis and Duke album, and little of anything else. When I left Roulette I went to work for ABC/Impulse.

I have said this before, I think that Coltrane was really responsible for my interest in the New Black Music. I'm not certain that I ever would have become really interested in it if it hadn't been for Coltrane. I don't think I was at Impulse more than a week when we decided to record Coltrane live at the Village Vanguard, and I went down there and, in fact, our

## FROM THE INSIDE OUT



### Bob Palmer interviews Bob Thiele

first meeting was the night of the recording.

**Palmer:** Had you heard Eric Dolphy or Ornette Coleman, or did the music sound very new and different to you?

**Thiele:** I must confess, you can tell from my past history that there was a period, when I was working at Decca, Dot, and Hanover/Signature, when I was really not keeping up with the new jazz players and the new music. I think I heard one of the Ornette records on Atlantic, and I didn't hear Dolphy until I worked with him at Impulse. I was really into a different thing, basically I was a pop producer, the old time type of pop producer, making a living and taking care of a family. I'd always try to do some jazz recordings, but the jazz thing was always really for pleasure, and I never could make too many records wherever I worked. Once I was at Impulse, I made up for lost time. I think that I was exposed to, and digested, about eight years of music.

So the best thing that happened to me was meeting Coltrane and working with

him, because that association lasted for about five years, and we did an awful lot of work together. It wasn't anything he told me, he wasn't trying to educate me, it was...listening. I think it was just a natural thing. I was exposed to it and, you know, got the message.

**Palmer:** Do you think that the music itself, or your knowing and being involved with Coltrane, was more important?

**Thiele:** Well, I don't like to be vague, but I think that it was probably a little bit of both. That first night at the Vanguard, as I recall, I was pretty shook up; I was confused. But by staying involved, the music began to make sense to me. Coltrane was really a very warm, friendly man. I think that helped, and though I say he didn't educate me, we had conversations, and I'm sure he clarified a few points. He made it a lot easier.

So involvement was an important factor, but the way it came about with me, makes me think that there's hope for a lot of people, because I believe one can be exposed to it and respond immediately, you



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really don't have to know the history. I really was not that familiar with Coltrane before I met him, and when we went in to do this recording, I was really hit over the head with the music, in three nights. And you know, I'm not a unique individual. I think there are probably a lot of people out there who, if they are exposed to it, can get to the music very quickly.

Palmer: The unreleased material Impulse has been putting out since Coltrane's death has been so fine, it's made me wonder how you decided what would and would not be released during your association with Coltrane and with Impulse.

Thiele: Well, when I was at ABC, I was sneaking into studios at night so the top brass would not know that we were making so many records. He was prolific, he wanted to record, and I tried to record him as often as possible. And that's why they still have maybe ten albums to be released.

Palmer: But I'm wondering, for example, why "A Love Supreme" came out soon after it was recorded, and the "Transition" session, recorded that same year, only came out recently.

Thiele: Well, first of all, if an artist only records two albums a year, those are the two albums that come out. And people like Coltrane, or Duke Ellington, record so much, they almost forget about what was recorded, and it literally piles up. And in most instances, you release the latest recording when a new release is needed.

Palmer: Was any of the music, say, too far out for Impulse to want to release?

Thiele: No, there I was really in charge of what came out. And nothing was really too far out to me, so I released whatever I wanted to release. The only problem was that struggle with the brass, it was a continuous fight over the amount of recordings we were making, I mean I was told I was always recording Coltrane too much. Fortunately, I did it. Just before leaving ABC, I made a tape copy of everything that we recorded, and had the company give it to Alice (Coltrane). I knew that people forget, tapes are even lost, you know, the damndest things can happen at record companies. So I turned everything over to Alice and let her at least take care of the editing. She has time, she has a studio in her house, so she has really been going through everything I recorded with him. She is responsible, I would assume, for the material that's coming out.

Palmer: Were there any business or economic problems involved in your relationship with Coltrane?

Thiele: No, he had a keen, a really good sense of business. And in fairness to ABC, I must say that they gave him a very good deal. He was very happy, he was content with his deal. With respect to actual recording, he was selecting the things that he wanted to record, except special things like when I had the idea to record him with Duke, and then the vocal album with Johnny Hartman.

So, as I say, he had a very fine arrangement with ABC, but there were all sorts of problems on the business level with other artists, with all the other artists that I worked with. Even today there seems to be a tremendous change in attitudes, in the approaches of a lot of the younger musicians.

Let me put it this way: I've been in the business for thirty years, and I think I've recorded almost everybody, all kinds of people. Of course, my true love was, and is, jazz. And I never thought I'd find myself not wanting to record someone because there was a lack of friendship. I mean, I love musicians, I've always felt they have a certain warmth and openness, it's friendliness, they're good people. I fought for the black musicians all my life, and I can very well understand a young, black, educated musician saying, you know, screw the company and the white people, I'm going to get as much as I can, that's the basis on which I record.

Of course, what happened during the past few years with me, like at ABC, the musicians, when they couldn't get what they wanted, the only person they had contact with was me. And they would blame me, not knowing I was the only one that was really fighting for them at the time.

Palmer: Even though the Coltrane relationship was successful, from a business standpoint, at ABC, I detect your disenchantment with ABC.

Thiele: You are ever so right. Some large record companies are run by men who are insensitive to the creative people. These are men who could really be selling anything, shoes for example. They are usually followers rather than creators. While

I was at ABC, there were three main problems as far as I personally was concerned. Number one: I had a terrible time obtaining approval to record the new young black players. Number two: I had a difficult time convincing the company of the validity of the new rock. I wanted the company to sign Big Brother, Quicksilver, Steve Miller and Blue Cheer. They turned these artists down, but permitted me to record The Free Spirits with Larry Coryell and a San Francisco group, Salvation. They ok'd these two because they were less expensive to record. When the sales people heard the albums they thought the music was terrible as they also said of Coltrane, Pharoah, etc. Lastly, I just couldn't stomach sales people's views controlling the acceptance or rejection of recordings. I'll never, never forget the company reaction to Louis Armstrong's What A Wonderful World. The unanimous reaction was, the lousiest Armstrong record ever made! Naturally then, it didn't sell in the States but sold a million and a half copies overseas.

Palmer: So you left.

Thiele: Right, Now I'm on my own. Happy. Extremely happy, especially because of my new association with Atlantic Records. I am very close to the Erteguns and Jerry Wexler. Have been for years, so this new distribution for my product is really going to be successful. Flying Dutchman's future is now secure and bright. My albums will finally see the light, in stores, on radio, etc.

Palmer: Do you think that many of the black musicians were encouraged to demand a lot from record companies because Coltrane was a relatively big seller in the field.

Thiele: Yes, I think that's a factor. But you know, there can only be a handful that can conceivably record on the same basis as Coltrane. I mean, you can't take fifty or a hundred musicians and give them a hundred thousand dollars each. I cannot offer a lot of money to a new, unknown musician, for the simple reason that if we don't sell a lot of records, I'd be losing my shirt, and I can't make other records and eventually I'd just go out of business.

But during the period when I was at ABC, I think what happened is that the musicians started to look to the record company not only to record them, but to help them in every area. I mean, see that they get a proper place to live and, whenever they needed, they'd pick up the phone and call and say, hey, I need some money.

As I said, Coltrane had a great deal at ABC. But then I wanted to record Pharoah Sanders, the company said no. It took me weeks, months, to finally get an OK to make an album on a one-shot deal, at union scale. Maybe he would never have recorded if someone hadn't gone in to fight for him. Anyway, the record sold well, and ABC said hey, we better sign this guy Pharoah Sanders. So they signed him and they gave him a pretty fair deal, the money escalated each year. He's probably deserving a hell of a lot more now, which he probably will get. Not that many of these deals were so great for the musicians, but I got the most I could for

them, and when they did need five or six hundred dollars, if somebody was going to be thrown out of an apartment, or was going to the hospital, I would have to go in and fight with the company to get it. There were times when a musician would call and want money and I couldn't get it for him, and the only person there he could, I don't say hate but, you know, I was the guy.

Now, many of the guys I've been working with feel that the company is stealing, you're always cheating them, you never pay them enough and you never do enough for them. And I mean, a record company can't handle the lives of twenty musicians, it's impossible. All you can do is pay for what you think the record is worth.

**Palmer:** What do you think a young musician, who is not generally known to the public, can reasonably expect from a recording deal?

**Thiele:** Well, first of all, if there is any interest from a record company, the company will usually try to figure the potential, and they will come up with a reasonable offer. Then it's up to the musician to accept or reject it, based on what he thinks he's worth.

But here I am now, in a new operation, which looks like it's going to be very successful. And my new distribution affiliation with Atlantic Records will make this company a potent carrier of good music. In many instances, I don't even think of a potential. If I hear someone I think is a great musician, a fine musician, and I happen to dig the guy, I'll record him. I'm not thinking of how many records I'm going to sell, but of course, I cannot offer a lot of money to a new, unknown musician, for the simple reason that if we don't sell a lot of records, I'm just throwing it away. Like I said, eventually you can't continue making records, you go out of business.

Really, both parties should have the faith. If someone wants to continue to record, they should continue to record, and after two or three years when there is a catalog and when you have developed these people, their records will start selling. For example, when we started recording McCoy Tyner for Impulse, I think the first album sold eight hundred. But we stayed with him for four years, and at the end of four years his initial orders were seventy five hundred, ten thousand albums. But I feel some artists just don't understand the record business. They feel that when they make a record, all hell will break loose, they'll be working in clubs and everything will happen right for them. But it doesn't happen that way. And I cannot spend hours and hours each day explaining the facts of life to these people. I'm in a business to sell records. I'm busy, yet I do have time for people and I get around, I go to clubs, I do everything that I can to keep my company going, which permits me to record musicians. And yet if I gave all these musicians the time they want, just to rap, I'd be out of business.

I got a kick out of Stanley Crouch a couple of weeks ago. He was in town for a poetry reading and, this isn't sarcasm, he's really a delightful guy, but you see,

he calls me "Steal", instead of Thiele, right, that's his joke.

So he called, "Hello Bob Steal, I'm coming by." And he said that he had met Elvin Jones and asked Elvin "Is Thiele a crook?" And Elvin said no, "you weren't a crook and that's good enough for me, I guess, you're not a crook." Now here's a guy who took the trouble to talk to Elvin Jones, to do the proper research on me or the record company. He's not coming up here to rap with me for three or four hours to find out where I'm at; he's doing it his own way. And I think that's a good example of what musicians have to do.

**Palmer:** In other words, to check all the possibilities out, find out where the business is at on all levels, and what commercial recording is and what it isn't.

**Thiele:** Sure. You know, I never thought

I would give releases to musicians after recording them and investing money, putting out one or two albums or whatever, but I have, and I don't think any other company does this. If there isn't any rapport between the artist and me, no faith, no understanding, I'm the first to say, "mail 'em a release". If the association is so bad, here's your release, and good luck to you.

**Palmer:** What is your standard operating procedure at Flying Dutchman for signing a musician? Do you always insist on exclusive contracts? Do you believe in advances?

**Thiele:** Well, the way I operate is probably unique. Because the musicians that I sign and that I work with are musicians that I personally like, and the music that I like. I initially don't think about whether

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it's going to sell, except with respect to the amount of the advance. I do believe in advances; I try to give as much as I can, and I try to level in front and tell the guy just how I feel. I say, look, I dig your music, I'll pay you so much, I don't know if the records are going to sell but if we stick with it and stick together, we may reach a happy period.

We usually sign a musician for a year and make either one or two albums a year, and we usually have options for an additional two or three years. In other words, most of our contracts are either three or four years.

Palmer: How do you feel about one-shots?

Thiele: Oh, I believe in one-shot albums, I make quite a few actually. They'll usually apply to a famous name. If I wanted to do an album with Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, those are one-shots. If I'm going to take an unknown, I wouldn't do just a one-shot. I would want that option to continue to record, because if they did become successful, we'd want to be able to continue to record them.

As I said, I always level in front. I say look, we'll make an album, if it doesn't happen, we're not going to hold you. But if it does happen, let us all enjoy the fruits of our efforts. So the musician really is not getting himself into a three or four year association unless the record is successful.

Palmer: Now, if Flying Dutchman is relatively successful selling this New Black Music, and Impulse is having success with people like Pharoah Sanders and Alice Coltrane, why aren't the other companies recording the music?

Thiele: Because it really isn't big business, it isn't big enough. You know, an album can be made for five thousand dollars, let's say, and over a period of two years maybe it will sell fifteen thousand albums. The company is making money. But RCA and Columbia certainly aren't interested in that level of business. They are interested in that million seller, you know, big volume! I don't think a major company will say that jazz doesn't sell. It just doesn't sell enough.

That's why I said recently that maybe the record companies should perform a public service, where they agree to make four or five jazz records a year, and it doesn't matter if they don't sell. Television performs a public service - why can't record companies? I recently suggested this idea to a meeting of NARAS, but there wasn't any response. It would have to be done through one of the industry organizations, NARAS or even the RIAA. I think it's a hell of an idea, and I don't think the companies would be losing money by it. If anything, I think it would prove to be commercially successful.

Palmer: In other words, it could work like the record companies, in effect, giving grants to certain creative artists who don't have a proven commercial potential.

Thiele: Right, but actually it's to their advantage. Think of what a record company might get out of something like this, possibly discovering a great classical cellist or a great jazz trumpet player. If a

program like this became routine in every record company, it would be a terrific thing for the industry, and for the musicians, naturally.

Palmer: The economic point here that is so interesting, is that jazz albums are always cut in a very spontaneous way. I know that on most sessions the musicians are ready, and have been ready for a long time, and they'll usually do an entire album in one or two sessions. . .

Thiele: That's true.

Palmer: Whereas, any beginning rock group that's going to cut an album is going to run up a budget of twenty, thirty thousand dollars. So the initial investment in a jazz recording is so very much smaller than for a rock recording, or a pop recording where they have to hire an orchestra. It seems this major company could easily cover the cost of five supposedly non-commercial albums from the sales of one of them. The problem is, how to make the companies aware of this responsibility, if that's what it is.

Thiele: Well, it must be a responsibility if it's art to begin with. You know, some of the major companies may even donate money to the Guggenheim Museum. Why shouldn't they make records on that same level, a public service situation?

Palmer: Another commercial consideration is that the jazz records which do seem to be selling are the more uncompromising ones, the strongly individual things by people like Miles, Pharoah. . .

Thiele: Yes, I think the young people in the country have made that happen. I believe that honesty in music is very important. You can't fool people any more, you can't give them. I think that's why we're selling more jazz records than ever. I'm positive that what has happened is the same thing that happened with the blues; the English white groups literally touted the black blues singers. I think the same thing is happening to jazz. The better rock musicians must expand, they've got to go in other directions, and where else are they going to go but to jazz? I'm positive they've interested the younger kids in jazz. And many of the jazz guys today are making a concerted effort to relate to the kids, you know, from style of dress to the music itself.

There is one other area that has really helped jazz, and this is the student musicians at the college or university level. I remember in the early days of recording Coltrane, it was impossible to hear a Coltrane record on the air, and yet his records were selling. And we were always trying to figure out who was buying them. Then I went on a tour, with Stan Kenton and some other people, as a judge of student bands. When I arrived on a campus and was with the student musicians, all they wanted to talk about was John Coltrane. And they all had all of his records. There are literally thousands of these student musicians, and they are buying the records.

Palmer: Aside from the things we would like to see happen, the grants for creative artists and public service recordings, what kind of trends do you see happening in the business now?

Thiele: Well, it's corny, but from a business level, the record business is booming. There's no question about it. It's going to grow and grow, and that means musicians have to record. It's really opening up, more and more people will be able to record.

Palmer: Yet I haven't noticed any more of the young black musicians recording than before. Do you think there's going to be a greater opportunity for these musicians?

Thiele: Really boiling it down to basics, I think the young black musicians have to look for individuals in record companies who are willing to record them. And they have to recognize the style of the company; they can only go to a company that might be interested.

And the other part of my message is, you've got to assume that somebody is giving you a fair shake. In other words, if a musician wants to record for me, and I want to record him, and we can look at one another and be honest with one another, then that musician has a hell of a chance.

Probably fewer black musicians are recording now, and I think part of it is due to their distrust, their belief that the company is screwing them. I'm not saying that record companies haven't screwed musicians or cheated them. But if a musician gets with a record company and is recording, all he can do, if he assumes the company is not working for him or with him, is leave the company and not record. And I think that's happened to a lot of guys. Palmer: I know many of the musicians I talk with have a very ambivalent attitude about recording for large companies. They want people to hear their music, but they believe in a new kind of society, and they don't want their music to contribute to the profits of a large corporation, to polluters or racists or the war machine. The whole record industry is ambivalent to start with, because it's dealing in a commodity on a profit level, and yet it's also dealing with art, which is not a commodity, and which is not produced for the purpose of making a profit. I don't know how it can be reconciled, short of revolution.

Thiele: I don't see how it can. If a guy doesn't want to record for a capitalistic company, then he shouldn't record, and more power to him. But you can't come in and make a record and say, now that I made it, screw you, because if any musician makes a record, it's because someone in the record company is a believer. And the reason it's so difficult to record is that there aren't enough people around who believe in music.

You know, I believe in the revolution and power to the people. But there has got to be some humanity, some understanding involved in this thing. All you do is the best you can for a cause. You know, we live here in the United States, and I'm stuck, I'm part of the system. But I know what kind of records I make. I don't put these records out just for kicks; they happen to be successful. But I put them out in the first place because I believe in certain things. You know, next year I may chuck the whole thing, go live in the south of Italy or something. But while I'm here I do the best I can.



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# JAZZ

# WYNTON KELLY by Mark Gardner



Wynton Kelly's death in a Toronto hotel room on April 12, 1971, was a dreadful tragedy. Wynton was struck down by an epileptic fit. Given timely medical attention he would, presumably, still have been with us. Wynton had been working with Ray Nance, Sam Jones and Ray Mosca in a small group that had played Jimmy Weston's and was due to open for a week at the Cav-A Bob. The day the gig commenced, drummer George Reed went to Wynton's hotel to collect him for a rehearsal and found him dead.

In perspective, and it is difficult to be at all subjective so soon after Wynton's passing, I think he must be regarded as one of the brightest piano lights of the 1950s and 60s. Kelly was a Bud Powell disciple but that tells you little about the way he played. His was a mercurial, swinging and above all happy style, a style that fortunately illuminated hundreds of records at a period when jazz was at its most popular zenith.

He will be remembered, inevitably, as the pianist that followed Red Garland in the Miles Davis Quintet/Sextet from 1959-63, yet some of Kelly's finest playing was done away from Miles, in his own trios and quartets, in the alliance with guitarist Wes Montgomery and on numerous blowing sessions for Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside, and Vee Jay.

Born on December 2, 1931, in Jamaica, West Indies, Wynton went to the United States at the age of four and was raised in Brooklyn. Kelly was a quick learner and at the age of twelve made his professional debut as a pianist. At fifteen he gigged with Cecil Payne and toured the Caribbean in a group under the leadership of Ray Abrams and he was only nineteen when he recorded his first trio sides for Blue Note (with Frank Skeete and Lee Abrams) in 1951.

Before moving into the jazz world, Wynton spent several years in the rhythm and blues field with such people as Hal "Cornbread" Singer. The importance of such a background is often stressed and there is no doubt that in those rough little groups which had to please the dancers... or else, Kelly really learned the value of swinging hard. He received his final

professional polish as an accompanist with Dinah Washington for three years, and in the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band of 1957.

Wynton first attracted attention as a jazz soloist with Lester Young and then the Gillespie small group (with which he recorded for Dee Gee) in 1952. Unfortunately just as he was becoming better known, the Army took him in the summer of 1952. Pianist Duke Pearson has recounted his meeting with Kelly and the profound effect Wynton had on him while they were in the Army together:

"I first met Wynton at a party the night before I went into the Army. There was a piano there and we alternated playing treble and bass while the other soloed. He was already in the Service and on his way to Fort McLellan, Alabama. We wished each other luck and the next day I was in the Army.

About five months later, at Fort Jackson, I was playing for a dance at the Service Club, when I heard my name called loudly from the dance floor. I opened my eyes and there was Wynton Kelly, running to the bandstand with arms opened to greet me. We went into a dance of our own."

Kelly was already in the Third Army Road Show package and arranged for Pearson to join the outfit. "Wynton and I were the only two Negroes of a company of approximately twenty white entertainers, including the Faron Young Hillbilly group and opera singer Tick Parley. We finally persuaded the unit to bring in more Negroes. First George Joyner on bass and later Willie Wilson on trombone. I was playing trumpet and bass, plus arranging for the shows. Being close to Wynton for two years really instigated my switch from trumpet to piano. He's such a beautiful player and person and I had learned so much from him that after he left I began to really dig in."

Kelly was, in many ways, a musicians' musician. A phenomenal reader, he could remember a part after a single run through. In fact, his friend and neighbour, Cecil Payne, another Brooklynite whose family originates from the West Indies, told me once, "Wynton is hip to anything you put in front of him. He can play it right off first time - the way it is meant to be played." Incidentally Kelly and Payne can be heard playing together behind Dinah Washington on her outstanding *For Those In Love* album (EmArcy MG-36011). The pianist's earliest work is to be found on sides Babs Gonzales recorded for Capitol in 1949 (*Prelude To A Nightmare*, *St. Louis Blues*) which are about to be reissued again on Japanese Capitol in an album entitled *Bebop Professors*. His own 1951 recordings do show a great respect for Bud Powell, but also a keen awareness of Tatum, Wilson and another great Brooklyn piano player who exerted a definite and lasting influence over him, Duke Jordan.

The important recordings that Kelly played on as a sideman are many in number. He was on the Freddie Freeloader track, replacing Bill Evans, in the "Kind Of Blue" album because Miles wanted the special Kelly feeling for that item. He is also to be heard on Miles' "Someday My Prince Will Come" set and "Miles Davis At Carnegie Hall", but his very best performances in the Davis group were contained on the double album "Miles Davis At The Blackhawk",

a location collection of extended performances which witnessed a magnificent series of solos by Wynton, including the tender Love I've Found You, a showcase for the pianist. These titles were cut in April, 1951. When Kelly returned to the West Coast for an engagement at the Tsubo Club, Berkeley, fourteen months later it was to make another outstanding LP, this time in company with Johnny Griffin and Wes Montgomery. Entitled "Full House", this was another inspired night's work by Kelly.

Other and earlier dates, under Kelly's own name, should not be overlooked. His debut record for Riverside, called simply "Wynton Kelly" (RLP 12-254) is as good as anything he committed to tape. Backed on one side by only guitarist Kenny Burrell and bassist Paul Chambers, with Philly Joe Jones making it a quartet on the reverse, Kelly gave virtually definitive interpretations of Ill Wind, Whisper Not, and Dark Eyes. Then there are the three groovy dates he cut for Vee Jay. The two trio productions (be-ware of copies with strings dubbed in!) I regard as indispensable, with the still-fresh-sounding quintet album (Wayne Shorter and Lee Morgan) not far behind in quality. His Verve sides were rather disappointing, except for "Undiluted". Then came a contract with Milestone and a great return to his old form on record in "Full View", a delightful trio session where he was expertly assisted by Ron McClure and Jimmy Cobb. It would be a crime, in discussing Kelly's recorded legacy, to omit mention of his many consistent dates for Blue Note in the late 1950s and early 60s with Dizzy Reece, Sonny Red et al. Of these, the most memorable for this writer were "Soul Station" and "Roll Call" with Hank Mobley and the often overlooked "Newk's Time", by Sonny Rollins, where Kelly was an absolute tower of rhythmic, supportive and continual strength.

Don Schlitten, vice-president of Prestige Records, tells me that Wynton's last sides were made for that label in company with Dexter Gordon last summer. The results will shortly be available. Another superb example of his latterday stylings is Illinois Jacquet's "The Blues; That's Me!" (Prestige 7731), cut in September, 1969.

Kelly belonged with a group of young pianomen who came to the fore in the period 1950-54. These would include, besides Wynton, Sonny Clark, Kenny Drew, Carl Perkins, Walter Bishop, Jr. and Mal Waldron. Yes, and Bobby Timmons too. All distilled Powell in differing degrees; each could play very convincingly in a soul bag but that was only a small part of the story. They were/are first rate accompanists and sterling soloists. They may have lacked the polished purity of the Detroit Bebop school - Barry Harris, Tommy Flanagan, Hugh Lawson - but they had/have a fleet, assured keyboard approach. Kelly had the touch that was probably the envy of the others.

To say more, might be to become maudlin which would be most inappropriate. The music of Wynton Kelly was invigorating and joyful, like a sunny day in mid-winter. Let's remember the Kelly/Chambers/Philly Joe rhythm section (a dynamite three)... his emotional reading of Crazy He Calls Me... the deft accompaniment for Art Farmer's attractive solo on Gone With The Wind... Wynton, compact and alert,

awaiting the sideglance cue from Miles. Wynton left us with many memories and a wealth of beautiful realities. His luminescent, witty piano will be missed by every hornman and singer who ever had the good fortune to receive his meticulous backing. Many listeners, I know, will share my sorrow. None of us should forget him.

# THE NIGHT PEOPLE

REMINISCENCES  
OF A  
JAZZMAN

By **DICKY WELLS**

as told to

**STANLEY DANCE**

(author of **THE WORLD OF DUKE  
ELLINGTON** and Jazz Reviewer  
for **SATURDAY REVIEW**)

Foreword by **COUNT BASIE**

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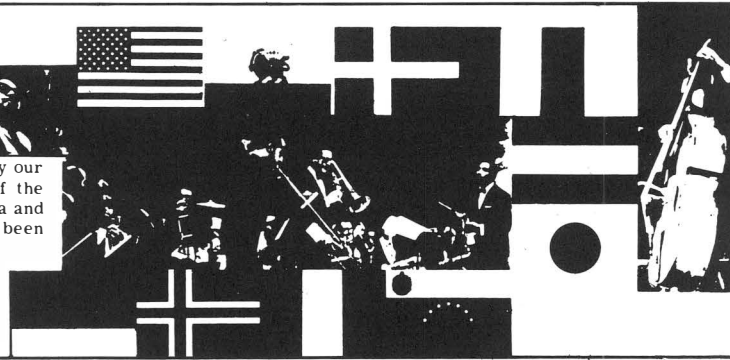
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# around the world



News and views of the jazz scene as witnessed by our correspondents in the various jazz centres of the world - Canada, the United States, Europe, Asia and Australasia. An up-to-date summary of what has been happening in the jazz world.



## TORONTO

The opening of a new jazz club isn't exactly a novelty for Torontonians so it remains to be seen whether the Artist's Jazz Room stays the course. Unlike most recent acquisitions (and losses) it is a genuine after-hours spot. The action doesn't start until at least 1 a.m. and Johnny Windsor (remember him from the old Chelsea Club days?) is anticipating that it will fill a need for musicians and other night owls who like to relax in comfortable surroundings. Pat Riccio put together a quintet for the opening night and jamming is encouraged. The music was uneven - almost as if some of the musicians were getting their first workout in some time but trombonist Russ Little played with great authority and energy while Art De Villiers' cleanly executed guitar solos were a constant pleasure. The club is located at 195 Merton Street and uses the premises of The Banana Factory, which functions earlier in the night as a discotheque.

While Pat Riccio and friends were reworking the language of the bop era other, younger, Toronto musicians were recycling the music of John Coltrane/Miles Davis at Meat And Potatoes. John Tank is a tenor saxophonist who has assimilated the sound of Coltrane, but not the strength, and like others who have drawn on Trane's inspiration the results are sometimes absorbing while often irritatingly inadequate. The rhythm section was a good one - Bernie Senensky, Rick Homme and Clayton Johnston. The electric piano was used and much of the music centered around the kind of rhythmic patterns that are being disseminated by Miles' current band. It's hard to really get inside the music when it doesn't grow out of you and this, to some extent, was a limiting factor in John Tank's music as much as it is with Pat Riccio's.

Stan Kenton's band, fully confident and together after extensive touring played a two night stand at the Palais Royale on March 28/29. The band is an exceptional one and all it lacks are any major soloists. The music it plays and the manner in which it is interpreted is first class and there was a lot of genuine excitement as well as the glory of the sheer volume of brass that is the Kenton trademark. One unusual aspect of the presentation of Kenton's music today is having the drummer front and center with the band spread out behind in a semi-circle. The idea works but part of the reason for this is the tre-

mendous drumming of John Von Ohlen. In addition to the two performances the band gave a clinic on Monday afternoon for music students from Metro area high school students. It was a great success.

Black Hallelujah, the gospel interpretation of the Passion of Christ was heard twice this Easter. The original radio version, recorded last November in a local church, was broadcast and then a revised version was seen on the tube. There was a strange dichotomy, at times, in the music which fluctuated between the excitement of the sanctified gospel idiom and European forms (the latter best personified in the interpretation of Christ). Jackie Gabriel's exuberant gospel singing was particularly noteworthy but the overall production was very well done and the music, performed by a band under Russ Little's direction, could hardly have been bettered. The music was written by Norm Symonds and John Reeves conceived the original idea for the presentation and wrote the script.

Erroll Garner made his first appearance in The Imperial Room of the Royal York Hotel in mid-April for a ten-day stay. The ad-lib introductions are as astonishingly droll as before and the intensity of his playing is always present - a quality that doesn't come across in many of his recordings. His quartet is very tight, but the sidemen get little chance for solo expression. The spotlight is firmly on the diminutive pianist and he likes it to remain that way. This was Garner's first Toronto appearance in some years but he has lost little of his enthusiasm for living and music. He showed up at the Colonial to listen to Carmen McRae and then proceeded to sit in for one set. Miss McRae is one of the handful of really excellent singers currently active and she gave some astonishing performances. Supporting her was Nat Pierce and the local duo of Bob Price and Jerry Fuller. There are spontaneous moments in her interpretations that keep the musicians awake and she can respond instantly to any ideas that are generated by her accompanists. There's a special intimacy when she sits at the piano and accompanies herself on some long-lost ballad and the choice of material is wide and all-encompassing.

Leon Thomas, accompanied by Flying Dutchman boss Bob Thiele and Polydor promotion genius Lori Bruner, was in Toronto briefly following his successful concert in Montreal where he shared the bill with B.B. King. The singer met people

in the music business and it is hoped that a concert engagement will follow as a result of his quick visit here. He now has a seven-piece band which includes a number of young but exceptionally talented musicians.

Meat And Potatoes is struggling to survive but despite presenting talented musicians - Brian Barley and Sonny Greenwich are but two of the groups to appear there recently - is finding it increasingly hard to attract enough people to cover the expenses involved with the presentation of live music. Hopefully, they will be able to continue their music policy for there are desperately few places where one can go and hear music - and if there is to be a viable musical community in our city there have to be places where musicians can perform on their terms.

Kid Bastien's Camelia Band just put out their own record and promptly sold all of the initial pressing at Grossman's during their regular Saturday night gigs. The band is appearing in concert at St. Lawrence Centre on June 4, where they share the billing with the Down Child Blues Band in a special night of music and draught beer from Grossman's. Down Child opened for an indefinite engagement at the Dovercourt Tavern.

Don Ewell and Herb Hall will be appearing in concert at Seneca College on Sunday May 30, in a special concert presentation. This is the first time in over a year that either of these artists has played locally and is a reunion for these two musicians who last played together on the stand of the Colonial four years ago.

The Mariposa Folk Festival will be a lot different this year. The evening concerts have been abandoned in favor of extended workshop and miniature concerts throughout the day and early evening. As the light goes (around 9 p.m.) so will the music. The event is also being held earlier this year - July 9, 10, 11 - which may, or may not, produce better weather. John Jackson, Larry Johnson, Isiah Ross, Johnny Shines and the Georgia Sea Island Singers are the artists who will interest Coda readers, but the overall emphasis of the festival this year is very heavily oriented towards traditional performers.

Planning is underway to present Leroi Jones' DUTCHMAN in the Toronto Subway System. DUTCHMAN, which was written for four characters in a subway car in transit, has never been performed outside the conventional theatre atmosphere. It is hoped that the play will be performed

during the upcoming summer months, with the admission price being a mere subway token.  
-John Norris



ARTIST'S JAZZ ROOM - 195 Merton St.  
Saturday nights 1-4 a.m.  
CASTLE GEORGE - 290 Dundas St. East  
Brian Browne Trio  
COLONIAL TAVERN - 201 Yonge  
May 24-29 - Jonah Jones  
June 7-12 - Jimmy McGriff  
14-26 - Oscar Peterson  
28-

July 3 - Young-Holt Unlimited  
GEORGE'S SPAGHETTI HOUSE - 290  
Dundas E.

Moe Koffman every third week  
GLOBAL VILLAGE - 17 St. Nicholas  
Fridays - assorted groups/after hours  
GROSSMAN'S TAVERN - 379 Spadina  
Saturdays (3 and 8 p.m.) - Kid Bastien  
MEAT AND POTATOES - 338 Huron  
various groups - Friday thru Sunday  
THE SKYLINE - 655 Dixon Road

Henry Cuesta Quartet  
DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY  
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THE GROSSMAN LEGEND  
St. Lawrence Centre, June 4 with Down  
Child Blues Band and Kid Bastien's  
Camelia Band  
MARIPOSA FOLK FESTIVAL  
July 9, 10, 11 - Toronto Island with  
John Jackson, Larry Johnson, Isiah  
Ross, Johnny Shines, Georgia Sea  
Island Singers

#### RADIO LISTINGS

Weekdays:	10.00 PM The Jazz Scene	CJRT-FM
	11.00 PM Harry Abraham	WHAM
	12.07 AM That Midnight Jazz	CBL-FM
Sunday:	9.30 PM Ken Ruof	WEBR
	10.00 PM Phil MacKellar	CKFM
	10.00 PM The Jazz Scene	CJRT-FM
	10.00 PM Many Moods of Jazz	CHSC-FM
Friday:	6.30 PM Bob Bowers	CBL
	11.00 PM Jazz en Liberté	CJBC
Saturday:	6.00 AM The Jazz Scene	CJRT-FM
	4.00 PM Field Of Jazz	CJOY-FM
	10.00 PM Carroll Hardy	WBLK-FM
	11.00 PM Ken Ruof	WEBR
	12.07 AM Jazz at its Best	CBL-FM

CHUM-FM plays jazz records as part of its "total music policy."

## MONTREAL

La Boehme, on Guy Street remains the major club in town to hear jazz regularly. The excellent Nelson Symonds Trio, featuring the leader's charged improvisations with Charles Biddle on bass and Norman Villeneuve on drums, are heard nightly except Sundays. On two Sundays to date, sessions, that it's hoped, will become a regular feature, have taken place. Among the many musicians heard in the ten hours between 2:00 in the afternoon and midnight on those Sundays have been Sadik Hakim, B.T. Lundy, Russell Thomas, Marius Cultier, Leroy Mason and, of course,

Nelson's Trio. The affairs seem to have been successful both musically and financially.

Among the other spots around town, The Black Bottom have gone mainly with Burke's Spectrum. Other groups appearing have included Marius Cultier and Denis Lepage. The Back Door coffee house has presented a week of Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry. The Esquire, in what has been a change from their strict rock programming, have had weeks featuring Muddy Waters (who's returning), and Junior Wells/Buddy Guy back to back. A good sign. Up north in Val David on Saturday nights at Jazz et Cafe, de la Riviere Street, drummer Richard Robinson with David Edmead, piano; David Gelfand, bass and Stephen Hall, saxophones are heard. The TimeMachine (including Gordie Fleming, Rob Adams and Rudy Pontano) are heard Fridays and Saturdays at La Loire in the Windsor Hotel. Presently, at the Bonaventure Hotel is Jonah Jones' group with Cozy Cole, Lannie Scott, Jerome Darr and John Brown. Sadik Hakim was set to sub for Scott, who had to leave town due to an illness in the family. Earlier Sadik did a long stretch with bassist Kenny Mitchell at the African Village in The Seaway Motel on Guy Street. Pianist Gene Rodgers, who was on Bean's original Body and Soul, is also a regular attraction there. The only concert of interest was the recent pairing of B.B. King and Leon Thomas at Place des Arts.

Sights And Sound, a CBC radio show, is heard weekly and consists of reviews of happenings in the arts around town. Recently producer Mark Goldman decided to deviate from that format and do a half hour on jazz in Montreal, which was recorded at La Boehme with music supplied by Nelson Symonds' Trio and featured a discussion on the lack of jazz here between Sadik Hakim, Cisco Normand, Spike McKendry and myself. The consensus of opinion was that radio was failing by presenting so little jazz. In town, Jazz en Liberté offers a weekly outlet to live jazz groups; Jazz At Its Best continues to present in depth looks into people like Gene Krupa and the Dorseys; Friday nights CKVL-FM presents a show called All-Star Jazz Festival featuring big bands, and CKGM-FM include jazz as part of its underground programming. But nowhere is there a show that takes in the complete spectrum of jazz, and this, the panel decided, was what was needed here. How can the young people gain an interest in jazz when there is no outlet that lets them hear the many faces of the music. -Len Dobbin



BLACK BOTTOM - 22 St. Paul East  
Nightly  
JAZZTEK (LA BOEHME) - 1418 Guy St.  
Nelson Symonds Trio - nightly  
OLIVER - Crescent Street

JAZZ ET CAFE - Rue de la Riviere  
Jazz - Saturdays  
JAZZ EN LIBERTE (CBC-L'Ermitage) -  
Cote de Neige north of Sherbrooke  
Tuesdays at 8 p.m.  
also worth checking:  
ROCKHEAD'S St. Antoine at Mountain  
ESQUIRE SHOWBAR - Stanley Street  
WINSTON CHURCHILL PUB - 1455  
Crescent Street  
BACK DOOR - Sherbrooke St. W. at  
McTavish

#### RADIO LISTINGS

Daily:	Underground	CKGM-FM
Sunday	12.07 AM Jazz at its Best	CBM-FM
Tuesday	12.07 AM That Midnight Jazz	CBM-FM
	8.00 PM Jazz	CBF-FM
Thursday	12.07 AM That Midnight Jazz	CBM-FM
Saturday	12.07 AM That Midnight Jazz	CBM-FM
	5.30 PM Jazz Classics	CBF-FM
	11.00 PM Jazz en Liberté	CBF-FM

## ENGLAND

The annual tour of the United Kingdom by the Count Basie Orchestra commenced late in April and will extend into the second half of May. As usual, some of their engagements will be with Ella Fitzgerald - three so far have been announced.

Two benefits were recently held in London. The first was for Ken Smart (drums) of the Crane River Jazz Band, whose tragic death I reported in a previous issue, and those who gave their services included Steve Lane's Southern Stompers, Black Bottom Stompers, New Era Jazz Band, Wolverine Cubs, Frog Island Jazz Band, Original East Side Stompers and several musicians from other groups who dropped in for a blow and to help the proceedings along.

The second benefit was for Buck Clayton - a regular visitor to this country in recent years. Humphrey Lyttelton and writer/promoter Jack Higgins organized a concert featuring the Lyttelton and Alex Welsh bands.

Don Ewell's tour here with Barry Martyn's Ragtime Band in January/February was so successful that plans are in hand to bring him back to Britain after his current spell in Europe and Scandinavia (also with the Martyn band). In the meantime, Martyn has had to postpone his plans for a similar European tour with Punch Miller until such time as Miller is again fit to play.

Clarinetist Sammy Rimington's new group, Armada, made its first public appearance at the end of March, and the final line-up comprises Graham Gregory and Richard Kenton (guitars), Michael Nicholls (drums), Terry Schindler (vocal) and, of course, Rimington on alto and tenor as well as clarinet.

Harry Roy (clarinet) died on February 1st at the age of seventy-one, still working after over half a century of leading his own band. An accomplished musician, Roy was primarily a dance band man but nevertheless he deserves to be remembered for the encouragement (and employment) he gave to so many promising youngsters and for the fact that his band, with its tremendous popularity between the wars, did much to prepare the public for

the more esoteric jazz forms to follow.

Alto-saxophonist Derek Humble died suddenly in a London pub on February 22. He was resident on the continent for many years and was a member of the Clarke-Boland band. -Rae Wittrick

The birth of new European record labels devoting attention to the more adventurous sounds in jazz continues unabated.

In the past few months at least four new companies have been formed, and the ones already established keep on keeping on. Of the new ones, the German ECM label (8 Munich/ 60, Gleichmannstrasse 10/ West Germany) and the French Futura label (61, rue Meslay, Paris 3<sup>e</sup>) appear to be the most productive.

The first albums to be issued by ECM include two by Paul Bley, both recorded in New York. "Ballads" (ECM 1010) sees Bley joined by Gary Peacock and Barry Altschul in a 1967 session. Paul Motian replaces Altschul in the second album (ECM 1003). "Free at Last" (ECM 1001) is by the Mal Waldron trio, with Isla Eckinger on bass and Clarence Beaton on drums. Robin Kenyatta teams with German pianist Wolfgang Dauner (a veteran of the Albert Mangelsdorff groups) in "Girl From Martinique" (1008) while Marion Brown has collected around him people like Anthony Braxton, Chick Corea, Andrew Cyrille, Jeanne Lee and Bennie Maupin for "Afternoon of a Georgia Faun" (1004), recorded in New York last August. That album actually has more percussion than blowing on it, but is nevertheless worth investigating. Other ECM albums in the initial batch are by The Circle (Chick Corea, Dave Holland and Barry Altschul) (ECM 1009), Wolfgang Dauner, (Outpost' ECM 1006) and the Music Improvisation Company (an all-British group including guitarist Derek Bailey, saxophonist Evan Parker, and drummer Jaimie Muir).

The Futura label has opened shop with fourteen albums, of which the most interesting are by Steve Lacy, "Wordless" (GER 22) with Ambrose Jackson on trumpet, Ken Carter on bass, Irene Aibi on cello and Jerome Cooper, drums, recorded in Paris last January; Anthony Braxton's "Recital Paris 1971" (GER 23); the John Surman quintet "Alors!!!" (GER 12); John Gilmore's "From In to Out" (GER 16); Barre Phillips' "Basse Barre" (GER 15); Joachim Kuhn's "Solos" (GER 18); and a solo album by Mal Waldron, "The Opening" (GER 20).

One of the more impressive of the new Continental record companies is Shandar Records (Societe Andson/ 8 rue de Richelieu/ Paris 1<sup>e</sup>), which began operations auspiciously with two albums which result from the last recording dates of Albert Ayler (SR 10000 and SR 10004), which have already won two awards each. They will be followed in June with two albums by Cecil Taylor (recorded in concert at the Fondation Maeght, a remarkable art gallery in the mountains above Nice, in July 1969) which are, to my knowledge, the most recent Taylor records available.

Shandar is run by Chantal Darcy, a hip twenty-four year old girl who used to work for Maeght.

Other albums to be issued on Shandar include two by Sun Ra, and one each by Stockhausen, Xenakis, John Cage and Lukas Foss. Shandar is distributed by RCA in France, and RCA has distribution rights for all other countries until July, at which time they revert back to Shandar if the company has failed to exercise its option - which is highly likely. The Ayler albums were recorded in concert at the Fondation Maeght last July 25 and 27, with Ayler on tenor and soprano sax; Mary Maria on vocals and soprano sax; Call Cobbs, piano; Steve Tintweiss, bass; and Allen Blairman on drums. They've been awarded this year's "Grand Prix du Disque" of the Academie Charles Gros as well as the "In Memoriam" Prize of the Franch Academie du Jazz.

The Sun Ra albums on Shandar were recorded at Fondation Maeght last August, and the first volume is now available (SR 10001). With Sun Ra are Marshall Allen, John Gilmore, Pat Patrick, Alan Silva, Nimrod Hunt and several others, although the entire second side of the album is given over to a Moog synthesizer solo by the mysterious Mr. Ra.

The other new label is a British one, already mentioned in this column. It's Black Lion, run by Alan Bates, and its first six albums were released in early May. All but two are previously unavailable sessions. The new ones are by Sun Ra (BLP 30103), in a New York concert; Dexter Gordon (BLP 30102); Ben Webster (BLP 30105); and Barney Kessel, Stephane Grappelli and a French rhythm section (BLP 30101). Reissues are a 1945 session by Nat King Cole with Buddy Rich and Charley Shavers (BLP 30104) and a 1965 solo album recorded in London by Earl Hines (BLP 30106).

Black Lion is distributed in Britain by Polydor, and sell for \$5.00 each. Bates plans to release about twenty-four albums a year on the label. He also plans to introduce an avant-garde label called Freedom in September, with material by such luminaries as Ornette Coleman (single albums reissued from the two-record set previously available on Polydor and produced by Bates), Anthony Braxton, Dewey Redman, Stanley Cowell, Albert Ayler and several others. If interested, write to Bates directly c/o HEC Enterprises, 25 Newman Street, London W.1.

Britain's only other significant jazz producer, Peter Eden, remains active as well. Over the Easter weekend he produced a single album by John Surman's Trio (Barre Phillips on bass and Stu Martin on drums) which will be available in July on the Dawn label here (a subsidiary of Pye Records, 17 Great Cumberland Place, London W.1). Titled "Conflagration", it is comprised of six tracks, two each by members of the trio. Augmenting the trio are Dave Holland, Chick Corea, saxophonists Alan Skidmore and Mike Osborne, trombonists Malcolm Griffiths and Nick Evans, trumpet men Kenny Wheeler, Marc Charig and Harry Beckett, drummer John Marshall and pianist John Taylor.

On Eden's own label, Turtle, which was created for music that the big record companies didn't want to mess with, there are two albums to be issued early in June. They follow up the label's first release last January, an album by Mike Osborne with Chris MacGregor. One is by John Taylor, produced by John Surman; the other is by pianist Howard Riley with bassist Barry Guy and drummer Tony Oxley.

Eden has also produced an album by Canadian expatriate John Warren, who left Toronto a few years back and now is recognised as one of the best composers in new jazz in London. He has played (baritone sax) on albums like Westbrook's "Marching Song", but mainly works as a composer-arranger for people like Surman and Skidmore. This will be his first album as leader, and sidemen include Surman, fellow Canadian Kenny Wheeler, and West Indian Harry Beckett. It should be released here next fall on Decca's Deram label.

RCA in Britain has also accelerated its interest in jazz. First indication was the release on its new Neon label of the first album by Chris MacGregor's big group Brotherhood of Breath. The album was recorded about a year ago, and was turned down by companies like Philips, CBS, Island and MCA before finally finding a home at RCA. It's the first MacGregor album to be released since his first on Polydor about three years ago, and it's just been put out by RCA in America.

Further interest in jazz by RCA here is indicated by the label's signing Mike Westbrook to a three-year world-wide deal. Westbrook had recorded for Decca over the past four years, but recently kept running into a brick wall in trying to get Decca to promote his stuff. RCA plans to release a big band version of Metropolis in early autumn. Meanwhile, Westbrook's band has been booked to play at the Warsaw Jazz Festival next October.

It also appears that Tony Oxley will record an album for RCA - his contract with CBS expired after two albums, and he has since participated in the founding of an independent, cooperative Incus label. In his new album he will work with several people, among them the same people from his CBS albums - guitarist Derek Bailey and saxophonist Evan Parker. Parker, meanwhile, has finished an album for Incus, which will be the label's second release. Oxley's RCA session will include two pieces for sextet, two for quartet, and a solo percussion piece. Producer and chief hustler for the album is Pete King, manager of the Ronnie Scott Club.

The Circle, being Anthony Braxton, Chick Corea, Dave Holland and Barry Altschul, spent the first four months of this year bouncing around Europe, but because of Musician's Union red tape were unable to play in public in Britain (because all but Holland are unBritish). They did, however, indulge in several record sessions, including two for Alan Bates, which should see the light of day later this year.

At the end of April, Circle returned to America, first for some gigs around New York, and then to move on to Los Angeles, which they will use as a base before re-



turning to Britain next November. While on the West Coast the group will record an album or two for Contemporary.

One of the jazz avatars who continues to work outside the Coop - but continues to work nevertheless - is drummer John Stevens. He's recently had an album titled "Source" by his Spontaneous Music Ensemble issued by a small and esoteric label called Tangent, and on May 7 held forth in concert at London's Notre Dame Hall, subsidised by Tangent and the Premier drum people. The SME varies in size, but when they performed "Source" in concert there were twelve musicians on hand. The concert also had two pieces for quartet and then twenty-two musicians and singers closed the concert with Stevens' composition Now I Sing - a March for Albert Ayler and all the Others. The concert was organised by the London Jazz Centre Society.

Jazz in Britain struggles on quite admirably - and as usual, it is largely through the efforts of the musicians themselves.

-Brian Blevins

## CHICAGO

The Marienthal operations - Mr. Kelly's, the London House, the London House North, and the Happy Medium, have had, with the exception of the LH itself, nothing to do with jazz all these years. Suddenly, largely through the efforts of Chicago Tribune columnist Harriet Choice, all four establishments have something going.

Mr. Kelly's has a jazz brunch on Sunday, opening at 11:00 a.m., with the jazz starting at 1:00 for three hours. Grand Opening was March 21, with a sextet co-led by tenorist Franz Jackson and trumpeter Norm Murphy, backed by guitarist Marty Grosz, pianist Bob Wright, and drummer Bob Cousins. March 28 belonged to bass trumpeter Cy Touff, with the house rhythm section of Larry Novak, piano; Jim Atlas, bass; and Marty Clausen, drums. April Sundays were given over to Franz Jackson's Entertainers, with vocalist Jeanne Carroll, and featuring a different pianist each week (Little Brother Montgomery, Art Hodes, Lil Armstrong). Altoist Kenny Soderblom and Friends will have the May Sundays. Meanwhile, Norm Murphy has same deal going at LH North, in Highland Park, each Sunday, with Wright, bassist Rail Wilson, and drummer-vibist Don DeMichael.

Meanwhile, the Happy Medium, long a theater spot with a discotek (that's my way) in the basement, has imported the World's Greatest Jazz Band, who open tonight, May 4 (last night they opened, but for the Press), for three weeks, maybe four. And the LH itself coasts along, presenting jazz and quasi-jazz as is its wont - George Shearing just finished two weeks there.

The Big Horn, in exurban Ivanhoe, continues its bi-weekly Sunday Specials: The Original Salty Dogs (March 14), The Riverboat Ramblers (April 4; skipped a week, there!), Jim Beebe's All Stars (April 18), and The Sounds of Swing (May 2). With Beebe were fellow trombonist Tom Gekler, from Jazz, Ltd.; trumpeter Bob Schulz, of the Ramblers; clarinetist-bass

saxophonist Russ Whitman, Bob Wright, and Larry Kostka, of the BH house band; Rail Wilson; and drummer Hillard Brown in a guest appearance. The SOS, with just seven pieces, was, without the tenor, not the prototype, but rather a "dixie" group with Murphy, Grosz, Wright, Cousins, clarinetist Jerry Fuller, trombonist Harry Graves, and bassist Truck Parham. No room on the bandstand for those Porta-Desks. . .

As I last wrote about Jack "The Bear's" Steamboat Stompers making a three-and-a-half-month gig out of a month's, the axe fell in mid-April, but the group opened, adding a trombonist, in the same time slot - Sundays at 9:00 - at the Red Garter May 2. Opening night exceeded all expectations, and it looks like a home at last for the SS-Bear, trumpet; Bill Hanck, trombone; Lance Schulz, clarinet; Jack Meilahn, banjo; Wayne Jones, drums; and tubaist Dave Melcher, who's just returned from a long hospitalization in England following a motorcycle accident there. Russ Whitman deputizes in front (clarinet), or back (bass sax).

Pianist Don Gibson's band, inactive since leaving Old Orchard Country Club at the first of the year, opened at Barnaby's in Arlington Heights for four May Saturdays. A revised lineup finds trumpeter Nap Trottier (home after wintering in Arizona), Hanck, clarinetist Bob Skiver (back after a year and a half at home in Ohio), bassist Dick Carleton, banjoists Meilahn or Charlie Marshall, washboardist-singer-announcer Mike Schwimmer, and Jones. Don's quartet (himself, Marshall, Carleton, Schwimmer) is literally packing them in at the Village Tavern, still, on Sunday evenings.

The I.W.W. Hall, on Lincoln Avenue near Fullerton, is the new site of Joe Segal's Modern Jazz Showcase concerts since the dispute with the North Park Hotel. Lee Morgan's quintet was the April 11, to cap a weekend that found him at Robert's Penthouse, and the Safari Room, the previous two nights. Elvin Jones' quartet did the same three-night tour April 23-25, and Art Blakey played the I.W.W. on May 2.

Miscellany: Kenton at Ruggles April 12 . . . the Four Freshmen at the Marriott Hotel April 11, and Guy Lombardo at the Willowbrook Ballroom the same night. . . Nancy Wilson at the Auditorium April 18, and Lou Donaldson at Sirah House for a week starting April 9. . . Tony Bennett, with cornetist Ruby Braff (ah, how lovely!) at the Empire Room of the Palmer House from April 13-23. . . Hello, Dolly!, with Pearl and Cab, at the Auditorium for the month of June. . . Rich at Ruggles April 19 . . . Vernel Fournier's trio, with pianist Willie Pickens and bassist Dan Shapera, are the intermission group at the London House. . . Al and Zoot played a MJS for Segal at the Wise Fools, on Lincoln, March 28, where they still have rehearsal band sessions on Mondays. Zoot appeared at Elmhurst College the night before at the Midwest College Jazz Festival. . . Barrett Deems, the World's Fastest 98-pound drummer, gave a drum clinic in Lincolnwood March 28. . . the staff of the London

House gave Roy Eldridge a farewell party March 20; the only other bandleader to be treated with such affection there in twenty-two years was Gene Krupa. . . Waldo's New Gutbucket Syncopators, with members in Columbus, Cincinnati, Chicago and suburbs, and Rhode Island, play for the Detroit Hot Jazz Society at the Georgian Inn in Roseville, Michigan, June 5.

Deaths: guitarist Jack Goss, March 12, who played and recorded with Doc Evans, among others. . . pianist Art Gronwall, in the '20s with Charley Straight, Ray Miller, and Jean Goldkette, and in the later years with the Gaslight Club trio and the Gold Coast Jazz Band, March 19. . . violinist Bruce Yantis, who recorded with Smith Ballew, the California Ramblers, Seger Ellis, Red McKenzie, and other similar contemporaneous groups, March 26.

-Wayne Jones

## LOS ANGELES

A shock (not the earthquake) reverberated through the Southern California jazz community recently when it was officially announced that Benson Curtis' nightly jazz program, "STRICTLY FROM DIXIE" would be closed out as new owners took over Radio Station KRHF. The reason given was that this was a specialized program, and as such, catered to only a limited number of listeners which made it unprofitable. Though no estimate is available, it is safe to say that the listening audience could well run into the thousands. It is known that innumerable shut-ins had their otherwise drab lives brightened through having the opportunity to enjoy recordings of Dixieland and New Orleans Jazz. For over twenty years this program has been an important vehicle for helping to preserve the older forms of American jazz and since the non-profit jazz Clubs have come upon the scene here, the consistent efforts of Benson Curtis have become even more productive as he made spot announcements relative to Club meetings and gave out the news about special jazz events and night spots featuring paid performers. "Strictly From Dixie" was not merely an hour of recorded Jazz Classics. It was a continuing tribute to the early creators of American jazz and was, in a sense, an educational adventure, descriptive of America's only Art Form. Drawing from his vast storehouse of knowledge of men and the jazz bands that have made jazz history since the turn of the century, and bringing into play his fabulous collection of old recordings, he was able to add immeasurably to the cultural values of the local community by skillfully engineering his programs with historical material pertinent to the bands and jazz personalities of yesteryear. Unlike the peoples of many foreign lands who religiously cherish their native culture even to the extent of subsidization through their governments, most of the American people are content to ignore this aspect of human values and be satisfied with what the marketplace has to offer. It is, indeed, a tragic irony that American jazz in its early forms must be exported to foreign shores to find the acceptance and the re-

cognition it so richly deserves. All of the local D.J. Clubs as well as many individuals not identified with the Clubs are mounting a crusade of letter writing and, hopefully, this will in due course be the key for making their feelings felt to the extent that Strictly From Dixie will soon find ready acceptance on some other local FM Radio Station.

Larry Grover, local philanthropist and avid supporter of the local DJ jazz Clubs recently played host to an SRO crowd of over 250 persons at George Ball's Cliff House in Pacific Palisades. Some of the well known Southland musicians who helped set the pace were Rosie McHargue, Pete and son Dennis Daily, Al Rieman, Jimmie Adams, Ethel Hiatt and Mickey Ingalls. Larry Grover, has over the years, made substantial financial contributions to the cause of fostering young musical talent in the ways of DL jazz.

Lee Katzman, local trumpeter recently opened a new nitery out on Landerhim Blvd. in North Hollywood titled the LEFT BANK. Local artists including guitarist Joe Pass, trumpeter Cat Anderson and guitarist John Collins have drawn favorable responses here.

Trombonist and arranger Ed Leach features his famed ZULU PARADERS, a fourteen-piece swing group, at the regular meetings of the New Orleans Jazz Club of Southern California.

Something new and unique in jazz albums has just recently been released by Arcane Records. Under the leadership of Ragtimer Dave Bourne, a big wheel in the local Maple Leaf Club, THE DAWN OF THE CENTURY RAGTIME ORCHESTRA cut the disc, the first of its kind, presenting a varied program of turn of the century concert and dance music as it might have been played on any Sunday afternoon in the park band shell. Bourne on cornet is side-manned by Dave Kennedy, trombone; Mike Baird, clarinet; Jack Langlos, trumpet; Dick Zimmerman, piano; Art Levin, tuba; Jack Malek and Donny McCluer, violins. Tunes carefully selected to carry out the theme include: Repasz Band March, Peaceful Henery, Slavery Days, Dixie Blossoms, Sweetmeats, Cubanola Glide, Silver Bell, Miss Dixie, Alexander's Ragtime Band, I Want To Be In Dixie, Ma Pickaninny Babe, and Portuguese Rag, a composition of clarinetist Mike Baird. This album is available only through the Maple Leaf Club at 5560 West 62 Street, Los Angeles, California, \$5.25 post paid (add \$1.00 overseas). Make cheques payable to Maple Leaf Club. -Frank Bostwick

## NEW YORK

The Basie band flew to London to play a Charity ball for Princess Margaret... Pianist Chuck Folds should still be appearing at the Gashouse (1st Avenue and 16th Street), Wednesday through Saturday. New York City's Evergreen Theatre is showing "Blue Accordin' To Lightnin' Hopkins", a short about the Texas blues singer.

Gene Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings are at Batchelor's Supper Club in Cincinnati. Trombonist, Bill Rank is in the group...

Pearl Bailey has signed with RCA... The Omaha World-Herald of October 17, 1970, had an article on cornetist Charles Williamson, who worked with W.C. Handy and Bessie Smith... Speaking of Bessie, Newsweek of February 1, 1971, has a story on Bessie. It reminded me of a poem I once read which told the story of Bessie and how she bled to death in the waiting room of a Mississippi hospital. The line went, "She had the wrong blood type - black"... For a free bumper sticker, "Big Bands Are Back", write Humes and Berg Mfg. Co., 4801 Railroad Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana 46312.

Eubie Blake was the subject of an article in Newsweek of February 22. He's now eighty-eight, the son of a slave. Says Eubie, "When I was a boy, my father used to bare his back to me and show me the scars from his whippings. He told me never to trust a white man. Maybe if I hadn't been successful I wouldn't have. Even so, I won't extend my hand to a white man. But if he's my friend I'll embrace him."

Hugues Panassie's book, "Louis Armstrong", will be put out in an English translation by Scribners... During the past few months, guest artists who have appeared with Dick Creedon's band at the Village Green in Danvers, Massachusetts have been Wild Bill Davison, Tyree Glenn, Bob Wilber, Urbie Green, Willie "The Lion" Smith and Jimmy McPartland.

Bessie Smith has been honored by the American Negro Commemorative Society through a medal issued in her honor... Igor Stravinsky's comment on modern music, "Now that John Cage's most successful opus is 4' 3" - four minutes and 33 seconds of silence - we may expect his example to be followed by more and more silent pieces by young composers, who will produce their silences with more and more varied and beguiling combinations. I only hope they turn out to be works of major length."

John LaPorta journeyed north from the Berklee College to present his Improvisation Clinic at the National Convention of the Canadian Music Educators Association held April 14, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The well attended event produced a great deal of enthusiastic response. At Berklee, itself, over 1,500 high school musicians converged on the college March 27 for the third annual High School Jazz Competition-Festival. It was an all day event that culminated in an evening competition with the nine finalist bands and the Festival Workshop band directed by Phil Wilson. Workshops and clinics were conducted throughout the day by various members of the Berklee faculty, who include Alan Dawson, Charlie Mariano and Andy McGhee.

There's now a Hot Jazz Society in Detroit and it's being organized by Jim Taylor and Mike Montgomery. Their opening event featured The Salty Dogs, Mothers Boys and Bob Seeley. There'll be another concert in early June and information on the society can be obtained from Mr. Taylor, at 12311 Gratiot Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48205.

Deaths: Last December 14, pianist Elmer Schoebel died in Florida at 74. He gained fame with the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and through his compositions, Bugle Call Rag, Nobody's Sweetheart and Farewell Blues.

Trumpeter "Fuzzy" Farrar died in New York January 6 at 77. He had worked with Bix, the Dorsey's, and Jean Goldkette.

- Jack Bradley

## Small Ads...

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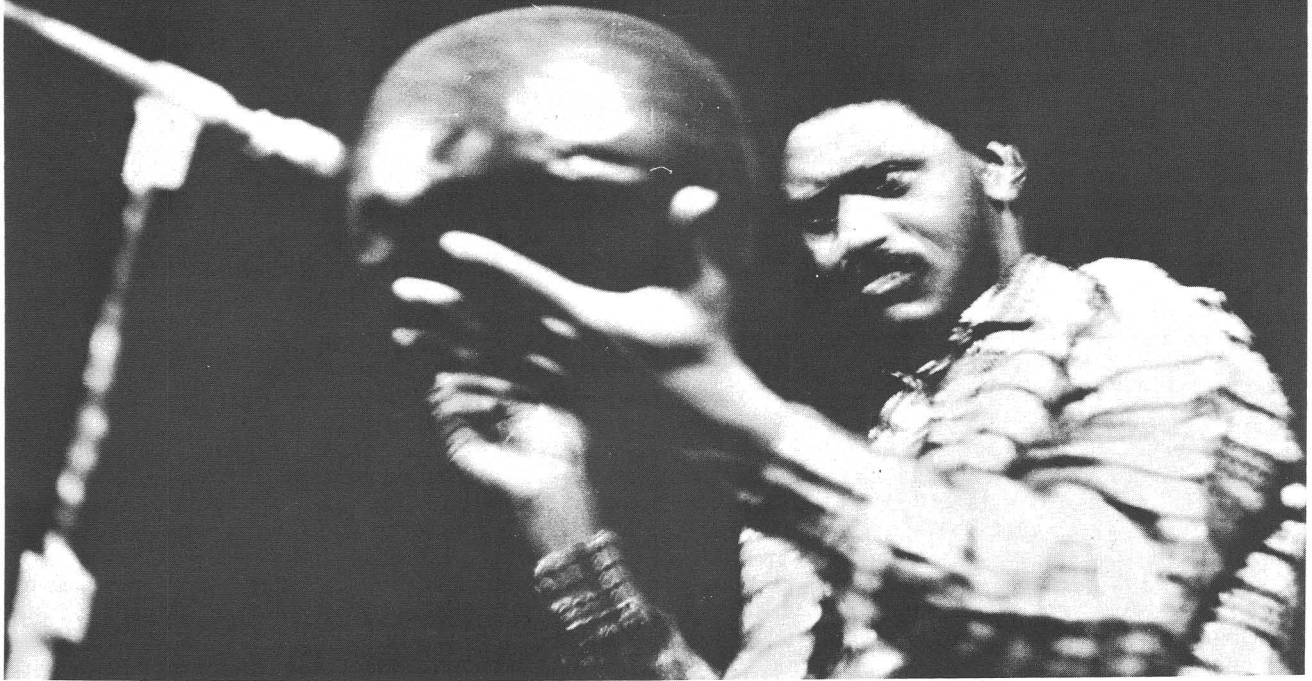
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# heard **and** seen



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## alice coltrane · pharoah sanders and archie shepp

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Buffalo State University. March 26, 1971.

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A prayer meeting was held at Buffalo State University and the fragrance of incense set the stage for the spiritual vibrations established by Alice Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders, and company.

First, from out of nowhere, Pharoah appeared on the stage and literally poured out his bag of mystical sounds. The ringing of bells along with the pulsating rolls from the drums of Jimmy Hopps, started to fill the air from different parts of the platform to reveal the presence of Cecil McBee on bass, Lonnie Smith on piano, and Lawrence Killion on congoes. Pharoah then proceeded to bombard his audience with his unique assortment of instruments. These blended with the now rhythmic energies of the piano, drums and bass, raised the music to such an intensity that Pharoah suddenly began to pound his chest in anguish.

As the music grew, and he began on his tenor, one heard no complete tunes played, rather threads of melody kept reappearing from *The Creator Has A Master Plan*. In between these snatches of melody, the characteristic screeches and cries of Pharoah's tenor evoked a dialogue with the equally involved

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photograph: Jurebu Cason

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audience as their chants of "Right on brother!" and "Blow your horn, brother!", echoed throughout the auditorium. Similarly this rapport was created with the following solos: Lonnie Smith's singular technique of using brushes on the piano strings simulating the sound flavor of an oriental string instrument; the down-to-earth funky playing of Cecil McBee; and the interplay between the drums and the congos, their shifting tempos weaving in and out of the rhythm, while still maintaining the basic movement of the music.

When the music ceased there was a pregnant pause; as if a trance had been broken; suddenly the audience jumped to its feet and applauded with fantastic enthusiasm.

After a brief intermission, the dynamic performance of Alice Coltrane, Jimmy Garrison, on bass and Frederick Waits on drums, joined by Pharoah Sanders, Cecil McBee, and surprise guest artist Archie Shepp, was presented. They began, amid burning incense, with Alice on the harp. As she plucked the first string, a beautiful soft shower of notes floated down to the audience. This was echoed in Pharoah's melodic soprano and vibrant string temperament of the bassists. The sound experience exuding from Alice's harp is difficult to describe, difficult to do justice to; one is wholly engulfed in the



mystical depth of her rich playing.

For their second tune, Africa, Archie Shepp's tenor was combined with Alice's piano. The lyrical phrases of Africa blown through Shepp's horn made me feel the presence of John Coltrane.

Further on, with the last tune Leo, the performance reached its height with the explosive duet of Jimmy Garrison and Cecil McBee, and the galloping drums of Freddie Waits. Ending on a final note by Jimmy Garrison, the audience applauded for more with animated hysteria. I am sure the Creator was well pleased with their musical offering.

-Jurebu Cason

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## new orleans jazz and heritage festival

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April 21-24, 1971.

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Jazz returned to its birthplace during the 1971 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. It was led by two octogenarians who, half a century earlier, had spearheaded a movement that carried the charm of New Orleans jazz to all parts of the world. This was the year that saw Kid Ory and Ed Garland triumphantly return to the scene of their earlier successes. Like aging Pied Pipers, Ory and Garland led scores of young musicians streaming into the warm Southern city.

Those of us who have lamented the demise of authentic New Orleans Jazz were heartened by the happy sounds of these young musicians who came to New Orleans with their horns and their inspirations. They came from England, France, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, and Japan. Their only common language was music and they demonstrated that a mutual love of jazz can create a strong human bond.

The 100 year old Preservation Hall was filled with the pulsating sounds of these young pilgrims. They reverently occupied the chairs of George Lewis Kid Howard and Joe Watkins. Joyfully they placed alongside such veterans as Kid Thomas, Louis Barbarin, Louis Nelson, Kid Sheik, Punch Miller, Albert Burbank, and Ed Garland. They rocked old Decatur Street with all night sessions at Bonaparte's Retreat. This was the dramatic backdrop that provided the setting for the 1971 New Orleans Jazz Festival.

The exciting four day event began aboard the S. S. President for a warm Wednesday evening cruise on the mighty Mississippi. The local advertisements heralded the appearance of "PETE FOUNTAIN WITH EDDIE MILLER... plus a backup band." (sic) As the evening unfolded, we learned that the "backup band" was Louis Cottrell's group boasting such stalwarts as Louis Barbarin on drums, Frog Joseph, trombone, Alvin Alcorn, trumpet, Paul Barnes (ex-Oliver, Morton) alto, and Cottrell's beautiful clarinet weaving them all together. While the slick arrangements of Pete Fountain's crew cleverly spotlighted the great Eddie Miller tenor and Pete's brilliant horn, the "backup band" provided the evening's great thrills with their swinging ensemble choruses and the inspired drumming of Louis Barbarin.

The next two nights were divided between the Roosevelt and Jung Hotels where cabaret settings created a warm informality. The colorful balloons swayed on the tables as local favorite Ronnie Kole served some tasty modern sounds with his trio. He scored heavily at the keyboard with a well-arranged Gershwin medley which followed his version of Big

Noise From Winetka. The New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra again recreated authentic dawn of the century sounds of orchestrated ragtime with jazz historian Bill Russell expertly handling the violin assignment. They treated us to such esoterica as A.J. Piron's theme, Purple Rose Of Cairo and the Scott Joplin "experimental" piece, New Rags.

A chronological step brought forth the Kid Thomas Preservation Hall Jazz Band, a grey-haired group that drew a standing ovation. Thomas' trumpet, still sharp and strong, was supported by Albert Burbank's singing clarinet and Louis Nelson's traditional trombone. Their concluding tune, Panama was still ringing in our ears when Bobby Hackett and Dizzy Gillespie appeared together on a relaxed I Can't Get Started. When these two giants stood shoulder to shoulder playing Duke's classic, In a Mellotone, the soft warm notes hung like sweet clusters of ripe grapes ready for plucking. Hackett tenderly soloed on I Cover The Waterfront as Dizzy stood silently in admiration. Festival producer, George Wein joined Bobby Hackett and submitted an interesting piano-vocal on Nobody Know's You When You're Down And Out.

The almost endless talent list included Papa French's Original Tuxedo Band, the dapper Santo Pecora (featuring young Sam Alcorn on trumpet) and a modern touch by Porgy Jones plus Three that drove many of us into the foyer to escape the ear-shattering trumpet that bounced harsh irritating sounds against the walls. From our refuge outside the hotel ballroom, Johnson "Fat Cat" McRee was overheard saying, "Compared to him, Dizzy sounds like Bunk Johnson!"

Upon returning to the room, we were rewarded with Armand Hug's piano solo on Maple Leaf Rag followed by the lovely Jelly Roll Morton ballad, Why?

The afternoon segments of The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival took place in historic Beaugard Square on North Rampart Street at the edge of the old French Quarter. The colorful outdoor fair was introduced to the festival last year and has proved to be a pleasant addition to the evening festivities. Each corner of the square offered a different musical attraction separated by food booths displaying steaming bayou crawfish, red beans and rice, hot sausage, beer, and sweets. It was quite pleasant to relax in the warm afternoon sun nibbling the delicious food while listening to Percy Humphrey's Eureka Brass Band. Between band numbers, blues stylist Roosevelt Sykes could be heard shouting from across the square:

"Walked all night with my 44 in my hand,  
I was lookin' for my woman,  
And I found her with another man!"

As the shadows grew longer, the inspiring choir of The Morningside Baptist Church filled the air with a lovely hymn. The choir is led by Anne Pavegeau, widow of the famous New Orleans bassist, Alcide "Slow Drag" Pavegeau. We also heard a group billed as The Country Cajuns, Babe Stovall, a folk-blues singer, and "Bongo Joe" who delighted the youngsters with his antics on gold-painted oil drums. From another corner of the square, a booming bass drum announced the arrival of Danny Barker's young Fairview Baptist Church Christian Marching Band. This is a spirited group of youngsters who are following the expert guidance of jazz historian-guitarist Danny Barker who is working very hard to establish a tra-



Top photograph  
Kid Ory trombone with Don Ewell

Centre photograph  
Jazz pioneer Ed Garland plays bass with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Kid Thomas, trumpet, Emanuel Paul, saxophone, Albert Burbank, clarinet, vocal, Charles Hamilton, piano.

Bottom photograph  
Sam Alcorn, trumpet, Santo Pecora, trombone, Tony Mitchell, clarinet.

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All photographs by Floyd Levin

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ditional marching band to train the children of New Orleans in their musical heritage.

Directly in the center of Beuregard Square stands a huge crumbling sandstone eagle proudly perched upon the site of the forthcoming statue of Louis Armstrong. The ancient bird is destined for the scrap pile, but he seemed to smile as he gazed down upon the large happy crowd.

The closing evening concert of the '71 New Orleans Jazz Festival took place on Saturday evening in the large Municipal Auditorium. Louis Armstrong had been billed as the festival's feature attraction; unfortunately, Louis was still confined to his bed in a New York hospital. In his absence, the entire evening was dedicated to Satchmo and every tune was a tribute to him. Louis' familiar theme When It's Sleepy Time Down South was given an excellent reading by a trumpet choir that boasted the talents of such greats as Bobby Hackett, Dizzy Gillespie, Wallace Davenport, Alvin Alcorn, and Punch Miller. Kid Punch was introduced by Dick Allen as "... a contemporary of Louis' who probably influenced Armstrong many years ago". Punch delighted the audience with Sister Kate, You Can Depend On Me, and That's My Home. Despite having been released from the hospital only a day earlier, the legendary Punch Miller thrilled the purists with his clear tone that reflects a background of over half a century of jazz.-

Longtime favorite Sharkey Bonano and His Kings of Dixieland romped through several of the Armstrong standards. Sharkey, a master of dynamics and showmanship, was hampered by an overly amplified guitar which marred what should have been a festival highlight.

Before introducing the evening's star attraction, producer George Wein brought on a little boy in short pants who came from Leeds, England to imitate Louis Armstrong's trumpet and vocal on Sleepy Time. The big round tones emerging from a horn almost as big as the tiny musician provoked suspicions that a well-trained midget was actually performing; however, young Enrico Tomasso's father was standing nearby and he convinced us that his son was, indeed, eight years old!

The festival's dramatic climax featured the veteran Kid Ory making his first New Orleans appearance



since 1919. Ory, now in his eighties, is retired and lives in Hawaii. Unfortunately, his performance was disappointing to fans familiar with his famous recordings with Joe Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, Armstrong's Hot 5, etc. He has been severely ill and was unable to provide the strong tailgate glissandos that have been identified with him for so many years. Those of us who attended his rehearsals heard traces of the "old Ory"; however, during the concert he played very little but sang several tunes including his own Muskrat Ramble. The true hero of the final stanza was the eighty-three year old Ed "Montudi" Garland who filled the cavernous auditorium with the sounds of his virile string bass. Sitting alongside Garland in the plane enroute from Los Angeles to New Orleans a few days earlier, "Tudie" expressed excitement over returning to his hometown for his first visit since 1912! That was when he left the Crescent City as leader of a travelling band that included Roy Palmer on trombone, Louis Keppard on guitar, and Lawrence Dewey on clarinet. He was home for the first time in sixty years and completely captured the hearts of jazz fans who heard him playing almost every night in the French Quarter. On the concert stage, his bald pate shining in the bright spotlight, he proudly joined the stellar rhythm section that included Don Ewell's piano, Danny Barker on guitar, Emanuel Sayles, banjo, and Freddy Kohlman at the drums. In addition to Ory, the front line included Thomas Jefferson on trumpet and Raymond Burke on clarinet. This was a group of expert players, but they could not overcome the sad realization that Kid Ory had waited too long to return to New Orleans.

A retrospective glance at this year's festival discloses several improvements over previous year's events. A warmer, more relaxed format was created by moving to the hotel ballrooms. The rooms were crowded and the musicians felt more comfortable in the cabaret setting. We missed the informative afternoon seminar-concerts conducted last year by a trio of experts: jazz archivist, Dick Allen; clarinetist, Willie Humphrey; and, New Orleans Jazz Club pioneer, Harry Souchon. These casual sessions provided an insight into the colorful background of jazz and contributed greatly to the success of last year's event.

The New Orleans Jazz Festival should receive world-wide attention and draw thousands of fans. To achieve this success, a well-organized publicity program is needed. Again this year, advance announcements were issued in a whisper rather than a shout. New Orleans is a hospitable city bristling with good hotels and fine restaurants and has the facilities to host throngs of fans who would attend the festival each year if they were exposed to sufficient advance information.

This reporter has made reservations for the 1972 festival. Join us where the Mississippi makes that lazy curve before spilling it's muddy waters into the Gulf of Mexico. Look for me. I'll be standing on the corner of Bourbon and St. Peter Streets holding a cold can of Dixie beer and tapping my foot to the Eureka Brass band strutting down Bourbon from Canal Street leading a second line of jazz fans from all parts of the world.

"If you've never seen that town,  
Boy, it's a pity!  
They call it New Orleans"

-Floyd Levin

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