

CANADA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE
APRIL 1974

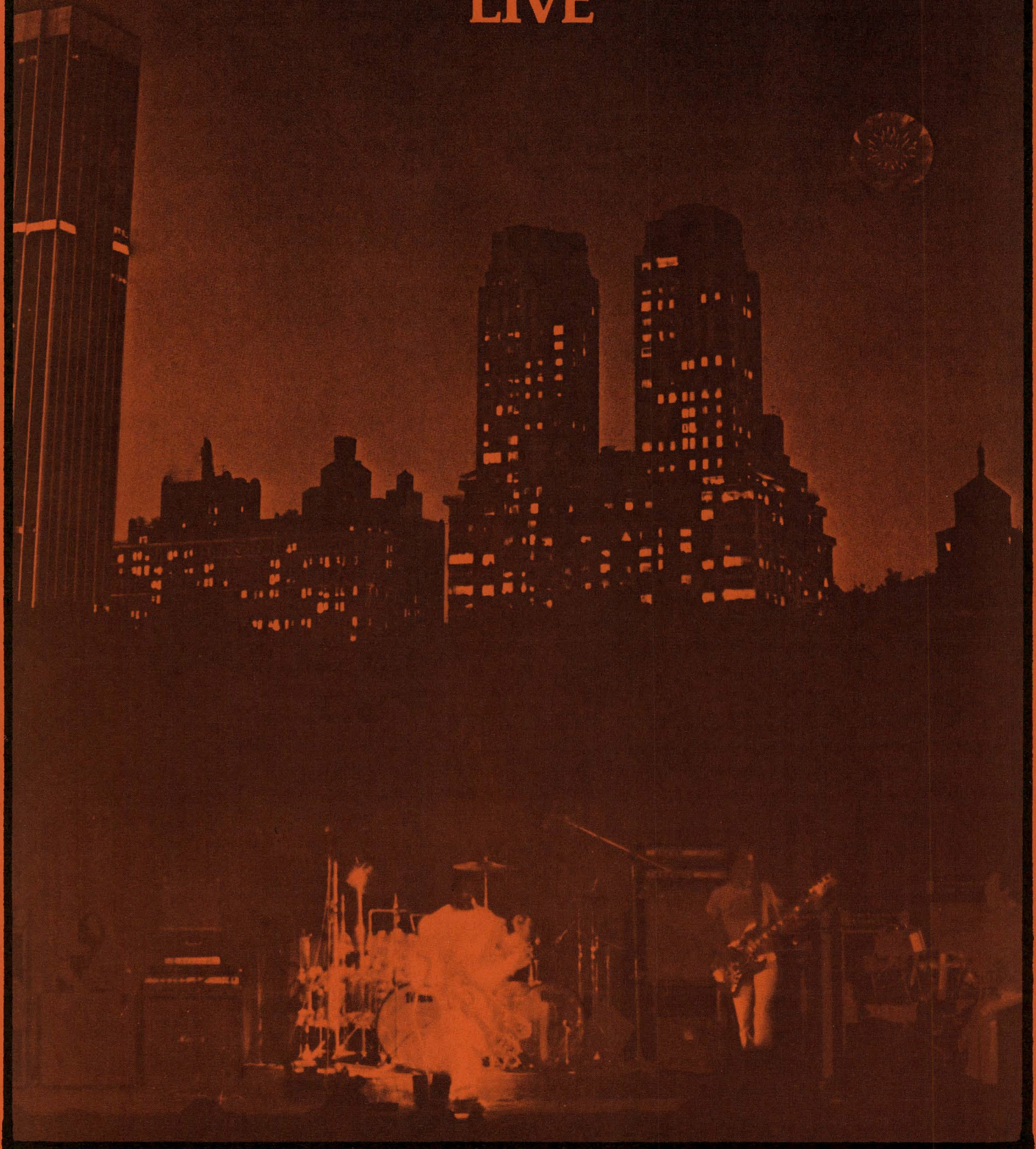
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BRAXTON



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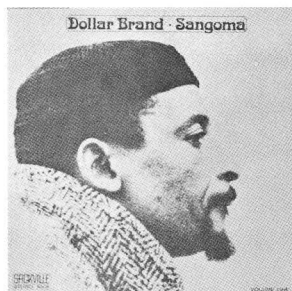
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IN TOKYO

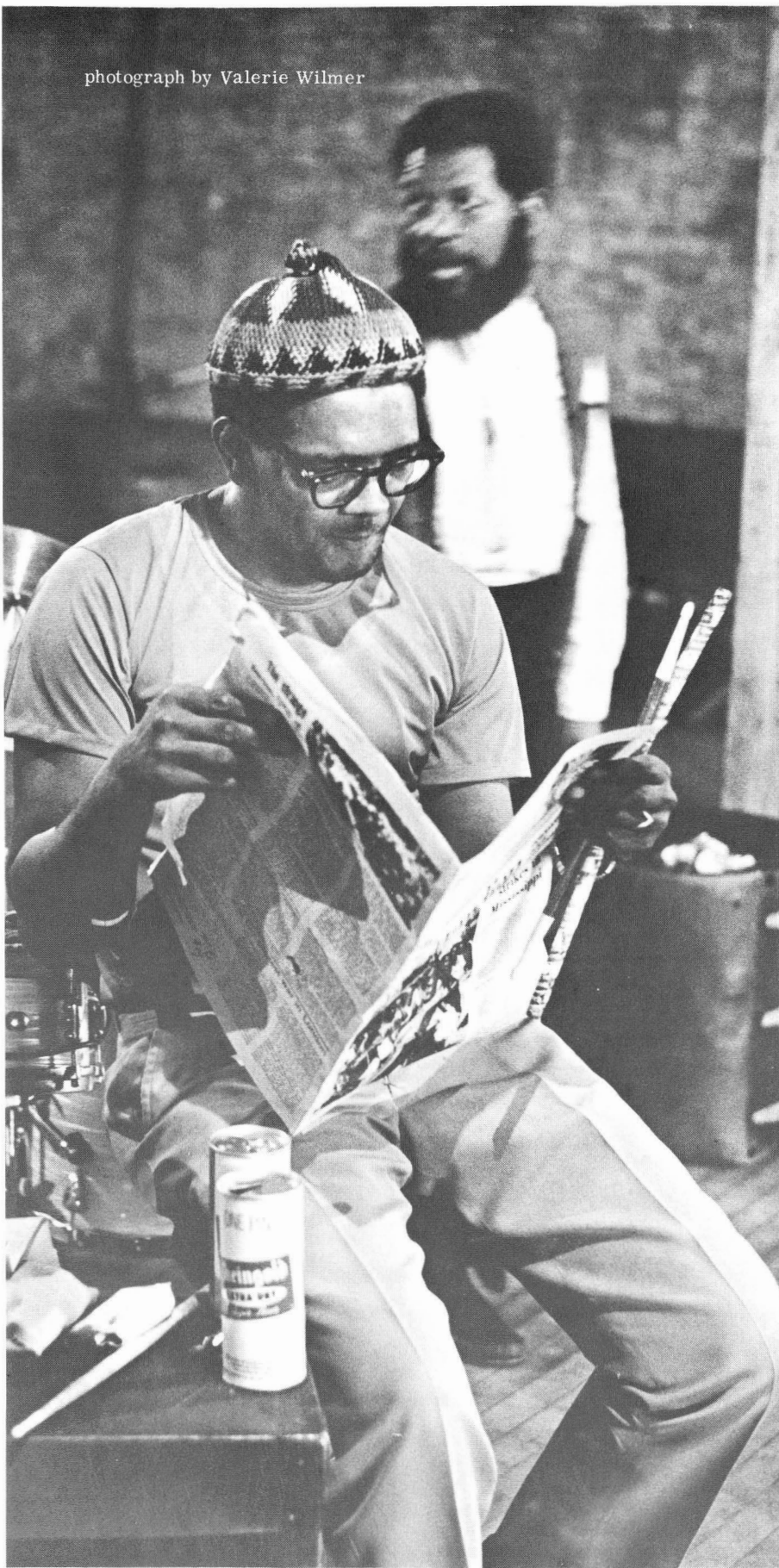
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I Get A Kick Out Of You - Sweet Lorraine - Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (And Dream Your Troubles Away) - My Ideal - On The Sunny Side Of The Street - Body And Soul - I Cried For You.

Smoke Gets In Your Eyes - I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Write Myself A Letter - Summertime - Runnin' Wild - She's Funny That Way - I've Got The World On A String - I Surrender, Dear.



photograph by Valerie Wilmer



Coda

April 1974 Volume 11 No. 8

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EDITORIAL

The spiritual togetherness which has generated such a high degree of worldwide support for Ed Blackwell during this time of his greatest need is a glimmering of hope in a period in the world where mistrust is normal. If the jazz community is to survive it has to learn to work together in trust and harmony in the hope of forming a viable alternative to the concert / night club syndrome which dominates the present environment of the music. Organizations need to be formed in many cities - to provide a healthy setting for the music being performed today. Coda is a part of this struggle and we will do all in our power to bring about changes for the better in the future.

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JAZZ ARCHIVES

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OUR FIRST FIVE RECORDS, STILL AVAILABLE...THE CRITICS LIKED THEM - THE COLLECTORS RAVED

We received excellent reviews on our first five releases. Praise was first for the quality of sound, secondly for the content and choice of material. Jazz Digest-Jazz Journal, IAJRC Journal Denver Jazz Society and others were unanimous in their praise. Further, Jazz Fans 'round the world have written to thank us.

JA 5

DON REDMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1932-1933

JA-5 DON REDMAN 1932-1933

Try Getting A Good Night's Sleep, Chant Of The Weed (Connie's Inn Orchestra), Got South In My Soul, It's A Great World After All, Two-Time Man (#B), Underneath Harlem Moon, How Ya Feelin', Shuffle Your Feet / Bandanna Babies (Previously unissued B13010A), I Found A New Way To Go To Town, She's Not Bad, Our Big Love Scene, After Sundown, Puddin' Head Jones, My Old Man, Tired Of It All, Keep On Doin' What You're Doin' (Version of Chant Of The Weed, here, was Don's favorite). Last six sides are rare items issued under pseudonyms with Chick Bullock vocals. A nice set of sides of a great musician.

JA 4

CLAUDE HOPKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1932-1933 1940

JA-4 CLAUDE HOPKINS - A COLLECTION OF PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED SIDES FROM 1932-1933 AND RARE SIDES FROM 1940

Three Little Words, Anything For You, Hopkins' Scream, Washington Squabble, Three Little Words, Shake Your Ashes, Mystic Moan, Just You, Just Me, Washington Squabble, Ain't Misbehavin', Honeysuckle Rose, Yacht Club Swing,

Out To Lunch, A Little Rain Must Fall, What's The Matter With Me? The 1932/33 unreleased sides are all "A" takes. First version of Three Little Works is instrumental. Hopkins' Scream is another title for Original Dixieland One-Step and it features wonderful Ed Hall. The 1940 sides are from the rare Ammor label.

JA 3

BUNNY AND RED BUNNY BERIGAN RED MCKENZIE MOUND CITY BLUE BLOWERS 1935-1936

JA-3 BUNNY & RED - BUNNY BERIGAN with RED MCKENZIE & MCBB (1935/36)

What's The Reason (I'm Not Pleasin' You) She's A Latin From Manhattan, You've Been Takin' Lessons, Indiana, Broken Record (#B), Music Goes 'Round & Around, I'm Gonna Sit Right Down & Write Myself A Letter, Mama Don't Allow It, Rhythm In My Nursery Rhymes, Hope Gabriel Likes My Music (#A), Sing An Old Fashioned Song, I'm Building Up To An Awful Letdown, Don't Count Your Kisses, When Love Has Gone, I Don't Know Your Name, Moon Rose. Great Bunny in a Dixieland vein with good supporting musicians & McKenzie.

JA 2

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1932-1934 1937

JA-2 EARL HINES - A COLLECTION OF PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED SIDES & ALTERNATE TAKES OF ISSUED ONES (1933-34/1937)

Blue Drag (#B), I Love You Because I Love You (12077A/B), Sensational Mood (B), Love Me Tonight (B), Down Among The Sheltering Palms (B), Why Must We Part (#B), Maybe I'm To Blame (B), Cavernism (B), Just To Be In Caroline (#C), We Found Romance (#C), Blue (#C), Julia (#C), Blue Skies (#2), Hines Rhythm (#1), A Mellow Bit Of Rhythm (#2) - Versions of I Love You Because I Love You are instrumental. Issued one from same session has a vocal. Readers of Storyville will recall the excellent article by John R. T. Davies commenting on the differences of performance on some of the alternate takes on this record.

JA 1

CHICAGO STYLE RHYTHMAKERS · 1932 EDDIE CONDON · 1938/40 JOE SULLIVAN · 1935 FATS WALLER · 1942

JA-1 CHICAGO STYLE - RHYTHMAKERS (1932), EDDIE CONDON (1938, 1940), JOE SULLIVAN (1935), FATS WALLER (January 14, 1942)

Oh! Peter (#1, 2, 3, 4), Yes Suh! (#1), Shine On Your Shoes (#2, 3), Somebody Stole Gabriel's Horn (#2), Serenade To A Shylock (#2), Oh Sister! Ain't That Hot (#1), Dancing Fool (#1, 2), Pretty Doll (#1, 2), Minor Mood (#B), Honeysuckle Rose (Live) - Finally all four takes of Oh! Peter, one never issued before in any form-in sequence for comparison of the differences. Other Rhythmaker sides are all new takes never issued before. Despite take numbers on issued 78's the 1940 Condon sides here are the correct takes in the sequence recorded. They have been transferred directly from the 16" recording session acetates. First title is a breakdown after the excellent Waller & Russell solos. The 1942 Honeysuckle Rose is from Fat's concert featuring Kaminsky, Freeman, Kirby, Krupa, and Pee Wee Russell, Sixteen sides, all in the Chicago tradition.

The ANTHONY BRAXTON Interview

Music was always around the house. I grew up with lots of music and I was listening very seriously until I was about 9. I was into rock and roll - The Flamingos, Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers - that record still arouses memories - that was the music happening in the 50's, and I was a real rock and roll fan. And later I heard an Ahmad Jamal record - "At The Pershing" - it kind of changed my whole scene - it was shortly after that when I was exposed to Brubeck with Paul Desmond (that was the only type of jazz music I was exposed to; I hadn't heard any Charlie Parker - I think I might have heard one record by Charlie Parker that frightened me - listening to jazz that was easily accessible was a natural entry) and it was the day I made the decision to play the saxophone, whereas before I wanted to be a trumpet player, with Miles Davis, but after I heard Desmond I knew I wanted to play saxophone.

But I didn't get a chance to study until I was about eleven. I was playing clarinet in the high school band and started taking lessons in alto saxophone (I had started playing saxophone in 1959). Of course in high school I went through a period of playing bebop music, tunes, and that kind of thing, my chief inspirations being Paul Desmond, Lee Konitz and Charlie Parker. I had my own combos, and I worked with other people's combos. I became a student of Jack Gell at Chicago School of Music and studied there from 1959 to 1966 - basic theory, theory of saxophone (I started with clarinet and alto). Of course even where I went to school - in Chicago School of Music - they would not normally make you aware of jazz - there was a dance band, that's what they referred to as a jazz band. They played show tunes, that sort of things, arrangements of old Woody Herman charts, old Basie tunes.

In 1966 when I got out of the Army, at that time I began to think I was insane or something; I was becoming very paranoid because for the most part I couldn't find anyone that I could relate to musically in terms of what I wanted to do. I was becoming somewhat isolated. Not many people wanted me to play with them unless I played conventional, so when I ran into Roscoe Mitchell, who brought me to the A.A.C.M., the experimental band, I found a whole group of people - not only could I relate to them but they were all doing it, the whole community. I haven't seen anything like it since. It was a very important part of my life.

I'm kind of far away from the AACM now, I know that in the period when we were working, I don't think I was concerned with worries any more, it was just work. The AACM have created a separate school of thought, quite different from the jazz tradition of New York; probably the biggest difference in the

music between Chicago and New York is the environment - in Chicago there was time to research and study and refine some of the elements that constitute how the music would flow in Chicago. I think between '66 and '68, or maybe in '69, there was a lot of creativity happening; no one was so much concerned with labels, and because everybody came from different directions eventually they went and continued in their own directions. It was very interesting, nobody came out sounding alike. And yet at some point we embraced certain realities together. I don't know if all the music could be called jazz. Actually I'm involved in contemporary classical music and to some degree with improvised music. So what I do is a logical extension of my interest in both areas, which is one of the reasons why I say I'm not a jazz musician.

When John Coltrane died, I began to re-examine process, because I found that I couldn't continue playing modal music, for instance. Even John Coltrane himself talked about the fact that he loved to hear multi-rhythms in his music, and his music was at some point getting to be rhythmical, and after he died I found myself looking at that concept, but I was not interested in the intensity, because I did not see how I could be more intense than John Coltrane. So what would be the result of having a sound environment which is free rhythmically without the intensity? And I found that if you took away the drums and the bass you could open up the environment in the same way, and yet you wouldn't have the intensity. I began to reject intensity as being just a common setting for the music. I found that at some point intensity can become a mass, for lack of invention. So in 1966 I formed a group with violin and trumpet with Leo Smith and Leroy Jenkins. We wrote in as many different settings as we could think of. Ninety percent of the stuff with the group was improvised - of course, it depended on the composition, like the Kelvin series. I have a concept I work on - repetition music - it's designated "Kelvin". For that particular music it's about dealing with the repetitions, although there's much more room than say like the Lamont Young school which I found out about later. Repetition is the basis, the germ of that music, but it moves into it differently. So it depended on what elements we were working with, whether it was all improvised or not. But for the most part it was really like improvisation.

It was in the same period that compositionwise I wrote my piece for a hundred tubas, and five tubas; I began to initiate (1) new situation for the improviser and (2) new compositional situations, since I've always been interested in structuralism at some point. Also in 1966 I began to explore the possibilities for solo alto, because in that

particular period I was breaking down everything, like I was getting Webern off of me and yet I think what I got most out of contemporary classical music is the fact that the composer has so many different mediums that he can work in and it keeps his activity up. You can see his activity from different colors, which is what mediums are at some point. I just began to conceptually break down certain things and decide which avenues were available to me and which avenues I was interested in, and at some point solo saxophone was the legitimate avenue which hadn't really been explored (of course Coleman Hawkins had done some wonderful things, Eric Dolphy would do isolated spots) but it hadn't been explored in the sense of Stockhausen's or Schoenberg's piano music where each piece would be really one more different element, or something like that. And in that particular period I was very deeply into piano music; I've always loved solo piano music, and I found myself thinking, why not use the alto saxophone for my piano (as far as my improvised music was concerned), and continue to write solo music for piano, which would have to be interpreted by an interpreter. And I found then as now that music for solo saxophone would have to be very different from solo piano music; in fact there are a lot of available areas on the alto which aren't available on the piano and of course vice versa. So that's really how I arrived at that process.

I approach my solo music using different systems; the piece for Bobby Fischer for example has to do with certain systems, ways of constructing and approaching several problems, and certain ways to resolve them, in terms of actual makeup of the piece. It's dedicated to Bobby Fischer because he's very important to me. There's always a relationship of some sort with the one to whom the piece is dedicated (the pieces are almost always dedicated to someone), but it's not always a relationship like I'm trying to duplicate a chess game, playing Bobby Fischer's chess game with Spassky, not that comparable. The actual systems of the piece don't really have anything to do with chess, but because it seemed like it would be suitable for Bobby Fischer, which is why I include that in my program of performance. It's actually stage 5 of a whole series of pieces that I have for Bobby Fischer, all of them using certain systems which at some point make me think of Bobby Fischer. And that particular piece was in part just another emancipation of the area of this that's been touched; it's just some of the inherent potential that's in the instrument. Part of my thing has been that there are a lot of things happening with the saxophone which haven't been done yet.

Why an alto and not a clarinet, a soprano or a tenor? Well, merely because I put

with bill smith

the limitation on myself that I wanted to just do alto saxophone music, and I have a record out in Europe right now - "The Complete Braxton" - it wasn't my name, but they changed it, called it "The Complete Braxton" anyway - and there's a piece for solo contrabass clarinet and I intend whenever possible to do isolated solos on some of the other instruments. But I've always had a special feeling about the alto saxophone, so I decided to use that extensively for my experiments. The conceptual answers that I can come out with the alto saxophone could apply to my writing and for other things that I'm interested in. So I really just solo - I just give solo concerts on the alto saxophone, really because it's my only consideration in terms of how I limit myself.

What happens now that I don't play clubs - I never liked playing clubs and in fact I never played in them since "Circle" - we usually rent a concert hall and present the music in a way where people can just come and hear the music and not buy drinks or anything like that. So whatever halls are available we could use that; but that's not the problem, the problem is getting the money to get them. There are always places you can rent and put the music on. My understanding of what I'm doing is that I'm trying to be creative, and hopefully I'd like to put it in a situation where people could experience it, to be able to either like it or dislike it.

I'm a composer, and as a composer I'm just merely trying to be creative in different mediums. I feel that's the function of music. I'm interested in parade music. My piece for a hundred tubas hasn't been performed - but I would really like to get into parade music, then I'd like to realize a few of my orchestral pieces and continue my electronic music. I'm in residence in Paris and there's an electronic studio that I can go to every day now, and work on tapes; I'm able to realize projects that I couldn't do in America. And so it keeps me in Europe. If I could do the projects in America I would do it. Not because it's my home, but because it's a valid part of the plan. It still exists, in spite of us. And there's a lot of things to do. But you have to have some way of gaining facility - it's usually a University or something like that - or you have to have enough money to be able to live on this. I couldn't really make a living off my music in America, I'd have to do TV commercials or something like that, or play some sort of music I don't want to play. And at this point in my life I don't want to do that any more; I have an idea of what I want to pursue as far as the creative thing is concerned. I'm not as flexible as I used to be; I'm no longer interested in showing someone I can play bossa nova and so on.

If Eric Dolphy were alive right now we would really be able to relate to each



other; I know he was interested in some of the same elements I am. He had different solutions, of course. I thought that at some point there is definitely a line running from Parker and Dolphy like a continuous system to the kind of music I do. I know Charlie Parker wanted to study with Edgar Varese; I mean he was very much aware of the fact that he couldn't get all of his music through the alto saxophone. That's only one medium, and that's what I'm working with now. I'm working with as many different mediums as I can. The problem is to get into other mediums (for me, anyway) rather than just to present oneself in the bass-drums-piano situation. It gets to be quite boring.

One possibility to get the facility is the university. I think most universities have an orchestra, so at some point I would have the facility to use an orchestra, and the electronic studio if there is one, to get some of my written music performed. I wouldn't mind teaching, as long as it's not too much teaching. I've been teaching in Paris and lately I've been giving a lot of lectures, not just on my music but on progressions of modern music, usually starting from Schoenberg to Cage and Lamont Young, and from Charlie Parker to Albert Ayler, to give some real perspective on what the implications of that music are all about, and to teach it in a way that it can open people up, rather than close them and make them think in limited terms about the music. One of the problems with teachers is that they limit you in your understanding of creativity. It's surprising how many people can't really teach about improvised music in a way which is enlightening; there are not very many good teachers. For that matter, there are not that many good teachers in contemporary classical music. I think the emphasis in teaching is definitely on something that's not creative.

Another possibility, being a musician-in-residence for example, would be something that I would be interested in, as long as it's not too long. For instance, in America you have 4,000,000 composers in every university and once or twice a year they perform their own music, and 5 or 6 composers in their area will come in and be at the concert because they know that if they don't go to his concert, he won't go to their concert. You know there's a whole university composer's thing happening in America, in fact happening in Europe too, and these are people who for the most part like to drive and go out to play their music and live what they're supposed to be about (supposingly) as musicians and composers. The university's a somewhat safe haven, kind of too safe. Usually it's very dangerous, because 3/4 of the composers are idiot composers, so they expose people right off to very bad music. Your whole post-Webern period made some of the dullest music on this planet. As far as I'm concerned, all those people are indebted to Varese, so I don't know. I think it has something to do with the inability to have structure initiate what

you say you're about. So there's an advantage connected with the university in some part, like where you can make some money, and use the facility, and teach; but if you stay there too long, it can also become a disadvantage, not just to you but to the people around you.

The question then becomes how much of that can you take, does it impair what you're doing and does it enhance it, or if it does both, is it worth it? Do you get more out of it than what you put into it? You're dealing with a strange kind of balance in that situation; I imagine that if there's a good balance then it could work. You can make a living plus still be creative. But you're dealing with a lot of factors, you know. All the factors of course change, depending on what university you're dealing with. Some give you more room than others. But to just be in America and not connected with some sort of institution and trying to play creative music - well, not trying to play creative music but trying to be creative, you're put in a very strange position. So I could understand Marion Brown teaching for instance, and find some sort of meaning in that. For instance he has a family, and just because of that consideration alone he's not able to be like me, running around the planet in heavy wins and losses, taking the loss myself because I don't have to worry about a wife and kids. I imagine at some point he might really be able to dig it, but how much it takes away or adds to what he does as a performer, we'll see of course in the future.

I know a person like Stockhausen has complete facilities in Germany; as soon as something is innovated in technology that could lend itself toward music, in terms of its creative potential, he gets it very quickly. Or he's able to use it. I guess that's the optimum situation. But I guess at some point even Stockhausen has gone out of it. It seems like the more facility he gets, the less creative he is; he hasn't done anything decent in the past ten years, so I wonder what that means. It's a strange balance happening. I don't know, maybe the nicest thing that could happen is to do like Charles Ives, be creative as long as you can and say fuck it. He eventually gave up and just did insurance. But while he was creative, he was very creative. At some point we're all going to burn ourselves out.

And that's been the question around here - is it really necessary to have this kind of struggle to be creative? And if it is, is it worth it? Because it seems like the less struggle you have, the less dynamic your work becomes, as far as its relationship to what you were doing in the beginning. And yet I would hate to advocate starvation, because it's not really hip.

But to get out and try to perform your music, you enter the area of where you're making a living doing it, so you then have to deal with the available mediums to get it out, whether it's records or concerts or what have you; you then enter big business or business. And there are problems there, you know. The record

companies don't know who I am, and the ones who do know don't seem to be interested. They're only interested in recording you if at some point they can help you define what you're doing, in fact if they can have the ability to define 3/4 of what you're doing, so there's my problem. Like Ornette went through so many changes to get "Skies of America" performed, you wouldn't believe it (we won't go into that right now) but here is a man who is established now in terms of his creative ability, and he can barely get that project off; and it's not even about money, it's about something else - it's about control, white people don't mind giving black people money (of course we have black people with money) as long as they can define.

I think everybody knows the situation with jazz musicians, of course they'll do whatever they can do to you. The record companies, especially in America, are not interested in paying you any money, where you can get good musicians, or where you can do a project and have it done in a right way, and on top of that they have the nerve to want to tell you what you're doing, as if I don't know what I'm doing all these years. Something like the A & R man syndrome. And so I have no records out on a major record label in America, and I don't see that situation changing. Besides, I still get treated like a jazz musician rather than a concert musician - like when I got my piece for five tubas recorded, it was only because we had signed the contracts and everything before; I was supposed to come in with my bass, drums and trumpet, and I slipped in with five tubas, but it was too late - they were in the studio, and so he had to tolerate it. At the end he liked it, but I've never had a record date of any of my written music, and so I'm represented for the most part as a saxophone player or a woodwind player. But that's a small part of what I do.

I have never had access to other media, like television or radio to any great extent in America, but in Europe I've performed on television in Germany, France, and Amsterdam. I mean in America they're just getting Miles Davis on television. That's true. And that's only because it's a rock band. I think the whole situation is silly, I mean I don't even see Muddy Waters on television. I saw him on television ten years ago, one time, at some festival, a pseudo-jazz festival, and he stole the show. I think it's undebatable people could listen to my music if it was on television, and could see the process of the music being made. I could take advantage of the visual aspect of it too. So of course, that's to your advantage - I think that's why the popular musicians at some point are known so much. Television is a real medium. But I think we all know why the situation is like it is. I don't think it's going to change, not for a while.

For me I find that in this part of my life I would have more problems if I wasn't trying to make a living playing music. I have less problems than for instance if I were working at a job and playing music



at night, because then I wouldn't have the energy to try and develop what I'm doing - it takes a lot of energy to do something you don't want to do. I accept the situation that I have to exist in - even if I didn't accept it, it wouldn't make any difference. It's not changing. But we're talking about the situation now, which is that to be creative is at some point to be put into a very isolated position on the planet - where for the most part you're not able to get the music out, and have people experience it on a real planet level.

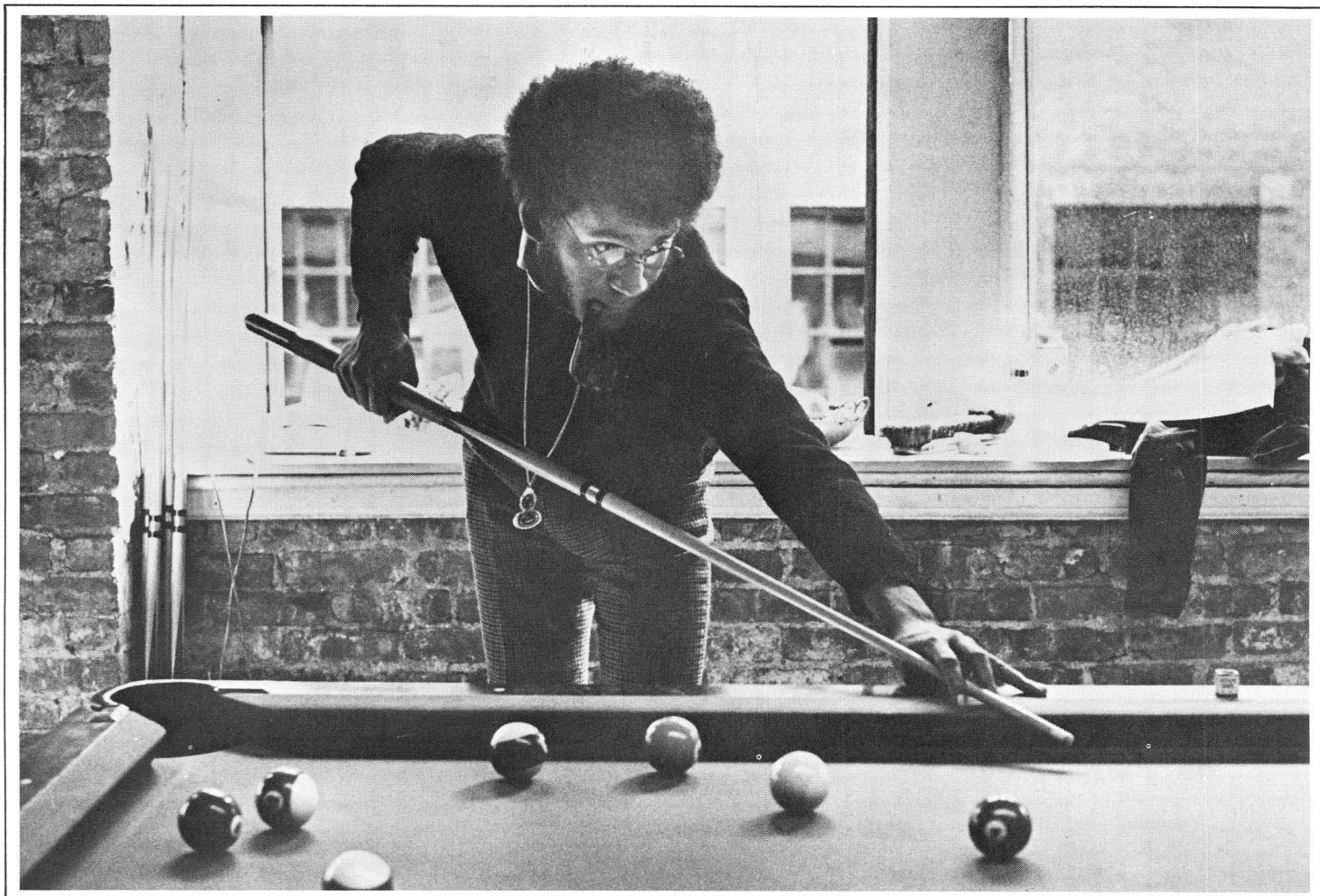
The dichotomy between the people and the music gets wider and wider. Because for the most part people who define phenomena, whether it's art or baking cookies or what have you - at some point they don't even deal with the music. There's a concerted effort in America in the past 6 or 7 years to kind of not use the music, to in fact push the music to one side, to talk about some of the weaker elements in the music, and to negate and invalidate contemporary creativity. So music gets to be somewhat esoteric which is not the purpose of it. And yet there's nothing we can do, there's no magazine

in America for creative music; there are no outlets, aside from the people who already know about it. It gets to be really something. I don't know if I could just relate it to the fact that I'm black, although in America the racial situation is manifested on every level of the culture so at some point of course my blackness is a barrier to me in terms of doing certain things and working at a certain level. But I don't attribute the fact that my music isn't available, or in a position where people can hear it, merely because of my blackness, I think the implications of creative music is what frightens most people. And I think it's basically people's misunderstanding about what creativity is in fact about in the first place that makes them repel any new effort. It would be much more comfortable if I would play jazz or if I would interpret Bach or something which is established, because of the reality aspect of the music.

But by the very nature of the system that we live in, once something creative is established, they find a way to turn it into a spectacle. It becomes established as something which other people will relate to, then they'll have another value

system they can talk about - this kind of relationship to Albert Ayler who becomes the norm then.

And here we're actually talking about flows and systems of art in Western civilization, because this whole situation is indigenous to our particular culture. In Africa you don't see no cat running around trying to get a record date because he can play flute or something, because everybody can play flute just as good as him, it's not even about how good you play. The music has more than just a casual interest, it's more than just a spectacle, it's about something else. We live in a situation that because there's no ritual, because this culture hasn't advanced to a point where spiritually or metaphysically or whatever people have got higher levels of cognizance, music becomes reduced to a diversion sort of thing. Even the particular periods of music, if you look at them, can be talked of in terms of the structure and what have you; the game seems to be to develop a new structure, so that we can say this is new, but actually nothing is very new. But by developing it, we can focus some



attention to what we do. And even in ten years if people should be listening to my music it would be for the wrong reasons or they'll think Braxton is really great or whatever, when actually nobody's doing anything else out of what they could do anyway. And all this trying to be creative is to realize the potential that is in us as human beings. It's really very natural to try to be creative, in fact it's not natural not to be creative. So we're placed in a very alien situation, not as a white man or a black man, but as a human being. This is not really a human situation that we walk around in. In that situation, it becomes important to have alternatives, for people whose activity is available as an alternative; creative music becomes a necessary alternative again (There's our reason for playing together). But I think that the way the situation is defined right now, my music could not appeal to the masses of people. Because there would have to be a lot of homework that would have to be done, not because my music's profound or anything, but because the nature of creativity has been distorted, to the degree where a person would have to be reschooled. I'm not talking about the people who come up under certain systems who naturally progress toward activities like mine, but I'm saying for the most part, it's a little bit different from the kind of music that's played on the radio, which is the kind of music for the most part that people are conditioned to dealing

with (not that I would want people to be conditioned to listen to my music, I wouldn't like people to be conditioned to listen to anything). And if at some point you've never been exposed to other alternatives, it can be somewhat difficult for people to experience it.

On the other hand it seemed to me last night (i.e. the concert given by Braxton in Toronto on June 16, 1973 - see August/September 1973 Coda, p.43) for instance (I don't know if all those people there were into creative music or contemporary improvised music), they were able to relate to it. The notion blowing around that people if given a chance couldn't really experience creative music is true to a degree, but at some point I find that a lot of people can relate to my music, in all of its different stages. I felt last night for instance the people were able to, even if they didn't exactly know what was happening, be open to experience it. And it's definitely true in Europe, and in France in particular since that's where I play most of the time - there, the audiences are more susceptible to new ideas than American audiences. In '69, I believe it was, concerning the influx of musicians from Chicago and New York - at some point the people became very aware of their music, mostly for the wrong reasons. But now I think I could say there's a real audience. The radical elements of the music are no longer impressive, at any rate. Now people can

really get down and listen to who's playing the music. When John Coltrane died, in America, for the most part when the media would centre on so-called new music, they would talk about the inadequacies of the younger musicians technically or something like that. Now we realize that we had those musicians only to thank, because most of the "polished" musicians are really playing accepted ideas, or ideas which Charlie Parker had initiated, you know?

People have the wrong idea about what jazz music is supposed to be, but I'm tired of fighting it. Charlie Parker was playing what he was playing; they called it jazz - I don't care if Louis Armstrong was the first to use that word or not - it's playing creative improvised music. And yet because the music was so creative, most of the people after him have not been able to understand that they should find their own processes in terms of their own solutions, or what have you. For instance I think the biggest problem that black people have in America is their inability to understand that they can define an "is" - their own situations. It's manifested in the music, I think that's what you're talking about. In fact jazz has been defined and pigeonholed to such a degree where in order for a person to pursue that type of music as a way of making his living, and being creative, he has to fall within the definitions of what that's supposed to be about and act accordingly.

Like I'm supposed to give you a bass, drums and rhythm section and work through tunes - Melancholy Baby or something, for the old folks - and I'm supposed to go out and play that, I become known as that, and it falls into T.S. Eliot's "formulated phrase" (Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, Lines 55-56: "And have known the eyes already, known them all; the eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase...") again, and that's not only how jazz is labeled but all our music's labeled. Like your contemporary classical musicians for the most part - well, their connection with Europe is obvious, but you go to a concert and the explanations for each piece will be four hours long to not only validate the music but also give a historical perspective in terms of what's gone down before it. I mean everybody's locked in by (1) the historical framework and (2) the fact that they haven't defined what they're doing.

That's why strong people are needed to hear what they themselves are doing and to have the integrity to stay with what they're doing. People like Lamont Young, for instance. Lamont Young is a composer in New York. For the most part I don't think the mass public knows his name, but he's a most important cat because he's been on the scene for 15 years (1) initiating his own concepts and (2) continuing to do what he's doing, and developing it. He becomes very important, it doesn't even matter whether or not you like him. We need alternatives, more people like Lamont Young, people who have an idea or the desire to want to be creative and who through the test of time will feel that they will be able to stay there and do what they do and develop it. And for me, the only course I have is to continue doing what I'm doing, period. Till I burn out and work at the Post Office or something. I think I do what I do because of who I am, but I'm also outside the general framework, like my music's not available for the most part on this planet, except say in Tokyo where I have music available - I can go and do a recording for the largest record company in Japan, with no vibration, with nobody running around and saying do this and do that, and with complete freedom with what I want to do, no question about it - and in Europe, but in America I don't have any music out because I haven't been O.K. 'd. I don't perform that much (I've never performed that much); recordwise, Delmark Records was the only outlet I had in America, and there's no distribution for those.

And so jazz has become a fixed medium, where to be a jazz musician you have to play in a certain way or whatever, and if you do well they give you five stars in Down Beat or something; you become a hero. The situation for creative music hasn't changed, either; although the situation for jazz has changed a little bit, I'm afraid that when you talk about creative music and when you talk about jazz you're talking about two different things, for the most part. I'm not trying to invalidate some of the musicians who come up playing what they called bebop,

who are really dealing with the reality of what their whole creative thing is all about, but when you're talking about jazz now, you're not talking about really creative music, you're talking about fixed solutions and even the jazz musicians who are able to get their music to the public come through a lot of definitions, a lot of things are changed. I don't know of anyone playing the music called jazz right now who's doing anything, I mean take somebody like Ornette Coleman for instance - I think Ornette's music has gone. He does what he does now, and he does it well, and it's not new to the extent where it challenges any notions of creativity, or even more than that, he does what he's done, or what he does. He's certainly still creative, it's certainly not still the same as when he was younger. I don't think it's so much that he's burned himself out as that he's lost a lot of energy and what-have-you through the living and the struggle, plus he's found a certain particular area that he wants to work in. And he does that. But for me, I'm not particularly interested in one particular aspect, my interest is that things keep moving along. And at some point I imagine that I'll burn out, or not have the ability to initiate something new, and maybe even become known for something that I've done or something, and be expected to be able to duplicate that. And maybe I won't even be able to do that. Which hopefully will be true. Leave it there and move on to something new.

One possibility is that I might remove myself from music entirely and devote myself to another love that I have, which is chess. I've been playing chess since I was in high school, I won my first trophy in high school, and it's a very important part of my life. It's just as lucrative as playing creative music, and I really love playing chess. I consider myself a good chess player, but I've never played it competitively on any kind of high level. I'm still studying for a mastership. I'd like to at least be a master. I have more work to do - I'm still studying more systems and I get a chance to play a lot in Paris - Yugoslavian players, and Egyptian players, so I'm relearning all of the opening systems, and doing a lot of theory right now. I'm hoping to start entering tournaments; I actually hope that I could start sometime this year but my schedule has been such that I haven't been able to study as much as I like, but when I can...

But getting back to what else can happen after you burn out - then what do you do? You become a legend, or you go teach in the university. But when the moment is happening - it's unfortunate that it can't be received. It sounds like I'm saying that if any cat comes up and says that he's doing something different, that he should immediately be pushed out and people should be exposed to what he's doing, of course that's not really happening, for every person who's legitimately coming up with something creative there are 400,000 charlatans too. Like most of the jazz music right now for example - we're in a very interesting period in jazz. In the 60's, a person like John Coltrane was

an honestly spiritual person who initiated a certain type of music; now in the 70's we see those intentions used - like everybody has a professional guru - and I find jazz very boring now, everybody talks about their religious beliefs, and has their little swami with them and for the most part the music is very dull, it's sacrilegious, it does more to confuse people. I'd rather listen to some rock than listen to most of the jazz although when I say that I find myself thinking "did I really mean it?", and out of the contemporary classical concerts you might find two decent concerts out of a hundred, because most of the people have become so in love with process that they forget about music.

It's quite possible that the energy source is going to shift from the United States to Europe for the further development of the music - there was a time when I would say no, it's not that critical, but I find myself wondering about that; I'm hoping that at some time the whole planet will be equally "is", in terms of the ability to initiate concepts. I doubt very seriously if America will become totally uncreative. But there are dangerous signs among the young musicians especially, that - I don't know how to say it - I don't hear that much creative improvised music, whether we want to call it jazz or not. Most of the gifted younger musicians - gifted technically - seem to be without the real understanding, the total perspective of what they're doing. I know that sounds somewhat negative, even though I'm saying it, and yet I might as well just say whatever I'm thinking. For me, I'm just bored with technique, I mean with that kind of technique; this is why I have not become impressed with some of the schools now which teach "Jazz". So-called, I mean they teach you how to play "correctly", and there's nothing more boring than a "correct" player in my opinion. It's all automatic, your situations are all pre-planned in terms of how you deal with certain harmonic situations, chord progressions and what have you. So there's not that much improvised music - jazz, or whatever you want to call it, that I find interesting. So I don't want anything to do with that. I left the jazz community a long time ago, and I think they were happy to see me go. I don't even listen to jazz any more, with the exception of old pieces of music that I like.

The problem is that there are not that many musicians on the whole planet that I really want to play with. Lately I've been really interested in doing duets with Richard Teitelbaum (he plays synthesizer, you know), and one of the main problems that George Conley and I run into any place on the planet is to find out what musicians are at some point being creative, I mean the first name that comes to my mind as far as improvised music is concerned is Derek Bailey. I don't know of any guitar player in America that could touch him. Bailey's English, it's indicative of some sort of change, I mean I think the idea that only black people could play jazz or be

creative - everybody's looking at that now - is seeing that it is of course racist. Like half of the creativity that I hear that is supposedly new is a drag. You know, you can't just embrace anything because it's new. As a safeguard you not only have your critics but you just have the whole way things are set up, in terms of longevity and what have you. And parts of that are valid too. That's all something you come up against, which is honest, but I don't know. I find most critics to be especially dangerous, especially in jazz music; like in Chicago, for instance, the critics really helped to destroy the AACM, by pushing out some figures and not talking about other figures, sort of separating them into who's good and who's not good, pitting the musicians against themselves. And they're all doing this under the guise of they know what they're talking about. They're the professionals. People who really know. And yet I don't know, I think the function of the critic is to make certain things available to people, and yet of course valid criticism is important too. I talk about critics and it's a problem for me, because in the west I think it's necessary to have critics. I mean our music isn't really about music, it's not about enhancing the general understanding we have about life, participating and that, because every one has a different understanding about life. So the critic reviews things from the historical standpoint, and the process, the position in this point of time on the planet is a valid one. A lot of critics seem to abuse it, where they know more about what a man's doing than what he knows, and usually they're so late. I don't think it would be better if critics were musicians, because every musician would write he was doing the most important thing in the world. Musicians are drags, although I think they should be able to define what they do. But as far as being a critic - if I was a critic I probably would "x" out 99 records out of 100 because of my own subjective understanding of what interests me. Musicians are very subjective, just because they're dealing in the medium themselves. It's like Aaron Copland writing a book about American music and spending one paragraph on jazz, dismissing it as bad-but-true that will soon go away or something. By his criteria the music wasn't even valid, never has been. He raped jazz. Anyway, the music exists or it doesn't, and it does. There's an interesting thing happening though in America; a lot of little creative groups are getting together, and people are just trying to be creative, manifested in the stuff you did with painting or music or what have you. In California people are going up into the mountains and hills to just do things to be creative, trying to get under condition, or reconditioned back to life. And it's not like them trying to make a living off it, you get to think that maybe trying to make a living off being creative is not the answer. It seems to be almost impossible. The hassle of having to make money interferes with your process. Creativity isn't a

spectacle, it's just something that people do, something that's related to being alive in the fullest sense of the word. But it's not salable. Actually, my music's not very salable anyway. But especially when I'm able to do some of the other aspects of my music, no one would consider doing it.

But even more than that, If America continues in the course that she's going, which is denying people the understanding of what creativity is all about. It's quite possible that the axis is going to shift to Europe or something, but I think it will still be some time at this point. We're moving to the decline of a whole civilization, we have to deal with that too, there's not going to be any change. I don't see any changes in the whole scene, the only thing to do at this point is to continue doing what you believe in. There's no question that I'm going to be accepted or not accepted, because it's not even about that, there's nothing to be done. We could say "Bomb America" but that won't even solve the problem, or go talk to the educated people of Down Beat Magazine, and that's not going to change, because the misunderstandings are so deeply imbedded in the culture not just about music but with dealing with existence, that I don't think one or two people can change anything.

All that has to do with cliques and everything too. I mean Cecil Taylor finally got a Guggenheim, which I think is really wonderful, but Cecil Taylor is a man whose contribution to music is not even debatable at this point - people attribute atonal improvisation to Ornette Coleman, but as far as that particular period Cecil was doing the same thing, in the same period. You can't say who was first or not. Now they've given him a Guggenheim, we're supposed to be happy. So it's the same thing, you still have to know somebody, or be around so long and have an output of music through a long time period where at some point they just have to deal with you, even if they don't like you. I mean there are still people who can't get into Cecil's music, but I think at some point we all have to give the man credit for what he's done. And he still doesn't work - understand, now. Cecil still isn't available for people who really want to hear him, he doesn't perform that much, and it's not because he charges too much money either. It's just because the way the situation is, that there's not the real need for Cecil Taylor because you could have Joey and the Flea-Bops or something; there's no understanding about what the man is, what his music is.

Now take Miles Davis for instance, who's supposed to be one of the richest black jazz musicians of America. He walks around talking about how great he is, and yet it seems to me that he could help some of the younger musicians - I'm not talking about me, since he probably couldn't stand my music, but what about the music he likes? He could do something with it. In America, how many black millionaires are there supposed to be? There are more black people than

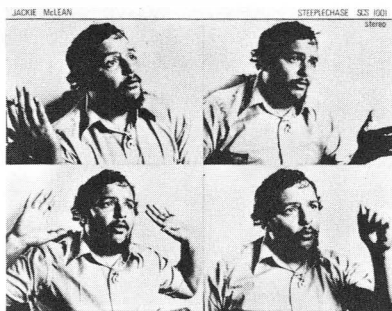
you would expect who have money, who at some point would really help, not just black people but help the scene, to initiate something that would be positive. Nothing's happening. They have that money but without the power of definition again, the power of being able to define. So that money's nothing. There's not any difference between the white and black bourgeoisie, except black bourgeoisie are imitating white bourgeoisie. The white one's an original one, the other's a copy. But in the final analysis, it's the same result. They don't feel any more relationship to me than any of the white millionaires, they feel even less, because they're trying to reject something. They're trying to push aside what they originally were and don't want to be.

Maybe the only way to make the system work is that it should be destroyed. And actually that seems to be the only thing that we've come out with, and we've known that when we came in - transformation. The system, as things stand right now, doesn't seem to lend itself toward some sort of real substantial change. In fact the way things are constructed, everything can be assimilated within the system and slightly altered (by "slightly altered" I mean "completely changed") then become part of the system, whether it's creativity or what have you. We could endure to continue doing what we profess to be about, the situation will change, I mean America's changing - I think in the next ten or twenty years we won't even be talking about America. Something's happening, and I think it's best for me to acknowledge it, so that I can learn from it. There's a lot of creative music happening in the underground, which is a very hopeful kind of sign. The mere fact that there are certain people on the planet who have the integrity and have the ability to go out and continue to initiate things which could be called creative, they become very important people. That's all. For as long as they're able to do what they're doing. But for the most part you don't know these people (like no one here knows about Richard Teitelbaum, the fact that they don't know about him is criminal, especially when you consider all the bad electronic music that's happening). They're usually kind of outcasts - for the most part no one can relate to them. And it's all over the planet; you go and look in the alleys and under the doorways, in the coal mines - they're there, lurking in the shadows: a significant amount of people in different parts of the planet who are genuinely creative. And I associate and attach myself to that.

Usually when I go to any new place I try to find out from the musicians - they'll usually say something like "this guy can't play," or "he's crazy," "he's not doing anything," "he's a sick, warped, demented fool," - and immediately I try to find him. He's probably one of us.

Special thanks to Dan Allen who transcribed and edited the original tape of this interview.

SteepleChase Records



SCS 1001

JACKIE McLEAN live at Montmartre

Jackie McLean (alto sax), Kenny Drew (piano), Bo Stief (bass), Alex Riel (drums)

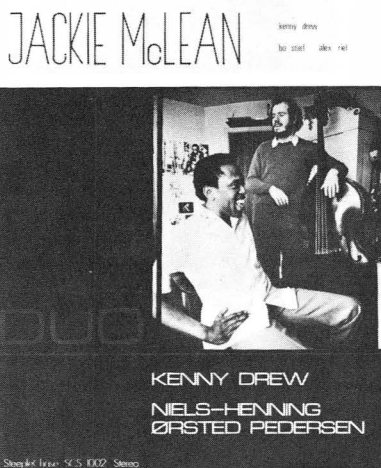
SIDE ONE: Smile - Das Dat.
SIDE TWO: Parker's Mood - Closing.

SCS 1002

DUO

Kenny Drew (piano & electric piano), Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen (bass).

SIDE ONE: In The Still Of The Woods - Come Summer - Lullaby - Kristine - Serenity - Once A Saturday Night.
SIDE TWO: Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans - Wave - Duo Trip - Hush-A-Bye.



SCS 1003

JOE ALBANY Birdtown Birds

Joe Albany (piano), Hugo Rasmussen (bass), Hans Nymand (drums).

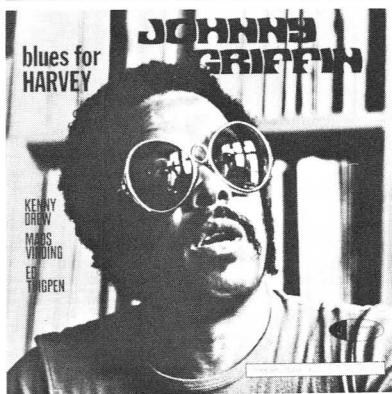
SIDE ONE: Birdtown Birds - Willow Weep For Me - Steeplechase - Sweet And Lovely - Night And Day.
SIDE TWO: C.C. Rider - I'm Getting Sentimental - Round About Midnight - Night In Tunisia.

SCS 1004

JOHNNY GRIFFIN blues for Harvey

Johnny Griffin (tenor sax), Kenny Drew (piano), Mads Vinding (bass), Ed Thigpen (drums)

SIDE ONE: That Party Upstairs - Alone Again.
SIDE TWO: Soft And Furry - Blues For Harvey - Rhythm-A-Ning.



SCS 1005

PAUL BLEY duets with Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen

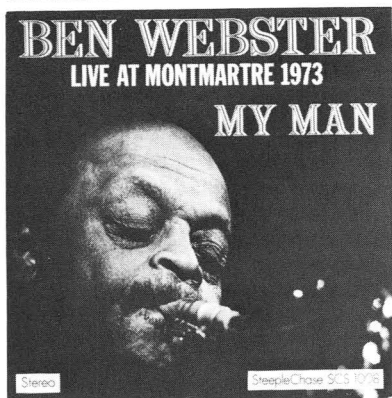
SIDE ONE: Meeting - Mating Of Urgency - Carla - Olhos De Gato.
SIDE TWO: Paradise Island - Upstairs - Later - Summer - Gesture Without Plot

SCS 1008

BEN WEBSTER live at Montmartre

Ben Webster (tenor sax), Ole Kock Hansen (piano), Bo Stief (bass), Alex Riel (drums).

SIDE ONE: Sunday - Willow Weep For Me - Exactly Like You.
SIDE TWO: Old Folks - I Got Rhythm - Set Call.



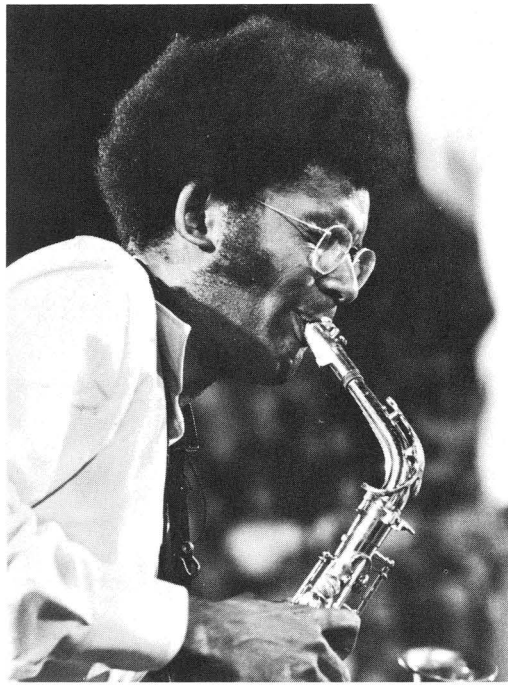
SCS 1009

JACKIE McLEAN Ode To Super

Jackie McLean (alto sax), Gary Bartz (alto sax), Thomas Clausen (piano), Bo Stief (bass), Alex Riel (drums).

SIDE ONE: Monk's Dance - Ode To Super - Great Rainstreet Blues.
SIDE TWO: Watercircle - Red Cross.

\$5.98 POSTPAID FROM CODA PUBLICATIONS



The ANTHONY BRAXTON Discography

RECORDINGS AS LEADER

Due to space limitations it has been impossible to reproduce accurately all of Anthony Braxton's composition titles in their original form. Wherever possible we have adhered to the original intention of the composer but in some instances the music is identified through the "dedications".

3 Compositions of New Jazz - Delmark 415

Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, CL, FL, Bells, Accordion, Musette, Snare Dru, Mixer
Leroy Jenkins - Violin, Viola, Recorder, Harmonica, Bass Drum, Cymbals, Slide Whistle
Leo Smith - Tp, Mellophone, Xylophone, Bottles, Kazoo
Richard Abrams - Piano, Alto Clarinet (side B only) Cello
(840M) - 44M - Realize
M488-44M - Z
The Bell

For Alto - Delmark 420/421

Anthony Braxton - alto saxophone solo
No. 1 Stage One: dedicated to multi-instrumentalist Jack Gell
No. 2 Stage Four: dedicated to composer John Cage
No. 3 Stage Two: dedicated to artist Murray De Pillars
No. 4 Stage Five: dedicated to pianist Cecil Taylor
Dedicated to Ann & Peter Allen
Dedicated to Susan Axelrod
No. 5 Stage Three: dedicated to my friend Kenny McKenny
Dedicated to multi-instrumentalist Leroy Jenkins

(both Delmark records recorded in Chicago)

Anthony Braxton - BYG 529.315

Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, CL, Contrabass, CL, FL, SoundMachine Chimes
Leo Smith - Tp, Flugelhorn, logs,
Leroy Jenkins - Violin, Viola, Mouth Organ, Hohner Organ, Flute, Harmonica
Steve McCall - Drums, Percussion, Darbouka
The Light On The Delta
Simple Like

(September 10, 1969 - Paris, France)

This time..... - BYG 529.347

Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, CL, Contrabass CL, FL, SoundMachine Chimes, Voice
Leo Smith - Tp, Flugelhorn, logs, Siren
Leroy Jenkins - Violin, Viola, Mouth Organ, Hohner Organ, Flute
Steve McCall - Drums, Percussion, Darbouka

Composition No. 1

Solo
Small Composition Nos. 1 to 5
in the street
this time
(January 1970 - Paris, France)

Recital Paris '71 - Futura 23

Anthony Braxton - alto saxophone solo/
piano solo
Come Sunday: dedicated to Johnny Hodges
GN6
(X'70B)... K
'7 : dedicated to David Tudor
(January 9, 1971 - Paris, France)

The Complete Braxton - Freedom 40112/3

(a) Anthony Braxton (soprano saxophone)
Chick Corea (piano)
(b) Anthony Braxton (alto and soprano saxophone)
Kenny Wheeler (trumpet, flugelhorn)

Dave Holland (Contra bass, cello)
Barry Altschul (percussion, Bells)
(c) Anthony Braxton - (four soprano saxophone solo)
(d) The London Tuba Ensemble - (Anthony Braxton conductor) - Geoffrey Adams, James Anderson, Michael Barnes, John Fletcher (E-flat tubas), Paul Lawrence (C-tuba)
(e) Anthony Braxton - Contrabass clarinet solo
(a) N 508-10
(4G)
(b) J-572
(431)-1
(b) 67M
F-12
(c) ZM-K-F
(b) R76-4
(d) Tuba Realization
(a) JNK
4-16
CJF
February 4/5, 1971 - London, England)

Donna Lee - America 30 AM 6122

Anthony Braxton - AS, CL, FL, Contrabass CL
Michael Smith - piano
Peter Warren - Contrabass
Oliver Johnson - Drums
Donna Lee
H-204
3 HF
G
You Go To My Head
Take one dedicated to Dinah Washington
Take two dedicated to Lee Konitz
60666 C
-66 M dedicated to Charles Warren
(February 18, 1972 - Paris, France)

Saxophone Improvisations
Series F - America 30 AM 011/012
Anthony Braxton - Alto saxophone solo
BWC -12
N-48 K

Stage 1
Stage 2
Stage 3
dedicated to Grandmaster Bobby Fischer
NR-12-C
(33M)
dedicated to Marie-Claude Cornet
RFO-M - F(32)
to Dave, Clair & Louise Holland
JMK-80
CFN-7
dedicated to Maurice McIntyre
178-F4
312 to Ann Taylor
NBH-7C
K7 to Buckminster Fuller
MMKF-6
(CN-72) to George Conley
(348-R)
C-233 to June Patton
104 - KELVIN
M - 12 to Phillip Glass
(February 25, 1972 - Paris, France)

Town Hall 1972 - Trio Records PA 3008/9
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, FL, Contrabass
CL, Sop & b-Flat CL,
Orchestra Chimes,
Percussion
David Holland - Contrabass
Phillip Wilson - Percussion (Pt 1 only)
John Stubblefield - tenor sax, FL, Bs CL,
Gong, percussion (Pt
2 only)
Jeanne Lee - Vocal (Pt. 2 only)
Barry Altschul - Percussion, Marimba
(Pt. 2 only)

Part 1
S-37C-67B - F7
dedicated to composer-percussionist
Jerome Cooper
G-10 4Z1

FK=47
dedicated to the composer-pianist
Frederic Rzewski
All The Things You Are
Part 2
W-12 ---- B-46
C28-12
:
4

dedicated to the vocalist Jeanne Lee
(May 22, 1972 - New York)

Four Compositions (1973) -
Nippon Columbia NCP 8504-N
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, FL, Contrabass
CL
Masahiko Sato - Piano
Keiki Midorikawa - Contrabass
Hozumi Tanaka - Percussion (on
composition 4 only)
dedicated to Richard Teitelbaum
dedicated to Richard Abrams
dedicated to Warne Marsh
dedicated to Laurent Goddet
January 11, 1973 - Tokyo, Japan

COLLECTIVE RECORDINGS

Circle: Live in German Concert
CBS-Sony SOPL 19-XJ
Anthony Braxton - Reeds, Percussion
Chick Corea - piano
David Holland - Contrabass, cello

Barry Altschul - percussion
Medley: Toy Room/Q and A
There Is No Greater Love
(November 28, 1970 - Isolome,
Germany)

Circle: Paris Concert - ECM 1018/19
Anthony Braxton - Reeds, Percussion
Chick Corea - piano
David Holland - Contrabass, cello
Barry Altschul - Percussion
Nefertitti
Song For The Newborn
Duet
Lookout Farm
73 KELVIN (Variation 3)
Toy Room
Q & A
No Greater Love
(February 21, 1971 - Paris, France)

Circle: Gathering - CBS-Sony SOPL 20-XJ
Anthony Braxton - Reeds, Percussion
Chick Corea - piano, bamboo flute, per-
cussion
David Holland - Contrabass, cello, guitar,
percussion
Barry Altschul - Percussion, finger piano
Gathering Part 1
Gathering Part 2
(March 17, 1971 - New York)

Familie - Birth 008
Anthony Braxton - Reeds, Percussion
Gunter Hampel - Reeds, Vibes
Jeanne Lee - Vocal
Familie Part 1
Familie Part 2
(April 1, 1972 - Paris, France)

RECORDINGS AS SIDEMAN

Richard Abrams - Levels and Degrees of
Light - Delmark 413
Richard Abrams - Piano, clarinet
Anthony Braxton - Alto saxophone
Leroy Jenkins - Violin (Side 2)
Maurice McIntyre - Tenor saxophone
Gordon Emmanuel - Vibes (side 1)
Charles Clark - Contrabass
Leonard Jones - Contrabass (side 2)
Thurman Barker - Percussion
Penelope Taylor - Vocal (side 1)
David Moore - Poet (side 2)
Levels And Degrees Of Light
My Thoughts Are My Future Now And
Forever
The Bird Song
(Chicago, Ill.)

Gunter Hampel - The 8th of July 1969 -
Birth NJ001
Gunter Hampel - Piano, Vibes, Bass
clarinet
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, Contrabass CL
Willem Breuker - AS, TS, SS, Bass clar-
inet
Jeanne Lee - vocal
Arjen Gorter - Bass guitar, Contra-
bass
Steve McCall - Percussion
We Move
Morning Song
Crepuscule
The 8th of July 1969
(July 8, 1969 - Utrecht, Holland)

Instant Composers Pool - ICP 007/008
Jeanne Lee - Vocal
Gunter Hampel - Vibraphone
Anthony Braxton - Contrabass clarinet
Willem Breuker - Bass clarinet
Arjen Gorter - Bass
Steve McCall - Percussion
Gib Mir Noch Ein Spiegelei Mit Schinken
(July 8, 1969 - Utrecht, Holland)

Alan Silva - Luna Surface - BYG 529.312
Bernard Vitet - Tp, French horn
Grachan Moncur 111 - Trombone
Archie Shepp - SS
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS
Kenneth Terrroade - TS
Dave Burrell - Piano
Alan Silva - Violin
Leroy Jenkins - Violin, Viola
Beb Guerin - Contrabass
Malachi Favors - Contrabass
Claude Delcloo - Percussion
From The Lunar Surface Part 1
From The Lunar Surface Part 2
(July 10, 1969 - Paris, France)

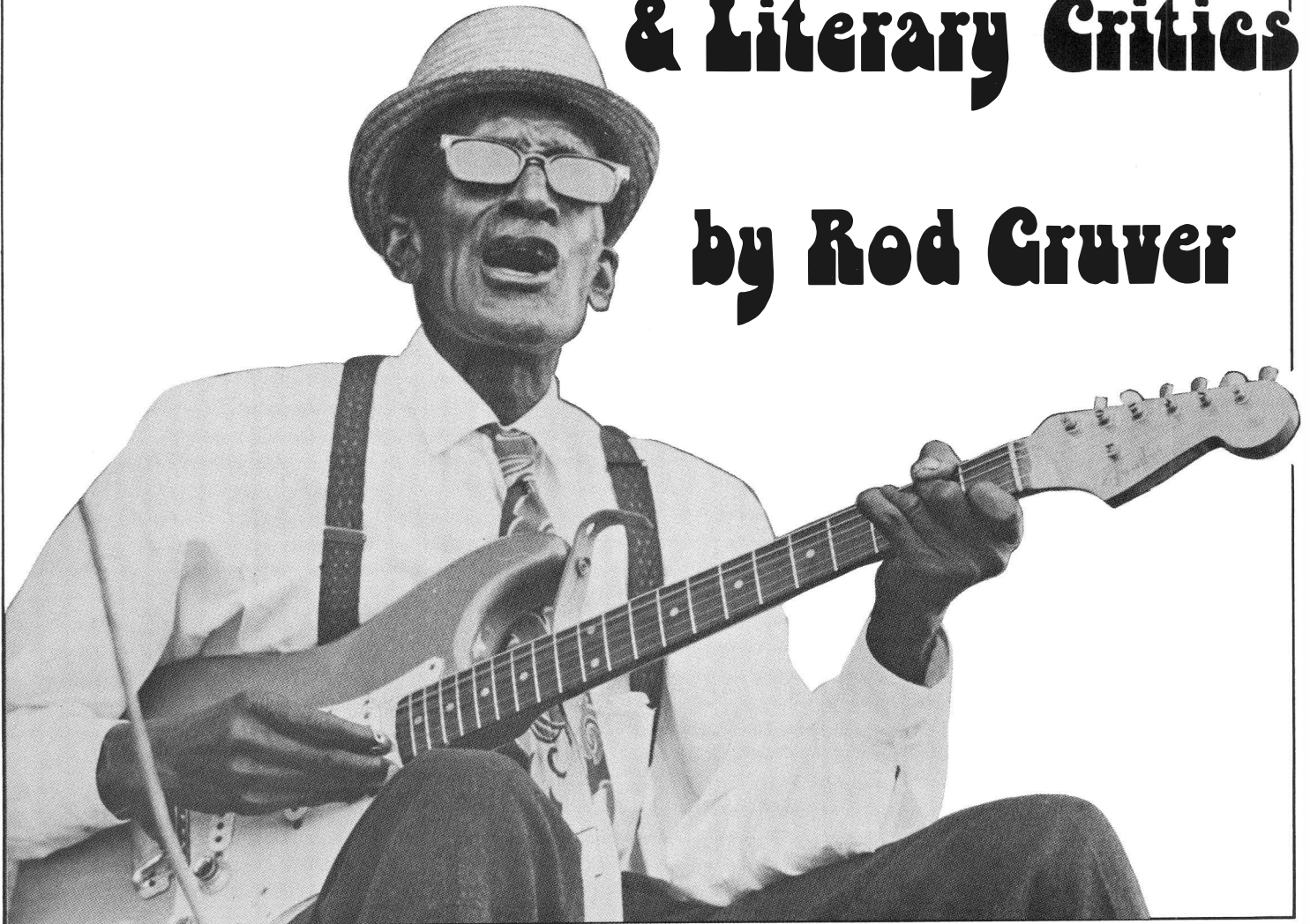
Jacques Coursil - Black Suite - America
30 AM 6111
Jacques Coursil - Trumpet
Anthony Braxton - Contrabass CL, SS
Arthur Jones - Alto sax
Burton Greene - Piano
Beb Guerin - Contrabass
Claude Delcloo - Percussion
Black Suite Part 1
Black Suite Part 2
(July 10, 1969 - Paris, France)

Archie Shepp and Philly Joe Jones -
America 30 AM 6102
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS
Leroy Jenkins - Violin
Chicago Beau - Vocal, SS, Harmonica
Julio Finn - Harmonica
Archie Shepp - TS, Piano
Earl Freeman - Contrabass
Philly Joe Jones - Percussion
The Lowlands
Howling In The Silence
(a) Raynes or Thunders
(b) Julio's Song
(December 11, 1969 - Paris, France)

Marion Brown - Afternoon of a Georgia
Faun - ECM 1004
Marion Brown - AS, Zomari, Percus-
sion
Anthony Braxton - AS, SS, CL, Contrabass
CL, Musette, FL, Per-
cussion
Chick Corea - Piano
Andrew Cyrille - Percussion
Larry Curtis - Percussion
William Green - Top O'Lin, Percussion
Jack Gregg - Contrabass, Percus-
sion
Jeanne Lee - Vocal, Percussion
Billy Malone - African Drum
Bennie Maupin - TS, AL FL, B CL, Bells
Acorn, Wooden Flute
Gayle Palmore - Vocal, Piano, Percus-
sion
Afternoon Of A Georgia Faun
Djinji's Corner
(August 10, 1970 - New York)

Blues Poets, Interviewers & Literary Critics

by Rod Cruver



Just as sociology is the discipline that studies man in groups, so literary criticism is the discipline that studies poetry. Thus since blues is a kind of poetry, one would naturally assume that blues journals would be full of literary criticism, filled with articles devoted to the analysis of blues poems. But such is not the case. It is the interview which fills up these journals. Thus it seems time to look at the differences between interviews and criticism, to see if perhaps we are not missing something by our one-sided preferences for the former.

The value of interviews lies in the information that informants can provide about their own lives, families, communities, regions and their musical training and influences. Singers can tell about how their music relates to the local religion, social structure and politics. As representatives of a musical tradition, their views about these factors will help us in understanding the attitudes and orientations expressed in their songs. The opinions informants may have about the origin and purpose of any aspect of blues poetry -

its three-line stanza, caesura, meter or rhyme scheme - will give scholars leads that can be followed up and tested. Often a few lines can reveal oppositions and alliances that will lead to theories that may overturn long established views. Hearing Leadbelly say that it was the white boss who was meant when workers sang "Go dig a hole, put the devil in" showed an opposition that threw new light on the blues. The attitude he expressed toward religious hypocracies in his Library of Congress recordings led me to find and explore the antagonism that exists between blues and the church, to see that each is at odds with the philosophy of the other.

A glance at what interviews can do will show that nothing has been said about their capacity to explain the meanings of songs and poems. Yet we still seem to consider interviews as unimpeachable sources of meaning, the main guide of interpretation. Who should know more about a poem's meaning, we say, than the man who wrote it. Poets themselves have often deplored critical analysis as parasitical; poets have frequently insulted critics by saying that

they only tear poems apart because they are frustrated by an inability to write them.

What poets and interviewers fail to realize is that criticism is a separate and valid field of its own; it is both different from and necessary to literary creation. Without critics to make his work meaningful, a writer may remain obscure for years, as Melville did, or be rated under lesser poets of their own day as Keats was. But if he has critics helping to make his meanings clear, a poet is assured of eventually reaching his proper place in the pantheon of literary gods. Top-notch poets are seldom good enough critics to make their own works meaningful, to raise themselves to where they rightfully belong. More often than not what they say about their own poems is so wide of the mark that it has less value as criticism than it does as biography. While their statements can sometimes be helpful to critics, how they interpret their own works cannot be considered as necessarily valid. Failure to understand this age-old axiom of literary criticism has led to a number of inadequate interpretations of particular blues songs.

To see the damage that can be done to the blues by taking poets' ideas about their own works as definitive statements, notice how Sam Charters sums up the results of his interviews. He says: "Many of the singers...feel that it is the singer himself who must have the emotional experience that the blues expresses."(1) Charters' conclusion, which nearly all blues writers share, forces us to think of the blues as basically autobiographical, makes it appear as if all blues were little more than direct, literal accounts of each poet's personal experience. Yet if Charters' conclusion were true, we would have to eliminate blues from the realm of literary art, since poetry is defined not by how closely it parallels a poet's life but how it has transformed that life.

While a poem may take its content from personal experience, it cannot simply repeat it and remain an art. It is the imaginative transformation of material that makes for poetry not the mere verbal repetition of some actual event. What the poet does with his material, what he creates out of it, is what we read and enjoy as poetry. If poems really were no more than direct reports of personal experience, what would there be to exult in, to make us marvel at the poet's creative imagination?

To see how misleading blues poets themselves can be, notice what Memphis Willie B. says the blues is about. Charters quotes him as saying, "It's about what a man feels when his wife leaves him..."(2) Since Memphis Willie B. was still married when he said this and since some of his blues are about "what a man feels when his wife leaves him", we can see that blues singers don't have to have all the emotional experiences their songs express, that they can imagine how some things feel without having to experience them personally. While this conclusion may not seem too important at first glance, it opens the blues to genuine criticism, to finding in them the symbolic values and meanings of genuine poetry instead of only the verbal husks of warmed-over personal experience.

Still another false assumption derived from blues poets is the idea that blues is a poetry of resignation, sorrow and despair, that its songs speak of "disappointment and danger".(3) Henry Townsend told Charters that the subject of blues is "Trouble...that's right. That's the one word solution. Trouble."(4) Summarizing what many bluesmen have told him, Charters says, "They think of the blues as an expression of the difficulties and disappointments of the life that they have seen in the streets and tenements and the poor farms."(5)

While Charters' summary makes it appear as if blues were little more than factual reports of ghetto and farm conditions, blues is primarily an erotic poetry of rebellion against the Puritan ethos. Rather than merely report on tenement conditions, the majority of blues are humorous songs of extra-marital sex. Most blues are Saturnalian reversals of one or more Puritan values, which hardly suggests the typical view of blues as a song of sorrow

and despair.

While the settings of most blues dramas are cheap rooms, taverns, jails, dark alleys and crowded tenement streets, the acts that occur in them often celebrate the joys of sensuous pleasures. One has only to listen to the lyrics of blues rather than be influenced by its typical melancholy sound to see that blues gets esthetic variety from the contrast between its whimsical humor and its somber tone. The melancholy sound not only gives blues ambivalence but it also functions as a cover to hide the rebellion secreted in its subversive lyrics. If the blues inversions of Puritan values had not been hidden by melancholy sounds (which made listeners think the singers were only moaning and crying), the songs would have been censored before their revolutionary work was done. Thus it seems more reasonable to explain blues sorrow and despair on esthetic and functional grounds rather than by any reference to the personal sadness of the singers. How could they possibly be feeling sad everytime they sing? While a poet may very well have been feeling the sorrow his poem depicts, its presence in the poem must always be justified on non-personal grounds alone, by the functional role it plays as part of an organic whole.

There is, of course, the very real possibility that blues singers knew that their songs added up to a joyous inversion of the Puritan ethos and that they purposely created a view of the blues as sad to throw censors off their trail. It was advantageous for them to have people think of blues as sad because it allowed the hidden rebellion to work its magic subliminally, to seep slowly into the American mind by the subtle process of osmosis.

But if interviews have inspired a number of erroneous generalizations about the blues, they have also led to numerous misinterpretations of individual songs. Because of his belief in the autobiographical nature of blues, Charters interviewed Sleepy John Estes not to discover any meaning in his Floating Bridge but only to find out about an actual experience that he assumed the song was re-telling. Thus Charters' explanation of it amounts to no more than a transcription of Estes' own account of his personal experience. Just before letting him tell his story, Charters says that Estes had described the near drowning that was the subject of his poem Floating Bridge. The blues that Charters thinks is only a re-telling of an actual event follows:

Now I never will forget that floating
bridge.
Now I never will forget that floating
bridge.
Now I never will forget that floating
bridge.
Tell me five minutes time in the
water I was hid.
When I was going down I threw
up my hands.
When I was going down I threw
up my hands.
When I was going down I threw
up my hands.
Please take me on dry land.
Now they carried me in the house

and they laid me 'cross the bank.
Now they carried me in the house
and they laid me 'cross the bank.
Now they carried me in the house
and they laid me 'cross the bank.
They dried me off and they laid me
in the bed.
Now they dried me off and they laid
me in the bed.
Now they dried me off and they laid
me in the bed.
Couldn't hear nothing but muddy
water running through my head.
Now my mother often taught me,
quit playing a bum.
Now my mother often taught me,
quit playing a bum.
Now my mother often taught me,
quit playing a bum.
Now my mother often taught me,
quit playing a bum.
Go somewhere, settle down and
make a crop.
Now the people standing on the
bridge was screaming and crying.
Now the people on the bridge was
screaming and crying.
Now the people on the bridge stand-
ing screaming and crying.
Lord, have mercy while we gwine.

Charters never bothered to analyze Floating Bridge as a poem because he thought he had fully accounted for it by identifying its content with a real life experience. But his method yielded no meaning, no quality of poetry whatever. The only way to get meaning out of it is to forget Estes' near drowning and to look at what he created, what he turned his experience into. By this method we can see that the song's theme is man's dependence on others, his need for both physical assistance and spiritual advice, for the brotherhood of man, perhaps. Notice, for example, how Estes has put his speaker into a situation in which he must have help or die. The man throws up his hands, cries out for help, and his friends respond. It is only by seeing the song as developing the theme of dependence and mutual aid that we can make sense of his mother's advice. Its function is to complement the physical assistance already given by adding some spiritual advice to it. Without both, the poem seems to be saying, we would all be lost. Thus we can best appreciate the full power of Estes' Floating Bridge only by going beyond the facts brought out in Charters' interview and by looking at it as a thing-in-itself, a self-contained whole. It is interesting to know that Estes used an event in his own life as raw material for his song; but the information helps in no way to interpret what he turned his material into, what he created out of it.

That poets are generally poor sources of information about the meaning of their own poems became clear centuries ago to the first interviewer of them all - Plato. Like his current counterparts, he too believed that the best place to go for the meaning of poems was to the men who wrote them. So, he says,

I went to the poets... I took them
some of the most elaborate pas-
sages in their own writings, and
asked what was the meaning of them

...Will you believe me? there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration.(7)

The reason that so few poets are good critics is that creation and criticism requires kinds of mentality that are seldom combined in the same man. Whereas the creative mind likes to put words together in new and unusual patterns, join them in ways that make them mean more than their literal meanings say, the critical mind likes to take poems apart, to dissect and analyze the hidden meanings they always contain. The poet's job is to say through metaphor those things that can't be said directly, to express the inexpressible symbolically. While most poets are not without some sort of world view, they need only a superficial acquaintance with ideas to be able to make artistic use of them. The critic's job is to make the poem as understandable as he can, to catch and hold some fleeting glimpse of its total meaning.

Very few poets have ever been professional philosophers and some, like Wordsworth in his "Intimations and Immortality", have even failed to get their sources right. This kind of error would be a grievous mistake in criticism, which has external references that it can be checked against. But since poets are using ideas primarily to show how they feel instead of expounding them as a coherent philosophy, such an error is inconsequential. Since the critical and creative minds seem to call for such divergent talents, it is no wonder they are so seldom combined in one man; that they are so divergent is why we have need of both poets and critics, the first to create and the second to explain.

Once a poet has finished a poem, it is no more his as a work of art than a symphony can be said to belong to its composer. As an artist, the poet's work is done once he has completed his poem. Afterwards, he is no more privy to its secrets than any other competent reader. As far as interpreting his own poem goes, a poet is as liable to the same errors and misunderstandings as anyone else. If each of us could find a poem we had written several years ago, think how irrelevant to its meaning the intentions we had at the time would seem now and how hard it would be to explain the meaning each of its symbols had then. If poets were capable of explaining their own poems, we would have much more good criticism from them than we do. As any literate person well knows, what we have is practically nothing.

If poets always knew what they had created, how many could have kept silent through the centuries? Though it need not disturb us, the fact is that poets just do not know the full meaning of what they write and are, as Plato discovered so long ago, neither good critics nor adequate theorists. That creative writers are poor theorists is shown by Zola who thought he was writing scientifically controlled observations while producing melodramatic and symbolic novels, by Gogol who con-

sidered himself as a realistic social reformer while creating stories full of grotesque and fantastic characters(8), and by Emily Dickinson who judged poems great if they made the top of her head fly off.

If a poet's announced intention were relevant to his work, a critic would have to limit his analysis to the meaning it had for the poet and his contemporaries. Any work, however, will acquire new meanings as historical period change and valid interpretations accumulate. Hamlet is far richer for us than it ever could have been for Shakespeare or the audiences at the Globe, for we are not only better educated than they were but we have also had the advantage of three hundred years of criticism. If we had to base our interpretation of Hamlet on Shakespeare's intention, whatever it may have been, we should have to ignore what each age and the thousands of Hamlet critics have added to it.

If a poet's intentions were relevant to his poems, they should carry over in those cases where poets have illustrated their own works; that is, if they had a clear intention in one art, it should logically appear in the other art as well. Yet

a comparison of the poetry and painting of Blake, or of Rossetti, will show that the character... of their poetry and painting is very different, even divergent. A grotesque little animal (drawn by Blake) is supposed to illustrate 'Tyger, Tyger! burning bright'. Thackeray illustrated *Vanity Fair* himself, but his smirky caricature of Becky Sharp has hardly anything to do with the complex character of the novel.(9)

Wellek and Warren conclude their study of the author's intention by saying, "It is simply impossible to rely on... the intentions of an author, as they might not even represent an accurate commentary on his work, and at their best are no more than such a commentary."(10)

Northrop Frye shows that intention can have meaning only in discursive writing, "where correspondence of a verbal pattern with what it describes is of primary importance."(11) Since poets, unlike non-fiction writers, never know exactly what they are aiming at until they hit it, until the right inspiration comes and the words fall magically into place, the question of intention in poetry is of secondary importance; "... a poet's primary concern is to produce a work of art, and hence his intention can only be expressed by a kind of tautology"(12)--e.g., What I made is what I wanted to make. "One has to assume, as an essential heuristic axiom, that the work as produced constitutes the definitive record of the writer's intention"(13), says Frye. In other words, "What the poet meant to say... is... the poem itself."(14)

The conclusion that seems most appropriate here is that the interview can be of great value provided we recognize its limitations. It can tell us much about the poet as a man and about his social milieu, what he thought his intentions were and what he knows about his medium. But it can tell us very little about the man as a poet or what his poems mean. For that, we

must depend upon the critics. Archibald MacLeish said in "Ars Poetica" that poems are "mute", "dumb", "wordless" and "silent", which is a poet's indirect way of saying that poems can show talking about the ideas and feelings it presents. To make poems talk, to make them tell us what they mean, we cannot depend upon the poet who made them silent in the first place. For that, we need the literary critic, a man whose special training and analytical mind permit him alone to say what it is that poems present.

Perhaps a final consideration that applies especially when whites are interviewing blues singers is that even the interview itself may have to be interpreted as a kind of poem, as a way of saying one thing and meaning another. In his *Twelve Million Black Voices* Richard Wright has shown how Negroes had to learn how to say only what they thought the white man wanted them to say.

Even when a white man asked us an innocent question, some unconscious part of us would listen closely, not only to the obvious words but also to the intonations of voice that indicated what kind of answer he wanted; and automatically, we would determine whether an affirmative or negative reply was expected, and we would answer, not in terms of objective truth, but in terms of what the white man wanted to hear... Always we said what we thought the whites wanted to hear.(15)

While this passage was written in 1941, there is little reason to suppose that the lower class Negro has changed much in his behavior toward whites or in his trust of them. Thus even if there were evidence that the poet could tell us what his poems mean or that he even wanted to, there is, as regards the interviewing of black bluesmen, the added problem that they may only be telling us what they think we want to hear or what they think we should here.

FOOTNOTES

1. Sam Charters, *The Poetry of the Blues* (New York, 1963), p. 12.
2. Quoted by Charters.
3. Charters, p. 13.
4. Quoted by Charters, p. 12.
5. Charters, p. 11.
6. Charters, p. 21.
7. Quoted by William K. Winsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley in "The Intentional Fallacy" in *Problems in Aesthetics* ed. Morris Weitz (New York, 1959), p. 278.
8. Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York, 1956), p. 149.
9. Wellek and Warren, p. 128.
10. Wellek and Warren, p. 149.
11. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (New York, 1969), p. 86.
12. Frye.
13. Frye, p. 87.
14. Frye.
15. Quoted by Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White* (New York, 1964), pp. 101-102.



Jack Chambers
Peter Friedman
Doug Langille
Roger Misiewicz
John Norris
Harvey Pekar
Bill Smith
Barry Tepperman
Dean Tudor
Tex Wyndham

ANTHONY BRAXTON

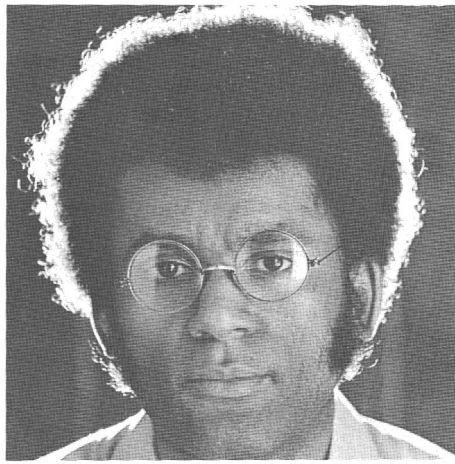
Saxophone Improvisations Series F.
America 30 AM 011-12
Town Hall 1972
Trio (Japanese) PA-3008/9
The Complete Braxton
Freedom (French) FLP 40112/113

For a whole week in June 1973 my family and I had the opportunity of having, as a house guest, Anthony Braxton. From that period came the interview in the front part of this issue of Coda, an interview that I consider to be the most important document that I have personally been responsible for. Due to it being published in the same issue as the following record reviews it is unnecessary for me to attempt to describe the reasons and attitudes of Anthony Braxton in creating this music.

"Series F" provides the art of the creative musician in its essence. There are no trappings, no rhythmic support, save his own natural energies, just Braxton presenting himself in the role as an alto soloist. A difficult undertaking. A superficial introduction to his solo music, for example the tune titles and liner notes, may give one the feeling of too much technology, leading to a resultant sterility in the music, but this is not so. Titles such as BWC - 12

N - 48 K (Stages 1-3) should not lead one into any preconceived assumptions to the sound of the music, for although the titles carry these seemingly mathematical tabulations, they are mostly for his own reference, a system that he prefers to the "Blues for Joe" attitude. This piece for example carries the subheading as a tribute to the chess master, Bobby Fischer. In fact all the titles, in one way or another, are dedicated to people in his life, and for me reflect, musically, the impressions he has of them. A composition for designer Buckminster Fuller, NBH-7C

K7, gives one the space of architecture, soft arpeggios with areas of silence, the music accompanying itself with the physical rhythmic noise of the saxophone keys, the two pieces dedicated to women, Marie-Claude Conet (NR-12-C (33M)) and Ann Taylor (178-F4 312) are both warm ballads, not that different to how I would have expected Johnny Hodges to have reacted under similar circumstances. One for friend and travelling companion George Conley - bouncing happily along,



the Holland family, composer Phillip Glass, saxophonist Maurice McIntyre... and more.

Braxton is musically a daring man and these two records allow you to absorb his music in a very pure form.

I like or admire, listen to and try to learn from all of Braxton's music, but "Town Hall 1972" just simply surpasses likes or dislikes. It rises above all the tatty little cliches of text book descriptions. Pulsing, multirhythmic improvised music, pulling you along as the leaf on its fast flowing current river, allowed only to slow down with its expansion. For the first two sides of this recording Braxton has assembled an amazing trio: David Holland (bass), Phillip Wilson (percussion). David Holland, apart from his obvious virtuoso technique, has a compatibility merger with Braxton that borders on spooky. His feelings for the shifts and changes is an uncanny complement for the saxophonist. Wilson is unknown to me, but if all these unknowns (?) keep appearing from nowhere then this music can never end. Stylistically he comes from the group of percussionists (Rashied Ali, Milford Graves, Andrew Cyrille, Barry Altschul), that has rhythmically freed the drummer from the stilted tedious chomp of the Hi-Hat. Superb.

From the start the jagged, up-tempo loose bebop music that Anthony Braxton articulates so beautifully roars out, expanding and changing its sense and form so that at times the slender thread almost breaks. Finally in the second half of the piece he leaps into the Jerome Kern standard, All The Things You Are. What an apt title. David Holland is a "fast" bass player, and to have so much left in him after what had gone before to produce

a glorious solo, makes one flop from sheer exhaustion.

Part two of the concert, both sides of the second record, changes in form completely. The music is still based almost entirely on improvisation, but with Braxton and Holland is the voice of Jeanne Lee, percussionist Barry Altschul, and woodwinds and percussion by John Stubblefield. This long piece dedicated to Jeanne Lee, is divided into three parts: (1) Collective improvisation, (2) Song, (3) solo situations with accompaniment. The entire beauty of the piece, as a whole, relies on the reaction of the performers to each other, for one to take a lead and create a level for one or more of the others to expand it and become the new lead. Open music with collective response which naturally changes constantly, in sound and space structures, producing tensions, textures and colours that only great improvised communication can do.

This concert represents Anthony Braxton's improvised music on its highest level, with the most distinguished performers of its form playing it. Jazz music has reached yet another high plain, a level that lifts it above all else, and this time around make no mistake, Anthony Braxton is the new high priest.

It's unlikely that there is such a thing as the COMPLETE Anthony Braxton, for this would surely mean that he had ended. The title of this two record set comes from the multiple situations in which his music is presented. Two tracks as duets, soprano and piano, with Chick Corea; three tracks with the quartet of Holland, Altschul and Canadian trumpeter Kenny Wheeler; a multi-tracked piece for four sopranos, a composition for five tubas; and one track of solo contrabass clarinet. The duets with Corea have the architectural feeling that I talked of earlier - two performers just giving and taking of each other on a very high organised level. The two composed (?) pieces, one for four sopranos, that he himself performs, and for five tubas, clearly illustrate Braxton's prowess as a serious 20th century composer. The three pieces by the quartet are so different in content, that on this basis alone, this man's abilities are awesome. Some very fine Kenny Wheeler for Canadian content.... And a contrabass clarinet solo!

He is here, playing, just waiting for you to listen. He knows already what he is, and presents these opportunities for you to discover who you are. It does not

matter if your likes are Johnny Hodges, Lester Young, Bird, Ornette or Trane, for Anthony Braxton is the present account of that lineage. He is THE one... so take it now...don't wait like you did with all the others, for ten years to pass, his music is pure and accessible, it's real and if it does not reach your ears/head/heart then it is you who will be the poorer. - B. S.

CLANCY HAYES

Clanco LRC 814

The Blues Alley Cats are a mainstream quintet (clarinet/vibes, piano, guitar, bass, drums), with a dollop of traditional flavoring, who handle the instrumental work on this LP. They have four tracks to themselves, and while Tommy Gwaltney's biting, agile clarinet work is consistently satisfying, the group as a whole doesn't sustain interest at a high enough level to support a full LP.

Fortunately, on the remaining seven tracks (comprising 5/8 of the total 43-minute running time) they are joined by banjoist/vocalist Clancy Hayes. Hayes, who died in March 1972, was one of the few outstanding male vocalists of the contemporary traditional jazz scene; according to a note enclosed with Coda's review copy, this was his last recording session.

Although the LP is released under Hayes' name, he is really more of a guest artist than the star, appearing for opening and closing vocals on his tracks with ample room in between for solo space by the others. No particular concession is made for his presence, six of the seven vocals being standards rather than the good-natured obscurities that enhance his other records. And of course, the band has a much less raunchy sound than the ones that usually backed Hayes on LP - particularly when Gwaltney shifts to the intrinsically cooler-sounding vibes.

However, the vocals (which do include the verses) are as warm and infectious as ever, while Hayes' banjo adds a certain amount of roots to the overall sound. Even though he had recorded most of these tunes before, with somewhat more congenial surroundings on LPs that are generally still available, there's probably enough of Hayes here to justify the purchase. Available from Clanco Productions, 702-46th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94121. - T.W.

ART HODES

Euphonic ESR 1207

While remaining thoroughly within the traditional idiom, Art Hodes has fashioned such a unique, personal and valid piano style that he can confront seemingly worn-out standards as Tin Roof Blues, St. James Infirmary and The Saints, as he does on this album of thirteen piano solos, and make each one into a fresh and satisfying listening experience. You'll hear clusters of right-hand notes in the

middle range, smears and slides rolling up from the left, an occasional light single note stride, and a veritable arsenal of earthy-sounding devices which give Hodes' performances a bluesy feeling that no other contemporary traditional jazz pianist can display.

Of course, all of this has to be put together with care, and Hodes is a master in that respect, building his solos in a logical and yet unexpected way, with each track offering a complete statement with no excess verbiage. Even in those cases where he mostly embellishes the melody, as in Closer Walk With Thee or Hesitation Blues, every chorus is distinctive and interesting.

Unfortunately, the session was made on a poorly maintained tape recorder that produced a noticeable level of tape hiss. How much this will bother you is problematical. The piano is well into the microphone, and the hiss level is far below that found on many of the scratchy reissues that we collectors devour without too much complaint - although it does detract a bit from the mood on the slower tunes.

The five tracks mentioned above, plus Grandpa's Spells, Ballin' The Jack, Watermelon Man, Dear Old Southland and four first-class Hodes originals, with something different, inspired and honest in each rendition. Hiss or not, there's a lot of good red meat here for the fan of jazz piano. It can be ordered direct from Euphonic Records. - T.W.

DAVID HOLLAND

Conference of the Birds
ECM 1027 ST

Conference of the birds indeed. The quartet that David Holland assembled in New York on November 30th 1972 must be close to a producer's dream. But that would just be a continuation of the idea that Manfred Eicher started a few years ago with the creation of ECM records. If you simply selected the most creative musicians in jazz today this quartet would individually be at the top of the list. Apart from David Holland on bass, it consists of Anthony Braxton (reeds and flute), Sam Rivers (reeds and flute) and Barry Altschul (percussion), who with the exception of Rivers played together for a couple of years as the creative nucleus of the group Circle. The music contained within this album however is far removed from the sound of Circle, due in part to the feel of the compositions, all of which were written by Holland. Three of the tunes come from the direct lineage of "Bird" via Trane, Dolphy and Ornette, powerful medium/up tempo structures, with strong organised melody lines. The first, Four Winds, is stated with tenor (Rivers) and soprano (Braxton) before each moves into very strong solos building the bouncing tempo up into collective group improvisation with a cohesion not often attained in music. Interception, a slightly faster tune, is more spacy in conception and Sam Rivers' tenor solo has an airy quality about it, but at the

same time the very spacy concept of the tune appears to allow him to be jagged and dramatic. The reed players are separated by Holland's virtuoso bass and the theme being partially repeated..... Braxton works another miracle. His sense of dynamics are almost frightening, the angular acrobatics abstractly become the theme again, Altschul gives everybody's chops a rest, except his own, and its over. Such a soft ending. See-Saw is right out of Bird, an almost delayed, over-lapping chase chorus within itself and Braxton's alto in full flight. Bird Lives. Rivers crosses him into his eventual tenor solo, the working parts between the four of them is embryonic, the force of improvised music, the heart and ears, all ARE so many times on this recording. This is truly new music, not avant garde, just new fresh music simply because of who and what they are. Q & A is the most abstract (?) piece on the album. Questions and answers, which I am assuming the title to mean, almost completely describes its feeling. Little clusters of sound passing back and forth between them, over-lapping, intertwining the various sounds of the various instruments they all play. No tempo, at least not all at once, just building sounds upon sounds as each listens to the other. Very dramatic contemporary music quite to Braxton's liking I should imagine. Conference Of The Birds, the title song, is the prettiest music of the session. Introduced by a careful bass solo the theme takes on a feeling of an English drawing room. The horns flutter around each other.

"While living in London I had an apartment with a small garden. During the summer around 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning just as the day began, birds would gather here one by one and sing together, each declaring its freedom in song. It is my wish to share this same spirit with other musicians and communicate it to the people." So be it David Holland.

Sometimes an erie feeling can become music, I remember Mingus' Goodbye Porkpie Hat made me feel that way. So it is with Now Here (Nowhere). Slow and spooky with Holland's bass being the continuing single force, which occasionally becomes a solo with just Altschul, like a candle is a darkened room. Tread gently my friend the sadness is only your own.

This is David Holland's first important record as a leader and his friends have been chosen well. There are few that are better. You will not listen and then file this away in your collection for their spirit will prevail. The Birds in this conference mean many things - the jacket design is the bird of the Pueblo Indians, the birds of sound are many. The one Bird, the birds in flights of fancy, the birds of song. Whichever they may be for you, take them like these men and become one.

Conference of the Birds indeed. - B.S.

EARL HOOKER

His First And Last Recordings
Arhoolie 1066

Although several Chicago blues guitarists have considered the late Earl Hooker to be one of the top blues guitarists to date, many blues critics felt that Earl lacked a solid driving force when recorded. The material presented here should help to dispell the latter claims, especially the material from 1953. If you want to catch Earl with forceful drive and spirit, listen to *Going On Down The Line* and Earl's *Boogie Woogie*, both recorded in 1953 down in Memphis with Pinetop Perkins filling in on piano. The other 1953 cut, *Guitar Rag*, is out of Earl's Grand Ole Opry bag and in its own right, is equally as good. Charley Pride could have learned a few tricks from Earl.

There are only two vocal cuts on the album; *Going On Down The Line* and *Sweet Black Angel* (1952). Earl really shows the Nighthawk vocal/guitar influence on *Sweet Black Angel*. Aside from the jump-type instrumental *The Hook* (1969 - G. Skaggs, Steve Millar, Louis Myers, and B. Johnson) Earl displays his relaxed and the often haunting instrumental approach for which he is widely known. A newer instrumental, *Sweet Black Angel* (1968), really sets a haunting and lonely mood, almost making one's blood run cold.

The remainder of the album consists of two long instrumentals recorded live at the old Pepper's in Chicago back in 1969 with Eddie Taylor on second guitar, Dave Myers on bass and one Art Jackson on drums. Earl is cool and relaxed on *Dust My Broom* while he picks up more on his adaptation of Albert Collins' *Frosty*.

With the added conversation between Earl and the audience at Pepper's, one gets the impression that Earl is comfortably sitting back, casually playing for his friends and neighbours. But playing well!

This Arhoolie release provides the best sampling of Earl's material to date. Blues fans alienated by the material issued by Earl on Blue Thumb and ABC Bluesway should definitely give a listen to this one. It provides a varied program of both relaxed and forceful material. Quality wise, all the material, including the studio work, the early 1950's cuts, and the live recordings, rate highly, conforming to Arhoolie's usual high standard.

- D. L.

JOHN LEE HOOKER

Get Back Home In The U. S. A.
Black and Blue 33023

Amid all the recent "heavy" Hooker albums, this album produced by the French label, Black and Blue, is somewhat of a pleasant and much needed old-time Hooker renaissance. Hooker is all alone, just himself and his guitar, creating the mood of informal intimacy and laying down the professionally executed spontaneity that

is associated with his "pre-heavy" personal blues approach.

The listener is likely to become deeply involved in the intense and emotive music of this album. Hooker puts forth some of his meanest fast shuffles - *Get Back In The U. S. A.*, *Love Affair*, *Big Boss Lady*, and of course his classic, *Boogie Chillen* - and some of his most moody and lonesome blues - *T. B. Is Killing Me*, *Cold Chills*, *I Had A Dream Last Night*, *Little Rain*, *When My First Wife Left Me* and *Back To Your Mother*. It is amazing what this blues artist can create when left alone. *T. B. Is Killing Me* has a very country air to it while the other slow blues numbers come across in a typical Hooker vocal and guitar pattern. Hooker often breaks out of his simple rhythmic patterns with spontaneous guitar bursts, products of emotive involvement - especially catch his classic, *When My First Wife Left Me* and *Cold Chills*.

A definite Jimmy Reed influence is present in *Little Rain* and *Big Boss Lady*. However, Hooker is able to mold them into his musical patterning.

While some may find Hooker surrounded by Canned Heat, etc., doing his watered down and often uninvolved show routine much to their liking, those that have had the pleasure of experiencing John Lee Hooker by himself in a small club setting can testify to "real" artistic ability of this man. And this album presents it. - D. L.

BIG WALTER HORTON

With Carey Bell
Alligator 4702

There seems to be something about the electric Chicago blues genre that is dying. Hordes of reissues are getting exceptionally favourable reviews, especially those albums reissuing post-war 45 RPM materials - and despite the often poor sound. Yet the newly recorded electric blues on long playing discs have come in for terrible, off-handed criticism over the past few years by the reviewing media. Blues freaks are weird people, and as all of them appear to be Caucasians with "stricken consciences", undue stress and emphasis are placed on roots and a veneration of the past for partial atonement of wrongdoings, etc. For them, electric blues ceased to be innovative sometime before 1960, and everything since has been labeled either heresy (integrated bands and music) or monotonous (no change since the mid-fifties). Cannot anyone enjoy music per se any more without worrying about where it came from or who is playing? The typical review would state: don't buy this record, for there are lots of other good (and better) albums around. But checking the blues field, there is only a small handful of really superior items. The rest appear to be claptrap, or at best mediocre.

It is in the midst of all this that the Big Walter album might get lost, like his 1964 Argo release did (a lot of Argo releases got lost, not just in the blues

field). It is incredible to learn that this is only his second album as a leader. His nervous, introverted style is often best suited to the role of an accompanist (hence, his sterling performances with Shines, Young, Dixon, Rush, George Butler, et al).

Big Walter's reputation for being difficult to work with and his lack of aggressiveness resulted in few recording contracts in the singles market. As a blues harpist, he plays in a straight ahead fashion, without getting technically involved. He normally blows a shrillish harp that often evokes the emotional detachment of a cool personality. On this present album, he is consistent in character. What makes this disc really dynamic is the fluid interplay between Horton and Bell. Such harp duos are rare in recorded blues, especially since the harp is a difficult instrument to play as lead. But Horton and Bell have jammed together in the Chicago bars many times before, and thus they are experienced with a rapport between them that is attuned to each other's slightest inflections. This is a solid working relationship, and it shouldn't surprise anyone that because of Bell's troubles over the past few years, he would end up being as distant as Horton is.

The partnership really shines through on the four instrumentals, which are the best cuts among the eleven tracks. Big Walter is on the left channel; Carey Bell on the right channel, and the stereomode is very welcome and desirable indeed for this particular record. The production job here is far better than Alligator's first record with Hound Dog Taylor. For that we can be thankful.

Along about the third number, the album begins to move with the instrumental *Lovin' My Baby*. Here the harps have solid interplay, but the duo still go off in separate directions to reassert each other's individuality. *Can't Hold Out Much Longer* is an old favourite originally recorded by Little Walter, but written by Big Walter. Bell's fast chromatic harp plays lead on *Have Mercy*, a difficult piece of construction indeed. He also blows nice fills with a bass harp on three tracks. By alternating the instrumentals with the vocals, and the tempos as well, the whole album can be played at one time without becoming monotonous, and at the end of the record we are ready for the thoughtful acoustic closer, *Trouble In Mind*, featuring Big Walter's shrill harp. There are also two remakes: *Little Boy Blue*, a 1951 Modern single reissued on Kent KST 9002 (the "Memphis Blues" album), and *Have A Good Time*, originally issued as *Cobra 5002* in 1956.

Great stress is made that Horton personally selected the sidemen and material. I would have assumed that this was standard procedure for the smaller, independent labels. The music here is good; the sidemen are better than adequate. As I said before, every new blues record gets cut down in reviews, while reissues mostly get raves. Let's state that Big Walter has a good record (the word "good" should mean something today

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SON HOUSE

The Legendary 1941-1942 Recordings in Chronological Sequence
Folklyric 9002

A legend in his own time, Son House made these recordings for the Library of Congress. For years about half of them were available on Folkways, and various additional tracks are out on anthologies. Now for the first time they are available complete, in logical form.

Originally issued on Roots RSE-1, some copies of that issue were marred by misplaced tracks, which led to subsequent mislabeling and confusion. This was compounded by an error in Blues and Gospel Records, 1902-1942, which leads one to believe that The Key Of Minor and Demonstration Of Guitar Tuning are separate tracks, the former being listed with Depot Blues. However, these first 2 are actually one track, here called The Key Of Minor, 6607-A-2b. So finally we have everything right! (Presumably, later copies of the Roots are identical with this record, since they use the same master. But check the Roots first to see that you get a proper one.)

The music is of undoubted importance. House's singing, which is remarkable even on his later records when he was suffering from various problems, is a perfect complement to his guitar. Also, the field quality (roosters crowing, trains going by) adds a tremendous amount of presence to these songs. One of the great Delta bluesmen, this record is a showcase of House's Talents, and a valuable and necessary addition to blues collections. - R.M.

GUY LAFITTE

Sugar and Spice
RCA (F) 740.109

Those who like their tenor saxophones to sound big, warm and lush should find this album to their liking. Many of the tracks have an Ellington small group feel to them which is further developed by the inclusion of such tunes as Passion Flower and Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me.

On six of the eleven tracks there is a trombone choir in the background. I expected that these would be superfluous but in fact they fit rather well and credit should be given the intelligent sympathetic arrangements contributed by Francois Guin. Lafitte plays with just the rhythm section on four tracks while on God Bless The Child he is joined in a duo setting by pianist Raymond Fol. Guy maintains a

consistently high level as far as his solos are concerned but if pressed I would select the longest track Yattoo as my favourite. Aside from the leader, the only other solos come from Fol on piano and he maintains the level established by Lafitte.

Most North Americans are totally unfamiliar with Guy Lafitte's tenor playing. When you stop to think he has been playing for a long time it is really rather surprising. He is head and shoulders above a good many American tenor players whom we find appearing on numerous recordings.

Now that Coleman Hawkins and Don Byas are no longer with us we should come to appreciate even more Lafitte's full bodied tenor. A most enjoyable, well organized mainstream jazz record. - P. F.

ROBIN KENYATTA

Gypsy Man
Atlantic SD 1633

Add Robin Kenyatta to the legion that already includes Donald Byrd, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Les McCann, David Newman, and a lot of other musicians who have genuflected in the direction of the marketplace with albums that are as slick as they are shallow. Kenyatta does versions of pop hits by the likes of Stevie Wonder and Otis Redding, and some pop originals, including a vocal with Lalome Washburn on the title track. It's surely no accident that this one was recorded and mixed at a place called the Hit Factory. If crumbs were layer cakes, the musicians would be able to strike up a deal with Atlantic whereby for every one of these they turn out, they get a free hand to record an album of their own choosing. - J.C.

YUSEF LATEEF

Hush 'N' Thunder
Atlantic SD 1635

JAMES MOODY

Never Again
Muse 5001

These two records share one basic attribute. They both feature multi-instrumentalist leaders of the first rank. However apart from that fundamental similarity these two LP's are as different as night and day. Furthermore, the manner in which they most obviously differ is symbolic of the two directions jazz albums can be classified into while browsing through the bins of your favorite record shop.

Before coming to grips with these differences a word about the two leaders is in order. Both Lateef and Moody are excellent flute players. In fact I might add they are my two favorite on that instrument. Yet it is on tenor saxophone that I prefer them both. Yusef gets a more gutsy, rough hewn sound with fewer

notes being played, while Moody's tone is somewhat lighter with a more flowing technically adept approach to the instrument. Each in his own way is a master.

To turn to the LP's under review the phrases "straight ahead jazz" versus "gimmicks and overproduction" seem appropriate. Ever since moving to Atlantic Records Lateef has put out a series of LP's far beneath the true level of his jazz ability. I have no idea as to the economic success of these records nor whether the responsibility lies with Yusef or the record company. I do know that his many Atlantic sides have been in the main disappointments. On this record for example we get bits and pieces of that big tenor sound but the price we must pay is to sit through choral singers, hand clapping, various instrumentations on each track, but little more than a taste of the relaxed swinging jazz that Lateef is highly capable of offering.

By way of contrast, the Moody side is everything that Yusef's is not. Here we have James on tenor all the way with backing by Mickey Tucker, organ; Roland Wilson, fender bass; and Eddie Gladden, drums. If I had my druthers, I would have replaced the organ and fender bass with piano and acoustic bass. This was Moody's choice though and my criticism turns out to be a rather nit picking one. What we end up with is Mr. Moody and his rhythm section in the kitchen and believe me when I tell you they have all the pots on and are cooking up a storm. The way they tear through Secret Love it has as much chance of remaining a secret as the Pentagon Papers. The three-quarter time A Little 3 For L.C. won't remind in the slightest of that old waltz master Wayne King. Add inspired versions of Sonny Rollins' St. Thomas and Eddie Harris' Freedom Jazz Dance as well as a warm ballad called This One's For You and you have one fine jazz record. Take notice Mr. Lateef, the kitchen door is still open. Why not come on in and put together some fare that will stick to our ribs? - P. F.

DAVE LIEBMAN

Open Sky
PM Records 011

One of the good moments on the local scene in the past couple of years happened when Elvin Jones brought Dave Liebman and Steve Grossman with his quintet for a week at the Colonial. Liebman was in boss form and seemed to take a lot of pleasure out of showing a lot of technique on whatever reed he picked up. Maybe it was planned and maybe it wasn't, but after the first tune in the first set, Grossman, then fresh out of Miles's band, always seemed to pick up whatever horn Liebman wasn't playing at the time, playing soprano opposite Liebman's tenor, and tenor opposite his soprano. In any event, Liebman was in a gloriously mean mood, playing all his horns with tremendous swing.

Seeing him then, you knew that he was

capable of making a superb record under the right circumstances.

"Open Sky" is almost it. Most of it was recorded before an apparently small audience at the WBAI-FM Free Music Store in New York City on May 1, 1972. The trio (which calls itself Open Sky) of Liebman, Frank Tusa (bass), and Bob Moses (drums), is no pick-up group. According to the promotional material, it has worked around New York City since 1970, and Liebman and Moses have worked together longer than that.

Predictably with this instrumentation, Liebman has lots of space. He gets to demonstrate his considerable talent on flute (Flute Piece), soprano (Our Life, Places, Arb om Souple, Constellation) and tenor (Questions, Devotion), and also finds a groovy line for the clarinet on a short and undemanding side filler (Deep). Moses sensibly limits his solo spots to two (Our Life, Questions), and leaves Tusa to accompany Liebman alone on the down tempo pieces (opening Flute Piece, Places).

If you want to hear one of the really good young reedmen, this may be as good a place as any. But the record is something less than superb.

One element it lacks is cohesiveness. There is little evidence on the record of the "musical love" that the liner note speaks about. In fact, it seems unlikely that the result would have been much different if Liebman had teamed up with any other good bassist and drummer.

Another element that is lacking is variety. Switching horns, varying the tempo and laying out do not altogether compensate for what another audible voice might have added to it.

"Open Sky" is certainly worth hearing, and probably worth having until the superb Liebman record comes along. It is available from P.M. Records, 20 Martha Street, Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey 07675, U.S.A. (ppd. \$5.00). - J.C.

ROBERT JR. LOCKWOOD

Steady Rollin' Man
Delmark DS-630

At long last, an album presenting the legendary session man, Jr. Lockwood, in a featured role. Blues fans will be familiar with his unique guitar style from old Little Walter and Sonny Boy Williamson material on Chess, from the Otis Spann sessions on Barnaby/Candid and from several cuts from Cadillac Baby's fine Chicago blues anthology (Colossal Blues, Bea and Baby Records). Jr. Lockwood not only shines as a superb guitarist, but also as a blues vocalist, as the material on this album will verify.

Robert Jr. is backed by one of Chicago's best back up bands, The Three Aces, featuring Louis Myers (guitar), David Myers (bass) and Freddy Below (drums). The Aces provide a very solid, sympathetic and complete blues foundation, permitting the best of Jr. Lockwood to flow forth. There is much high quality guitar interplay between Myers and Lockwood

with Myers taking lead periodically (note Steady Groove). However, one is aware that Lockwood is definitely in command. Fred Below also lets fly with some of his damn fine flawless drumming, keeping everything tight and together.

The selection on this album ranges from such blues classics as Rambling On My Mind, Take A Walk With Me, and Kind-Hearted Woman to fast boogie-like instrumental shuffles.

Although the blues lyrics follow familiar themes Jr. Lockwood and the Aces inject a great deal of fresh impact and feeling into them. Steady Rollin' Man, Mean Red Spider, and Blues And Trouble are worth the price of the album alone.

Blues fans should not be disappointed with this album, for it provides solid, relaxed and definitely "steady rollin'" blues. Stereo quality, pressing, etc. are superb. Simply a high quality blues release in all respects.

Jr. Lockwood fans should also look out for his 45 released last April on Bobo Jenkins' Big Star Label. - D.L.

MC GRIFF & HOLMES

Come Together
Groove Merchant GM 520

Toe tapping, finger popping good time party music. These words come easily while listening to this recording by two popular organ players, two guitarists, drums and conga. There is a special similarity found in most jazz organ records which sets them apart from most other jazz into a category of their own. The music found on this record is the type I would like to dance to, that is if I had any talent in that area. It seems incomplete to just sit and listen to this LP the way you might to an album by Sonny Rollins or Lee Konitz. While I basically hold a slight bias against the organ and prefer the piano (and the real piano, not the electric one) over the organ in most jazz contexts, I must admit that there are some situations when an organ can pick you up and put you in that happy funky mood that puts a smile on your face.

Jimmy McGriff and Groove Holmes are both swingers. The same holds true for guitarists George Freeman and O'Donel Levy. Bernard Purdie and Kwasi Jayourba on drums and conga respectively are entitled to that same characterization. No one of the six dominates the album. Rather they all compliment one another. If the idea of two organ players overwhelms you as it did me when I first saw the cover let me lay your fears to rest. They do a fine job of keeping out of each others way. In fact togetherness is a central feature of this LP.

One irritation should be pointed out. On three of the six tracks fade outs occur rather than a true ending to the tune. I don't dig that and it seems this is a practice that Groove Merchant has been criticised for on other occasions.

In summary, not a great work of art nor even an outstanding jazz record. Yet if you are into swinging organ - guitar

sounds and/or if you want a kinetic happy album this may be just what you're looking for. - P. F.

JOHN MC LAUGHLIN

Birds of Fire
Columbia KC 31996

The key to the Mahavishnu Orchestra's broad appeal seems to be the uncanny effect of the guitar-violin unison. John McLaughlin and Jerry Goodman don't just play the notes, they have developed a technique of playing them somehow in synch, setting up vibrations more powerful than the sum of the parts. Combined with Billy Cobham's assertive drumming, it gives the Mahavishnu Orchestra an acoustic gestalt that is uniquely and weirdly pretty.

McLaughlin knows how to maximize the effect too, by making it the vehicle for simple riffs that build on simple variations. This is his style in the compositions entitled Celestial Terrestrial Commuters, Miles Beyond, One Word and Sanctuary. Of course, if he carried it much further, the style would resolve itself into a formula, but he manages to hold back. This time. At its best, as in these tunes, even a cynic might comprehend the relevance of the epigraph which gives the album its title, by Sri Chinmoy: "Above the toil of life my soul/Is a Bird of Fire winging the Infinite." The music is the opposite of earthy, whatever that may be.

Unfortunately, there is very little on this album except the guitar-violin unison and Cobham's drums. The tracks called Hope and Resolution are that alone, without even the token solos that occur elsewhere. Sapphire Bullets Of Pure Love is 21 seconds of Moog by Jan Hammer and is beneath notice. Thousand Island Park is another gimmick: Hammer on acoustic piano and McLaughlin on acoustic guitar combine to make a sound like a harpsichord. Open Country Joy is a blatant dilution of Gary Burton's metier, with obvious commercial intentions. Even on the most effective tracks, there is never a solo marked by spirit or invention.

Commercial success in pop terms is necessarily debilitating. It may be that it came to McLaughlin uninvited in the first place, but it is at least plausible on the basis of this release that he is now actively courting it. Like George Shearing before him, McLaughlin finds himself in grave danger of becoming just another pretty gestalt. - J. C.

BREW MOORE

Brew's Stockholm Dew
Sonet SNT F 624

I suppose every serious jazz listener has his mental list of musicians he considers to be vastly underrated. Well, Brew Moore ranks high on mine. Moore has been away from the heart of the American jazz scene for many years now. A good

portion of his time has been spent in Scandinavia. When you are not playing in the Apple or in L.A. and when your last record was made in 1962 it's all too easy to be forgotten. Now roughly ten years after his Fantasy 6013 - "Brew Moore In Europe" LP we have a truly outstanding album.

There isn't a weak spot on this entire record. From beginning to end I am gassed. This certainly has to rate as one of my favorite records of the past twelve months. Don't expect anything revolutionary unless in these days of electric instruments, rock rhythms and "New Thing" noises you consider it revolutionary to groove in a straight ahead finger popping manner. A friend of mine suggested pairing Brew up with Zoot Sims for a record date as they both are such natural, relaxed swingers. I heartily agree - it would be one hell of a session. Swedish pianist Lars Sjosten has heard Bill Evans. His fine solos here add considerably and I look for more from him on future recordings. Bassist Sture Nordin is a strong player and drummer Fredrik Noren keeps things moving.

Strongly recommended. - P. F.

JACKIE MC LEAN

Live at Montmartre
Steeplechase SCS 1001

Jackie McLean was one of the most important alto saxophonists to emerge in the 1950's, an original and consistently inventive soloist. He was primarily influenced by Charlie Parker, but his playing was also marked by tenor saxophonists Sonny Rollins and Dexter Gordon. McLean blended elements in the work of these men in the process of creating a highly individual style of his own. His playing was more deliberate, more jagged and staccato than Bird's. Parker made things seem so easy, tearing through a difficult chord progression like Cherokee effortlessly. By contrast, McLean appears to always be working hard. He's not the technician Parker was; he doesn't overwhelm you with complex bursts of notes. But he's outstanding in his own way. He chooses notes carefully, and thoughtfully and does not fall back on cliches. He plays with enormous energy and searing passion, yet also with control, avoiding tasteless exhibitionism. He has a strong, penetrating tone that is sometimes harsh, sometimes plaintive. His harmonic conception is unique. He plays out of tune and makes you like it. Maybe I shouldn't say he plays out of tune, however, because that might imply that I think he doesn't know what he's doing, that he's playing well by accident. I don't think that at all. I believe that McLean plays what he hears, and that what he hears sure sounds good.

Some of the characteristics of McLean's playing were so singular that other altoists couldn't exactly imitate him. But I think he did have a strong influence on hard swinging post bop altoists, possibly including Phil Woods, in the 50's.

In the early 60's, McLean became interested in Ornette Coleman's innovations and subsequently recorded some very good "free jazz" selections. However, the performances on this LP, cut at the Montmartre in Copenhagen in August, 1972, are reminiscent of his mid-50's work. He is accompanied by Kenny Drew, Bo Stief and Alex Riel.

There are three selections on the album, Charlie Chaplin's Smile, McLean's funky original Das Dat, and Parker's Mood. (For some reason Parker's Mood is divided into two tracks, with the second track entitled Closing.)

McLean plays masterfully. His work is unhurried and economical but passionate. He airs out his solos interestingly with rest and double times relatively infrequently. His lines are consistently meaty. Generally he bears down hard on the beat, swinging powerfully. He brings all registers of his instrument into play and makes good use of high note cries. His imaginativeness and solid musicianship are always in evidence. There are many musicians whose playing is flashier than McLean's, but few whose work is as good.

Drew performs in a competent but undistinguished manner. He's a tasteful soloist, but not an original one. His spots are loaded with stock devices. Stief and Riel do a fair job in the rhythm section, though their playing is rather stiff and unswinging. - H. P.

MUSIC INC.

Live at Slugs', volume 1
Strata-East SES-1972

Once upon a time, maybe ten years ago, there was a band of musical chefs whose broths were crackling hot, thick, and rich, nourishing for body and soul and (the legend says) "whatever else ails you". They called themselves the "Jazz Messengers" - and when the heat got too much for even them, they left the kitchen. Each went his own way - Freddie Hubbard to become a well-respected trumpeter of soaring lyricism and visceral acuity, Wayne Shorter by defection to the Miles-muse, and the others into their own times and paths. Charles Tolliver, Stan Cowell, and "Music Incorporated" are all in various ways outgrowths of the "Messengers" paths. But rather than mere derivation, what this quartet accomplishes is a summation and - in searing skylarking lines - an extension of everything Blakey's bands stood for.

On May 1, 1970, Tolliver, Cowell, Cecil McBee and Jimmy Hopps (a band no longer together) performed at Slugs' in New York. This album, the first issued from that night, holds thirty-five minutes of substantial, fascinating, and in every respect worthwhile music. Tolliver's Drought, for the exotic promise of the trumpet's opening chant over free space, is a flinty, sparkling-hard exercise in what ten-years-ago would have been called "hard bop". Like his contemporaries Hubbard and Woody Shaw, Tolliver

has been affected as much by Coltrane's explorations as by Clifford Brown or any other brass-playing predecessors, and is (with Cowell) one of the outstanding modal improvisers in the music. The co-leaders' solos grow and sway in countless ways closed to players hassling about simply running changes over time. The "Messengers" people were - and still are - experts at blues of various shades and a few other amusing chord puzzles. The modal basis of this quartet's repertoire gives its members many more ways of breathing and thinking than dreamt of in Blakey's mythology.

McBee's Felicite, with arguably the most moving of the album's trumpet solos, is a finely-wrought, aerial ballad of the kind that Tolliver and Hubbard inevitably play well (for comparison, try Hubbard's Tranquility solo with Bobby Hutcherson on Blue Note 4213). Side two, Cowell's Orientale, is a swooping Eastern work in the best lineages of mid-1960s Coltrane or Tolliver's On The Nile (on Music, Inc.'s first Strata-East album).

Stan Cowell gets equal billing with Tolliver, and - as I remarked earlier - is in every way the trumpeter's equal as a modal improviser. But there's something else, too. Tolliver's lines have little internal propulsion; without Hopp's and/or McBee behind them, they hang prettily in space going nowhere. For all his harmonic and modal acuity, Cowell is a two-fisted pianist of Harlem and Tatum descent. His lines need no such prodding. Somewhere back there, for his use of space and wonderfully subtle lyricism, Cedar Walton must have been another source. No matter; Cowell is one of the very few pianists of this most recent generation post-bop to commit himself to a style unmistakably his own. Bassist McBee and drummer Hopp's are two of the finest musicians to come out of the post-Miles cool of the mid-1960s. Everyone seems to be in the right place all the time.

Strata-East is, as far as I know, Charles Tolliver's own label. He's put out two bloody fine albums so far. I hope those to come will be equally good. - B. T.

BOBBY NAUGHTON

Understanding
OTIC 1003

For various reasons, most of the musicians who have come to prominence in New York over the past decade under the protective prestige and influence of John Coltrane and his disciples have been black. Record companies - and thus most listeners - have either ignored or been unaware of the growth of a community of equally substantial improvisers of free music in New York whose skins happen to be white. A few have previously had token exposure on record (Paul Bley, Mike Mantler, Steve Lacy, Carla Bley, Roswell Rudd, Perry Robinson, Ran Blake), but none in amounts commensurate with his talents as a improviser and - by the twisted Crow Jim logic

that often pertains in the jazz business - certainly none in amounts equivalent to what opportunity he would have had had he come out of the ghetto. Some people like to tell me that this is as it should be. Bullshit. But the important thing right now is that some of these neglected artists have grouped their resources in a self-help effort - OTIC Records - so their music might reach the people.

End of social commentary. The music on this recording espouses what LeRoi Jones used to call (when he was speaking to us) "the post-milesian cool". The music is closed and searingly intense; but it's a low-key rather than a cataclysmic power in the sound. The flames are banked, blue, and very hot, but generally not visible. In many ways, the music carries the same atmosphere as Paul Bley's classic mid-1960s sets for ESP disk. Four titles are Carla Bley compositions; the other four, by Naughton, are heavily affected by Ms. Bley's concepts of linear motion and harmony. As a pianist, Bobby Naughton explores the same realms of grainy density and tweedy vigour as Paul Bley, but brings to these harmonic areas a rhythmic richness and drive of his own. (Naughton's Nital Rock, with the leader on clarinet, is the essence of free rhythm music.) Naughton is a most startling vibraphonist. He uses the vibrato of his instrument to hang his notes sparsely in space, and it's gradations to give his lines nuance in a way analogous - but to rather different ends - to the vibrato used toward the impact of Albert Ayler's expression. Particularly worth hearing as a sample of this boldly original vibraphone style in Naughton's own Austin Who over a drone accompaniment.

Four titles on this recording are played by a trio composed of Naughton, Randy Kaye (drums), and Richard Youngstein (bass). Kaye's subtle conception of his kit - laying down spaced polyrhythmic eruptions from underneath rather than a constant barrage of sound - is a particularly sympathetic approach to this music, having the particular advantage of not tangling Naughton's space-laden widely-strung lines. The remaining four pieces are played by a quintet with Perry Robinson (clarinet), Mark Whitecage (tarogato and flute), Naughton, Mario Pavone (bass), and Kaye or Lawrence Cook (drums) - all outstanding individualists. Robinson's venturesome approach to his instrument, by now fully matured, makes him the boldest, most original creator of all the artists attempting to revive the clarinet and give it an identity in the new jazz. The tarogato (the sleeve says basset horn, but by sound that's rather unlikely; the label identifies it as a tarogato) is a dark-toned Hungarian folk instrument best described as a wooden soprano saxophone. It's a bastardly horn to try and handle, but its lovely bitter-sweet sound makes it worthwhile. Whitecage has not only mastered it, he has built with it a very personal saxophone-like style comparable with Robinson's in power, expressive range, and subtlety; he is also an especially lyrical flautist. Lawrence Cook is certainly as

appropriate a drummer as Kaye is, and both bassists are excellent. (Where do all these magnificent bassists come from?) There is a paramount feeling of community in the music the five create. No one musician comes up front as the chief protagonist or firebrand of the quintet. Particularly interesting to me is their reading of Carla Bley's Ictus which - rather than having any of the under-the-fingers pseudofreedom of Jimmy Guiffre's 1963 version with Paul Bley (noting also that Guiffre was once a major influence on Robinson) - recalls the free-wheeling ensemble swagger of the New York Art Quartet's unified Short (essentially the same piece; ESP disk 1004, recorded 1964). The music the five create is a subtle, rich, and warmly expressive experience.

So - what you have here is seven relatively unknown musicians, providing their own opportunities for expression, and making sure that the music on their album is their best (so that people will be interested in them and, hopefully, opportunities for performance will become a bit less rare). Some titles come from an October 1971 concert at Yale University, some from studio sessions, and a note included with the album indicates that (because of problems with imperfect pressings) more than a year lapsed between the time of its original intended release and the time it finally reached the people. The music is well worth the wait; but could we please have the next one a little faster? Production and sound are both excellent.

Enthusiastically recommended. -B. T.

(OTIC Records available from JCOA, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023, U.S.A.)

NEW BLACK EAGLE BAND

GHB-59

The New Black Eagle Jazz Band is a relatively recent (formed 1971) group made up of Boston area business and professional men with extensive experience playing traditional jazz. None of them as yet has had sufficient exposure to develop a reputation among jazz fans, but if this band can keep itself together, all of that should change rapidly.

The overall quality of musicianship in the NBEJB is astonishingly high, especially for people who are not full-time professionals. Special mention of clarinet-soprano saxist Stan McDonald and tubaist Eli Newberger as being particularly outstanding should not be taken to slight any of the others, each of whom is both a capable soloist and exactly right for his assignment in the ensemble.

The rhythm is predominantly four-beat, highly unusual for a banjo-tuba rhythm section, and the emphasis is on ensemble played at medium-loud volume. Repertoire is drawn almost exclusively from Negro small jazz bands, including both the classic twenties recordings and the "rediscovered" musicians of the forties

revival as source material, leaning heavily toward complex, multi-strain pieces that require the kind of diligent rehearsal which the NBEJB has obviously given them.

The result is a highly musical, steady, punching flow of sound that rolls on in ensemble after ensemble, building the kind of controlled excitement that made King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band the great band it was. Thoroughly successful in what they've set out to do, the NBEJB are a different and most welcome sound on the jazz scene. Copies of their Lp may be ordered @ \$5.50 postpaid directly from the band at 128 Front Street, Marblehead, MA 01945. -T.W.

TONY NEWSTEAD

Tony loves Bix
Fat Cat's Jazz FCJ 127

Eight tunes, all recorded by Bix, taken from live performances at the 1971 and 1972 Manassas Jazz Festivals. Five different sessions by on-the-spot groupings of all-star musicians are represented, each one including the Bix-influenced cornet of Tony Newstead.

The product is Dixieland, played well, at generally medium tempos, in the loose, ensemble-solos-ensemble, four-beat format that this type of session most naturally seems to fall into. Unfortunately, despite an army of microphones, sound pickup wasn't all it could have been. This is a common problem of recording live concerts, but nevertheless has to be counted as a minus in evaluating the record for purchase; on two tracks, the bass and piano are underrecorded, creating a somewhat empty sound, and on two more, I hear too much drum and too little clarinet.

When the band blends properly, things move. Art Hodes, as usual, provides plenty of spark for the others in his appearance on Royal Garden Blues, and a very tasty Way Down Yonder In New Orleans is highlighted by fine work from reed men Joe Muranyi and Deane Kincaide.

I played in both festivals and, having heard the performances from backstage, can vouch for the full-bodied sound and good jazz that these bands created - and the record makes a great souvenir of the shows and of Newstead's all-too-brief stint in the Washington, D.C. area. After allowing for the sound, though, I guess I'd have to put the Lp in the B-minus-to-C-plus range as an overall listening experience. - T.W.

GEORGE BERRY

Plays New Orleans
Sunny South 102

A better title, perhaps, for this lp would be "George Berry plays George Lewis and Emmanuel Paul". On the first side his clarinet is featured playing some of George Lewis' favorite solo numbers

(Over The Waves, Burgundy Street Blues, Old Rugged Cross etc.) while on side two George unfolds his tenor sax and rolls through such numbers as Object of My Affection, Marie, Somebody Stole My Gal and Berry's Boogie.

It's hardly possible to expect any surprises in this 1971 recording but everyone concerned brings to the music much love, devotion and enthusiasm. George Berry captures the Lewis sound admirably while his tenor playing is robust and sure. The rhythm section are more comfortable at the slower tempos. They pound rather than swing.

Like the earlier recording by the entire Kid Bastien band, this recording will be best appreciated by those who enjoyed Berry's playing during the time he was a key member of the Camelia at Grossman's Tavern in Toronto. - J.W.N.

NORTH TEXAS STATE

University Lab Band
Lab 72

This two record set by the North Texas State Lab Band is dedicated to their 25th anniversary. One of the four sides is a tribute to the Lab Band alumni and features the compositions and arrangements of Dee Barton and Lou Marini, Jr. as well as the trumpet playing of Marvin Stamm. The remaining three sides concentrate on the writing and playing of the 1972 edition of this fine band.

You notice I didn't say it was a fine college band, just a fine band. That's because from the evidence this album gives us, this band could hold their own with most professional big jazz bands playing today. The sections sound very together, the rhythm is crisp and swinging and the soloists play with spirit and intelligence. Special mention should be made of Randy Lee's warm blooded tenor

saxophone on Sweet Thing which gets my nod as the best solo on the record.

With jazz on the campus expanding rapidly these days it seems the message which Texas State has long been sending is finally being received. I wish them many more milestone anniversaries. Big band enthusiasts who would like a copy of this album should write to: Box 5038; North Texas Station, Denton, Texas 76203. - P.F.

TAMPA RED

Bottleneck Guitar 1928-1937
Yazoo 1039

Considering how popular an artist he was, as evidenced by his prolific recordings, it seems strange to only now be getting an Lp available which spotlights Tampa Red. He carved out a distinctive niche in the Chicago scene, specializing in a sophisticated, humorous, hokum type of music which rapidly made transition from his country roots to the smoothness of the urban blues. His real trademark, however, was his clean, clear, rich bottleneck tone, which sets him apart from other "knife style" players. Also, since he preferred a single-string technique, he was employed to fine advantage as a house musician.

This Lp showcases both these aspects of his recordings. By including six cuts featuring the like of Ma Rainey, Madlyn Davis, and Lil Johnson, a fine sense of variety is achieved. Also, his well known ability to back piano playing, especially Georgia Tom's, provides further diversification. But these strands are all drawn together by his inimitable guitar work, the high quality of which ultimately makes this album a success.

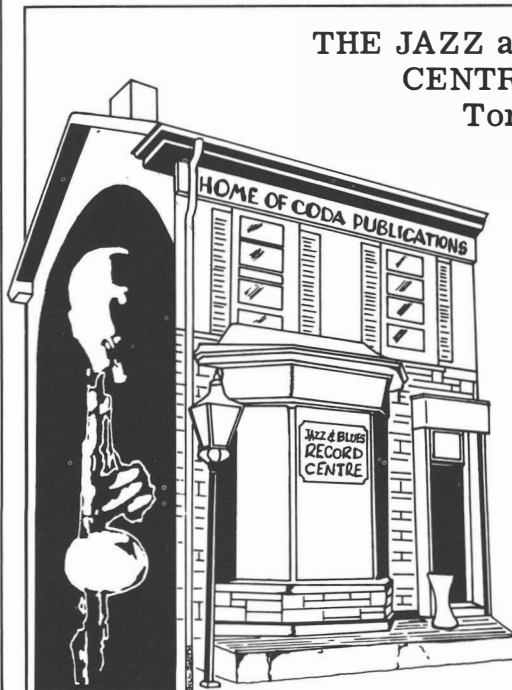
City blues enthusiasts will definitely need this Lp, and it is recommended as well to those with more general interests. either on the classic or country side. R.M.

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JAZZ LITERATURE

REFLECTIONS ON AFRO-AMERICAN MUSIC

edited by Dominique-Rene de Lerma
Kent State University Press, Kent,
Ohio, 1973.

"Afro-American" has rapidly become the accepted generic term for an American minority population that at its extremes has little in common other than its members' racial identification. Certainly degrees of acculturation within the virtual apartheid of white America vary widely from the Georgia Sea Islands to the middle-class suburbs of Long Island; and Black American Music has to be taken on the same continuum. It occupies the complete spectrum from African retention to wholesale acceptance of the European (mainly Italian and Germanic) concert tradition. But - regardless of their degree of acculturation and assimilation - all Blacks feel in one form or another the impact of Amerikkkan racism. Thus at least theoretically all their musics - regardless of forms chosen for expression - should reflect to the same degree the same communality of an oppressed people. If Afro-American music is worthy of preservation at all - of which there can be no doubt - there is certainly equal validity to making efforts to support all its diverse aspects (Rev. Gary Davis to William Grant Still).

This volume is the collected and annotated proceedings of a 1972 series of seminars conducted under the editor's direction by the Black Music Centre of Indiana University. It considers two basic questions - the definition of the Black musics in the larger functions of Afro-American identity, and the means possible for the sustenance of all their products. It's hardly a definitive volume of methods and sources. It doesn't even pretend to be, and because efforts like the Black Music Centre are still into or just beyond initial formation it couldn't be a full treatise on the subject even if that was intended. Rather, it's a report of educational work-in-progress, a dissertation on the formal needs and attempted means of transmitting a heritage in the face of overt or covert suppression, and to a lesser degree an examination of some neglected aspects of a music's scattered history.

That aside, not very much need be said. Afro-American music is sufficiently complex and ill-defined a field that if its traditions are to be continued and extended efforts must be made to formally and informally educate the Black population at all levels about their acoustic lineages. The concerns voiced for the relatively low priorities given Afro-Americana in the established music industry are not new;

plans for changes, reasoned and tailored to the circumstances being made available, as discussed here have rarely been considered before. This, perhaps, is the main contribution of these seminars. As important, and repeatedly emphasized in these proceedings, is the social role played by these musics, particularly in the urban ghetto and the rural south. Ghetto music is mainly the blues, soul, and gospel. Afro-American music is much larger than that, and a great deal of the problem presented in its preservation is the question of bringing the more esoteric Black musics (American and world; and dance) and the roles of Afro-Americans in other musics into more direct contact and social relevance to the young who must pick up their heritage early if it is to be picked up at all. First-hand reporting of successful teaching experiences is hardly a comprehensive or objective way of passing on educational methodology; but so little of worth has been achieved to date in this field that any individual successes must be noted. Unlike John Norris, who reviewed the first volume of proceedings, "Black Music In Our Culture" (1970 seminars, published 1971), I applaud the emphasis placed on the musics of Black Euroart composers, because although they choose to adapt another tradition to their own expressive ends, their music is by its own terms a reflection of the Afro-American experience equal to any of the indigenous forms (gospel, jazz, soul, blues, spirituals), and the one area of the heritage most likely to be jettisoned if emphasis is placed on retaining only that which seems most pertinent to the Black man on the street. All participants emphasize the parallelisms of the social and musical evolutions of all Afro-American musics; what must be taught is not just contemporary popular sounds, but how and why the music got there, and all the musics with which it coexists in the same social frames of reference - because really Black music represents a great bulk of the recorded Black world view.

As in "Black Music In Our Culture", the various appendices are incomplete. The listing of European composers using Black elements in their music is a good starting point if you consider the topic pertinent, but incomplete. (If Edgard Varese's *Integrales* is listed, the same should be said for his *Hyperprism* and *Octandre*.) The listing of Black artists in music and dance available for educational booking is woefully inadequate. (On the basis of the music as I know it, off the top of my head, I wonder about the addition of dancers Alvin Ailey and Nadi Qamar, saxophonists Anthony Braxton, Jimmy Lyons, Ken McIntyre, Sam Rivers, and Archie Shepp, the Revolutionary Ensemble and the Art Ensemble of

Chicago, violinist Leroy Jenkins, pianist Cecil Taylor, percussionists Andrew Cyrille, Charles Moffett, Sonny Murray, Horacee Arnold, and Milford Graves, and the Sun Ra Arkestra. You no doubt could make up your own list.)

General readers should be interested in Thomas Dorsey's reflections on gospel music, the multiple contributions from David Baker and others concerning the place of Black musics in Afro-American society, and the discussion of Black Music and Dance. It's a substantial volume that should be required reading for educators and musicologists at all concerned with the Afro-American population.

- Barry Tepperman

INSIDE JAZZ

by Graham Collier
Quartet Books, London, 1973

Many jazzmen have written about their music before. Most such books were in whole or part autobiographical, directed more at defining the individual as an entity in that world than at reflecting or discussing a life style. There are many introduction-level books about jazz, most written by professional critics, some of whom (at least) view the musician's world from the acknowledged position of hanger-on; being in that world but not of it, their writings reflected at best detachment (more often, gross lack of sympathy) from the artists whose work they sought so eagerly to dissect. A book to tell interested listeners about the music, by a jazzman, is something of an exciting innovation; and few seem more suited for such burdens of authorship than Graham Collier.

Collier deals with the music he lives from two basic vantage points - the anatomy of the music, and the life of its creators within the musical microcosm and society at large. For a man as well-versed in the music as Collier is, though, his discussion of the sound itself is comparatively lightweight. Predictably, it is coloured by the same influences and biases that direct his own creative impulses, and consists of simplistic analyses in terms of stylistic characteristics and instruments used. His words often seem somehow inappropriate. I find it hard to believe that all large orchestras that derive neither from Ellington nor from the avant-garde are "predictable", or that all traditional bands play limited, ritualized solos, or that "cool" music means cocktail piano. Certainly, these are the characteristics of the more popular and inferior segments of those movements - but Collier makes little attempt to point such things out; tyro listeners attracted

to "Inside Jazz" may well take his works at face value. With the casual assembly of the book, again, several factual errors and numerous typos creep in. (Wild Bill Davidson neither plays organ nor has played with Ellington. I know Collier means Wild Bill Davis - but will the person scanning the chapter in W.H. Smith's know that?) Worse, though, is the fact that his discussions offer little real insight into the whys and hows of the jazz experience. Discussing the intangible in terms of the indefinable creates only an impression of knowledge.

Far better to listen to Collier talking about the jazzman's environment. He deals with basics - the musicians' concept of himself, his relations with the people on the outside, the monetary and physical aspects of living in jazz, and other roles in the music's microcosm. Here his assessments are solid and well-reasoned. These are aspects of life of which most lay people are totally ignorant; and "Inside Jazz" accomplishes its best service by stating the facts openly, looking for only understanding of the creative artist. He pleads no earth-shattering causes; he calls things the way they are.

"Inside Jazz" is a chatty, entertaining book. It's written as a casual conversation with a good friend and should be considered in that context; taken that way, it's excellent.

- Barry Tepperman

MAGAZINE NOTES

The demise of Jazz And Blues at the end of 1973 seemed, at first glance, to imply a decline in jazz interest in England. Almost immediately, however, a new magazine - IN TO JAZZ - was born with Ron Brown (who was assistant editor to Sinclair Trail at Jazz Journal) as editor. Judging from the first issue's coverage it would appear that the problems faced by the established British magazines are largely of their own creation: excessive inbreeding and a continuing backward look at the music's past as well as only a cursory recognition of the contributions by British musicians. "In To Jazz" states that "jazz is not primarily a sound from the past preserved on vinyl...it's a living music which is still developing". They further emphasise that their viewpoint is to regard jazz as a current music and evidence of this is shown in articles and reviews by such practicing musicians as Ian Carr, Dick Sudhalter and John Stevens. Some of the writers will be familiar names to those versed with British publications - Jack Cooke, Brian Priestley, Martin Davidson and Tony Russell - but there are others who are fresh. Roy Eldridge, Leroy Carr, Ian Carr and a trio of British musicians - John Stevens, Keith Tippett and Stan Tracy - are the meat of this first issue. There's freshness as well as a healthy professionalism. Hopefully it will strike a responsive chord amongst jazz enthusiasts. The subscription price is 3.50 pounds for 12 issues from In To

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- John Norris

BRIEF NOTICES

A new and useful resource tool for research and reading into musics other than European/"classical" is the Annual Index To Popular Music Record Reviews, compiled by Andrew Armitage and Dean Tudor. (Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, N.J., 1973. The first volume, that for 1972, is hopefully to be followed by comparable compilations going back to 1947 (the advent of Lp recording) and forward indefinitely. The compilers have broken "popular" musics down into twelve more-or-less broad categories, and within each section list artists and recordings alphabetically with citations for all reviews published during the year in the thirty-five periodicals searched by the authors. The arbitrary categorizations have the usual shortcomings of such pigeon-holings, but these are overcome somewhat by individual numbering of each entry with cross-indexing by

artist's name. The periodicals cited are all English-language, originating in the U. S., Britain, and Canada, and range from high-circulation general-appeal music magazines to some rather obscure specialist and library journals, omitting various trade publications that serve only to push recordings indiscriminately; thus, "Down Beat", "High Fidelity", and "Ethnomusicology" are included, "Billboard" and "Variety" aren't. The only dismaying aspect of the project is the fact that the compilers have read each review and have - on the basis of the review - included a numerical rating of the recording on a zero-to-five scale. Checking my own listings and some others, I'm amused to find that the ratings they assign don't necessarily agree with what I thought I said; but even more, the fact that they would rate recordings reviewed by someone else when the original author neither condoned nor contemplated assigning grades to the music him/herself is annoying. I personally disagree with the ethics of numerical ratings - it smacks to me of implying universal applicability to one's personal standards - and I resent having them imposed on me. Perhaps others feel the same way; perhaps not. There are a few minor misprints, but the listing seems fairly complete otherwise. The Index is obviously a useful research document, and should be of considerable assistance in assembling music libraries.

Journal Of Jazz Studies is a new semi-annual publication from the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, edited by Charles Nanry and David Cayer. (\$4/single copy or \$7/year to Transaction Periodicals Consortium, New Brunswick, N. J. 08903.) The articles in the first issue (October 1973) are uniformly extensive and of high quality - an analysis of Fats Waller's use of language and lyrics, the "Lady Sings The Blues" abomination dissected, Artie Shaw's Gramercy Fives discussed, a piece on the sociology of creativity in jazz, a proposal for more comprehensive discographical cataloguing, Robert Reisner's tribute to Marshall Stearns, and a superficial overview of the first twenty-one Prestige twofers. However, for the most part these are articles that could have seen publication equally easily, and with much wider currency, in many of the established jazz speciality magazines. (Coda, Jazz & Blues, and Jazz Journal immediately come to mind.) I really cannot see now any particular need for a high-priced journal that relatively few (those with the academic credentials that go with the entire scholastic air of this production) who care about the music can afford to read. Possibly this will change at issue number 3, after which all submissions will be referred to an editorial board (currently in formation, including Walter Allen, David Baker, Max Roach, and Martin Williams among others), a system well-established in most circles of academic authorship. However, at this point \$4 for 110 small-format pages (of which only two plus the back cover have advertising, admittedly) seems rather steep.

- Barry Tepperman

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LETTERS

I'm certain David C. Hunt is concerned about the well being of jazz musicians but Black Voice Lost In A White Superstructure in your February issue doesn't help at all. Mr. Hunt is simply not well informed on the situation.

It would be easy to take issue with virtually everything he says - and perhaps others will - but in the interest of brevity let me address myself to the 8 points he suggests as "standard record business practices":

1) Sidemen are paid at least \$90 per session (the scale has gone up to \$95 now and under the terms of the most recent AFM contract will go up again before long). An LP requires at least 2 three hour sessions, generally three and sometimes many more. Thus scale pays more than \$30 per hour. Sidemen who are in great demand frequently demand and get double or triple scale. Scale is a minimum payment and is negotiable.

2) While sidemen are rarely paid royalties, it is not true that they are not eligible for royalty payments. There are plenty of known instances where sidemen have received royalties and for heavy-weight sidemen a royalty arrangement can sometimes be arranged with little resistance.

3) The specific charges made to a musician's royalty account are negotiable. Among the customary charges are recording costs, production costs - involving a wide number of things - and pension payments. These are customary for unknown Black jazz musicians and White Superstars (i.e. The Osmonds). If royalty payments are meager it is because the record didn't work off charges.

4) Production cost can run a Hell of a lot higher than \$4,000. I'd guess it impossible to do a session involving ten pieces and an arranger for less than \$3,000 unless it was a working group. A jazz LP will routinely cost \$7,500 if overdubbing, sweetening, multiple configurations, extensive remixing and other technical options are employed.

5) True. Musicians sometimes get around this by retitling tunes (Jack McDuff has a line which he has recorded at least 4 times each with a different title). I do know of instances where this clause has been modified.

6) Virtually all record labels have publishing companies and more often than not they are a great convenience to the artist. It is not true that ownership of a publishing firm absolves a company from paying a publisher. Publishing is one of the most misunderstood aspects of the record industry. During the time I worked for Prestige I saw any number of different publishing arrangements made. Harold Mabern was an example of a musician who wanted to keep control of his compositions so he published his recorded originals while Gene Ammons -

who was always travelling - didn't have the interest in applying for copy right, issuing licences collecting and disbursing royalties that go along with publishing and he assigned his music to Prestige Music. Obviously this is a "different strokes for different folks" situation.

7) The record industry - at least as it is currently practiced - is a guaranteed sale business. Thus, the fact that an LP is shipped from a manufacturer's pressing plant to a distributor is no indication that the record has been sold. Nor is the order from the distributor by a record store a sale. Anywhere along this line the LP may be returned for full credit. If a company doesn't charge an artist with returns, it goes broke. Simple economics will tell you that.

8) If the artist has knowledge of multiple bookkeeping that is defrauding him and he takes no action he is a fool. More often there is so much street talk and no real evidence. Record industry audits go on all the time but the auditors who specialize in this work are expensive. They generally work on a fee vs. percentage basis.

The record business is a vicious business. A thorough discussion of all aspects should be made available for the aspiring musician but articles like Mr. Hunt's just blow old smoke. What you've got to get into are things like cross collateralizing, free goods, dumping returns and various other suspect practices. Problems of this nature plague jazzmen regardless of their color or musical predisposition. Organizations like Strata and Creative World are the alternatives and they should be given every opportunity to prove themselves. They deserve as much publicity and support as it is possible to render. Inevitably they will survive and prosper if they are able to 1) produce good product; 2) expose the product; 3) make it available for purchase. Just like any other record company!

Bob Porter
Bergenfield, N.J.

Since I have been quite familiar with the Dave Remington band and its members over the past few years, I feel justified in attempting to correct several discrepancies revealed in Mr. Onge's article in the January 1974 Coda.

Drummer Rick Frigo is seldom heard with the band. He has sat-in on occasion but can hardly be referred to as "the backbone of the Remington band." The regular drummer is Bob Cousins, who has missed few nights on the stand during the past three years.

The band's regular bass player is Jim Atlas - one of Chicago's busiest musicians. True, Rufus Reid has played with the Remington band but only when subbing for Jim. Likewise, the band's baritone saxophone player is Ronnie Kolber, not Bart Demming.

The ballad referred to by Mr. Onge as "Love and Feeling" has, to my knowledge, not yet been composed. What I assume

he means is "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling", composed by Bill Medley, formerly of the popular recording team of the 60's known as "The Righteous Brothers."

The lead on "Pavane" is played by flute and piccolo trumpet - not by the flugelhorn. Of course it is nice to give credit to Bobby Lewis' fine arrangement, but isn't accuracy equally important?

Finally, Mr. Onge states that the Remington band's only album, Chicago Shouts, has never been reviewed. That may have been true until December 1973. One may merely check that month's issue of Different Drummer to discover that the problem has been remedied.

William Benjamin
Chicago, Illinois

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TORONTO

By the time this issue of Coda reaches subscribers, the Ed Blackwell Benefit will be a thing of the past, however its good vibrations will carry on.

This benefit could not have taken place without generous help from Coda Publications who printed the posters, sold tickets and answered the telephone; Greg Gallagher who liasoned with Sonny Rollins and performed many miscellaneous and valuable acts; Joe Romer who designed the poster; Mike Ryce and Bill MacKenzie who provided their beautiful club; the various helpers and of course, both the local musicians and the special guests.

Albert Ayler insisted that Music is the Healing Force of the Universe. He knew the secret and laid it on us. It is our responsibility to use this wisdom whenever necessary to conquer the hardships life imposes. How effective is this philosophy? The global movement to aid Ed Blackwell reveals an unprecedented unity among people whose consciousnesses are focussed - through music - on the need to help one another. This collectivity is in the realm of the spiritual and cannot be measured scientifically; its mere existence implies a power of great magnitude, always increasing in strength as long as men like Ed Blackwell feed it with great music, energy for the spirit. No other philosophy relates man to the arts as much as Albert's simple statement, and we have only to look at the following letter to sample the Healing Force at work in the world.

Enclosed you will find a cheque of \$101.80; this represents the entire proceeds from a benefit concert that took place on the night of the nineteenth, featuring Jane Fair and Terry King and assorted cohorts. Paid admissions totalled just under 70 people; sorry it couldn't have been better.

The concert took place on February 19 at 9:00 p.m. in the ballroom of the McGill student union building (not a very good room, but the only thing I could get, in a hurry, for free). The bands which played were Kohlrabi (Jane Fair, soprano sax; Bill Gobby, guitar; Brian Hurley, bass; Lou Williamson, drums), which has been together (infrequently, needless to say) since June 1973; and Raoul (Terry King, violin; Jane Fair; Steve Hall, tenor sax; Burke Mahoney, guitar; Mike Morse,

bass; Gary Lindner, drums), which has been rehearsing (original tunes) for about as long, but which has had only one concert before this one.

The main purpose of the concert, naturally, was to raise money for Ed Blackwell. Apart from that, however, I had hoped that the concert would result in a few changes-for-the-better in the local scene. First, the two bands would get exposure, which is something that happens very infrequently in Montreal. Second, the concert would serve as a focal point - a well known and worthy cause - to bring together whatever audience exists for jazz in Montreal, who would in the process find out that there is excellent music being played by local musicians which is worthy and needy of their support; that local jazz is not well represented by Sonny Greenwich and a Toronto rhythm section in a one-nighter at the Windsor Hotel. Anyone who has tried to get things happening for himself, who hopes (with ridiculous optimism, it appears) to make a living playing jazz in his own town, can appreciate what it means to try to improve the situation, to enlarge his audience and to develop support in his community.

Anyway, having had a few days to think it over, I can say that the concert was a failure in every aspect except the music. Just under 70 people attended, paying a total of \$101.80; in the spirit of every-little-bit-helps, this is acceptable, but if that's all Montreal has to give to Ed Blackwell - well, it's indicative of something. The musicians were heard by very few people, most of whom had heard them already (I recognized nearly every face in the audience). The concert was ignored by the press, both before and after the fact, even though they knew about it. It's possible that an inadequate P.R. job was done (in which case I'm to blame; but Len Dobbin and Mark Stafford did a great job, every night for three weeks, plugging the show on CJFM; surely more than seventy people listen to the radio?). It's possible that a sudden snow storm convinced people to stay home, or it may be that a Bruce Cockburn concert, scheduled for the same night, is an event of such all-consuming importance that no one preferred to go to a jazz concert. I only hope the Toronto concert has somewhat better response.

- Brian Hurley

Brian Hurley's disappointment is understandable; however, he and the other musicians are an important part of

a greater whole, namely, the force Albert Ayler identified so clearly.

VOICE OF AMERICA: NEW YORK: Jazz Interactions resumes its workshops at Intermediate School 44, 100 West 77th Street. Free to everyone with playing experience. The staff is headed by Joe Newman and includes Roland Hanna, Eddie Jones, Yusef Lateef, Astley Fennell, Freddie Waits and Gene Bertocini. Call (212) 866-6136...The N.Y. Jazz Museum is setting up a Jamaica Jazz Party from May 21 to 26, starring Roy Eldridge, Zoot Sims, Eddie Vinson, Chet Baker, Grady Tate and others. It costs \$295.00 for round trip (N.Y.C.), Holiday Inn, and three days of jazz non-stop. Call N.Y.J.M. at (212) 765-2150, and remember, watch out for those famous Jamaica no-name cigarettes.....

CONNECTICUT: On March 22 U. of C. presents "UNITY" a new American classical music group based in N.Y.C. The members are Byron Morris (alto and soprano), Jay Clayton (vocals), Vincent McEwan (trumpet and flugelhorn), Abdush Shadid (drums), Mike Kull (piano), Milton Suggs (bass), Tony Waters (percussion) and Frank Clayton (bass). This band has worked extensively in New York and are managed by ERRA Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 842, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12602. Write to Byron Morris and support live music...NEW ORLEANS: The 5th Annual Jazz and Heritage Festival goes on April 18 to 21. Two Toronto bands - The Climax and The Camelia - are heading south to perform along with a plane load of local habitues of Grossman's Tavern and Albert's Hall....

BOSTON: The Berklee College of Music stages its High School Band competition April 27 with American and Canadian entries vying for prizes totalling \$2500. Staffers Gary Burton, Alan Dawson and John LaPorta will conduct demonstrations and workshops....

MENDOTA: a benefit to aid pianist Hod Russell happened March 10. Russell was severely injured when struck by a car last month. Bands included Doc Evans, Harry Blons, Upper Mississippi J.B.; Pit's Eye J.B.; Bill Price's New Yorkers, Eddie Tolk Swing Band and Hall Brothers J.B. Coming up, Max Collie and His Rhythm Aces from England....

TORONTO: All the clubs were busy after the February slump. Bourbon Street hosted Salome Bey, Frank Rosolino and Phil Woods while George's Spaghetti House continued with

Matrix is the leading jazz discographical magazine. Every issue contains articles of interest to record collectors prepared by leading authorities.


Issue 101 contains: A discography of Beryl Bryden, the first article is a series on Discographical Techniques by Bert Wyatt, reviews of limited edition LPs, with full discographical details, literature survey and review. Recent issues have contained the first complete listing of the Rudi Blesh "This Is Jazz" programme, label listing of the Continental label and a survey of Billie Holiday alternative masters.

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the local bands of Terry Logan and long-lost Tony Collacutt... British jazz filmmaker, John Jeremy, informed us while in town that during research for a film which required photographs of Harlem he visited the U.S. Information Service library and found nothing. He now knows what Harlemites have known for decades.... that as far as the U.S. Government is concerned, they don't exist..... Benny Goodman appeared at Massey Hall along with Bobby Hackett, Paul Quinichette, Remo Palmier, Hank Jones, Slam Stewart, Grady Tate and Peter Appleyard. Hackett stole the show, in spite of Quinichette's "Lester-isms"...

OPENINGS: After hours jazz is back. This time at CLEMENTINE'S, a neat cellar at 5 Hayden Street. During regular hours it's a fully licensed dining room; but every Friday night at 1:00 a.m. Clementine's gives itself over to live music. The \$2.50 cover seems a reasonable price to pay for a chance to hear good jazz from Toronto's best known bands. There is also a chance that cats from other clubs will sit in for a tune, and when they happen to be ARILD ANDERSEN, AL DAILEY, LAMAR BARKER, and SALOME BEY, you can bet you will wish you had been there... MANIE'S, at 742 Danforth Avenue opened March 17 with SYNERGY, a group featuring talented pianist DIANE ROBLIN and bassist PETE MARCUS. Youthful veterans of St. Francis Church and Grossman's Tavern, the band plays tunes by Shorter and Hancock with lots of feeling. Manie's serves rock 'n roll during the week with jazz on Sundays only during regular hours. Like Clementine's, it's a basement lounge, fully licensed and it features Balkan food. There's no cover charge....

LONDON, ONT: Eric Stach and the Experimental Jazz Quartet have applied a second time for an arts grant from the Canada Council to continue their music... On May 25 Gene Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings of Dayton, Ohio will play the London Hunt and Country Club....

MONTREAL: The 3rd Annual Canadian Collector's Convention took place March 16. The Montreal Vintage Music Society plays host this year, alternating with the West Mississauga Jazz Muddies of Ontario. They describe themselves as "two bodies of devoted jazz / swing / pop record collectors, boozers and discographers. I wonder if they went to the Dollar Brand concert that same weekend?....

TILT, the arts magazine issuing from Montreal needs money. Call Raymond Gervais at L'atelier de musique experimentale for details (514) 273-8094...

MARCH FACTS from the Black Music Calendar: King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band began a series of recordings for Paramount, 1923... Ornette Coleman born March 19, 1930.... Sarah Vaughan's birthday on the 27th. She will be... find out for yourself by ordering this terrific source book and date guide from the Black Music Centre, School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.... Only \$2.00 each....

"Living Blues" walked in the door at

York University's Bethune College the last two days of February and slammed the door on some young fingers. Totally unready for BUKKA WHITE and SUNNYLAND SLIM, the youthful audience had to some extent come simply to drink beer; however, most of them left with some brand new insights into what the blues are really all about. The two great bluesmen alternated sets, and between Bukka's eloquent steel body National guitar and Sunnyland's outrageous piano syncopations of country barrelhouse to more recent urban styles they laid out the real roots of American music for all to see. An added surprise was the presence of Bonnie Mae, Sunnyland's wife. With a short haircut that made her look all the world like Bessie Smith, she came on with some strong classic renditions and closed the night with chorus after chorus of rent-party singing: Early one mornin' / I was on my way to school; I met you, Baby / And broke all my mother's rules... In addition to accepting applause for their own work, Bukka and Sunnyland called for appreciation for long-departed greats - Robert Johnson, Little Brother Montgomery, and Sonny Boy Williamson - heightening the emotional force of their own presence with spirit-images of the past. - Alan Offstein



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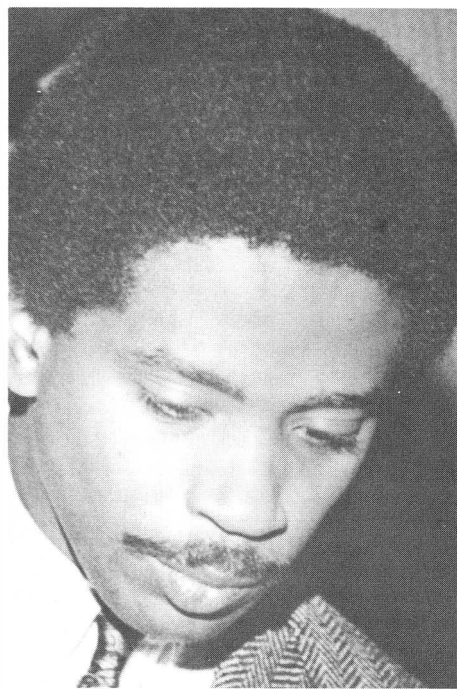
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ALBERTA



A financially and artistically successful performance by the Bobby Hutcherson Quartet has meant a secure future for Jazz Calgary, the Calgary jazz society

formed during January. This, the society's first concert, was presented February 6 in the MacEwan Hall Ballroom at the University of Calgary.

Hutcherson also appeared in Victoria - where a similar society has started - and in Edmonton, where the grandpa of jazz western-style, Mark Vasey's Edmonton Jazz Society - got the ball rolling a year ago.

The three societies means a fulfilment of a long-held dream: the formation of a Western Canadian jazz circuit, with musicians performing in all three cities.

Rahsaan Roland Kirk is lined up for the end of February. Other possibilities include Sam Rivers, Joe Henderson and Anthony Braxton.

Jazz Calgary was formed along the same lines as the Edmonton organization - a safety fund of \$5 membership fees and concerts that in theory should be self-supporting or turn a profit. More than 500 people attended the Hutcherson event. There are almost 200 members of the Calgary society.

Most people in the audience were expecting a light, mainstream set from Hutcherson; instead, he delivered extremely intense, earthy music that literally put the crowd in a trance. He's playing better than ever before and his band - Henry Franklin, bass; Gordon Lightsey, piano; and Larry Hancock, drums; - is superb.

Questioned about the vast difference in

sound between his albums and his concert, Hutcherson said "We play just like this on record dates, too! Only the cats at Blue Note turn the volume down..." Many fans who haven't caught Hutcherson live and are dismissing him as too commercial because of his latest Blue Note recordings

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better get ready - the man is a force to be reckoned with.

Appearances by Rahsaan Roland Kirk and The Vibration Society and Dollar Brand have brought March in like a lion. Rahsaan performed in Edmonton February 26 - 27, in Calgary March 1, and in Victoria March 2. More than five weeks on the road had started to wear down Rahsaan's quartet - Kenny Rogers, baritone sax; Hilton Ruiz, piano; Medithias Pearson, bass; and John Goldsmith (former member of Sun Ra's Arkestra), drums - but all in all the music was excellent. Rahsaan provided miracles on tenor sax and flute as well as good stritch and manzello work. His revealed his latest musical toy, the harp, in Edmonton February 26, sounding a bit like Alice Coltrane at her best. All concerts were packed, and the Edmonton Jazz Society - who put on both the concerts in Edmonton and Calgary due to Jazz Calgary's financial problems - made a bundle.

Weak promotion and a bad snow storm in Calgary cut down Dollar Brand's attendance, but those who attended concerts in Edmonton March 3 and Calgary March 5 agreed that his two-hour solo recital was nothing short of brilliant. Dollar dug Alberta and plans to make it back for July, August and September. Putting a band together up here will be part of the project, but his main reason is to study Kung Fu with Edmonton's Frank Lee, who Dollar says is "the first honest teacher I've met in America..." Dollar wants to bring Don Cherry with him when he comes. No objections here.

April's concert will feature Sam Rivers with Dave Holland, bass and Barry Altschul, drums. He'll be doing at least three nights in Edmonton, one of which may be a benefit for Ed Blackwell... Calgary concert will be promoted by Jazz Calgary, now getting back on its feet after a good deal of haggling, baggling, bungling, grunting and overt racism at meetings. Let's hope things improve.

- Eugene Chadbourne

SAN FRANCISCO

Jazz music is certainly a truly "underground" sound in the Bay Area, these days, and there is of course irony in the fact that while the supposedly far-out contingents of the Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, etc., are living it up in Marin, a swelling number of first-rate jazz musicians are struggling to survive. This is not to say that there is no jazz happening - since there is a lot of beautiful music to be heard - but it is often hard to find out about ahead of time. Generally, the big names book in at the Keystone Korner or the Boarding House. Keystone Korner has featured in the past weeks such groups as Roland Kirk, Hank Crawford, Cannonball Adderley, etc. Artists coming through this month and April will include Pharoah Sanders and Elvin Jones. The Boarding House features generally more popular types of performers, with some jazz slipping in.

The only act caught there recently was Esther Phillips, who put up a brave struggle against a determinedly mediocre band and silly sexist material. Earl Hines snuck through town by way of the Miyaka Hotel, and while it was a great thrill for this writer - who had never witnessed the Fatha in action before - there is very little I can find to say about hearing such a great artist perform things like Scarborough Fair and Kansas City. Hines' approach was purely commercial and the only moments of interest were the opening trio numbers, Rosetta, You Can Depend On Me and a third Hines classic - which were all just tremendous.

Hearing the local musicians is a bit more difficult, as the clubs that feature jazz are spread out all over the area and word-of-mouth is often seemingly the only way of advertising. Such residents as Eddie Henderson, Julian Priestler, Woody Shaw, Bobby Hutcherson and others may be heard at The Sand Dunes when the Quincy Jones Quintet "with guest artists" holds forth Sundays from 3 - 7. All kinds of things happen at these jam sessions and make the Sand Dunes generally the best place to catch the "San Francisco sound" - if there is such a thing. For the rest, Hutcherson and Mike White both have groups which play in various places in the area, which I have not had a chance to hear. John Handy, who gave a concert February 17, has nothing planned for the coming weeks and is teaching at S.F. State for a living. Also teaching in the area is Charles Moffett who is teaching elementary children in Oakland and has a band of about 35 kids - mostly 12 years old or younger! I certainly hope to hear this group soon, as reports about it have been interesting.

Musicians such as Henderson, Priestler and keyboard-man Mike Nock may be heard as sidemen to such less-than-spectacular leaders as Latin-jazz trumpeter Luis Gasca, but hopefully the time is coming when these men can play their own music in the Bay Area. (A Julian Priestler concert is reviewed in this month's heard & seen.) Sonny Simmons will make his first appearance in some time when the Prince Lasha group appears this week. - Richard Baker

DENMARK

Duke Ellington and his orchestra and Miles Davis and his new group (with two guitars) visited Denmark during the last months of 1973.

Other guests were Louis Jordan and his Tympany Five, and Wild Bill Davison who played with local bands.

Joe Albany played at New Orleans in Aarhus for two months, Al Haig came to the country and played a few gigs. Along with Haig came British record producer Tony Williams.

Pop pianist Duke Jordan came to Denmark in November after an invitation from Jazz Exchange (read about this organization in CODA, December 1973 issue).

Jordan played Denmark, Sweden,



Norway, and Holland with a regular trio featuring two Danish musicians: Jorn Elniff, a veteran drummer and Allan Gregersen, a new man on bass. Jordan was happy about playing in Europe and the audiences welcomed his melodic and original music with enthusiasm. While in Europe Jordan also played with Dexter Gordon, Johnny Griffin, Red Mitchell, Barney Kessel, Chris Woods and Bent Jaedig.

Jordan recorded for SteepleChase Records and the first of two LPs is ready for release this spring. Other new albums from the company are by Ken McIntyre, Horace Parlan, Jackie McLean, and Kenny Drew.

Marc Levin, composer, arranger, and multi-instrumentalist has settled in Denmark and has been working with a Danish avant-garde group. Levin has a representative album on his own Sweet Dragon label (Songs, Dances and Prayers, Sweet Dragon ML-1).

Bent Kauling has worked out a Ben Webster European Discography featuring Webster's recorded work in Europe from January 1965 to September 1973. The discography is available from, Bent Kauling, Jagtvej 219 K, DK 2100 Copenhagen, DENMARK.

- Roland Baggenaes

HOLLAND

Belgium guitarist Rene Thomas, who at this time is playing a very personal far out version of bebop, is hardly recorded these days. His latest was made several years ago with Stan Getz and called "Dynasty" on Verve. Often he is hampered by the fact that rhythm sections cannot follow him. Every now and then he performs with drummer Han Bennink. Very soon both musicians will do a duo recording for the private Belgian label "Vogel" and all ingredients can be there

to make it a record to look forward to.

On February 9 several hundreds of people attended a concert given by the Buddy Tate Trio in the town of Zaandam. Organist Milt Buckner and drummer Jo Jones were with him. Tate's part was very surprising - serious and beautiful.

The Irene Schweizer - Ruderich Karl Quartet gave two performances in early February in Amsterdam. Dutch bassist Arjen Gorter and drummer Heinz Hock completed the group.

Cellist Jane Robertson, who is on Don Cherry's Relativity Suite and Dewey Redman's latest for Impulse, was in Amsterdam. She took part in a Mickery Theater production and a concert given by Burton Greene.

Tenor saxophonist Rudy Brink was awarded an Edison for his interpretations of ten famous ballads on the CNR record "Teach Me Tonight".

Two Dutch jazz musicians have opened their own club. Trumpeter Nedly Elstak has his "Masjien" in the Amsterdam Vonderstraat every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. Saxophonist Gijs Hendriks opened "Jazz In Kikker" every Sunday afternoon in the Utrecht Tejater Kikker.

Flutist-bandleader Chris Hinze will break-up his Chris Hinze Combination in June for at least half a year to concentrate on his recently formed Keytone Records. Alto saxophonists Gary Bartz and Charlie Mariano have recorded with Combination's rhythm section - about the finest and tightest in Europe - (American) bassist John Lee and drummer Gerry Brown. Also in definitive state are plans to record German guitarist Siggie Schwab, and Dutch keyboard wizzard Jasper van 't Hof in company with Polish (recent) expatriate alto saxophonist / violinist Zbigniew Seifert. Keytone Records will be distributed by Dureco - Holland. Publicity man Kees de Bakker from CBS was signed by Hinze to his company.

Willem Breuker wrote some beautiful music for the theaterplay performance of Bertold Brecht's "Baal", in which drummer Pierre Courbois' sister actress Kitty is impressive in the leading role. Willem Breuker seems to be at his very best these days when he does his composed / arranged works. He is involved in De Volharding (The Perseverance) formed a few years ago by composer / pianist Louis Andriessen. De Volharding includes eleven musicians from both the classical and the jazz scene. Willem Breuker plays clarinet, alto and tenor saxophone and conducts parts of the performances. De Volharding plays "revolutionary" compositions such as Darius Milhaud's "La Creation du Monde", Terry Riley's "In C", Stravinsky's "Tango", Vietnamese war songs, music by Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler and originals by Willem Breuker and Louis Andriessen. For a long time De Volharding strictly performed during political meetings, social actions, protest demonstrations etc. Now the ensemble is playing in concert halls.

In February pianist Joe Albany returned to Holland for a couple of gigs. Singer Cleo Laine received the Edison du Disque for her "I am a Song" and later toured Holland accompanied by husband John Dankworth's Quartet. Oscar Peterson, Stephane Grappelli, Niels Henning Pederson and Kenny Clarke performed during the Grand Gala du Disque. American composer ("Available Forms") and recording engineer (Tristano's "Crosscurrents" and the MJQ's "Third Stream") Earl Brown gave lectures at the Rotterdam conservatoria in February and March. The annual International Jazz Festival Old Style will be held in Breda from May 23 to 26. Expected guests are clarinetist Barney Bigard and the Firehouse Five Plus Two.

New records on private labels.....

American pianist / composer Burton Greene has released his second recording on his own Button-Nose records. It's called "Trees" and done in duo with percussionist Daoud Amin. The recordings, including a raga, took place during "live" performances. Information: Burton Greene, p/a Ceintuurbaan 60, AMSTERDAM, Holland.

Harry Verbeke is one of our best known tenor players from the post mainstream-bebop generation. He plays with fire and has an incredible heavy sound. "Broedermelk" (Brothermilk) is his first record. Verbeke is accompanied by his brother Joop on piano, bassist Henk Veldhoven and Martin van Duynhoven on drums in four standards such as Satin Doll and I'll Remember April. Information: Universe Productions, Spanjaardlaan 33, LEEUWARDEN, Holland.

Contrabassist Maarten van Regteren Altena (formerly with the Theo Loevendie Consort and today working very close with Willem Breuker) has done a solo-bass recording for ICP Records. The record is called "Handicaps". Information: I.C.P. Records, Vinkenslag 22, DE HOF, Holland. - Maarten Derksen

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JA-14 - "ARCADIA SHUFFLE" ROY ELDRIDGE AT THE ARCADIA BALLROOM - 1939
(Theme) Little Jazz - Mahogany Hall Stomp - Body And Soul - Arcadia Shuffle (all
August 5) St. Louis Blues* (September 2) Swinging At The Deuces - Sweet Georgia
Brown (August 12) Yellow Fire Shine (August 19) Minor Jive (September 9)
Woodchoppers Ball (September 2) Heckler's Hop (August 12) Sam, Sam The Vegetable
Man** (August 5) Oh, Lady Be Good - Roy's Riffin' Now (September 9) King Of Bongo
Bong* (August 12) Pluckin' The Bass - Little Jazz (August 5) vocals: *Roy Eldridge -
**Laurel Watson.

JA-13 - "THREE BLIND MICE" DUKE ELLINGTON - COTTON CLUB 1938, (Vol. 2)
Echoes of Harlem (May 15) Prelude In 'C' Sharp Minor (Rachmaninoff) May 29) If
Dreams Come True*(March 24) Harmony In Harlem (March 24) It's The Dreamer In
Me* (May 15) Ev'ry Day (May 15) Three Blind Mice (April 17) On The Sunny Side Of
The Street* (April 24) Dinah's In A Jam (April 24) If Dreams Come True (May 1) Lost
In Meditation* (May 15) Rockin' In Rhythm (May 29) vocals, *Miss Ivie Anderson

JA-12 - "IF DREAMS COME TRUE" DUKE ELLINGTON - COTTON CLUB 1938, (Vol. 1)
Harmony In Harlem (May 1) Dinah# (March 24) At Your Beck And Call* (May 1) If You
Were In My Place (March 24) Oh Babe!, Maybe Someday* (March 24) Downtown Uproar
(April 17) If Dreams Come True (May 15) Birmingham Breakdown (May 15) You Went
To My Head * (April 17) Rose Room (May 15) The Gal From Joes / Riding On A Blue
Note (May 1) vocals: *Miss Ivie Anderson, # vocal trio

JA-11 - "DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM" - BUNNY BERIGAN - BUNNY IN THE 30's
Down By The Old Mill Stream - Running Wild - Dardanella (all October 22, 1936) Back
In Your Own Back Yard - Rose Room - Louisiana (all March 27, 1938) It's Wonderful -
Devil's Holiday - Whistle While You Work (all April 8, 1938) Shanghai Shuffle
(April 19, 1938) Stardust (April 16, 1938) I'll Always Be In Love With You (April 24,
1938) Beale Street Blues (July 2, 1938) Hold Tight (January 21, 1939) Old Man Mose
(January 28, 1939) Panama into (Theme) I Can't Get Started (Summer 1939)

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND
1935 - 1936



KEEP THE RHYTHM GOING JA-10

FRANKIE NEWTON

SWINGING
ON 52ND ST.

1937 - 1939

'EMPEROR
JONES'



JA-9

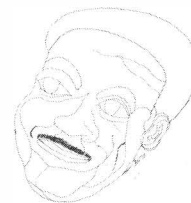
CHU BERRY
FEATURED WITH
CAB CALLOWAY
AND HIS ORCHESTRA



'PENGUIN SWING'
1937 - 1941

JA-8

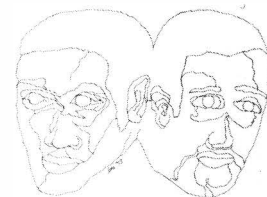
FATS WALLER



'HERE 'TIS'

JA-7

CHARLIE CHRISTIAN



LESTER YOUNG

TOGETHER
1940
JA-6



JA-15

ROY ELDRIDGE
at the
ARCADIA BALLROOM-1939



"Arcadia Shuffle"

JA-14



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"DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM"
Bunny in the 30's



BUNNY BERIGAN and his ORCHESTRA
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Swingin' In E Flat, Let's Have A Jubilee, African Lullaby, Dancing Dogs, Keep The Rhythm Going, Harlem Heat, There's Rhythn In Harlem, Tallahassee, Truckin', E Flat Stride (previously un-issued), Yes! Yes!, Merry Go Round, Balloonacy, Barrel House, Big John Special, Callin' Your Bluff, (Exciting Harlem Swing of the mid-thirties with such greats as Red Allen, J.C. Higginbotham, Buster Bailey, Edgar Hayes, others)

JA9 - FRANKIE NEWTON - SWINGING ON 52nd ST. - "EMPEROR JONES"

Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone, Who's Sorry Now? (#1), I Found A New Baby, There's No Two Ways About It, 'Cause My Baby Says It's So, Jitters, Jam Fever (#B), Parallel Fifts, Shame On You, Emperor Jones (previously unissued), So You Won't Sing, Afternoon In Africa, Dizzy Debutante, Chained To A Dream, Light Up (Frankie Newton with his all-star groups featuring Pete Brown, Edmond Hall, Tab Smith, Russell Procope & Newton playing with Charlie Barnet, Buster Bailey, and Jerry Kruger & Her Knights of Rhythm - small group excitement!)

JA-8 - CHU BERRY featured with CAB CALLOWAY "PENGUIN SWING"

Penguin Swing (previously unissued) - Bugle Blues, Rustle Of Swing, Three Swings & Out, Trylon Swing, Calling All Bars (#2), The Lone Arranger (previously unissued), Who's Yehoodi? (#2), Bye Bye Blues (#B), Sunset Cupid's Nightmare, Hot Air, Hep Cats Love Song, Johah Joins The Cab (#2), Geechie Joe (#2), Special Delivery (#3). (A collection that compliments the greatness of Chu Berry with the excitement of Cab's fine orchestra)

JA-7 - FATS WALLER - "HERE 'TIS"

Your Feets Too Big, Handful Of Keys, Ain't Misbehavin', There's A Girl In My Life, Honeysuckle Rose, What's The Matter With You?, Big Business 1-2, Sweet Sue, Just You (#2), Curse Of An Aching Heart (#2), Kiss Me With Your Eyes (#1), You Run Your Mouth (#1), Come Down To Earth My Earth Angel (#1), Shortnin' Bread (#2), Carolina Shout (#1), (First six items are live performances 1938 - 1942. Big Business is an original cast recording, an excerpt from "Hot Chocolate" with Fats at the piano. Remainder all previously unissued "takes"!!

JA-6 - CHARLIE CHRISTIAN / LESTER YOUNG - "TOGETHER 1940"

Finally, thirty-three years later, the legendary "lost" recording session and other versions of great Goodman Sextet Classics with Buck Clayton, Count Basie, Cootie Williams, George Auld, others. None of the tunes as presented on this record have ever been issued before! Ad Lib Blues, I Never Knew, Charlie's Dream, Wholly Cats, Lester's Dream, I Can't Give You Anything But Love (#3), Breakfast Feud (Reh), Royal Garden Blues, Benny's Bugle (Reh), I Can't Give You Anything (#2), Gone With What Draft, Benny's Bugle, Breakfast Feud (second reh), Wholly Cats, Breakfast Feud, Gilly (all with Benny Goodman & His Sextet)



Heard ^{To} _o Seen

DOLLAR BRAND

Old Timer's Cabin, Edmonton, Alberta
March 3, 1974

To the general "jazz"-listening public, the terms "innovator" and "virtuoso" seem to convey connotations that are almost sacred. After John Coltrane and Clifford Brown (and now, McCoy Tyner) it's no wonder. But the fact is that Trane's (and McCoy's) music has nothing

to do with those two "mystical" terms. Great music is great because it will always mean something important to the being of any man or woman capable of equating the sounds with feelings. The supposed fact that there are an incredible number of important musicians on the scene today is an illusion: There are simply a lot of people playing next to nothing with great chops and a deep understanding of audience psychology.

Dollar Brand's music is the antithesis of

these mixed-up standards. From the beginning to the end of his concert I never once jumped, gasped, drooled, ooo-d!, or ah-d!; not once did I say to myself: "Wow! How did he do that?". It had nothing to do with music in the way that I had brain-washed myself into thinking about it.

Each set consisted of a long piece of music which went through a number of changes before returning home. As a whole, the form of each piece was

indefinable. Like a suite, each part had its own character, and each part contributed, in a cumulative way, to the total effect. The parts in themselves were not complex in the Western sense. In fact, it was all based so much on African folk music that the term "jazz" does not apply. Something that Dollar said after the concert explained both the lack of form and the simplicity of the pieces - that is, that the rhythms of his music correspond to the rhythms (shapes) of natural objects. The jungle has no squares. (The city's four-walled universe has us hearing 4/4 and living geometry). But really, the rhythms of mathematically-indefinable living things are far more complex than those of the plastic creations of western civilization. More important, they are so much more graceful and vital. The same applies to his use of non-scalar-based melody and ear-harmony (as opposed to paper-harmony). This is profound, organic music - it flows from the mind of a man who plays only what he hears and sees. He is adamant about his feeling that he does not play the piano - he plays himself. In fact, it is almost incorrect to call these sounds music - to the listener, they can become an experience that brings out the best in himself.

Dollar Brand chooses honest communication over pretentiousness; peacefulness over excitement. He is a creator of beautiful feelings - and the locus of those feelings is in ourselves. His music made me feel beautiful. I thank him again for an unforgettable and totally satisfying experience.

Only 140 people attended, but they were as responsive as any audience of which I've been a part. It was like sitting through a profound movie without being interrupted by the patrons' giggling at the most intense moment. I'm sure that many of us will remember this concert as the finest sponsored by the Edmonton Jazz Society to date. - David Goorevitch

PLUS BEA BENJAMIN

St. Clair Music Library, Toronto.
March 8 - 10, 1974

The experience of Dollar Brand's music is something you'll never find on record. All you'll ever hear on sides of vinyl - even the sympathetically-produced ones - are the notes he plays; but piano sound is hard to capture, and Brand's is a hard sound. His touch draws a brittle, almost percussive response from the keyboard, one that instinctively recalls Bud Powell's heritage. The brilliance of that sound has subtle shades and gradings, ones that I've yet to hear any engineer capture. Rather than cascade off his fingers, his lopsided quicksilver runs stab the strings like so many darts of black steel, and in the middle of the volley it sings. But even so it's wrong to talk about his sound, or his piano music, in isolation. You're speaking instead of a complete immersion of the senses when you hear him - the vision of his gangly figure bending more

and more resiliently into the music, his feet slapping and dancing out marvelously intricate rhythm patterns under the bench, and the hoarse voice that chants and croons harmonies over the keys running off his fingers. No record has captured that infectious ambience. You can't press a whole man into vinyl (even black vinyl) in a paper sleeve.

Dollar Brand plays music that has meaning for him - his own compositions, some familiar and some not (the older ones reemerging during the evening like signposts through a mist, weathering and gaining in complexity with age), songs by Ellington and Fats, ones from Monk, and a few that he just likes. (Shrimp Boats, Some Day My Prince Will Come.) They all form part of his heritage, because he pours himself into them and them into him when he plays. He plays the lyrics as well as the notes. Dollar is a distinctive musical personality like absolutely no-one else. His forms are rhythms - the complex ostinatos under his left hand that smear into and out of tempos, the patterns his feet strut, churchy block chords that part like a veil for the breathtakingly sure dance of his right hand, his voice planing the peaks. And all the time, the bass rumbles on, like train tracks drawing your imagination into him. It's hard to cope with a figure that powerful, that complete a fusion of man and music and come away with anything but vague shards of impressions to write home about.

And as if that weren't enough to fill your head to explosion, we had the rare treat of Bea Benjamin's vocal talents. Ms. Benjamin's voice is a pleasure that is not accessible on vinyl. Her deep, throaty sound and soaring delivery more than match her husband's astute rhythmic commentaries. Together they share an impeccable South African swing. And, like her husband, she puts a power behind every note and every syllable she sings as if she were giving birth to bits of herself in them rather than merely placing and enunciating them. Her control of dynamics and pitch is exquisite. Her opening I'm Glad There Is You was a prelude, perhaps just slightly nervous. By her second, Sophisticated Lady, she was in full stride, washing away any notions you may have had of other ways of singing that song. (And yes, I do realize that Billie Holiday used to sing it.) Come Sunday was an electrifying performance, profoundly moving and just a little frightening in its power. Then Dollar left her on stage, alone, for her last - a glorious a cappella Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child, chanted more than sung like part of a cantorial liturgy.

Dollar Brand is beginning to appear on record, now, a bit more than he had in the past. Bea Benjamin is unrecorded, her reputation passing from mouth to mouth. Their sympathy is unforgettable, their identity together or separately unmistakable. A perfect cure for Toronto midwinter blues. Feed for the senses and mind. Absolutely great music.

- Barry Tepperman

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BROTHERHOOD OF BREATH

The MacLellan Galleries, Glasgow
February 26, 1974

Everything was against the band. Chris McGregor here on a brief visit from his home in southern France had seen a supposed ten day tour disintegrate into just three isolated concerts. For the last of these, the musicians had left London by car at eight in the morning to drive up to Glasgow - four hundred miles away. The venue was the MacLellan Galleries - a majestic name but in fact a decayed music hall better suited to a coffin exhibition than live sounds. The stage was cramped with no seats let alone music stands. Perhaps jazz musicians are not supposed to read. Anyway, what parts they had were scattered in a few untidy heaps on the floor. Worst of all the supporting group, who performed first, were so atrocious that about half the well-intentioned audience were driven away before the Brotherhood appeared. Jazz has a hard enough time without this sort of indecent assault from within.

All in all, not the ideal situation for the presentation of music.

And yet, seemingly immune to these setbacks, the Brotherhood gave us the most together exultant big band sounds you could wish to hear. They played for I don't know how long - time stood still. But by the end everything had been said. Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath has been together about four years with few changes in personnel. Chris serves as a catalyst for the strongest musicians around, whatever their individual persuasions. Like Sun Ra's family they know it is good. They being Mongesi Feza, trumpet, Harry Beckett, trumpet and flugelhorn, Marc Charig, cornet, Nick Evans and, I think, Radu Malfatti,

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trombones, Dudu Pukwana, alto, Mike Osborne, alto and clarinet, Elton Dean, alto and saxello, Evan Parker, tenor and soprano, Chris McGregor, piano, Harry Miller, bass, and Louis Moholo, drums.

They are like no other big band. They don't sound like Basie or Ellington or Kenton or even the Arkestra. They are wide open and yet their totally natural swing is as old as the hills. The Brotherhood sound like the breath in your body. And the pulse of South Africa is never far away. There were plenty of solos but everybody was playing nearly all the time. In fact the soloists, all of them impressive, were backing the band rather than the band backing the soloists. It's next to impossible to describe the music because there's no point of comparison. And words cannot do justice to those rhythms that dance in your head. Can you imagine one man with twelve instruments all playing the same thing differently - well that's how it sounded. Everybody was so in tune. They had to be with Louis Moholo around. The highest compliment I can pay him is that I cannot imagine anyone else with this band. From first to last was continuous music. There were no visible cues but the songs changed and the whole band was there instantly - homing in like a flock of birds.



The way they change patterns and positions while always knowing where they are headed.

The musicians were happy with the gig and we floated out of the MacLellan Galleries, speechless and unbelieving. This was one of the Brotherhood's very best nights. They gave out the same sort of feeling that Bird used to give. Therapeutic.

Nearly twenty years after Bird flew away, it's about time musicians were accorded their proper place in society. They are our only true speakers.

- Roy Morris

**RONNIE SCOTT • ILLINOIS
JACQUET • GENE CONNORS**

at Ronnie Scott's Club, London, England.

Middle-period tenormen are a diminishing band these days, with the tragic departure of giants such as Don Byas and Ben Webster, so the appearance of Illinois Jacquet at Ronnie Scott's Club

was especially welcome. The tenorist and his trio were resident throughout December and over New Year, exactly repeating their successful 1972 booking. For this, its third visit to London, the trio reverted to its original personnel: the ebullient Milt Buckner at the Hammond organ and the non-pareil drummer, Jo Jones, were along as Jacquet's co-partners in swing. I doubt whether many more satisfying combinations may be imagined.

But to first things first. As though to force a surfeit of riches on his customers, Scott elected to present his own group in the opening spot. Flanked by organist Mike Carr and drummer Bobby Gien, he produced a storming set of sustained improvisation. Scott's tenor style is a powerful amalgam of modern saxophonic forces and he takes his place rightly among the leaders on the instrument. Doubtless the close proximity of masters such as Rollins has had its effect - evidently beneficial. It's no surprise, therefore, that his trio is in demand far beyond the confines of the Club. Carr is

also an important voice, capable of creatively exploiting the organ's capabilities and his long solos were a mighty complement to the leader's exploits. Gien, a new-ish name on the London scene, has ample technique yet seems to properly understand his role in the musical plan. To his credit, Gien appeared much taken by Jones' playing later on and probably gleaned a lot from his observations.

So to the top billing of the night. Seconds before the off, Buckner was relaxing at a stage-side table: Jones materialised from the shadows, tapped out an insistent rhythm on the splash cymbal, Buckner moved to the Hammond, fed a chord or two and in some indefinable way, we were into All The Things You Are at a gorgeous, flowing tempo, with Jacquet strolling on to entrance us with his warm-toned tenor lines.

You'll gather from all this that I was bowled over by the Trio. So often in concert situations the great players fall short of their reputations but on this occasion each of these artists was in stimulating form. Drummer Jones, who seems to re-invent jazz percussion technique by the hour, was in arrogant command throughout - shading his ploys to Jacquet's direction and bringing his special dynamic concept to bear on each musical event. He sits high at the set, smiling demonically, castigates the audience ("Who needs Buddy Rich?") and swings, as we say over here, like the clappers. An education in himself, Jones, in the right company, remains a timeless force in music. Tiny touches remain in the mind's eye: he holds the right hand stick so that its base strikes the tom-tom as its tip pounds out the cymbal beat - turning a conventional sound into something distinctive. Typical of the man.

As each song unfolded, I was struck by the apposite balance between the trio's performance and its repertoire. Jacquet seems now to eschew the rabble-raising tactics of his JATP days, concentrating on ballad readings, full of grace and with a strength of tone that pervades the room. Naturally, he still swings hard at up tempos and on his famous Flying Home, repeated his classic solo and then launched into a series of extrovert choruses. Contrast this with the very slow and moving Blues From Louisiana, where his overtly emotional playing stilled audience chatter, evoked memories of his early mentor, Herschel Evans, and firmly stamped him as a major creative force. I suppose Jacquet has taken Lester Young's basic method, allied to it the full bodied tone associated with the Hawkins school, in the process producing an adroit combination of improvisational skill and sheer luxuriant sound.

On One O'clock Jump, Jacquet somehow managed to bring the sonority of the entire Basie sax section to mind. It was on this that Buckner's opening duet with Jones alerted us to the organist's jazz reflexes. Milt seems to live for his music, rhythmically potent and good humoured in its execution: the whole blended with the

masterly touch of a swing era professional. He retains a pianist's concept of the organ's dynamic function as in his attractive version of Midnight Sun with its lush chordal approach or in the exciting Buckner's Boogie-Woogie. He's quite capable of moving from his own "locked hands" unison chord style to a more pianistic mode involving longer single line explorations. In short, he has adapted to the organ, in the process keeping the monster under control yet without sacrificing his erstwhile fleet way with a chord structure.

With music of this quality now safely stored in the memory bank, it's heartening to learn that the Jacquet trio recorded in Paris for Monestier's Black and Blue label, following the end of their London season. If they can produce again the inspiration shown at Scott's, then this will surely be an album to covet.

Too little space to adequately cover the third item on this heavy bill. Trombonist and blues shouter Gene "Mighty Flea" Connors, backed by Ronnie Scott's trio, vocalized effectively on Goin' To KC and Tain't Nobody's Bizness and impressed with his instrumental command on Undecided and other warhorses. Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, Connors knows the big band scene but has spent years on the Coast with Johnny Otis and the bluesmen. He's equally at home in jazz and rhythm 'n' blues where his fast, modern hornwork fits so well. His forceful music is bringing him increasing popularity and as a consequence, Gene is spending lengthy periods in Europe. A talent to watch. - Peter Vacher

JULIAN PRIESTER

One World Family Teleport Center,
San Francisco. March 2, 1974

Much to the possible good fortune of the San Francisco area, Herbie Hancock's group broke up here last year, leaving some very strong musicians in town - among them trombonist Julian Priester, who led a group in a concert March 2 in the strange environment of the One World Family Teleport Center in Berkeley. The One World Center is the home of an Aquarian Age-type of religious commune whose leader was, as I understand it, visited by extraterrestrial beings who instructed him to set up the Center. If this raises a few eyebrows, it is worth saying that the atmosphere of the Center was certainly less oppressive than the crass one-drink-a-set-minimum attitude usually encountered in a club. In fact, the surroundings certainly served to under-line the extraterrestrial aspect of Priester's music, reminding one of his early association with Sun Ra.

Assisting Priester was a strong and varied, yet almost unfailingly coherent group. The other horn was the alto of Nguanda (David Johnson) who has been heard in the company of Biyete (Todd Cochran), who handled the electric piano for the evening. The drummer, whom Priester introduced as "My brother

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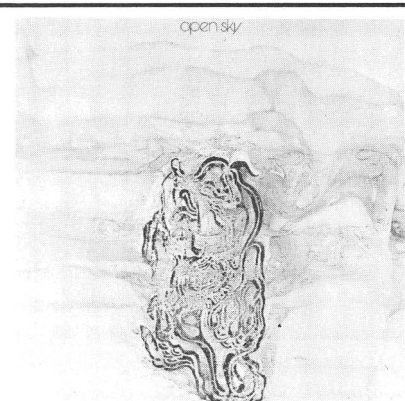
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Cecil Taylor - solo piano

SIDE B
Spring Of Two Blue-J's (part 2)
Cecil Taylor, piano; Jimmy Lyons, alto saxophone; Sirone aka Norris Jones, bass; Andrew Cyrille, drums.

Second set of a concert recorded at Town Hall, New York City, November 4, 1973, dedicated to Ben Webster.

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Kamal" was, I am told, Eric Gravatt. The group was completed by bassist Kenny Jenkins and, on the moog, Patrick Gleeson.

I should admit that I experienced some apprehension as I watched Mr. Gleeson set up his instrument, as the electronic element which has recently been heard in groups such as Miles' and Hancock's has never held any appeal for me. This concert, however, convinced me of the fact that there is room in jazz for any and all means of expression. Gleeson and Biyete were both able to extract the most amazing kinds of sounds from their instruments without ever playing anything that wasn't appropriate to the group sound at a given moment.

The concert began with a few introductory remarks by Priester and went into a number appropriately titled Interactions. The emphasis was, of course, on group improvisation, and, as that rather broad term might not imply, the music of the entire concert moved with such deliberate and careful logic that I was incredulous to discover later that the group was performing together for the first time. And the avenues of interaction which the group explored were myriad; horn to horn, moog to horn(s), electric piano to moog, drums to electric piano, and, really, everybody to everybody. That such balance could be achieved by a group together for the first time out is unbelievable. Each player was able both to express his own concept and contribute constantly to the group creating. This level was maintained, moreover, for over three hours through four pieces.

Individually, all six men gave strong solos. Priester's playing was for the most part subdued, as he concentrated on directing the group flow. He spent maybe half of his solo time in a kind of slow modal space which emphasized his extremely lyrical approach. Unfortunately, his sound was hurt by a poor sound system which rendered many of his remarks inaudible and hurt the playing of Nguanda even more. To make matters worse, the saxophonist's energetic style almost never failed to ignite the rhythm section, so that a great part of his playing could not be heard at all. Biyete showed a strongly personal approach to his instrument, moving through a maze of textures and sonorities with real originality, and giving evidence of imagination and talent far beyond what I've heard on record. Kamal, for his part, was near perfect in his support and did a great deal toward holding this diverse group together. Jenkins and Gleeson both gave strong solo offerings, particularly in the numbers that each kicked off, Jenkins setting up a fast and strongly organic pace in the last number which reminded a little of Mingus, a little of Richard Davis, (a big, round tone) but, of course, strongly his own man, and Gleeson getting into all the supersonic possibilities of his instrument on the previous number. A word further is due concerning Mr. Gleeson's control. Undoubtedly, he had the power to ruin the efforts of everyone involved, but his

restrained use of the moog remained constant throughout the concert.

One very sour note. I understand that Priester, obviously a man who is working very hard to bring good music to the area, actually wound up losing money. It is always disheartening that so often events which are so successful musically can be such failures economically.

- Richard Baker

BOBBY HUTCHERSON

Students' Union Theatre, Captain's Cabin;
Edmonton, Alberta, February 3/4, 1974.

The Edmonton Jazz Society sponsored two good concerts by Bobby Hutcherson which were up to their usual standard. Hutcherson brought his quartet which consisted of himself on vibes, Kirk Lightsey on piano, Harry Franklin on bass and Larry Hancock on drums. Naturally, Hutcherson was the dominant instrumentalist and drove the group quite hard on up-tempo pieces while playing quite tasteful ballads. He is somewhat influenced by Milt Jackson but has both a softer tone and an even more swinging conception. He just about pushed his instrument to its limits and I doubt that a better combination of technique and taste are possible on that instrument. I think vibists tend to fall into cliches and mannerisms and while Hutcherson has a few, such as repeating a note at the top end of the vibes, he never lets them get too obvious. Lightsey is a strong, capable piano player with no very obvious (to me, anyway) influences. His solos were interesting and exciting and I look forward to hearing more of him. Franklin was a clear and strong bass player with a somewhat unique tone, similar to that of Slam Stewart (unbowed). He provided very good support and several times played an important role in the heads and the codas. Hancock's drumming was at a similar high level and I enjoyed him working on two cymbals simultaneously.

As a group, Hutcherson's quartet worked well with a good balance of jazz originals and standards. The group seemed to have given some thoughts to its endings and I found that these were often unusually effective. One minor reservation I had was that the vib and piano sounds frequently clashed. However, if the solution is restraint along Shearing or M.J.Q. lines, I'd much prefer things the way they are. One member of the group told me that Lightsey plays flute well but he did not do so on either night. Perhaps, this could be used to add some variety to the group's sound.

As I have said before, the local Jazz Society format seems at least a partial solution to the problem of presenting jazz under pleasant conditions for listener and musician and providing a better working environment than the typical "jazz club". The more cities that have such societies, the more benefits there will be for all since there are obvious advantages in arranging bookings in nearby cities.

- Kellogg Wilson

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