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DECEMBER 1974

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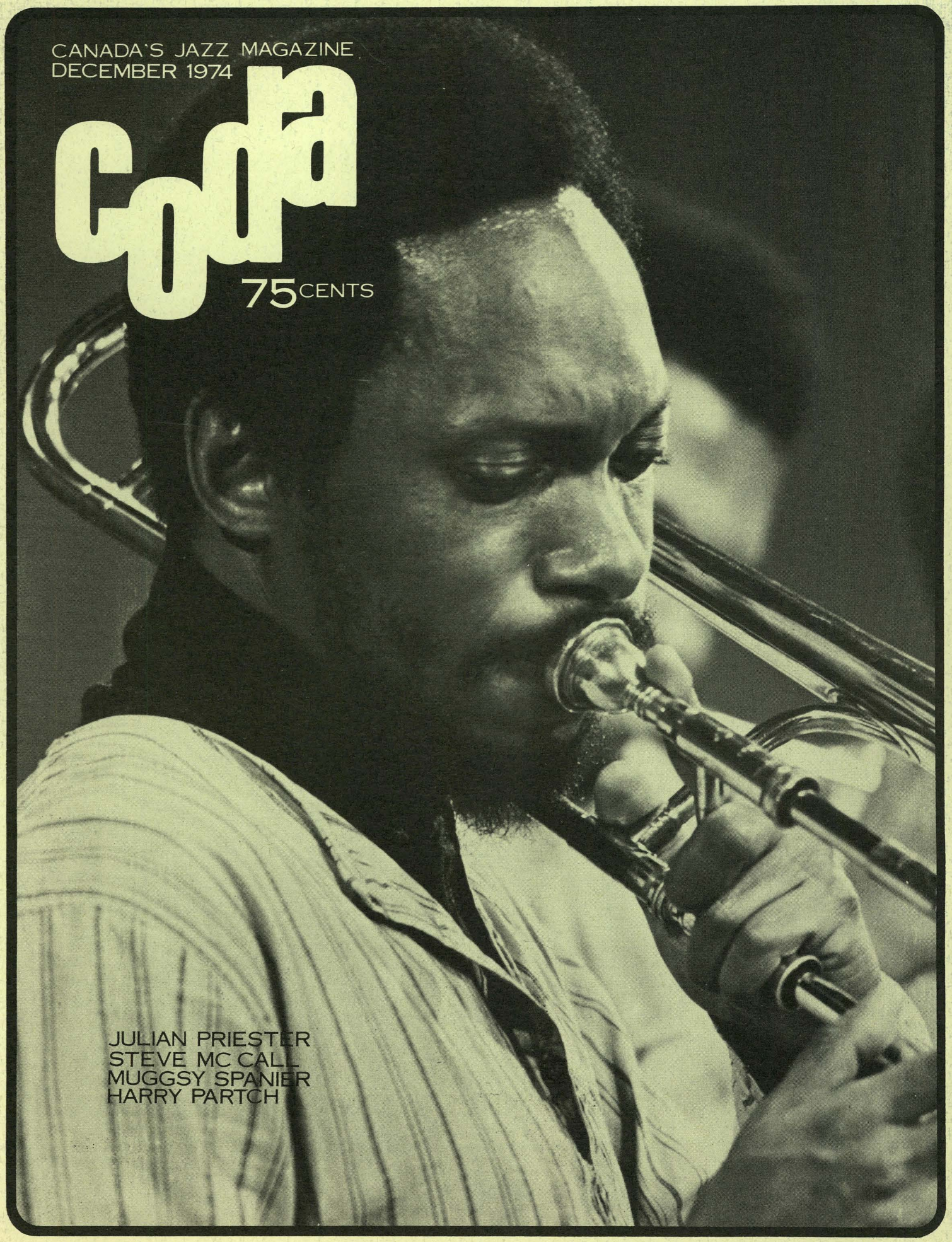

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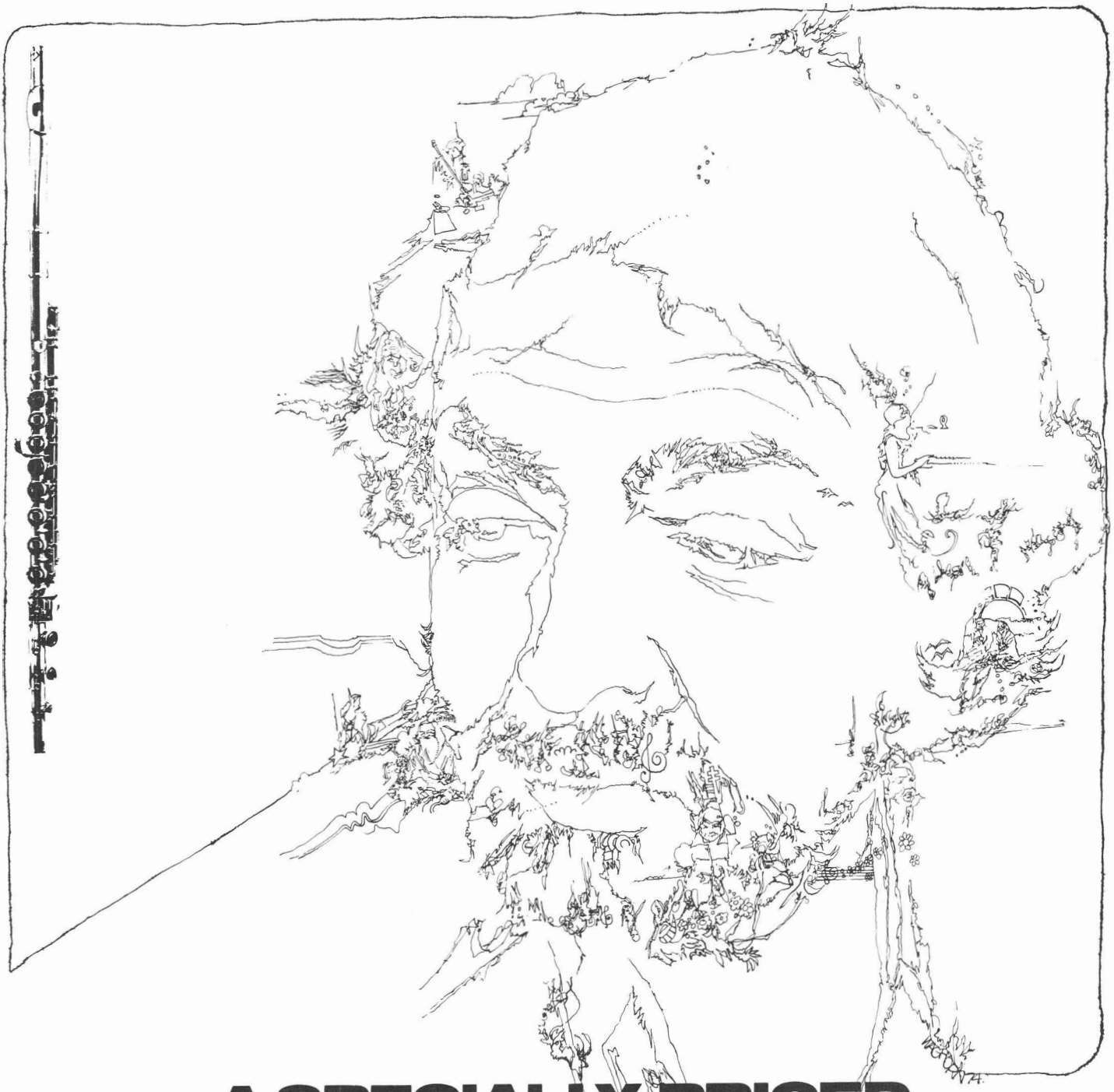

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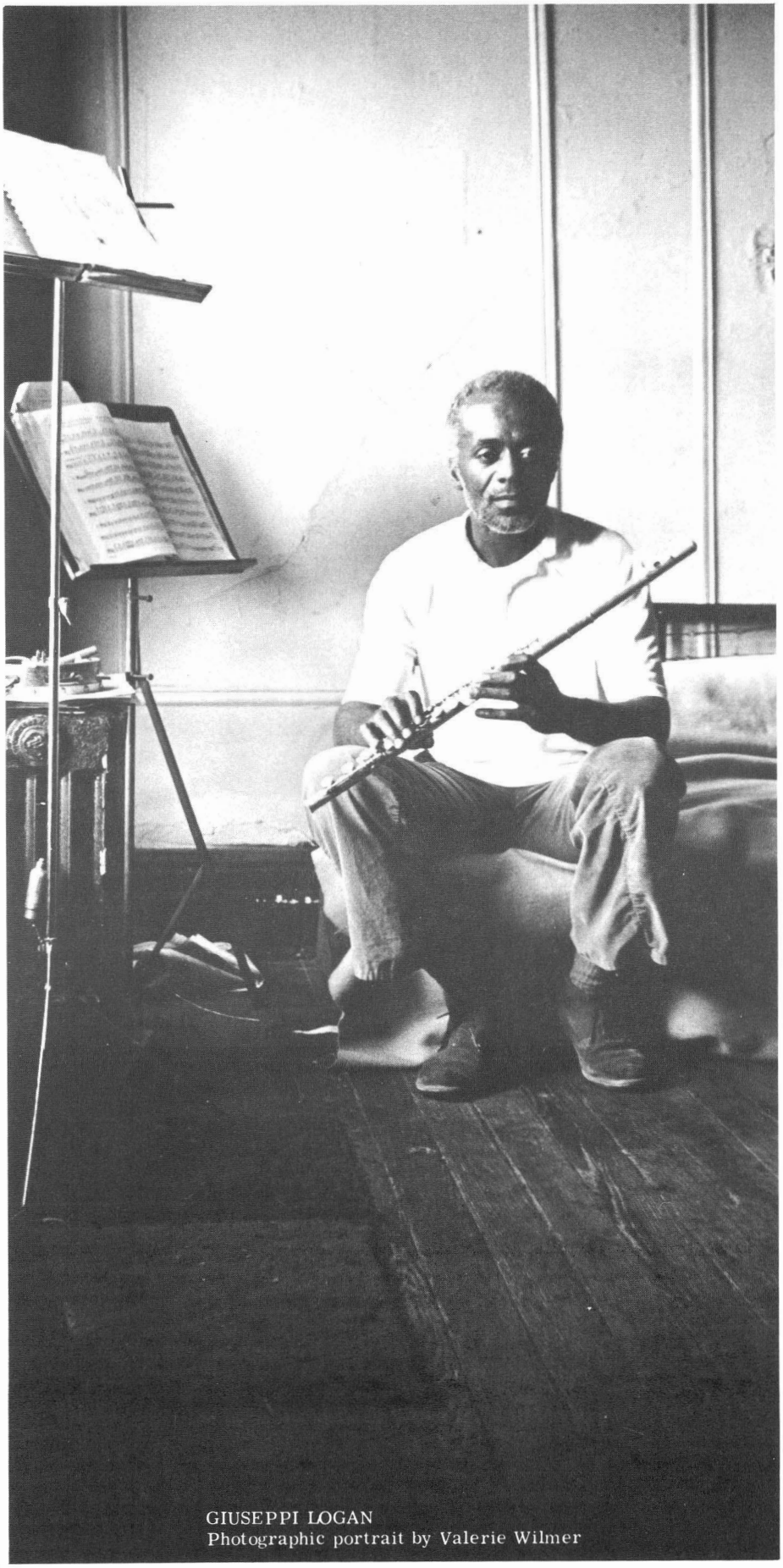

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FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

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JULIAN PRIESTER
photograph.....Dave Poholka

EDITORIAL

NEWSSTAND price of Coda is to become $1.00 starting with the January issue. The reasons for this should be obvious to anyone who has to purchase anything these days. Paper costs continue to rise and it is becoming more and more un-economical to publish the magazine. At the present time the subscription price remains the same and there is now a definite advantage (financially) in taking out a subscription. While we don't want to pressure anyone into this we should point out that subscribers (rather than advertisers) are the lifeblood of the magazine and only through increasing the regular readership can we hold our own in an adverse environment.

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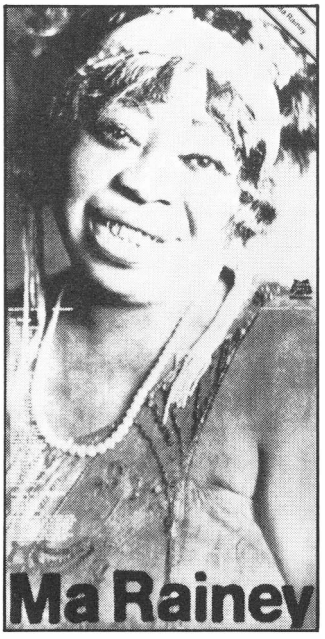

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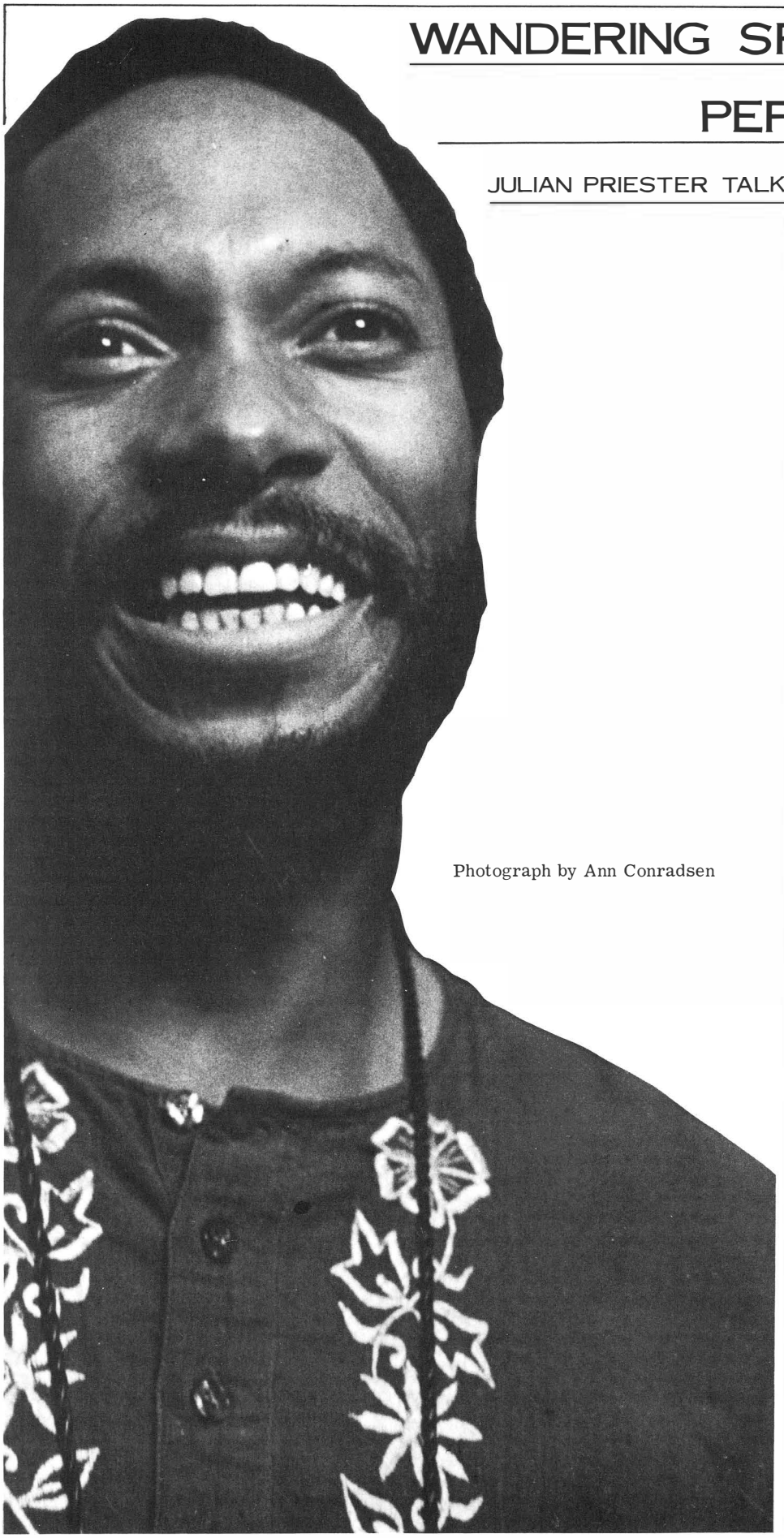


Photograph by Ann Conradsen

So what do you say about Julian Priester? Here's one fact that trembles with importance - he copped fourth place in the trombone division of the annual Downbeat Readers' Poll, with 277 people choosing him as the best trombonist in the jazz world.

Okay, that's meaningless. In a scene where too many musicians are bittersweet or just plain bitter - perhaps rightfully but inevitably depressing - Priester is a happy, constantly pleasant man who can fit himself into any musical style. I've heard him go from be-bop to free form between beers at the taping of a jazz series for a public television station. Whatever he plays is good. He simply plays with all his heart in any setting. Check his career out - he's on his own now after the dis-banding of the Herbie Hancock Sextet, a gig that kept him musically happy for over three years. Right now he's hustling record companies with a tape he recorded with some of San Francisco's most promising young musicians. I listened to the tape over breakfast one morning, and I hope some record executive will have the brains - this is typical early morning, wishful thinking - to put it out and sell the hell out of it. It's important music, and is going to do a lot to define just what is right about electronics and what is jive. Julian certainly isn't jive. He's worked with a wide assortment of musicians. Sun Ra gave him a start early in his career, and the Arkestra's "Super Sonic Jazz" (Saturn LP 0216) serves as a good example of the young trombonist's early playing and composing.

Other good Priester on record includes the three albums by the Hancock group, "Mwandishi" (featuring the side-long Wandering Spirit Song by Priester) and "Crossings" on Warner-Brothers and "Sextant" on Columbia.

He also contributes to Billy Harper's superb new album "Capra Black" (Strata-East 19739) and "Percussion Bitter Sweet" by Max Roach on Impulse. These are just a few Priester sessions that come to mind - he's also recorded with McCoy Tyner, among others. A short-lived contract with Riverside resulted in several sessions as a leader that are long out-of-print and will hopefully be revived by Milestone's new mass re-releasing on two-record sets. Some of the latest batch of Riverside re-releases by Philly Joe Jones and Johnny Griffin again exhibit his talents as a sideman.

But Julian Priester - given the second name of Pepo Mtote by Hancock - is summed up best by his own actions. During the taping of that same TV show, Priester continually blew long, strenous

solos during the preliminary sound checks for each tune to be recorded. Questioned by one of the musicians about why he doesn't "let up" during the checks, Priester shrugged "I think about doing that, man... I feel like I should just take it easy during the checks and save the real stuff for the real taping.

"But I can't do that. I have to let it go, strong and hard, every time. Besides," he says with a laugh that betrays his modesty, "I got plenty of stuff. I'm not worrying about running out."

E.C.: First of all, what contributed to Herbie Hancock's decision to break up the sextet after three years together?

J.P.: It was really two things...first of all, it was discouraging in an economic way after all those years to realize that we were really no farther in terms of money after three years of pretty constant working then we were when we started out.

We were able to get work without too much trouble, but the jobs always seemed to be all the way across the continent... they were never together. And where this always causes hardship, it hurt us particularly because we were lugging all our own equipment with us! Our own sound system and all of Herbie's keyboards and electronic things. This became enormously expensive, and as we kept working and traveling the cost just added up. It's tough to keep a group of that size - six pieces - on the road and after three years we'd really made next to no money, you see, practically nothing.

Another reason had a lot to do with it being his band, Herbie Hancock's band. He chose the musicians to begin with, the group from the start was me, Bennie Maupin, Buster Williams, Eddie Henderson and Billy Hart, but over the years the sound developed in a sense that it was no longer a leader and five sidemen following directions but a group. Over the years each of us began to make very substantial contributions to the entire sound of what was happening. Now I'm sure Herbie appreciated this as a person and a human being but as a businessman in the music business it makes more sense to him to have a band under his name with his personality being the dominant force, because that way people can relate to him, and it's a lot easier for the average fan to relate to one guy, the leader, than to six cats.

So when it came time to decide whether the group was to continue, each of us really had to think about well, I love the music and on a purely musical basis my contribution is as great as Herbie's but am I getting the recognition for it? And the answer really was no. In terms of sound the band was really an effort by six individuals working closely together, but when it came to recognition and the way audiences thought about it, like I say, it was The Herbie Hancock group.

And then of course there's the monetary thing, when it comes to royalties from albums and publishing rights and all that. Now Herbie or Bennie might have come in to the group with the original composition, but by the time the tune is down each man has added something uniquely his own, not just in the solos but in the way the tune feels when it is performed, the individual way each guy in the group plays his instrument and lets the music take shape. And as much of what we were doing was collective improvisation, with everyone moving ahead at once, I really felt the end result should be credited to the group and not just to the individual writer.

Now I talked with Herbie about this, and it was my idea that we should make the band a co-operative thing financially, with everyone sharing. We should share the things we create together. Now Herbie was hip to what I was talking about, but this never came to pass. It made more sense to him to follow David Rubinson's advice - this is the man who now manages Herbie - which was to cultivate his image as a solo, a leader. Rubinson wants to put Herbie's name out there in front of a lot of people and Herbie's been around and that's maybe going to be good. His new direction is music that is orientated more for a larger segment of the audience.

So anyway the way things were set up, after three years all I have left is three albums to hang up on the walls of my apartment. They're good albums and the covers are pretty but I honestly feel I should have something more after all I contributed to the group.

E.C.: The group received a lot of static from its audiences on occasion. Did this have anything to do with Herbie's decision?

J.P.: Well, we had the normal problems a group involved in this kind of music would. The music was fresh every night. We were one of the first groups, one of the first popular groups to accept some of the newer things going on and put them right out in front of the arrangements, and play that kind of music. We got into a thing where our music was a spontaneous creation. It was a new experience for us every night and it should have been one for the audience, too. But first of all, the audience has to be willing to participate! And too many people have this attitude where they're afraid to let themselves go - and that's what the musicians are doing of course, so the audience should do it, too.

Over all, the reactions were good, but many times I felt the audience seemed afraid to really absorb mentally and physically the stuff that was coming off the bandstand. Most of the people who didn't like us were those who had been listening to jazz for a number of years, and their attitude was, well, I've heard jazz and I've heard Herbie Hancock and he should sound different than this band playing. They wanted us to play music the way they remember it off records and when it's fresh and new they can't accept it.

E.C.: How about all the negative reviews the band got? As I remember it in 1970, it was almost completely pans from all the music journals, and then a few writers stepped back and revised there thoughts. One writer called the music "a form of premature ejaculation" How did the bad press affect the band?

J.P.: Again, that didn't have too much effect, not in the beginning, and not in the end. The initial band reactions were expected, we honestly felt it would take people some time to get into our music. And again, the critics who came down had the same attitude I'm talking about, where a guy would come up between sets and say, "I'm so and so from Downbeat, and I gave Herbie's last album five stars, so I think you should play the arrangements off the record for me and not wreck them up like you're doing." So I always wondered why that guy didn't stay home and listen to the album instead of coming out to the club. You know, I'd tell them to go home. Other cats would listen, I'd tell them that that attitude is like a set of shackles, and he should just relax and sit back and dig the music. We couldn't force our style of playing down the audience's throat, it was too subtle a style, but because of that some critics thought we were ignoring the audience and withdrawing into ourselves.

E.C.: Apparently the last straw for Herbie was a bill with The Pointer Sisters where the crowd reacted enthusiastically to the Pointers and then practically ran out of the club when you came on...

J.P.: Right! Right! Now, here's an example of Hergie taking the audience's reaction seriously when he shouldn't have. The band wasn't wrong, the bill was wrong. Now by that time it was pretty much decided that the group would break up but like you say it was the last straw. The bill was an example of Rubinson at work, again.

He was trying to get Herbie's sound out to lots and lots of people, which I can understand. But I can't understand mixing your audiences as bad as that! People who come for the Pointer Sisters are not into Herbie's kind of jazz, right? So we had two different crowds. Herbie's crowd and the Pointers' crowd. So Herbie thought that our group wasn't as good as the Pointer Sisters when in reality it had nothing to do with being good, it was just being different. But when people started booing, Rubinson and Herbie thought, well we got to change the band! That isn't right, you just have to change the audience.

E.C.: The band did seem to divide audiences - even straight jazz audiences. The sound was heavily electronic - which many people object to right from the start. The improvising was also not divided up into theme-solo-solo-solo-theme, and at times it was difficult to figure out if there was a "theme" at all. Maybe the whole music was the theme. At any rate, it was controversial, all three years of it. Looking back, do you feel sad about leaving it behind?

J.P.: Yeh, it is sad. It's definitely sad. Because despite the complaints I had, we were together so long and we

were brothers, man, we had good times. And everyone in the band contributed equally at all times, we shared our music and that's beautiful. No one dictated where the music would go, even on someone's own tune. There would be an over-all structure, a loose framework, maybe three or four different points we'd touch upon musically, but what happened in between those points, how we got from one place to another ... that would change from night to night. Anything might happen. One of our tunes was called You'll Know When You Get There, and that's right...we got there and we knew.

We had things that were tightly arranged, definite parts, but there were also sections where everyone contributed freely. I had a lot of solo space, and we all had a chance to contribute during other solos, which isn't an innovation but still feels good - it doesn't have to be new, if it feels good it inspires you and the music is better because of it. There was also the electronic thing, which was pretty much Herbie's bag, but it affected us all, especially with the recording. "Sextant", for example, sounds totally different on record than it did when we recorded it. There was a lot of strange magic in the control booth, that's all I know. So things like this were always fascinating.

E.C.: Having heard your new music, I can safely assume you're moving in a similar direction on your own.

J.P.: Yes. I'm pretty much working with the same concept. Staying in San Francisco, playing with a lot of musicians, and taking my tape around to the record companies. I'm talking with Warner Bros., Columbia, Fantasy-Prestige, Polydor ... everyone seems interested although it's too early to tell. I'm looking for a company that is willing to invest in an artist, that will feel good about not making a profit til maybe the third or fourth album, that will let the artist build and develop an audience. Maybe I'll get lucky or something.

Until I put out an album and start getting work as a leader, I can't put a permanent band together or anything, but I'm playing with a regular group of cats such as Bayette (Todd Cochran) on piano, Dave Johnson on sax, Henry Franklin on bass ... all these cats have expressed interest in working with me if anything like that happens.

At any rate, I'm looking for musicians who want to work within the same kind of concept. The electronic thing will be involved, because that's something that is worth experimenting with. A lot of people feel it's going to be the next major thing - well, I don't know, but there are definitely some things happening. I do like what Miles is doing now, and on my tape I do some work playing the trombone with a wah-wah pedal, which I think can lead you into some interesting sounds. I also play a lot of alto and bass trombone whenever I can - trying to keep everything I do as fresh as possible.

E.C.: How does the sound of your new music compare with the old Hancock sextet? Is it as similar as Eddie Henderson's "Realization" album?

J.P.: Well, that album sounds exactly like the old Hancock band simply because it is the band except I'm not on it! Now my music is a similar concept but the sound is different, because it's different cats playing, which gets right to the heart of the whole thing. There are some styles that might sound the same no matter who is blowing, but with this concept the individual musician develops freely, his personality comes right to the surface. I want players who will develop inside this context and we'll see what happens.

E.C.: One of your first modern jazz gigs was with Sun Ra. How does this style compare with what you're doing now in terms of freedom?

J.P.: Well that's a whole new story. I first got together with Sun Ra when I was out of high school in Chicago and working with a lot of blues bands, I was with Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley, and people like that. I didn't know that much about what was happening. A friend hipped me to Sun Ra, said he was looking for some trombones because Sun Ra is a musician who is always fooling with the sound of his band. He, too, wants it to be fresh always.

So I went on down and he hired me, and what he started doing was teaching me to

Photograph by Dave Poholka

be free, to play free. I didn't realize this at the time but now when I look back I can see what he was doing. Some of the free things I got into when I was with Herbie, they made me look back to Sun Ra. What he'd do would be, he'd set up only the slightest thing going with the band and then he'd suddenly be pointing at me to solo. And I'd get up but I wouldn't know what was going on! I wouldn't know where I was in terms of a harmonic framework, I'd just have to listen to what was going on in back of me with the band - which was liable to be just about anything - and I'd have to work from that, I'd have to measure things instantly and start playing. Through all this I began to realize what sounds were - all notes are sounds and all sounds are notes in a way, and I learned a lot about structure, how even the most limited structure can start you out improvising and how things can change immediately from there depending on what you play. It was a lot of knowledge.

E.C.: One thing that intrigues many people about Sun Ra - and I hope I can ask this without offending him - is whether he really believes all that stuff about outer space. It isn't that anyone thinks he's a phoney, it's just - does he get in bed at night and think "Well, by tomorrow I may be on my home planet Saturn..."?

J.P.: I believe he does...I believe he does believe all that. I don't! I never really believed any of that when I was in the band, and that's one of the main reasons I left.

E.C.: Is there any pressure on anyone in the group to accept his ideas?

J.P.: Well, there's no direct pressure, it's more of a psychological thing. You see, he really believes that - I mean he acts that way all the time, I've never seen him any other way. He doesn't nudge you when you come off stage and say "Well, we put one over out there!" or anything - he believes in what he's doing. So night after night you sit there and he's telling it all to the audience and you feel, well, I better either go along with him or get out, I can't sit here smirking because it's unfair to Sun Ra. I mean, he's going on about taking everyone to Mars and I'm thinking "Beautiful! Let's go now, come on, let's go..." Leaving Sun Ra was also an economic thing. It's like working for nothing. From what I hear it still is. Nobody can really afford having a big band, not even Stan Kenton - so how can Sun Ra? These guys that have worked with him for years, it's all dedication. I wonder how they keep going.

E.C.: How do you rate your experience playing with Max Roach and Abbey Lincoln?

J.P.: That is definitely one of the finest experiences in my career as a musician. That album, "Percussion Bitter Sweet", is one of my favorite albums. The whole thing was fine - the musicianship was so high, and every member of the band was into their own thing, and they were writing, and we were playing everyone's music, so we were all finding out about each other.

Clifford Jordan was writing, Eric Dolphy was writing, Booker Little was writing, Max and Abbey were writing and I was writing... It had to grow, the music had to grow.

It was like being planted. Growth - that's what it's all about.

E.C.: From what I hear about your tenure with Duke Ellington, I have the feeling you weren't quite as happy there.

J.P.: That was a strange thing, and a sad thing, and I think about it still. It was in the late '60's, I worked with Duke for less than a year, about six months. I learned that I like listening to stylists rather than being one - I mean, I can listen to Duke all day, but his band now is essentially a stylist thing, the band is re-creating something, not doing anything new. The music isn't growing.

I came up against examples of that while I was there. One night one of the trumpeters was soloing, so I signalled the rest of the trombonists and we set up a little riff behind him for a couple of choruses. After the gig, everyone in the band cornered me and gave me hell, they said "Man! You're trying to change the sound of the Duke Ellington Band!" After that I just felt sad up there. I wasn't trying to change Duke Ellington, I was trying to change sound, trying to add to the sound in the air. It had nothing to do with Duke. It had to do with music, just plain music.

E.C.: How are the chances of musical growth on the trombone? Is it still being discarded as a modern jazz instrument?

J.P.: Oh yeh! It's so old-timey, everyone thinks. It's up to individual trombonists to get things going. It's sort of depressing. Everyone can name five or six sax players just like that, but trombone? J.J. Johnson is all they can think of. And he doesn't even play anymore, but he wins every poll. Sometimes I feel like I'm playing a tuba - which is another beautiful instrument that people don't want anything to do with.

E.C.: Can you name a few of your inspirations on the trombone?

J.P.: Sure - of course J.J.! Curtis Fuller, Grachan Moncur ... rather than name a lot of established cats, though, I'd like to mention a couple of younger guys who are just starting out who have affected me. First, there's a fellow in San Francisco named Wayne Wallace - his ideas are fresh, and he's taking some steps. Then in New York, there's a man named Earl McIntyre, a real young cat. He's doing the same thing. He's not content with what J.J. did, so he's taking the trombone a step further. I'm sure there are a lot of other guys I haven't heard or come in contact with who are doing things on the instrument.

But still, it's a minority. When it comes to picking an instrument - well, look at me in high school. It was my wish to play a trumpet! I just happened to wind up on the trombone and stayed with it because it was too late to change.

E.C.: How is the supply of creative jobs for a trombonist?

J.P. Well, there are always jobs, but are they always creative? What I term creative is a small group gig where everyone contributes. Besides that, though, there is a lot of work with orchestras and the trombone is much in demand for Latin music. In modern jazz, however, there's not a big enough demand. I mean, how many modern groups are there that constantly use a trombone? Archie Shepp always has either Roswell Rudd or Grachan (Moncur), but what else is there? This is maybe why J.J. went into a career as a composer and writer instead of a creative performer. Everyone has a chance to compete except the guy on the trombone.

E.C.: Any final words?

J.P.: Well sure. I hope I get my record out, because then I'll be competing, I'll be one trombone out there against all the trumpets and saxes. So... If you see my album, buy it. I want a whole lot of people to buy it.

Steve McCall, forty years old, is one of the members of the A.A.C.M. of Chicago since its formation. His magnificent playing may be heard on some recordings of Joseph Jarman, Anthony Braxton, Marion Brown, Gunter Hampel and other exponents of Black Music.

This interview was made in Bagni di Lucca on August 5, 1974, after a standing ovation concert by the Noah Howard Trio (Noah Howard alto sax, Kent Carter bass, Steve McCall drums).

Roberto: You have played in France with the Art Ensemble of Chicago when they were looking for a drummer; I know they asked you to join them, why didn't you stay?

Steve: Yes, it's true, Malachi (Favors) always told me. It's just that I love to play with many people. At that time, in 1969, I was playing with Anthony Braxton, then with Marion Brown and Gunter Hampel and so I was very busy; but I'm sorry I did not play with them more. Anyhow Don Moye is OK.

Roberto: I heard you with Marion Brown in his "Geechee Recollections" together with African musicians. What kind of relationship do you have with African music?

Steve: I'm glad you know "Geechee", a very good date. Talking about African music and what we know as "jazz", implies not only musical concepts, but we must look back at history. The tradition, the culture of the Africans, when they were brought as slaves in America, was destroyed, but something survived in the music of the Afro-American people. A worksong or a blues were different from an African wedding chant, but some basic characteristics were derived from African music: improvisation and rhythm come to my mind. So we may find out that not only African music and jazz have the same social background, but that both musics have some elements in common. And now

Photograph by Bill Smith

in Africa there are very good musicians who have something of their own to offer also in what we know as jazz. We don't know what may result from the encounter of two different cultures but certainly it is very interesting. I'm forming a group to play some compositions I worked at; besides Kent Carter and Kako, a Japanese pianist, there will be two Nigerian musicians: trumpeter Ray Stevens Oche and saxophonist Frankony.

Roberto: You were one of the first American musicians to spend much of your time in Europe. Did you find any difference between the American and the European audience?

Steve: Yes, to a certain degree. When I play in Chicago I see in the audience black people of all ages, kids and also old people. In France and in Germany it is a little different; there are mostly young people coming to see some musicians perform a music that they have discovered themselves, a music that does not belong to their environment, though it may be "their" music as well as it is the music of the Afro-Americans. It is a problem of different cultures but I believe in the universal message of black music and I enjoy playing in front of every audience in in the world. I was really surprised to see the reactions of the Italian audience: people of all ages seemed to receive our music instinctively. Is it always like this?

Roberto: Well, yes and no. We organized a concert in Pisa with (the) bluesman Cooper Terry and an Italian blues group, The Fabio's Fables. The response was fantastic. But most people can see a concert in their town perhaps once a year, and not always a good concert. No television, too little radio exposure, the same old universal problem....

Steve: I know. For example it was a damn shame that the Muhal Richard Abrams sextet who went to Berlin last year and was praised very much by both critics and public didn't get a chance to be recorded. Besides me and Richard there were some of the best musicians around: reedmen Kalaparusha (Maurice McIntyre), Henry Threadgill, Wallace McMillan and bassist Reggie Willis. We would like everybody to enjoy the music and we would like records to be cheaper, free if it were possible!

Roberto: Are the majority of musicians conscious of this problem?

Steve: Yes, I think so. Gunter Hampel formed his own label, Birth Records, more than five years ago and there are also Instant Composers Pool in Holland, Incus In England, Free Music Productions in Germany, Palm in France. In the States too, though the first musicians' labels died almost immediately, Mingus' and Booker Little's labels for example, there are some important ones like N.Y.M.O., Unit Core, J.C.O.A. and many others. It is not an easy task: private labels are very expensive and need to be supported in different ways. Something must be done, when you think that musicians such as Richard Abrams, Von Freeman or Kalaparusha, who are not so young, have only a couple of records released....

Roberto: I have heard "Forces And Feelings". I was unprepared for such beauty.

Steve: I know, and it is criminal. Kalaparusha is almost unknown outside of Chicago. And many don't even get any work, no records out. In Chicago there are many beautiful musicians who deserve wider recognition, take Fred Anderson, Thurman Barker, John Jackson and many others. Black Music is in a strange position. Lots of people keep listening to Sidney Bechet and do not realize that there might be in our time musicians at least as good as Bechet. It is stupid to say "real jazz is dead after 1945" as it is stupid to say "real jazz is only free jazz". Black music is as much Duke Ellington as it is Bird or Dolphy or Cecil Taylor.

Roberto: Did you ever play with Eric Dolphy?

Steve: Unfortunately not, and it is one of the greatest regrets of my life. He came to Chicago a few months before he died, I saw him but couldn't make the gig. I will never forget that night! To me Eric has been one of the greatest musicians who ever lived.

Roberto: What about your influences?

Steve: If you mean drummers, they were mostly Max Roach, Art Blakey, William Campbell and Roy Haynes. But taking music as a whole, I grew up with my father's records, Count Basie and Duke more than anybody else. And I still collect Duke's records as well as those of Billie Holiday.

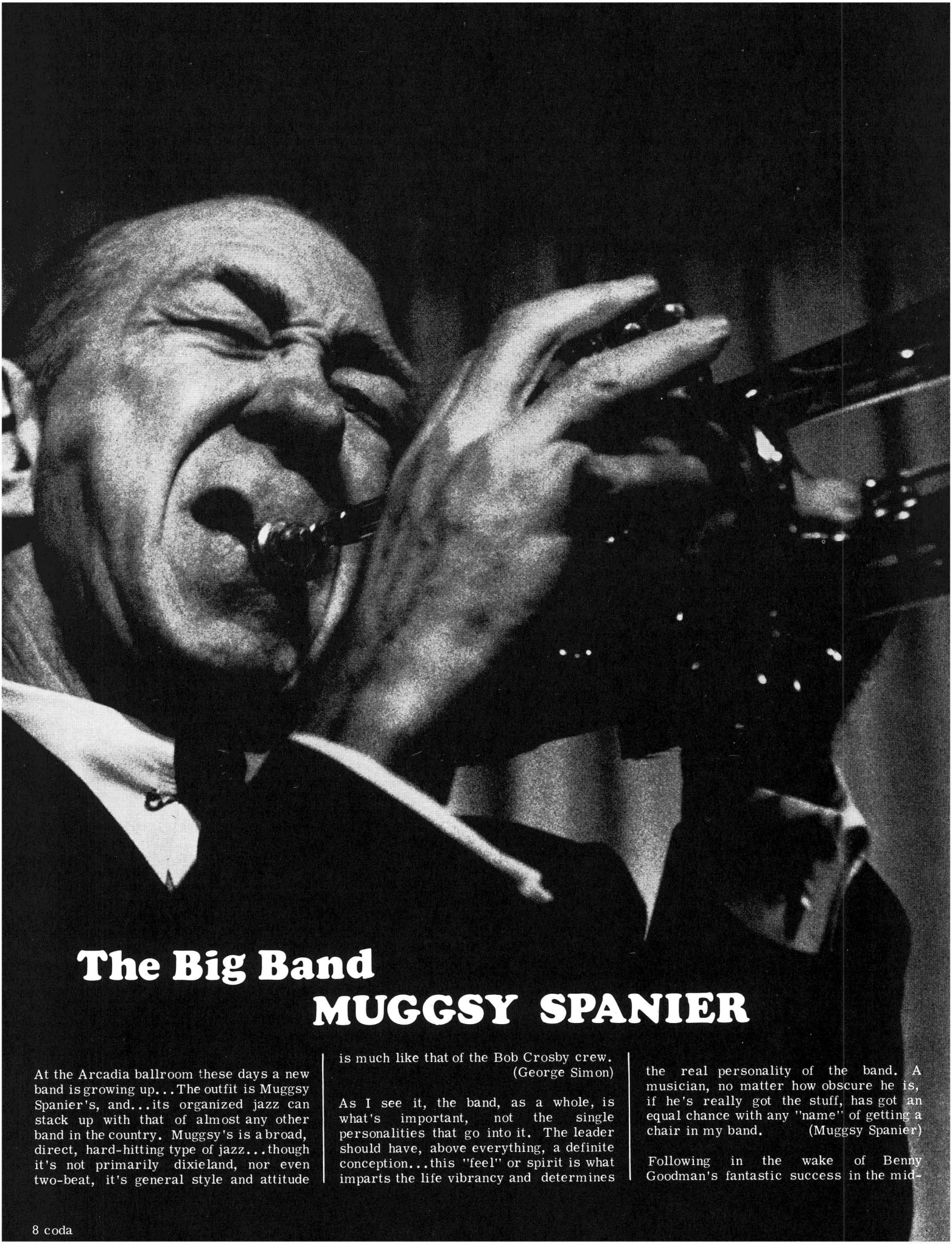
Roberto: I heard a record, "Manhattan Cycles", a live concert of the Revolutionary Ensemble, and I was really happy to hear Leroy Jenkins' violin accompany Billie's voice coming out of a recorder. It was as if she were still living in the spirit of the younger musicians.

Steve: Yes, Billie has never died, she lives in our hearts. Leroy, Jerome Cooper, Sirone and Leo Smith made a wonderful thing. Leroy, besides being a very great musician, is also a great friend to me.

Roberto: What are your plans for the future?

Steve: I will play some other concerts with Noah Howard. Maybe he will have this trio recorded for his own Label Altsax. We enjoy playing together very much. My album solo (for the French label Futura) is going to be released soon as well as another record with Marion Brown, a recording with Byard Lancaster for the French label Palm, and a date with Sam Rivers and Jeanne Lee, a really, really wonderful vocalist. Then, next year A.A.C.M. will be ten years old and there will be many concerts by all the A.A.C.M. groups. I'm optimistic on the future of Black Music. We find very receptive audiences even in such little towns as this one, many young musicians come out from all over the world and the associations for a fair promotion of the music start to grow. The fact that the A.A.C.M. is well and stronger after living ten years, almost ignored, is a very important sign.

ROBERTO TERLIZZI



The Big Band
MUGGSY SPANIER

At the Arcadia ballroom these days a new band is growing up... The outfit is Muggsy Spanier's, and...its organized jazz can stack up with that of almost any other band in the country. Muggsy's is a broad, direct, hard-hitting type of jazz...though it's not primarily dixieland, nor even two-beat, it's general style and attitude is much like that of the Bob Crosby crew.
(George Simon)

As I see it, the band, as a whole, is what's important, not the single personalities that go into it. The leader should have, above everything, a definite conception...this "feel" or spirit is what imparts the life vibrancy and determines the real personality of the band. A musician, no matter how obscure he is, if he's really got the stuff, has got an equal chance with any "name" of getting a chair in my band. (Muggsy Spanier)

Following in the wake of Benny Goodman's fantastic success in the mid-

thirties, a veritable epidemic of new bands broke out in America, many of the bands being led by former Goodman bandsmen. Other "name" bands also begat "sibling bands"; Ray Noble's band in 1935 included six future leaders. By the time Muggsy Spanier "got into the act", the torrent of new bands had dwindled to a trickle, which was strike one against him. Francis Joseph 'Muggsy' Spanier was born in Chicago on November 9, 1906 and played drums and cornet in his early teens. According to George Hoefer, "Muggsy Spanier was beating drums in Chicago's notorious Clark Street hangout, the Belvedere Cafe, in the early twenties...the joint has been gone for many years but, before its owner was hanged, it served as a meeting place for such luminaries as Dion O'Bannion and his cohorts. Muggsy's job lasted until his brother Bill happened in one night and reported his discovery to the family! He started playing cornet regularly with Elmer Schoebel's orchestra at the old Blatz Palm Gardens on North Avenue. During subsequent years, he worked around Chicago in bands led by Sig Meyer, Charles Pierce, Charlie Straight and Floyd Town, finally going on the road with Ray Miller and Ted Lewis." (1) Charles Edward Smith noted, "On weekends at White City, Sig Meyers' orchestra with Muggsy Spanier played opposite (the Wolverines)...The two bands undoubtedly affected each other. Muggsy was an old-timer...Keeping to the middle range of the cornet, Muggsy played in the rhythmic style of Oliver and Armstrong, and from the former may have gained his dexterity with mutes. A warm tone riding easy - that was Muggsy. And he kept to this style, even when playing in name bands. Years later, when a baton wielder told him to play high notes, Muggsy retorted - Aw, get a piccolo!" (2) After seven years with Ted Lewis, Muggsy worked with Ben Pollack until January 1938, when he was admitted to Touro Infirmary in New Orleans with haemorrhage and peritonitis due to perforated gastric ulcer. Although critically ill for many weeks, Muggsy made a remarkable recovery under the care of Dr. Alton Ochsner, to whom he later dedicated two original tunes, Relaxin' At The Touro and Oh, Doctor Ochsner. In April 1939, Spanier made his debut as a bandleader with a small group, his Ragtime Band, at the Sherman hotel in Chicago and later at Nick's in Greenwich Village, New York. According to Rudi Blesh, "Before financial difficulties broke up this group, it made sixteen sides for Bluebird. Not a ragtime band at all, Muggsy's outfit was an attempt to return, via dixieland, to Negro jazz itself. The instrumentation was almost....that of classic New Orleans....These records....represent the most mature white attempt to play pure jazz since dixieland came out of New Orleans...The years 1939 and 1940 marked a stage in the awakening of a serious interest in jazz....Muggsy's Ragtime Band records, Someday Sweetheart, That Da Da Strain, Eccentric, Big Butter And Egg Man and the others are symptomatic of this awakening." (3) These titles have been reissued on LP by RCA. During 1940, Muggsy returned briefly to Ted Lewis before joining the Bob Crosby band, which was going through a rather lean period, musically, having lost several of its star musicians. Muggsy was so impressed by the style of the Crosby band that he decided there was room for another big dixieland band, which was strike two against him.

Muggsy left the Crosby band in February 1941 and, with the help of his brother Bill and road manager Art Eisendrath began preparations for organizing his own big band in New York. According to Deane Kincaide, "Bill Spanier worked in LaSalle Street, the financial district of Chicago, and, although crippled by some kind of nervous disease, he was the brains behind the band's administration... He had induced some big industrialist to give financial backing to the band." (4) Muggsy had definite ideas regarding the calibre of musician he wanted, but his approaches met with mixed results. His favorite pianist, Jess Stacy, was still under contract to the Crosby band and his favorite clarinetist, Irving Fazola, was settled in the Claude Thornhill reed section. He was more fortunate in his offer to tenor saxist Nick Caiazza, a former member of his Ragtime Band, who told me, "Mel Powell and I were working with Bobby Hackett at Nick's and we both joined Muggsy's new band, for which I wrote some of the early arrangements. Muggsy's brother Bill had persuaded Mr. C.W. Kraft of Kraft Foods to back the band and the money was good." (4) Bassist Bob Casey, another former Ragtime bandsman, left Gus Arnheim to join Muggsy, as did two of his old Chicago session mates, trombonist Vernon Brown, from the recently disbanded Artie Shaw orchestra and drummer George Wettling, from Paul Whiteman. According to DOWN BEAT, "Spanier is starting his baton wielding career with a reported 20,000 dollars backing, an exceptional booking guarantee and the opportunity to make records whenever he feels his band is ready. Never before in dance band history, possibly, has a leader been given the down beat with prospects of a successful career so assured...Muggsy says he is in no hurry. 'We'll rehearse until the band sounds right and until we've got enough fine stuff in the books to be able to do a bang-up job on a date.'" (5) Early in April 1941, Muggsy signed Deane Kincaide as head of the arranging staff. "I travelled with the band all the time." said Deane. "I did 95% of the arrangements....three arrangements, including copying, per week." (4)

The band made its public debut at the El Rancho club in Chester, Pennsylvania, on April 12, 1941. "Not too many people came." said Dean Kincaide. "Art Eisendrath, whom we called 'Drag', brought all his friends along." (4) The full personnel was Ralph Kessler, Frank Bruno, Jerry Brooks, trumpets; Vernon Brown, Bob White, trombones; George Koenig, Bennie Goodman (no relation to the other BG!), Nick Caiazza, George Berg and Larry Molinelli, saxophones; Mel Powell on piano, Bob Casey, bass, George Wettling on drums and vocalist Edith Harper. The next engagement was for a month at the Venetian Gardens in Altoona, Pennsylvania. According to Kincaide, "Altoona was one of the main depots for the Pennsylvania railroad. Horseshoe Curve was near Altoona and I used to go up there to write and watch the trains go by. Our next date was at the Mansion House in Youngstown, Ohio, on May 29, 1941. It really was an old mansion...built out of solid stone with turrets all round, oak panelling throughout, circular marble staircases and dozens of rooms, including a small bowling alley in the basement. The builder had gone to Europe to buy stuff for the house but, unfortunately for him, sailed back on the Lusitania! His widow had to sell the place and some enterprising promoter put a band-shell and dance floor on the lawn. During an engagement, the band used to stay there because it was so far from town". (4) "We did a few weeks there." said Frank Bruno. "I used to see Deane Kincaide sitting on the stairs that led to the second floor, knocking out arrangement after arrangement as if writing letters - no piano, nothing to guide him! He was a very talented musician and writer and played saxophones, clarinet and trombone." (4) During this engagement, Jack Hansen joined on first trumpet and Dave Bowman took over on piano for Mel Powell, who returned to Nick's with Jimmy McPartland. "Muggsy leaned towards Jess Stacy," recalled Frank Bruno. "I heard him speak of him often and I'm sure that was the reason for Dave joining - Stacy and Bowman played a similar style." (4) Former Red Norvo vocalist, Linda Keene, replaced Edith Harper and, according to Deane Kincaide, "She was a real dyed-in-the-wool Mississippi Southern flower with whom Muggsy was much enamoured, but she couldn't stand him!" (4)

The band next played the Summit Beach ballroom in Akron, Ohio, before starting a tour of one night stands in New England, under the aegis of Sy Shribman, who, according to Kincaide, "owned nearly every dance hall in New England and we used to stay at the Avery hotel in Boston, which was known to musicians as the 'Ovary' hotel!" (4) During the tour, George Koenig was replaced by a young clarinetist from Ben Pollack called Billy Woods who, according to Kincaide, "was a tall, thin, shy youngster, who Muggsy used to kid unmercifully. Billy retaliated by calling Muggsy, 'Must-he-suffer', an allusion to Spanier's hypochondriacal nature. Muggsy worried about his health and was always calling up Dr. Ochsner, whom he referred to as 'The Chief'. Poor Muggsy didn't relate to the public too well and was rather disdainful about playing requests. He was also inclined to be aloof with the boys in the band; Bill kept telling him - You're smarter than

they are, you're the leader! Bill regarded all musicians who didn't like dixieland as Communists!" (4) DOWN BEAT's George Frazier reviewed the band in Boston, declaring, "This Spanier band has life and movement and colour. It has, as his own playing has, drive and guts and a quite miraculous devotion to the basic principles of the art-form wherein it works...aside from the first-class coloured groups, there has rarely been a large band that managed to project as much spirit. It is still in its formative stages, of course...but even at this early date it can safely be said that it has the right conception...and some awfully good men to carry it out. There is Muggsy, of course, and he is lovely. There is George Wettling on drums and Dave Bowman on piano and Nick Caizza on tenor and Vernon Brown on trombone and they are lovely too. And there are the arrangements by Deane Kincaide, which are simple, tasteful and always with plenty of room for the soloists' freedom of expression." (6)

Muggsy made further changes while in the Boston area, including the return of Edith Harper to replace Linda Keene and the acquisition of Clarence Willard on third trumpet and Jack Lesberg on bass. The following drama ensued during the next engagement at the Tune Town ballroom in St. Louis in August 1941:

"Benny Goodman - I needed a tenor man so I offered a job to Nick Caiazza. He didn't want it, so I hired George Berg. Naturally, I asked him to get away as soon as he could.

George Berg - Actually, I told Muggsy on a Friday night that I was leaving to join Goodman. That was in St. Louis and Mugs didn't need a man until the following Tuesday, when he used a radio station man.

Muggsy Spanier - It was a Sunday morning that he asked to get away...that was impossible because its tough to get a man on a Sunday. So I told Berg no... I even paid his dues on Saturday in St. Louis." (7)

According to Deane Kincaide, "Benny Goodman was THE 'pirate' of all time! We'd had a rehearsal for a radio programme and George Wettling was rather miffed at having to spend a very hot afternoon in the ballroom. That night, George showed up drunk as a skunk and Muggsy told him to leave and we'd get a sub. George said - Nobody's going to play my drums! Muggsy had him ejected and this local drummer took his place. Right after we started the broadcast, George sneaked back and crawled under the grand piano and took the spurs off his bass drum, causing the whole kit to collapse in a chaotic din! This time George was taken away in the wagon!" (4)

On returning to New York, Don Carter took over on drums and Ralph Muzzillo replaced Hansen on lead trumpet. "Ralph was a great first trumpet player," said Kincaide. "Jack Hansen was rather too light and sensitive a player for Muggsy's driving style." (4) Another new trumpeter was Leon "Red" Schwartz, who told me, "The band was rehearsing at

Nola studios in New York. I asked Muggsy to let me play and he said I was too young and inexperienced. I said - If I'm not any better than what you've got, don't hire me, but let me try. After ten minutes playing, he said - OK kid, you've got the job." (4) In October 1941, the band opened at the Arcadia ballroom in New York, billed as Francis (Muggsy) Spanier and his Orchestra, but that didn't fool anyone! "The Arcadia was a fine engagement," said Vernon Brown. "The main thing I remember was that my wife, Edith Harper, who was the vocalist, had to leave twice because of illness and then came back to finish the engagement to its termination in April 1942. She then retired due to pregnancy." (4) According to Nick Caiazza, "During this gig, Deane Kincaide came up with some of his greatest arrangements, including Columbia, Gem Of The Ocean and American Patrol, which was recorded by Glenn Miller before we got to record it. We also picked up a band-boy, the ever popular "Little Gate", who had worked for Bunny Berigan and others." (4) George Simon wrote, "Deane Kincaide, who used to write so much of the Bob Crosby band's stuff, is supplying just about all the Spanier arrangements...they're wide-open manuscripts that feature wide-open brass and voicings that aren't ostensibly subtle, but refreshing and healthy-sounding. Muggsy, himself, sets the musical keynote. For sheer rhythmic drive, with little or no resort to upper register, over-blowing or screeching, there probably isn't anyone...who can compare with this lovable character of jazz. He gets both a beat and a beauty of expression out of his cornet that are utterly astounding. It's all so direct and sounds so simple and yet...who else can reproduce such powerful drive with such restrained ease? There are three other fine trumpeters in the band. Most scintillating...is Ralph Muzzillo...whom just about everybody had been angling for, but who wouldn't resettle down until Muggsy came along...Combined with consistency are a fine conception, range, brilliancy of tone and inability to be blown down by any other player. Frank Bruno...is an excellent hot man in his own right, while in young Red Schwartz, Muggsy has a potentially great trumpeter, for he shows facile technique, a big broad tone and an immense amount of feeling. Nick Caiazza is a thrilling tenor man. He doesn't strain nor honk...(and) plays in a section that's surprisingly clean for the length of time it's been together. Dave Bowman is an exceptional pianist who combines a fine beat with an intellectual's touch and who can play solos and back a band with the same proficiency. Drummer Don Carter...is content to set a basic beat, often on top cymbal, and just feed the band from there." (8)

Before the end of the year, Spanier signed a recording contract with Decca, despite persistent reports that he would record for RCA Victor, who had issued the Ragtime Band's Bluebird records. This appears to be a strange decision since the earlier Bluebirds had been so successful and the Bob Crosby band recorded for Decca and would obviously command promotional priority. About the same time, Muggsy enlisted the services of Fud Livingston to assist Deane Kincaide on the arranging staff. Livingston had been chief arranger for another "satellite" Crosby band led by pianist Bob Zurke and was very familiar with the dixieland style. On the Arcadia bandstand, Muggsy introduced his quartet, including Caiazza, Bowman, Carter and himself, which he later augmented with clarinet, trombone, guitar and bass to the instrumentation of his earlier band and called them the Ragtimers. But the biggest boost to the band was undoubtedly Muggsy's success in finally persuading Irving Fazola to join the band as featured clarinet soloist, a department in which the band hadn't been too strong.

Fazola joined the band at the Arcadia on New Year's Day, 1942, and immediately stamped his authority on the band. According to Nick Caiazza, "His flawless technique, his pure sound and ideas made him as near perfect as one could be. All this far outweighed his drinking habits - two fifths of gin a day - and, at times, his hard-to-put-up-with attitude....One night, at a rehearsal, he and Fud Livingston had a helluva fight - Faz was a terrible fighter!" (4) "Faz's approach was so easy and so good," recalled Deane Kincaide. "He just sat there and made all the other clarinet players look like pikers! Like most New Orleanians, his speech was cluttered with profanities and it was so natural. The Arcadia was

packed every night and yet at the back of the room Faz's sound carried over the band like a bull-horn. As a man, he was formidable - nobody messed with Faz! But when he liked you, you had a friend and benefactor for life." (4) Vernon Brown said, "Faz was, without question, one of the greatest clarinet players in jazz... I've worked with a gang of clarinet players and he was my favorite...we were all elated about him joining us." (4) "Having worked with Louis Prima," said Red Schwartz, "I knew a number of New Orleans musicians, so Faz and I had friends in common...He drank a fifth of gin every night - it was measured to last till we finished playing, so you were rarely offered a drink - if you were, it was an honour. Faz was a sensitive man, but I fear, because of his size, he was reticent and introspective... nevertheless, a great, great, player." (4)

The band cut its first records on January 2, 1942, including Little David, Play On Your Harp and Can't We Be Friends, both Kincaide arrangements, Chicago, arranged by Livingston, and Hesitating Blues by the Ragtimers. Dave Dexter wrote, "The spiritual, Little David, is similar to the Crosby band's old I'm Prayin' Humble - unreservedly recommended. But even better from every standpoint is the Blues, in which Muggsy junks his full band to get off, royally, with his Ragtimers. Fazola, Vernon Brown, Nick Caiazza, Dave Bowman and the maestro all blow wonderful solos, not unlike those heard (by a different personnel) on Spanier's Bluebirds of three years back." (9) Two further changes occurred before the end of the Arcadia season, Russ Isaacs, former Jan Savitt drummer, replaced Carter and Ford Leary joined the trombone section and contributed occasional vocals. Muggsy declared that he hired Leary, another big man, to balance the band bus, by sitting opposite to Fazola! In March 1942, Joe Forchetti joined on fourth tenor, telling me, "I got a call from Muggsy's manager after Larry Clinton disbanded and joined at the Arcadia. I played tenor sax, clarinet and bass clarinet. I sat next to Fazola, who was a good friend and had recommended me for the job. When the band got ready to hit the road again, after finishing at the Arcadia, Faz didn't feel up to it and gave in his notice." (4) Dave Bowman also elected to stay in New York and his place was taken by Charlie Queener on his recommendation. Deane Kincaide left the band at the same time, as he recalled, "Muggsy and I had a set-to over my scores - I was trying to write partial scores and made a few mistakes in the copying. Bennie Goodman, our sax player and my room-mate, had shown me a few short cuts and they didn't pan out! One night, during yet another rehearsal, Muggsy walked out in a huff - and so did I!" (4)

Having set an all-time record record in attendance at the Arcadia, the band left on another theatre tour of New England, before returning to New York for only its second and what proved to be its last

recording session. Many changes had taken place and one or two substitutes were used, as Ruby Weinstein recalled, "I made that one recording date with Muggsy, not as a regular member of his orchestra but as the lead trumpet for that particular session." (4) The Wreck Of Old 97, sung by Ford Leary and American Patrol were Kincaide arrangements, also More Than You Know, sung by Dottie Reid, who had replaced Edith Harper. Two O'Clock Jump was, according to Deane Kincaide, a stock arrangement and Mike Levin complained, "I still claim it's incongruous to hear Muggsy on what has come to be the theme song of the powerhouse bands. But then he claims he doesn't play two-beat style either. Strictly Stacy-like piano leads into a Muggsy muted chorus that sounds alone and forlorn with the four-beat sax riff figure in back of it. Last chorus kicks well, especially in the brass. Rhythm doesn't quite come up to the power demands made on it." (10) The band was on the road for the rest of the year, suffering many personnel changes due to calls from the Draft Board and loss of recording due to the AFM Recording Ban from August 1, 1942.

It returned to New York in January 1943 for a week at Dempsey's restaurant, followed by a return engagement at the Arcadia ballroom, where tenor saxist Boomie Richman joined for his first name band experience, as he recalled, "Muggsy hadn't been satisfied with the jazz tenor since Nick Caiazza left several months earlier. He called me Eddie (Miller) Junior!" (4) Amy Lee wrote, "Though this Spanier band, putting out some cleanly cut, spirited dance music despite constant manpower shortages due to the War, has just closed another successful Arcadia run, Muggsy is cryin' the blues...He knows every single note of his scores (and there are over 200 arrangements in his book) and when anyone plays anything wrong, it hurts him. 'They all say to me,' Muggsy argues, 'Oh, what do you care? The people don't know the difference. But I know! ... Why should I try to have a band these days? Where am I going to get men? ...I just want to go to California and rest. If I could just retire on a farm. I'm thinking maybe I ought to have my small band again. If I just had a month's rest, I'd be OK..." (11) But there was no immediate rest for Muggsy. His band fulfilled a strenuous tour of Army camps in the summer of 1943, but Muggsy became increasingly irritable, tired and dis-enchanted with his routine. Finally, in September 1943, he broke up the band and returned to Los Angeles suffering from mental and physical exhaustion.

In retrospect, it would appear that Spanier's decision to lead a band that was a carbon-copy of the Bob Crosby band was his first mistake. It could be argued that it was a mistake for Muggsy to lead a big band at all, because his cornet style was intimate and restrained, not unlike that of Bobby Hackett, whose attempt to lead a big band had failed a couple of years before. Muggsy, like Bobby, was ideally suited to the small band format and the club atmosphere which emphasized it best - a fact illustrated by his Ragtime Band performances in 1939 and his later small bands of the late forties and fifties. It was also unfortunate that, owing to Spanier's determination that his band should sound right, it was in existence for nearly a year before recording and then for only two sessions. Muggsy, like many other musicians before and since, learned that neither the ability nor the desire to play good jazz was sufficient criterion to be a successful bandleader.

My thanks are due to the following musicians for their help in the preparation of this article: George Berg, Vernon Brown, Frank Bruno, Nick Caiazza, Joe Forchetti, Deane Kincaide, Charlie Queener, Boomie Richman, Red Schwartz, Ruby Weinstein and Clarence Willard. Pictures by courtesy of Nick Caiazza.

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(6)	Down Beat	July 15, 1941
(7)	Down Beat	Aug. 15, Sept. 15, 1941
(8)	Metronome	November 1941
(9)	Down Beat	April 15, 1942
(10)	Down Beat	Aug. 1, 1942
(11)	Down Beat	April 15, 1943

ARTICLE BY IAN CROSBIE

”the most beautiful sound next to silence”

ECM 1035-37
3-LP-Box

”Solo Concerts – Bremen & Lausanne”
Keith Jarrett

Keith Jarrett p.

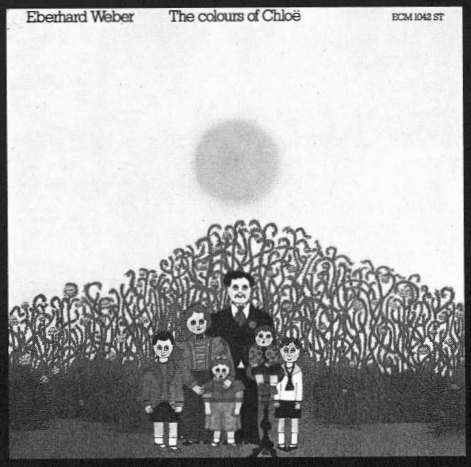
Down Beat:
Down Beat Critics Poll 1974:
Record of the Year: "Solo-Concerts."

HIFI Stereophonie:
„Was sich mit den Platten „Facing You” (auf ECM) und „Expectations” (auf CBS) schon ankündigte, erfüllt sich hier: der große Durchbruch des Musikers Keith Jarrett, dessen Format in endgültigen Konturen sichtbar wird. . . Das Album des Jahres!”

Melody Maker:
”Solo Concerts is a masterpiece.”

New Musical Express:
”Solo Concerts” is more than merely remarkable – it's one of the greatest collections of piano pieces, improvised or written, jazz or classical, than I've ever heard.”

ECM



”The Colours Of Chloë”
Eberhard Weber

Eberhard Weber b, vc
Rainer Brüninghaus p, synthesizer
Ack van Rooyen flgh/Peter Giger or
Ralf Hübner dr/string section of
Südfunk Symphony Orchestra a.o.

ECM 1042

Die Zeit:
„. . . Farben, Bewegungen, Staturen, Konsistenzen, Stimmungen, Träume, Wunschvorstellungen. Alles klingt ungemein schön, entspannt.

”Illusion Suite”
Stanley Cowell Trio

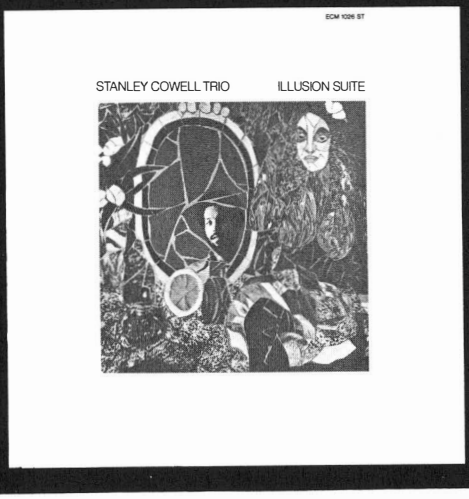
Stanley Cowell p, e-p/Stanley Clarke b
Jimmy Hopps dr.

ECM 1026

Jazz Journal (England):
”. . . There is a feeling of unity throughout and Cowell in particular, plays very well. . . A trio album which should appeal to most modernist and all piano fans.”

Artist:
„Dieses Trio-Album bestätigt Stanley Cowell als wichtigstes Mitglied einer neuen Pianistengeneration.”

Down Beat:
Rating: 4 1/2 stars



polydor

record reviews

Bill Benjamin
Jack Chambers
Wayne Jones
Doug Langille
Roger Misiewicz
John McDonough
John R. Nelson
John W. Norris
Johnny Simmen
Ron Sweetman
Barry Teppermar
Tex Wyndham

MC KINNEY'S COTTON PICKERS

RCA 741.080 (Vol. I)
RCA 741.088 (Vol. II)

It is with the greatest of pleasure that I salute these first two albums by McKinney's Cotton Pickers which French RCA has made available. I understand that, little by little, the whole recorded output of this exceptional orchestra will follow. This is one of the brightest and most valuable projects in jazz reissues.

When these few observations appear in print, subsequent albums will have been published. Today I will stick to the above-mentioned LPs.

Discussing his various orchestras (in 1946), Don Redman told me: "In the course of my long career I directed several bands with ever-shifting personnels and each one gave me a certain amount of musical and personal satisfaction. However, the one that I liked best was not even my own band - although I was in charge of everything concerning the musical side. Of course, I am speaking of McKinney's Cotton Pickers. They were in reality William McKinney's orchestra but after he had hired me as musical director, he took care of business matters exclusively. He didn't even touch his drums any more. Of course, he had already hired Cuba Austin before I got the job with the Cotton Pickers in 1927 but it seems that up to that time he used to sit in with the band almost every night - if only for a few numbers - because Bill still liked to play. But in all frankness, I must say that I don't recall Bill (McKinney) having played the drums once during all that time I was directing his band."

Don Redman speaking: "Almost all of McKinney's Cotton Pickers' records were popular with musicians all over the country. Quite a few bands - even the famous Bennie Moten orchestra from Kansas City - tried to play in our style and - especially - imitate our sound. It was a most musicianly band and Victor knew how to record us. Well, the band sounded on records almost as good as it did in person. Many of Fletcher Henderson's records and most of the ones I made with bands under my own name, didn't do justice to those bands. I'm not speaking of the music but of the sound. Maybe vitality was (seemingly) lacking. Anyway, something was missing. The recording was at fault. But McKinney's Cotton Pickers kept that lively sound they had in reality, on all their records. Furthermore, John Nesbitt was a very good arranger. Very ahead of his time. One of the best of that period. He had wonderful ideas and he was learning fast all he could about music in those years. He became better and better. It was too bad when he left the band."

Over the years, I have discussed McKinney's Cotton Pickers with many musicians active at that time and even with a few who were more or less associated with the band. The principal musicians of these latter were Don Redman (1946), Kaiser Marshall (1937/38), June Coles (1941) and Rex Stewart in the forties and sixties. I restrict myself to giving only the information I have got which is not generally known.

Put It There, Crying And Sighing, Stop Kidding, There's A Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder, I Found A New Baby, Will You Won't You Be My Babe, Plain Dirt were arranged by John Nesbitt (according to Don Redman, 1946 - confirming some of the information I had received from Kaiser Marshall and June Coles and contradicting none.)

Four Or Five Times, Milenberg Joys, Cherry, Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble*, Nobody's Sweetheart, Save It Pretty Mama, Beedle-Um-Bum, Selling That Stuff and Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You were arranged by Don Redman (same sources). (* I am aware of the fact that most writers credit Nesbitt with having arranged Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble but I have it from Kaiser Marshall that this was one of the last charts Don wrote for Fletcher, just before he left to join McKinney's C.P. and that he took the arrangement along with him. This was confirmed by Don Redman himself.)

I don't know the authors of the other arrangements although in a few cases I think I recognize them (Redman or Nesbitt). However, destesting to publish guess-work which, after some time, might be taken as fact, I prefer to keep my mouth shut until I'm sure.

Don Redman is the baritone soloist on Nobody's Sweetheart and Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble (according to same sources).

Don Redman plays the solo on celesta on Crying And Sighing (same sources).

George "Fat Head" Thomas plays the 24 bars of alto on Will You Won't You Be My Babe. Kaiser Marshall, who said he was one of Thomas' best friends, used to stress that this was "Fat Head's" only recorded solo. Don Redman thought this to be correct where McKinney's Cotton Pickers are concerned but added that perhaps Thomas recorded with other bands which featured him as a soloist. Rex Stewart considered this unlikely and my investigations didn't bring in any trace of other solo (or even recording*) work by George Thomas. (Of course, I don't speak of the Chocolate Dandies dates here. They are well-known and do not contain any instrumental solos by George Thomas.)

All other alto solos are played by Don Redman (although I have difficulty positively identifying him on Do Something) with the exception of the ones in Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You and I'd Love It which are the work of Benny Carter. Please note that I speak only of McKinney's Cotton Pickers and not of the sides issued under Jean Goldkette's name, comprising a few men from the former band. I am not yet familiar enough with the Goldkette tracks to express an opinion. For instance, regarding My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now, take-2, I hesitate to attribute the short alto-solo to Don while on take-3 of the same number, I'm certain that it is Don! However, there cannot be any doubt that the same musician plays on both takes.

I always hear four reeds. This is doubted by some who feel there is sometimes only a reed trio present. To give you just one example: On Milenberg Joys Don Redman's last alto break is immediately followed by three clarinets.

Of course, Prince Robinson is the author of all the (fine) tenor solos. Generally he is also credited with having played most of the clarinet solos (with the exception of that typically melodic Don Redman statement in "chalumeau" on Save It Pretty Mama For Me). This seemed logical to me for many years because Prince enjoyed a fine reputation as a

clarinet player as well. Prince Robinson's tenor solos and the hot clarinet flights on Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble, Cherry, Some Sweet Day and Milenberg Joys are performed in the same driving, piercing staccato manner. However, lately I have changed my mind regarding Robinson being the clarinet soloist on the numbers mentioned. Let me tell you why: After Milton Senior left the band (while Prince Robinson stayed on) this excellent and very special clarinet player isn't heard any more. Among musicians Milton Senior had a fabulous reputation as a great alto and clarinet soloist. He was an artist other musicians used to look up to. Senior was some sort of an elder statesman who could teach others a lot of things. He had studied music extensively and he was quite experienced before he joined McKinney's Cotton Pickers. Many of the older musicians are still talking with respect of Milton Senior to this day. I am now convinced that Senior is that exciting clarinetist who is not heard any more after he had left the band. I sure wish that I could quote a musician, backing me up on this. Unfortunately, I can't. I haven't noted anything concerning the clarinet solos from my conversations with Kaiser Marshall, June Coles and Don Redman. The subject was not discussed because I was (too) sure then that the clarinet was Prince. Furthermore, none of the clarinet solos under review, directly precedes or follows a tenor solo! This would have been the proof - that the clarinetist is not Prince - I am still in need of. But no luck! Anyway, perhaps you will listen to the records yourselves and give the matter some thought...In 1966, Rex Stewart spoke of Milton Senior as "a really great saxophone and clarinet player of unusual ability. One of the best ever." All I said then was: "Too bad he didn't play any solos on the records by McKinney's Cotton Pickers." I still remember Rex's astonishment to this (wrong, I think) statement. "I think Senior did play solos on McKinney records", he said. This was a bad day for me, I think now. I must have been tired or drunk or something because instead of putting a few McKinney's Cotton Pickers records on the turntable - of the period Senior was with the band - I stupidly changed the subject!

The "straight-man" on trumpet is Langston Curl (Do Something, It's A Precious Thing Called Love etc). John Nesbitt is generally considered to be the "hot man" on all these sides. There were only two trumpet-players although sometimes it sounds like three plus one trombone to me. Rex Stewart (1947): "One of my closest friends among musicians was John Nesbitt. During three periods we even lived in the same flat. I was also by his bed-side when he died in Boston in 1935. John and I shared a great love for Bix's style and we used to play Beiderbecke solos right along with some of his records: Riverboat Shuffle, Singin' The Blues, Ostrich Walk, Crying All Day etc. John was also a drinking buddy of Howdy Quicksell, the banjo-player with Goldkette. And Howdy and Bix were great drinking pals, too. So you see that, as a matter of fact, I got friendly with Bix through John Nesbitt. Incidentally, John and Quicksell composed a few good numbers together". (J.S.: For instance Will You Won't You Be My Babe).

Listening attentively to the trumpet solos on the records under discussion, one notes an amazing difference in quality among them: most (but not all) make one think of Bix (some others of Red Nichols) but a few are performed in Negro style and these sound passably different. While the trumpet solos on Will You Won't You be My Babe (nothing at all of Bix/Red Nichols), Stop Kidding, Selling That Stuff, Do Something are excellent, those on Nobody's Sweetheart, It's A Precious Thing Called Love are pretty close to being "corny". However, what I find most intriguing: on Milenberg Joys (both takes) there is an open solo in the first chorus (Bix-ish) and a break by the same man leading into a fantastic muted solo (much better on take-2 than on take-3) by another man. This is an all-black sounding solo. Who is who? From what Rex Stewart told me, Nesbitt would always play in Bix's style and, consequently, could not be the main soloist on Milenberg Joys. Rex also said: "Curl was strictly a paper-man. He couldn't swing." So this rules Langston Curl out, too....Was there another trumpet-player present? A third trumpeter? Or somebody replacing Curl on that particular session?

On the last tracks of Volume II the trumpet soloists are: Leonard "Ham" Davis in Plain Dirt, Joe Smith muted in the first chorus and behind Redman's vocal, Sidney DeParis open on Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You. There is no trumpet solo on I'd Love It.

A last word about the band's great drummer, Cuba Austin: "Louis (Armstrong) had a wonderful drummer in Chicago, a little fat guy named Tubby Hall. He just sat there and kept the beat going and that's what Louis wanted. Tubby knocked Louis out. We had a drummer like that with the Cotton Pickers. His name was Cuba Austin. Cuba would keep that foot going right and the band would just swing. He had a box of hats and he would throw these hats in the air while he was playing. He'd have these hats flying in the air and they would land on his head right on the beat. "Bap!" they'd land on his head right on the beat. Now that's originality. Cuba chewed tobacco and after a week at the Roseland tobacco juice was running all over the bandstand." (Adolphus "Doc" Cheatham in the accompanying booklet to his wonderful two-record set on Jezebel 102 - ST). - Johnny Simmen

ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO

Phase One
Prestige PR10064

"Phase One" is the most powerful and forthright of the Art Ensemble of Chicago's recordings. No doubt. At the same time, it raises questions as to the role of the percussionist in the Ensemble's music. Originally, the hallmark empathy of Roscoe Mitchell's bands was predicated on the fact that in the absence of a drummer the horns had to draw from each other a gossamer synergy in order for the sound to move at all. ("Horn Web", "People In Sorrow", "Numbers One And Two") The advent of Don Moye has somewhat altered the validity of that statement, because with a powerful pulsating undercurrent like that Moye and bassist Malachi Favors generate, the other group members need not intermesh so closely; the possibility does exist for the band to become just another maniac bebop horns-plus-rhythm-section. True, for the extra energy the drums furnish, Joseph Jarman has burst out of his rhapsodic soul-shell to become the feverishly eloquent improviser he had always tried to be. But to some degree all three horns enter the egotrip soloist's cul-de-sac in both titles here.

The basic form of Ohnedaruth is that of Moye's playing - which would have been impossible without Elvin Jones. (As is true of every other percussionist entering the music in the past decade.) Jarman's composition opens with a delicate cymbal filigree which Moye molds gradually into an ever-widening whirlpool of heart-beat. As the vortex spreads, it sucks the others in - first Favors, smouldering and sparking around Moye, then the horns into a frantic up-tempo head. From there the whole splits. First Jarman methodically pulls apart and sears the tune through progressive levels of reformation and redistribution of notes and times down the bell of his tenor. Then Bowie, stretching frenzied note-spatterings of undiluted energy over Moye's socking strength, punctuated with the half-valve bends that tell you where home is for him. Finally, Mitchell's alto somersaults in successively smaller and faster arcs over the abyss, first building poignant melodies that make as much use of studio echoes (lots of those, for some reason) and the nuance of the unsaid in rhythm/space as it does of the sound of his horn, then honing distances travelled and time said until his lines attain the sharp-edged gut momentum of Bowie's lunging knives. Favors is more sensed than heard throughout. Moye is a sandstorm of red-heated time ever shifting through all the others - he makes the performance worthy of Coltrane's memory.

Lebert Aaly, the collectively-improvised dirge for Ayler, illustrates just how far the Ensemble has gone since its first exodus to Europe. While it depends very much for its impact on musicianly interaction providing sliding bases for the temporary preacher, it is texturally naive compared to, say, "People In Sorrow", and for this reason some of its potential fascination turns to tedium. Part of the overdone simplicity may be a fitting elegiac move toward the dignified root-searching of Ayler's own music; but

a great deal of it seems to be that with Moye's energy floating freely overhead there's no longer much reason for Jarman, Mitchell, and Bowie to interlock as closely as they did when musical survival meant knowing each others' every move. Their reactions are grosser and almost clumsy; they listen less. Favors' arco lament permeates the piece fascinatingly.

For what it is, "Phase One" defines the Art Ensemble as it was in 1971, and the directions toward 1974; certainly "Bap-Tizum" (on Atlantic), recorded more than a year later, bears this out. Still, you can't have what was and what is; and while the surfaces of the Ensemble's music change, its root aesthetic hasn't. Nor has its musical worth. You will not hear greater free Black music than this. - B. T.

GATO BARBIERI

Chapter Two: Hasta Siempre
Impulse! AS-9263

There's a long gap between the street music of Buenos Aires in the 1940s and the jazz of Don Cherry, Karl Berger, Dollar Brand and, Carla Bley in the 1960s. Gato Barbieri crossed that hiatus with ease; and, having done so, seemed to have decided that there was little of the Black traditions he really wanted for himself when he had an equally rich heritage of his own to draw on. Since he recorded his inital manifesto, "The Third World" (1968, on Flying Dutchman), Barbieri has been on a constant journey home, and has marked in vinyl all his landfalls along the way. His music, if not jazz in the strictest dictionary sense, draws from the Latin American culture in an analogous manner. The vocality and sensuality of his tenor allow him to sing for his people in much the same way as Jacques Brel does for France - with social awareness, sentiment, an astringent lyrical power, but above all an amiably guileless ethnic pride.

Barbieri's two most recent albums - both on Impulse! ("Chapter One: Latin America" and "Chapter Two: Hasta Siempre") - were recorded together and should be considered jointly as the latest messages from his search for his childhood awarenesses. They culminate the man's quest for authenticity to his heritage in his music, not only in his lines but in his ensemble textures. In "Fenix" and "El Pampero", for instance, NaNa's birimbau merely hinted at the powerfully unique beauties of their shared tradition. On two selections in this album, (Encontros, Marissea, both recorded in Rio de Janeiro), Barbieri is joined by a guitarist, bassist, drummer, a "drum" (percussion section) from the Escola do Samba do Niteroi, and a player of cavaco (a small four-stringed guitar). Elsewhere, his working band is made up of quena (South American Indian wood flute), arpa India (Indian hard), acoustic and electric guitars, bass, drums, multiple indigenous percussion, and - for the one title recorded in Buenos Aires (Juana Axurduy) - charango (a small ten-stringed guitar). The presence of these players works no basic transformations in Barbieri's own music, but their weaving an ethnically authentic setting for his improvisations gives the tenor lines an unprecedented depth. The contributions of Raul Mercado (quena) and Amadeo Monges (arpa India) in three of these pieces are particularly crucial, but all these musicians help to make of Barbieri's music a great deal that it might not otherwise be.

The tenorist's compositions and performances are all molded similarly, into soaring, eloquent sambas. There are, however, two things about "Hasta Siempre" that disturb me. One is that, in all Barbieri's albums for Flying Dutchman, there is a continual element of search contributing to the strength of his performances. Now that - with the decadent eroticism of "Last Tango in Paris" and the two Impulse albums - Gato has finally come home, that aspect of his music has run dry, to be replaced by a quest for polished perfection in his self-allocated artistic niche. I regret this fact, because if he remains true to this form, in two or three years' time he'll be comfortably ingrained as the socialist rock culture's answer to Xavier Cugat, and no more.

The other problem is just about enough to get me to ask you to boycott Impulse recordings altogether. Encontros started life as an extended performance. Somewhere postnatally, someone divided it into three parts. Parts one and three are segued together here. For part two, you'll have to buy another album. Apart from the utterly execrable disregard for musical artistry involved in doing this, it qualifies as the cheapest and dirtiest way of getting a consumer to buy yet another album I've ever seen. It gives me a very good measure of the integrity and relative regard given art vs. commerce by producer Ed Michel and our other corporate "friends" at Impulse. Need I say more? - B. T.

BENNY CARTER

1940-1941
RCA (F) 741.073

There may be a market for this record among the nostalgia people, or those intent upon building a complete Benny Carter collection, but the plain fact is that the average jazz fan will find this record to be an elegant well-played bore.

The sterling musicians listed in the personnel give promise of some swinging music, and there are good moments - the trumpet solos on Takin' My Time, Babalu, and Lullaby To A Dream, the trombone solo on My Favorite Blues, and the sax solos on Sunday and Back Bay Boogie - and they generate some heat and swing on My Favorite Blues, Sunday, and Back Bay Boogie, but three good tracks out of fifteen aren't enough. There are also two gruesome vocal tracks by one

Roy Felton to contend with.

To put this record in perspective, I compared it with Benny's 1940 Decca recordings in the Big Bands Uptown collection, and this strengthened my feeling that the tracks on this record do not show Benny at his best. - R.S.

STANLEY COWELL

Illusion Suite
ECM 1026ST

As I've written before, Stanley Cowell stands out in my mind as one of the three cardinal pianists of his generation. His melodic originality, rhythmic drive, and harmonic acuity sum to a style that is both varied, drawing widely from the heritage of his music, and uniquely personal. For the most part he has recorded alongside horns - Marion Brown, Gary Bartz, with Charles Tolliver in their now-defunct cooperative quartet Music, Incorporated, and in bands led by Max Roach and Jack DeJohnette. He has had only one prior studio sojourn in a piano trio setting, "Blues For The Viet Cong" a technically adept but otherwise sterile session, because it seemed to me that he approached the studio setting at that time as if he had to prove that he could be all things to all men. "Illusion Suite" is Cowell with trio again - Stanley Clarke and Jimmy Hopps this time - giving him room to stretch out into a maximum of form and implication in a way he is unable to do when he has to share prime solo chores. It's a relaxed, unpressured recording.

"Illusion Suite" is a sequence of six original compositions by Cowell - five portraits of people he knows, closed by Astral Spiritual. It's not an "exciting" album - Cowell, by himself, is not one of the most heated or "hard-swung" of soloists. Rather the music is a consistent, intelligent assimilation with foresight of everything Cowell knows and is, putting him successfully in the same sort of role Ray Bryant took on for himself in the last post-Parker generation by recording "Alone With The Blues". Cowell travels a wide range, from his usual jaggedly-paced modal cascades to some very sophisticated Tatum romanticism - but here, without the pressure to be Tatum that drove You Took Advantage Of Me on the "Viet Cong" date. His musicianly scope is too broad to fit categories. Like Bryant, Cowell is capable of making wise, germane contributions in the styles in which he normally works - but has a knowledge and love for the jazz heritage as a whole that spreads far beyond such well-circumscribed bounds. All six titles build from that assured knowledge.

Not that "Illusion Suite" is straight-ahead Cowell by himself. Ibn Mukhtarr Mustapha voices bassist Stan Clarke imaginatively in the lead; and in spite of some doubtful arco intonation Clarke does justice full well to the music with a big sound and furious sympathy. Drummer Jimmy Hopps was one of the original four members of Music, Incorporated, and could hardly be more attuned to Cowell's music.

"Illusion Suite" is an earnest, intense presentation of the best of what one man has drawn from the heritage of the piano. It demands - and rewards - your attention. - B. T.

NAT KING COLE

From The Very Beginning
MCA 2-4020

It just so happens that the King Cole Trio recorded just sixteen titles for Decca in four separate sessions: December 6, 1940; March 14, 1941; March 16, 1941; October 23, 1941. All these could have easily been packaged neatly on to one twelve-inch LP, but it is apparently MCA's inane policy to issue only five titles per side (one less than their Decca predecessors - this is progress? - no, it's highway robbery). This two-record set is therefore padded out to twenty titles with the inclusion of four numbers by Eddie Cole's Solid Swingers recorded July 28, 1936: Stompin' At The Panama, Honey Hush, Sleep Baby Sleep, Thunder. The musicians involved are Kenneth Roane (trumpet), Tommy Thompson, Bill Wright (saxes), Nat Cole (piano), Eddie Cole (bass), Jimmy Adams (drums), and Leonard Feather in his liner notes admits that the arrangements and the soloists "represent a rather undistinguished brand of small combo jazz". So why bother to include them at all?

As for the King Cole Trio, Nat Cole never was a real jazz pianist of note, and these old Decca titles with Oscar Moore (guitar) and Wesley Prince (bass) consisted of little more than "novelty" vocals (many sung in unison) and assorted, familiar riff numbers. One of the latter (Hit That Jive, Jack) pales into insignificance when compared to the hilarious version by Slim Gaillard and Bam Brown ("Groove Juice Special").

The Decca titles did at least feature all three instrumentalists, whereas in later years the trio got shoved more and more into the background, and Nat Cole's pleasant piano was heard less and less. In effect, this LP is just an historical document which will appeal only to nostalgia trippers. - J. R. N.

GRAHAM COLLIER

Portraits
Saydisc SDL244

Graham Collier is one of the world's more adept orchestrators for small ensembles. Listening to this recording, one gets the impression that his thematic imagination and pallette of ensemble pastels and subtle hues approaches Ellingtonial proportions. "Portraits" is, however, not one of Collier's more typical recordings. Partly because of working with younger, relatively inexperienced musicians here, he has regressed somewhat from the free-wheeling ensemble-soloist interaction of "Deep Dark Blue Centre" and "Down Another Road" to a very thoroughly composed music with limited freedom for soloistic expansion. The sound resulting is very attractive, but almost ironically it is far more a showcase for his skills as a musical instigator than a valid debut for the members of his ensemble.

Collier's compositional spirit is unique, but still you realize his indebtedness to Ellington and to the general concept of group interaction evolved by Miles Davis, Wayne Shorter, and Tony Williams in the mid-1960s. This particular feeling is exaggerated by flugelhornist Dick Pearce's very strong Miles orientation - so much so that at times during his feature, Portraits, you feel that had Miles Davis never existed, Collier's music could bear but little resemblance to its present form.

This album is built from two compositions - And Now For Something Completely Different and Portrait, each organized as a suite of attractive, subdued thematic statements and developments forming together a single congruous emotional unit. (The main difference between the two compositions is the title.) The distinction of the music lies in bassist Collier's writing, particularly his genius at building expansions and variations on a very close sextet sound. His companions in the ensemble are willing and for the most part able to do his lines justice. The band's one liability

is altoist Peter Hurt, who combines almost-invariably-flat intonation and a strident tone with a tenuous formal conception in this most formal of musics, producing brittle lines which run in neurotic little circles, repeat, and shatter like so many shards of broken mirror when ensemble pressure and freedom build. Guitarist Ed Speight plays from a delightfully sensitive merger of flamenco and folk influences, while pianist Geoff Castle is arguably the most telling of all the soloists. The composer and drummer John Webb underline and drive.

This is an immaculate recording of nice music that demands little concentration - and there, indeed, may lie the rub. "Portraits" demonstrates anew Collier's prowess as writer and catalyst, but in an overly-predestined and lightweight manner. It tells you absolutely nothing about his music that you would not have known from other recordings; and while the younger musicians around him are worth the hearing, there are better doors into his world than this one. - B. T.

WILD BILL DAVISON

Big Horn Jazz Fest '72
Big Horn SB 2001

Chicago's answer to Manassas is the Big Horn Jazz Fest. Two days of musical mayhem in the Traditional manner by today's surviving veterans plus a liberal sprinkling of local talent. Programming, tune selection and group cohesion remain at a primitive level. It is easier for everyone concerned to jam on the well worn favorites. In this way everything sounds more convincing. Not that it's really important for those in attendance as they are usually oblivious to goofs, errors and incorrect key selection etc. When it is preserved on record it is another question.

Bill Davison's swashbuckling arrogance and mouthy distain best sum up the musical philosophy of these bashes and his presence is the dominant factor in this lp. His vocal comments have been retained while his rasping lead horn smears through and across the ensembles in varying degrees of accuracy. He is aided and abetted by fellow traveler George Brunis whose pitching problems get worse with every year. Propping up the front line is clarinetist Bob Wilber (he also gets one outing on his curved soprano) and a rhythm section of Art Hodes (local talent Bobby Wright subs on two numbers without setting the world on fire), Rail Wilson and Barrett Deems that at least has the temerity to swing in a strong fashion.

But the inanities of the repertoire (Avalon, Tin Roof Blues, Muskrat Ramble, Running Wild, Sweet Georgia Brown) are self-defeating and the music is as predictable as a Big Mac. The only exception to this is Bob Wilber's excursion into What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry.

Like many festival recordings, this will be a handy momento for those who were there but this is one to pass by for the long suffering jazz enthusiast who waits at home for his jaded ears to be brightened with great sounds. You will have heard it all before. - J. W. N.
($5.50 postpaid from Big Horn Records, Rt. 2, Box 64B, Mundelein, Ill. 60060.)

DUKE ELLINGTON

Duke Ellington Presents Ivie Anderson
Columbia KG 32064

Here is more Ellingtonia from the decade of the 1930s, this time spotlighting his finest vocalist, Ivie Anderson. Nine of the tracks here are generally available on other Columbia box sets, and six others are available on such other labels as Tax, TOM and I.A.J.R.C. Only 14 of the 32 compositions appearing here are by Ellington. The balance are a cross section of pop songs of the period, many by Ted Koehler and Harold Arlen.

Ivie comes across as an honest, unaffected singer of songs, and frequently a highly moving singer where the material permits. Her phrasing is remarkably graceful, and her slightly nasal sound lends a highly distinctive timbre to her overall style.

But mostly we can accept and savor Ivie, where other Ellington vocalists over the years have proved an unpleasant annoyance, because she was an integral part of the Ellington sound during its greatest years. She was built into the band as firmly as Sam Nanton, Hodges, or Greer because she was there when much of the basic ground was broken in the Ellington sound and developed into the perfect balance of the late '30s. Because she was there, she became an integral part of that balance. Subsequent vocalists only seemed to be intruders.

While Ivie Anderson was not a prime mover in the Ellington world and therefore this collection is not as basic a collation as some others, both Miss Anderson and this set will be of major interest to anyone who wants to get beneath the surface of Duke's work and explore in some detail one of its most refreshing and timeless components.

- J. McD.

GIL EVANS

Svengali
Atlantic SD 1643

As a composer-arranger, Ian Ernest Gilmore Green of Toronto, alias Gil Evans of New York City, referred to by the anagram Svengali in Gerry Mulligan's living room, ranks with Duke Ellington. It is good of him to make a recording every five years or so to remind us of this fact.

One imagines Gil Evans, the least public person in any of the arts, emerging from his Greenwich Village basement, blinking in the sunlight after five years under a yellow lightbulb, and heading downtown to lead an orchestra through the folio of charts tucked under his arm. Red-rimmed eyes and baggy pants. A man who considers Miles Davis an extravert.

That image is slightly tarnished by the fact that he has been out playing concerts with this orchestra for the last few years. One track, ZeeZee, a showcase for trumpeter Marvin Peterson, was recorded live at Philharmonic Hall, N.Y. It closes with fading applause and an enticing flute introducing the next tune, so the rest of that concert must be stowed in somebody's vault. Perhaps we won't have to wait five years to hear the rest of it.

The other five tracks were recorded (without Marvin Peterson) at Trinity Church. The image is slightly tarnished again by the fact that all but one of these has been recorded before in a very similar arrangement. Only Cry Of Hunger, a showcase for the tough tenor of Billy Harper, who wrote it, is new. Summertime features guitarist Ted Dunbar playing pretty in the role where Miles Davis originally scintillated. Eleven is the old bop number written by Evans and Davis, this time taken at double the tempo, which compresses it to less than two minutes. The absolutely stunning arrangements of Harper's Thoroughbred and George Russell's Blues In Orbit were recorded originally on Evans' last album (Ampex A10102, in 1969). Recording them again for Atlantic is truly a service for those of us who weren't quick enough to grab the Ampex album during the two weeks or so that it was available.

Whether the arrangements are new or reworked, Evans' genius as an arranger shines through. He pits voicings against one another to create asymmetries that are bittersweet. On Cry Of Hunger, the soloists (Harper and baritonist Trevor Koehler) and the rhythm (Dunbar and drummer Bruce Ditmas) double the tempo of the sombre orchestra. On Blues In Orbit, the staccato ensemble parts are a rigid abstraction of the fluid solo intervals (by Harper again, altoist Dave Sanborn and bassist Herb Bushler). As always, Evans provokes excellent solos from all the horns by defining a coherent and inherently dramatic context for them with the band.

The charts may be a bit dog-eared but the quality is true. "Svengali" is a great album of music, no matter how much of it you've heard before. - J. C.

FOREFRONT

Incantation
Universal 21557

"Four trumpets and rhythm? They must sound like Chase!" Nothing could be further from the truth. No screech effects or double-high C's to be found here. The Forefront owes its influence to each other, and therein lies the reason for the unparalleled creativity found in this album. Jazz, rock and classical elements are all measured in equal doses

on Incantation. The material covers a broad range of musical interests - something not often found in today's categorized record market.

The Forefront is the brainchild of Bobby Lewis, who, in addition to handling the lead book, has penned several of the charts. Each of the four has contributed his own resources - financial or otherwise - in a solidarity effort at bringing the group before a wider audience.

George Bean, Bobby Lewis and Art Hoyle are all veterans of Chicago's recording studio and club scene. At the time this group first began rehearsing, Russ Iverson had just finished a stint with the Buddy Rich Band. Today, the four comprise the trumpet section of the Dave Remington Band - Chicago's finest rehearsal unit - and have been playing together for over three years. They have built a cohesion and unity that rivals any brass section in existence.

Supplementing Lewis' compositions are pieces by Joe Daley, Art Lauer and Les Hooper, all local musicians of renown. George, Bobby, Art and Russ each gets ample solo opportunity, but it is the band's collective sound that is to be marveled. One must listen to Quartet in order to fully appreciate the empathy each has for the other.

Rufus Reid may well be the busiest bass player in town. Born in Sacramento, California, Rufus came to Chicago from Seattle, where he had been attending school nearby. Soon after arriving, he could often be found playing at Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase sessions at the North Park Hotel. It didn't take long for his name to spread and the telephone to start ringing. Like Rufus, drummer Jerry Coleman enjoys an excellent reputation and the esteem of fellow musicians. His contribution to the group is a large one and is consistently rewarding.

Presently, you won't be able to find the album in your favorite record store. However, like so many other musicians have done of late, The Forefront is distributing the album itself. A copy may be obtained for $5.60 postpaid from Forefront Publications, 1945 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

The album is an utterly satisfying emotional experience. By all means, get it! - B.B.

FOURMENONLY

Volume One
Edition Wacker EWW2250

"Fourmenonly", formerly the Modern Quartet Karlsruhe, is a group of German musicians making tentative gropings toward free sounds. Their musical leader is flugelhornist Herbert Joos, who brings to his instrument a fleet and intricate personal lyricism unfortunately coupled with a sweetly cloying sound. Apart from being the composer of the various tunes on this album, he is the source of most of the drive and intensity in this music. Reedman Wilfried Eichhorn tends to both angularity and insubstantiality. His solos are poorly structured, and depend a great deal on what ensemble interplay there may be behind him and on elements of juxtaposed surprise for their motion and impact. His sound (tenor and soprano saxophones and bass clarinet) is full and rich in the lower range of the instruments, but toward the top is tightly strained to the point of a constipated stridor. He conceives of his instruments in terms of aspects of a number of different influences - identifiably Coltrane, Dolphy, and Rollins - but not in personal terms so far, and seems to be having problems deciding whom he wants to be. Pianist Helmuth Zimmer and percussionist Rudi Theilman are a powerful synergistic duo. They play quick, brittlely percussive lines that depend a great deal on each other's empathy for growth and sustenance, but rarely attempt to impart the energy they generate to the larger ensemble. In effect, this band plays three different musics simultaneously with little other than the bare frames of Joos' compositions to anneal them together into a coherent unity.

As recorded here, one of the things this quartet does best is use taped echo effects to build compositional complexity and intensity. Ich Und Meine Bruder, for Joos alone, moves by pyramiding layers of short intersecting and contrasting flugelhorn lines over each other, creating and resolving a great deal of interlinear rhythmic and melodic tension successfully with great attention to detail and execution. This is much the most distinctive performance on the disc, and it's a far more valid, complex, and interesting use of the tape delay devices than those attempted by Don Ellis (most notably). Also of note in this regard is the effective backdrop for Joos' horn created by the seeming aviary of birdsong flutes in Count Down. Joos' lines are clipped and intrinsically hard-driven, overcoming the gap left by the stillborn group interaction, and although Joos still evokes the spirits of various others (sound just beyond Clark Terry, harmonic acuity and command of the instrument somewhere pulling away from Booker Little and Don Cherry) he is by far the most substantial of the bandsmen and threatens (with proper playing and publicity circumstances) to become a major European brass voice. Elsewhere in this album he is, unfortunately, not heard in the best possible settings. He provides - again through tape - parallel vamping lines beneath Eichhorn's introverted stutterings in Compulsion. The remaining two selections, Viridiana and Excess, are attempted group performances that never really get started. Zimmer and Theilman are at their most overpowering in Excess.

Four men. Only four. It would have been much nicer had they learned to play together. As it is, you might check out Herbert Joos. - B.T.

(Available from Edition Wolfgang Wacker, 7530 Pforzheim, Nebeniusstr. 15, G.F.R.)

FREE JAZZ FESTIVAL

Inspiration And Power 14
Trio PA-3006/PA-3007

This album is a sampler of the Japanese avant-garde scene, recorded in concert at the Shinjuku Art Theatre, Tokyo, between June 30 and July 12, 1973. Like any sampler - one title by each group - content and inspiration vary widely from track to track. Between that and the general North American ignorance of the Japanese scene, generalizations about the music are hardly appropriate; piecemeal dissection is a better course for valid discussion.

PA-3006, side A

1. Ikisudama - Fetch - Toshiyki Miyama and his New Herd Orchestra

This selection sounds to be a collective improvisation based on written frames, along the lines of various compositions by Mike Mantler and Alexander von Schlippenbach, and not particularly original in conception or execution. Ensemble textures and voicings are striking, but very close to Mantler's Communications #9 in particular, and combined with an harmonic and rhythmic setting drawn from early Sun Ra or late Don Ellis. Structurally, Ikisudama/Fetch is in good old ABA form with free interludes. The "B" section is very heavily scored in a big-band bebop manner, and none of the sections are developed. Players are unidentified, and no individual solos are heard; in the ensembles there are notably a guitarist whose stance toward his instrument is sound-oriented on the same plane as Englishman Derek Bailey, and an altoist taking the Konitz sound well beyond the bounds of its originator. As it stands, this piece could be a fine outline for further development into an extended orchestral work, but as played it's unoriginal, undeveloped, and stillborn.

2. Inland Fish - Motoharu Yoshizawa (bass solo)

The prime function of the bass line - anywhere you look in the jazz tradition - has always been as support and foil for another voice, never primarily as soloist in its own right. Whether operating chordally at the bottom of an ensemble or melodically embellishing around horns, it served as a fundamental rhythmic and unifying factor, with the occasional "bass solo" demonstrating how well the bassist could be a running underpinning. This unfortunate tradition began to decay with Charlie Haden and Scott LaFaro beside Ornette, and with Jimmy Garrison's flamencoes with Coltrane, but the first true tour de force of the liberated bass was recorded only four years ago with Barre Phillips' "Journal Violone" solo album. Inland Fish may just be the second full-scale masterpiece of bass literature. This is a finely-wrought, supple arco sculpture exploring and exploding the tonal, melodic, and rhythmic subtleties of the instrument to Ayleresque dimensions. Formally, it's intricately

JAZUM Records present

JAZUM 29: CAB CALLOWAY
Down Hearted Blues/Without Rhythm/Stack O'Lee Blues/I'm Now Prepared To Tell The World It's You/Old Man Of The Mountain/Doin' The New Low Down/Emaline/Good Sauce From The Gravy Bowl/Keep That Hi-De-Hi In Your Soul/Miss Otis Regrets/I Ain't Got Nobody/Baby Won't You Please Come Home/You're The Cure For What Ails Me/Copper Colored Gal

(Material all taken from Perfect and Brunswick records dating from November 1931 to September 1936 with the exception of Emaline which came from Victor, January 1934)

JAZUM 30: BOSWELL SISTERS & CONNIE BOSWELL
Star Dust/I Surrender Dear/Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries/This Is The Missus/The Thrill Is Gone/My Song/That's Love/That's Why Darkies Were Born/Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries/Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea/Me Minus You/You'll Never Get Up To Heaven That Way/Doggone I've Done It/Down Among The Sheltering Palms/In A Little Second Hand Store/Charlie Two-Step/Lousiana Hayride

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JAZUM 31: BOSWELL SISTERS & CONNIE BOSWELL
Mood Indigo/Under A Blanket Of Blue/Puttin' It On/The River's Takin' Care Of Me/Swanee Mammy/It's The Talk Of The Town/That's How Rhythm Was Born/This Time It's Love/You Oughta Be In Pictures/Dinner At Eight/I Hate Myself/Emperor Jones/The Lonesome Road/In Other Words We're Through

(Material on Jazum 30 and Jazum 31 all taken from Brunswick records dating from 1931 to 1934. As usual, fine musicians including the Dorsey Brothers, Bunny Berigan, Mannie Klein, Eddie Lang, Joe Venuti, etc. are present, not all on every record. Jazum 30 also includes all the material from two rare Brunswick 12" records which featured, in addition to the Boswells, Frank Munn, Bing Crosby, Tommy Dorsey and the Mills Brothers, including Bing's great "The Thrill Is Gone", probably the finest rendition Bing ever put on record)

JAZUM 32: GLEN GRAY
When I Take My Sugar To Tea/I Wanna Be Around My Baby All The Time/White Jazz/I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby/Alexander's Ragtime Band/Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet/I Wanna Sing About You/Just A Blue-Eyed Blonde/It's The Girl/Take It From Me/Time On My Hands/If I Didn't Have You/Black Jazz/Maniac's Ball

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JAZUM 33: GLEN GRAY
Rain On The Roof/Starlight/Kiss By Kiss/One Of Us Was Wrong/Indiana/I Never Knew/Don't Tell A Soul/Blue Jazz/Was I To Blame/You're Still In My Heart/Lazy Day/Evening/The Dance Of The Lame Duck/Blue Prelude

(All material on Jazum 32 and Jazum 33 from Brunswick records dating from 1931 to 1933. This was a fine period for Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra. Gene Gifford's great arrangements, the precision Casa Loma brass section, Pee Wee Hunt's singing and trombone playing (when he was in his prime), Kenny Sargent's early crooning and a batch of great tunes are all shown to good advantage)

JAZUM 34: MUGGSY SPANIER
Relaxin' At The Touro/Royal Garden Blues/When My Dreamboat Comes Home/Careless Love/That's A Plenty/Relaxin' At The Touro/Dippermouth Blues/I Ain't Got Nobody/Cherry/It's A Long Way To Tipperary/On The Alamo

(Broadcasts from the Blue Note, Chicago, on October 18, 1953 and October 25, 1953 with the same, or about the same, band that Muggsy recorded with on Mercury records at that time)

JAZUM 35: BENNY GOODMAN
Intermezzo/Don't Be That Way/After You've Gone (Broadcast from Hotel New Yorker, fall 1941)/Tiger Rag/I Want To Go Where You Go/Rattle And Roll/Rachel's Dream/Mad Boogie (Broadcasts July 1946)/Boy Meets Horn/One Sweet Letter From You/Down By The Old Mill Stream/Scatter Brain/Flying Home/Make With The Kisses/Heaven In My Arms (from Columbia records August 1939 to October 1939)

JAZUM 36: BENNY GOODMAN
Faithful Forever/That Lucky Fellow/Bluebirds In The Moonlight/Board Meeting/Let's All Sing Together/Be Sure/The Sky Fell Down (from Columbia records October 1939 to March 1940)/After You've Gone/If I Had You/Bye Bye Blues/Poor Butterfly/Avalon (Broadcast from the Blue Note, Chicago, August 20, 1952)

JAZUM 37: EDDIE CONDON
At Sundown/Squeeze Me/It's Been So Long/Mandy Make Up Your Mind/Concentratin'/Someone To Watch Over Me/Ensemble Blues (from Ritz Theatre, NYC, October 7, 1944)/Royal Garden Blues/Little High Chairman/Three Little Words/Struttin' With Some Barbecue (from Ritz Theatre, NYC, October 21, 1944)

JAZUM 38: EDDIE CONDON
Yesterdays/Old Folks/Ensemble Blues (from Ritz Theatre, NYC, October 21, 1944)/September In The Rain/I Got Rhythm/I've Been Around/The Lady's In Love (from Ritz Theatre, NYC, November 25, 1944)/Should I/Song Of The Wanderer/Sister Kate (from Ritz Theatre or Town Hall, NYC, February 10, 1945)

(Jazum 37 and Jazum 38 are the seventh and eighth records we have issued from the broadcasts that Eddie Condon made from Town Hall and the Ritz Theatre in New York City during 1944 and 1945. This is great jazz and you can hear Max Kaminsky, Ernie Caceres, Miff Mole, Ed Hall, Cozy Cole, Muggsy Spanier, Pee Wee Russell, Billy Butterfield, Jess Stacy, Bob Casey, Jimmy Dorsey, Johnny Blowers, Sidney Bechet, George Wettling, Lee Wiley, Red McKenzie and others)

$5.50 pp. in the U.S.A. and $6.75 elsewhere from: William C. Love, 5808 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217, U.S.A.

structured, flawless except for a rather abrupt ending, by an improviser of great power and a fully unique command of his mind and of the bass.

PA-3006, side B

1. October Revolution - Itoru Oki Quintet

This is glorious music, quite the best case I've heard made yet for the place of the electric/electronically-altered trumpet in germane improvisation. The "Revolution" opens with a raunchy Don Ellis exploration of the electronics and trumpet sound in general by the leader over a bell and chime accompaniment, which gradually builds in content and impact until the meat of the piece is reached. Fully blown, October Revolution is a driving, slashing, free trumpet (yes, with tape devices and wa-wa in full sway) outing over fascinating but busy bass (Takashi Tokuhiro) and ferocious percussion (Tatsuya Nakamura and Joe Mizuki). There are two liabilities to the performance - teeth-in-the-reed soprano saxophonist Mototeru Tagaki, who screeches and squelches at great length about virtually nothing, and an overlong collective section dominated by the percussion. (This is a matter of both undue recording prominence and a sort of musical intimidation of the horns by their erstwhile accompanists.) Oki's quintet builds "Revolution" to a knife-at-your-throat tension, but at length can't sustain the energy.

2. Introduction and C de F - Now Music Ensemble

Since I don't understand Japanese, "Introduction" - a very theatrical narration over recorded background music - was lost on me; the sounds are fascinating but their meaning escapes me. Too bad. Perhaps had I known what "Introduction" was about, I could rationalize "C de F", which at the moment sounds like a string of pointlessly distorted major scales and nursery rhyme motifs all very incongruously placed over raging drumming.

PA-3007, side A

1. Reminisce - Masahiko Togashi (percussion) and Masahiko Satoh (piano)

This is an intense, vivid, close sound. Satoh plays frenetic piano with a tight complexity and two-fisted energy that cannot help but evoke images of Cecil Taylor. The flames are perhaps lower, the harmonies generally more orthodox and occasionally derivative, and the counterpoints of the first and third sections of Reminisce draw perhaps from Paul Bley (or even Denny Zeitlin) as well. But even so the fires are raging, and the multilayered intricacies of the various sections of the piece and and intense interaction between Satoh and Togashi the dancing ghost are those of Taylor and Andrew Cyrille. This is an amazing performance, one which suffers little by the comparison.

2. Mass Projection - New Direction for the Arts

"New Direction", it seems, is no direction. Mass Projection is a formless sound barrage by three string players (violin, cello, guitar) and a drummer attempting to play as much of their instruments as quickly and as loudly as possible simultaneously. It sounds like three Ornettes-on-violin fronting a machine-gun battery.

PA-3007, side B

1. Phase 13 - Garandoh

With Garandoh, we again come to a music which, either by design or recording balance, is dominated by an insensitive percussionist (in this case, Hozumi Tanaka). Phase 13 is a rather disappointing second look at Masahiko Satoh, whose keyboard energies here are dissipated between piano, electric piano, and synthesizer as he produces lines of various contrasting sounds and does nothing with them. The power of his piano playing is briefly hinted at toward the end, but between a temporary infatuation with sound for its own sake and the burden of unsympathetic accompanists (bassist / cellist Keiki Midorikawa has little more grasp of the potential subtleties of Satoh's music than does Tanaka) nothing comes of it.

2. Clay - Yosuke Yamashita Trio

Yosuke Yamashita is another power pianist of the Cecil Taylor-Don Pullen lineage, a frenzied player with a great deal more motion and less subtlety in his lines than those of his inspirations. The difference in style lies more in use of space than anything else. Rather than striving for ideal placements of isolated sounds in time and against each other, Yamashita and partner-percussionist Takeo Moriyama simply move quickly and let the lines they shed land properly by themselves - which, for the most part, they do. The third band member, altoist Akira Sakata, is an inventively shouting improviser winding above and through the others helping to create even more fully the illusion of a Cecil Taylor unit.

A lot of the music on this album is fairly derivative, as you might have expected, and close to its obvious roots. Most of the performers are competent and powerful musicians, even in the face of voices that are not quite their own and an epidemic of drum fever. But since no sampler can represent the complete sweep of one man's concepts or survey an entire cultural area in detail, in an album of this sort one has to take the bitter with the sweet. Free music and the improvisational spirit are alive and well and living in Japan as in Europe (not hiding like in America). - B. T.

J.B. HUTTO

Slidewinder
Delmark DS-636

This is pure, straight-forward, unobstructed, and uncluttered gut bucket Chicago Blues. J.B. slides, boogies, drives, and gets way down with his personalized form of blues. J.B. exibits a great control over his brand of slide guitar, using it appropriately in his presentation, but not over-using it. His high pitched vocal work, often likened to a variant of the Kansas City shout, is extremely well suited to his slide guitar playing. Each accentuating the other.

The Hawks on this album are comprised of the competent guitarist, Lee Jackson, an exceptionally fine bass player, Bombay Carter, and an understanding drummer, Elbert Buckner. They form a tight, sympathetic backing, working with J.B. as a solid unit. Lee Jackson is given a great deal of latitude, weaving around J.B.'s slide work taking up any of the slack.

The album opens with the title cut, Slidewinder, which is a hard driving, good times slice tour de force. Things are slowed down and relaxed with the slow Blues Do Me A Favour and the slightly faster Precious Stone. Blues done smooth and easy. On the slow numbers J.B. has a certain manner of presentation by which he speaks, often shouts his statement directly to the listener, thereby giving the listener a sense of involvement. Quite effective. Young Hawk's Crawl gets it on again with a hard driving request for some woman to get his "young hawk" motivated. Lee really lets fly on this one.

Side Two opens with a slow blues - Too Late. J.B.'s vocal work, dipped in sorrow and emotion, plus his soft wide-spaced slide work convince the listener of the artist's commitment to this particular blues. Lee lays down the steady, sorrowful - at times tolling - basic guitar line for this one. Plus there is a very solid bass line and very sympathetic and quiet drumming. Too Late comes across extremely well. Letter From My Baby is a typical relaxed Hutto rocker with plenty of controlled slide while Shy Voice has an uncommercialized, soulish James Brown feel to it. J.B. and the Hawks bring it off well. The closer, Boogie Right ON does just that - it boogies and drives right on. It is the type of closer that will have Post War Chicago fans wanting more.

As a Post War Chicago Blues fan I have nothing to say against this album. Musically, the Hawks do everything right, while technically Delmark has done everything right. All around quality.

- D. L.

DILL JONES

Up Jumped You With Love
"77" 12/45

This album was recorded in concert during a visit home to England in 1972. Dill displays the skill that has made him a musician's musician both there and his adopted USA in ten solos on blues, pops, and piano numbers. Hines and Sullivan are two of his major influences and he splashes them all over the place, and though he plays quite a bit of stride, he is not a convincing stride player in the classic sense; his time feeling lacks the qualities of Johnson, Waller, the Lion, or Cliff Jackson. (This is not to say that

stride MUST "feel" their way, but no other way seems quite as satisfying.)

Besides the title tune are Jitterbug Waltz (both associated with Fats), Limehouse Blues, Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans, A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square, Something for Luckey (Roberts), Chelsea Bridge, I Just Couldn't Take It Baby, and a couple of blues, one for George Wettling, the idea of which pleases me immensely in a most regretful way. A blues for Wettling, I mean.

Recommended to fans of the traditional mainstream. - W. J.

ELVIN JONES

Mr. Jones
Blue Note BN-LA110-F

The predictability of Elvin Jones closing every track of every album with about eight bars of leftover paradiddles is easily overlooked when the rest of the album is as unpredictable as this one. "Mr. Jones" is a variety show on a neo-bop theme.

The title track is the most boppish, which may only mean that it shows its relative age, since it was recorded in 1969, or about five quintets ago. (It was originally released on "Poly-Currents," Blue Note BST-84331.) The other five tracks, recorded in 1972, are played by various permutations of his second-last working band and some studio guests. That band was a very good one, with Dave Liebman and Steve Grossman on reeds, Gene Perla on bass, and Carlos Valdes on conga. They are supplemented prominently by Thad Jones' flugelhorn on Gee Gee, a ballad showcase that also adds Pepper Adams on baritone and Jan Hammer on piano. Hammer remains with the quintet on One's Native Place and What's Up as well. The latter tune, by Perla, is arranged after the fashion of Weather Report, thus putting it at the opposite pole of the neo-bop continuum from the title piece. (Incidentally, it robs the leader of his closing paradiddles by fading out before he gets around to to them.)

Perhaps the most effective tracks on what is a solid set throughout are the two without any guests. New Breed features the unison tenor of Liebman and Grossman and a rhythm duet by Perla and Jones. Soultrane reduces the personnel even further by going with only one tenor, whom I presume to be Liebman. His solo here is beautifully sustained throughout more than six minutes. Apart from the superficial and probably intentional resemblance to John Coltrane in the head, it should make a lot of listeners aware that Liebman has arrived as a sensitive and original saxophonist.

Since a lot of people apparently buy Elvin Jones' releases mainly to get the drum solos, it is worth mentioning that the only extended solo is on One's Native Place. The leader is surrounded by a battery that includes congas, a tympany and assorted other percussion on this one (as well as the reedman and Hammer), which should be enough to satisfy any drum freak. It is certainly the most exhibitionistic track, but it is not the most striking exhibition of drumming on the album. If enough young drummers get to hear the superb brushwork on Gee Gee, New Breed and especially Soultrane, it might even inspire a revival of that dying art. - J. C.

JOACHIM KUHN

Piano
MPS 21 21330-7

According to various polls I've seen, Joachim Kuhn is one of the most highly esteemed of Eurojazzmen. Since I've not heard him specifically in a jazz context since 1969, I can't say very much about that. However, I can conclude that this is obviously not an album by which he should be gauged.

"Piano" is a series of unaccompanied piano studies improvised in what Kuhn deliberately takes to be a "modern classical" idiom. I needn't comment about individual pieces - the same problems pertain to them all. Unfortunately, the music was not only improvised, but made up out of whole cloth as the session went along. It seems that there was neither forethought nor planning when Kuhn sat down at the keyboard. Whether there was or not, each piece became an empty, technically fantastic performance through which several ideas pass, none of them developed in any sense. I suspect that the various motifs remained fruitless and stunted because Kuhn had no adequate recollection of starting points to which he could return for development. Notes meander by in drowning rhapsodies, or - if fast - skitter neurotically in tight, scratchy little mechanical circles like squirrels on a treadmill. Identical phrases turn up repeatedly, all under his fingers. The shorter pieces are more enjoyable because in less time they can drift less far. So...what is presented for your hearing is a jumbled free association of absolutely unoriginal pyrotechnics wandering through naive impressionist and romantic harmonies and almost-counterpoints like something Debussy might have written when drugged (or the acoustic translation of a Grandma Moses painting), with no reason other than the fact that Kuhn chose to play them that way and in that order. The lack of any propulsive force in the music - not "swing", heaven forfend, but any tangible reason for its continuation from any point in these performances - is excruciatingly complete. And frightening.

Self-indulgence becomes few musicians, and Kuhn even less than most, I fear. - B. T.

ROLF KUHN

The Day After
MPS 2121604-7

Phil Woods shows up on two tracks of this album, ostensibly to attract North American listeners to the talented Kuhn brothers, clarinetist Rolf and pianist Joachim. Their names don't have much currency over here; Woods' still does.

Unfortunately, Woods proves to be too good a musician to be much of a shill. He dominates his tracks completely by swinging hard and ranging freely over his horn. The other tracks, and the Kuhn brothers generally, suffer by comparison in a way that they might not have if they were heard completely on their own terms.

The second side crystallizes the incongruity. On Everything In The Garden, Woods is alone with the rhythm section (Joachim Kuhn, Peter Warren, bass; Oliver Johnson, drums). On Sonata For Percussion, Piano And Clarinet, Joachim and Rolf Kuhn are joined only by Nina Juvenal Vasconcelos. Both tunes are free improvisations from start to finish. "Just playing around in the studio" is Rolf Kuhn's description for them, but there is considerably less playing around on Woods' track than the trio's. Woods fastens onto a theme and finds a lot of life in it. The Sonata, on the other hand, never resolves a theme, and seems comparatively static and inhibited in spite of the freeness of its form.

Certainly the Kuhns are good. Joachim constructs a careful solo at breakneck tempo on Turning Out and gets in a neat neo-bop chorus on Ca. 1-9-5-2, the other track with Woods on it. Rolf shows beautiful tone and sensitivity in a long ballad solo on the title tune. But Woods blemishes their work by being too much better in too close quarters. - J.C.

LADD'S BLACK ACES

Fountain FJ-106

This Lp contains, in chronological order, the second 16 sides by Ladd's Black Aces (the Original Memphis Five, with Phil Napoleon, Jimmy Lytell, and, on three tracks here, Miff Mole) on the Gennett label, dating from August 1922 through April 1923. It follows the first 16 on FJ-102 and is Fountain's usual definitive job, with excellent sound considering the source material, complete discographical data, and interesting liner notes.

LBA owed much to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in its emphasis on ensemble playing, in its almost total reliance on arrangements, and in the styles of some of its musicians (Napoleon's clipped LaRocca-like phrasing, Lytell's piercing Shields-type sound). On the other hand, LBA's rhythm is a straight-ahead four-beat vs. the ODJB's nearly-eight-to-the-bar shuffle, and LBA's correct, deliberate approach gives them more of a conventional jazz style at the sacrifice, perhaps, of a certain amount of excitement.

The musicians have full command of their instruments, and are operating on pop tunes that reflect the high quality of Tin Pan Alley's output at that time. Six sides contain vocals, the three by Mandy Lee, whose full sound and clear diction are reminiscent of Sophie Tucker, being quite good; the band relaxes and digs in on the vocal tracks, perhaps benefiting from being out of the spotlight.

This is historically important music, forming a direct link from the ODJB to the somewhat larger, pre-swing units, such as those led by Red Nichols, that recorded widely in New York in the later twenties. Apart from its musical merits, and I find much here that's quite enjoyable, any serious traditional jazz fan should have something by the Original Memphis Five - or Ladd's Black Aces - in his collection. This Lp provides an excellent sampling of their output. - T.W.

HUBERT LAWS

Carnegie Hall
CTI 6025

RON CARTER

Blues Farm
CTI 6027

Superficially, these two records look like two impressions by the same rubber stamp. Both were recorded in January 1973, and they are now released at the same time, both of course in those glossy packages that Bob Ciano designs for CTI. The core personnel on both includes some familiar stablemates: Hubert Laws (flute), Bob James (piano), Gene Bertoncini (guitar), Ron Carter (bass), and Billy Cobham (drums). There are lots of lessons for bass players and quite a few for flautists on these tracks, and a lot of pleasant and swinging, if somewhat undistinguished, music for everyone else.

The similarities end after a few hearings. "Blues Farm" soon gets used up, like a pop record. Its country funk tracks are too similar in tone and tempo to sustain interest for very long, and country funk is the groove on Blues Farm, A Hymn For Him, Two-Beat Johnson and R2M1 (all by Carter). That leaves A Small Ballad (also by Carter) and John Lewis' Django for relief, about eleven minutes out of nearly forty. A Small Ballad shows Bob James to considerable advantage as he plays acoustic piano in a trio setting with Carter and Cobham. Django features Carter's bass supported by a rhythm team of James, Cobham, Sam Brown (guitar), and Ralph MacDonald (percussion). Unfortunately, the track is not as good as it might have been. Even the technical difficulty of Carter's simultaneously playing the melody and the chords in the head cannot justify pressing a take with so many missed notes in the final statement of the melody.

"Carnegie Hall" holds up better, though it too might have benefited from more discerning production. The short first side, listed as a medley of Windows and Fire and Rain, fades out after Laws' introduction to the latter, less than two minutes into the tune. Obviously, CTI owns more of this Carnegie Hall Concert than it is willing to sell right now, perhaps even enough to have made this a full side.

On Windows, Laws shares the extended solo space with vibist Dave Friedman and with Bob James, again on acoustic piano. The second side, which uses Passacaglia In C Minor as a point of departure, allows Carter and Bertoncini to stretch out, as well as Laws and Friedman.

At least as important as the solos, which were given impetus by a good audience, are the arrangements. The melodies by Chick Corea and J.S. Bach are rich enough to make the group interplay interesting, and the unidentified arranger had the good sense to invest the Bach with no more pretensions than he did the Corea. (The addition of a bassoon into the ensemble for the Passacaglia is unobtrusive, and effective.) High points include the counterpoint playing of Carter and Friedman to open the Passacaglia and the restatement of its theme by Carter and Laws before Bertoncini's unaccompanied solo.

Both records are likely to please a lot of listeners, though they may not excite many of them. "Carnegie Hall" will at least please them for longer. - J.C.

JOE HILL LEWIS

Muskadine 101

Sixteen selections by the one man band are now available on this valuable release. From Memphis, Louis made a number of recordings between 1949 and 1956 which stamp him as an unusual and important performer. Although he relied on his harp as a primary instrument, he managed to also combine guitar, traps, and hi-hat, a lineup which resulted in a unique sound.

The album fully surveys his career from his first to last session. Sound transfers are excellent, though the technical side of many of his originals left a lot to be desired. For example, mumbled lyrics and even cutting a song off when it was a bit too long for 78 issue are problems that could have easily been remedied by subsequent takes, but the feeling for the music comes through none-the-less, and perhaps with a bit of added atmosphere for the modern listener.

The full notes by Steve LaVere also tell us a lot of solid information about the man himself, and show the care with which the album was produced. It is a record well worth adding to your collection. - R. M.

JACK MAHEU

Mississippi Mudders
PCI 100-SP

Most of the nine tracks on this LP by a quartet of clarinet, banjo, tuba and drums follow the same format - ensemble (i.e., clarinet lead) chorus or three in, banjo solo, and ensemble choruses out. With this instrumentation, perhaps little else

is possible, but it introduces a certain sameness about the performances that makes the Lp hard to listen to all the way at one sitting, despite the truly formidable talents of clarinetist Maheu.

Actually, the approach of the group is really more in the good-time, sing-along vein, as opposed to undiluted jazz. This sort of thing - imitation dog noises in Yellow Dog Blues, gag quotes from Dragnet or It Ain't Necessarily So in a tune called Watergate Rag - displays a deliberately shallow approach to the material and further diminishes the record's appeal to readers to this magazine.

The musicians are good and seem to accomplish their purposes well enough. And on the more extended tracks, such as Nobody's Sweetheart, Maheu comes up with some very juicy clarinet work. On balance, though, I don't think you'll have much reason to regret passing up this one. - T. W.

JUNIOR MANCE

The Junior Mance Touch
Polydor PD5051

Junior Mance is a real two-fisted pianist - a bluesly, thoroughly original swinger. When he wants to be. When he's with his own trio or beside a good horn (his 1970 Montreux sessions with Dexter Gorden are still miracles). But not with strings. Not with a producer prodding him. Then, he's all those things except the American original we know he can be.

Strings on this album are arranged and conducted by Bill Fischer, and with their help and the addition of a few current popular tunes Mance slides down a notch or two from a truly personal blues-infused approach to engaging party two-hand-tremolo funk. (Something of the same transition marked Ray Bryant's execrable early-1960s Argo/Cadet sessions.) In I Can See Clearly Now, a superior ditty, the charts, and the bassist and drummer (unidentified, but probably Martin Rivera on bass) all make use of the original strong-beat-drum weak-beat-bass reggae pulse. On form, such a rhythmic configuration would have been the source for an unimaginable treasure of variation by Mance; but here he doesn't even seem aware of the different pulse until fairly late in his solo. Drag. Leadbelly's Midnight Special, with Horns, harmonica, and guitars, is a truly definitive performance in the faceless funk form.

Mance does get his head for two titles, though - and those are the only reasons for checking out this disc. Where I Come From, although again a full-blown blues like most of the other pieces, is a gentle and subtle exploration of roots. Mance's juggling and stretching of the Latin rhythms in Tin Tin Deo makes it that much more of a gem to be set off from its tawdry surroundings. Much like what you expected to hear when you put the album on your turntable in the first place.

I dislike putting down this album. But titles notwithstanding, it's not the Junior Mance touch at the keyboard here. It's competent and congenial entertainment, yes, but almost any identikit pianist could be equally punchy. - B. T.

FRED MC DOWELL

Oblivion OD-1

Producers have been messing with the concept of electric Mississippi Delta blues for some years now, and mostly messing it up. After all, most blues fans are rather firmly in either the pre-war or post-war period of interest, or at least like to have them rather clearly separated, so it is not surprising that they bring exacting standards to bear when judging the results of the amalgamation.

Fred McDowell died in the early summer of 1972, and since he was only discovered in the late 1950's, an argument could be made that he was by definition a post war artist, but his style found most favor with those interested in the older pre-war delta style, and how it was continued in later years. Recorded live in November, 1971, this album is a huge success, demonstrating the integrity of the musicians and the Delta style as a vital force in music. What we have here is pulsating, rhythmically infectious, driving music, recorded live on an evening when McDowell had it all together. It is the kind of date one longs to have been present at, and now that we will no longer have that opportunity, this is the next best thing.

This is a very worthy album indeed from this new company, and hopefully they have others of the same standard in the works. If you can't find it anywhere else, try sending $4.98 direct to P.O. Box X, Roslyn Heights, N.Y. 11577. It's well worth it. - R. M.

SWING TENORS

DON BYAS
Midnight At Minton's
Onyx ORI208

COLEMAN HAWKINS & FRANK WESS
The Tenor Sax
Atlantic SD2-306

LESTER YOUNG, CHU BERRY AND BEN WEBSTER
The Tenor Sax
Atlantic SD2-307

In the late 1930s and 1940s, a budding tenor player had three choices. He could either try to play like Lester Young, or he could try to play like Coleman Hawkins, or he could seek some other line of work. These three albums bring together Lester at his pinnacle, some good Hawkins, Hawk's three chief acolytes of the day, and one latter-day lesser light drawn from the Hawkins heritage.

The Don Byas album, recorded in 1941 ringside at various clubs in Harlem, is culled from the late Jerry Newman's archives of spontaneous sessions. At least one of the titles (Byas' Stardust solo) has seen issue before (abbreviated, in the Esoteric "Harlem Jazz Scene 1941" album of several years ago). This is prime early Byas, depicting a master rhapsodist with a flourishing harmonic acuity that hinted at developments in the music's then-near future, and an amorous buzzsaw sound thicker and richer than almost anyone's (Hawkins excepted). The masterful Stardust and the serpentine vitality of Indiana are signposts at the opposite ends of the man's wide expressive range, and he shines either way. Le grand Don peaked in 1946, just around the time he left America for good. His ballad style isn't quite as individual here as it would become, and in 1941 he hadn't learned to use the harmonic audacity of his lines as advantageously as he might have, but his heritage and his future (right up to the final frustrating days when he had completely updated his changes but not his phrasings) are obvious.

Unfortunately, his companions - with one exception - hardly reach his level. The primordial T. Monk's incursions (usually off-mike) are brief, interesting vignettes of a personal interpretation of the stride heritage, but are hardly indicative of things to come. Joe Guy would have very much liked to play crackling trumpet like Roy Eldridge or Lips Page; the resemblance ends at about that point. Helen Humes, featured in Stardust (edited out in earlier issues) and Exactly Like You, is Byas' only peer - a superlative jazz voice, not only Billie Holiday's successor with the Basie band but a singer with a palpably individual approach to her music who suffers not at all by the comparison. The music, all told, is superb; recording quality is decent, considering.

The two Atlantic albums are two-for-the-price-of-one affairs drawn from the vaults of Milt Gabler's Commodore records, and - especially at that kind of price - belong on everyone's shelves. Sound is excellent, and in spite of non-chronological programming, flabby liners from Leonard Feather, and the dubious presentation of some "alternate" takes constructed by judicious splicing of snippets from various performances of a piece into one version, the fact remains that - for the most part - this music has stood the test of time handsomely.

If Lester Young ever made any recordings more beautiful than the 1938 Kansas City Six sides, I have yet to find them. This is the purest distillation of his art, from the monstrous opening drive of Way Down Yonder In New Orleans through the wistful clarinet balladry of I Want A Little Girl to the plaintive Southwestern cry of Paging The Devil. Lester actually plays clarinet for most of these 1938 recordings, with an essence all his own - the same as in his finest tenor improvisations. The 1944 Kansas City Six sides, with Dickie Wells' ruminative chuckles (which the trombonists on the Frank Wess recordings included in the

other Atlantic twofer try so hard to imitate), are distinctive and pleasant; but to me the '38s, with Buck Clayton's dapper swing, some excellent pre-Christian electric guitar from Eddie Durham, plus the solid support of Walter Page and Jo Jones, say more than anything else Pres ever recorded. (I'm tempted to add "could have recorded" as well.) Musical eloquence at its most perfect. Rather than fill the Young disc with the earlier Kansas City Five titles (the 1938 band without Pres, as was done in programming the earlier Mainstream and Ace Of Hearts reissues of these sessions), the original takes are fleshed out with alternates - some as born that day in the studio, some spliced - which give great insight into the workings and range of the man's mind but don't come quite to the level of the versions we already knew. (The alternates, all previously unissued, are Four O'Clock Drag, Jo-Jo, I Got Rhythm, and Three Little Words, the first two being composites.)

The other disc in the Young twofer contains two complete sessions with Chu Berry (1938 and 1941), and a 1944 quartet date with Ben Webster. Chu swung harder and more easily at up-tempos than any of the other Hawkins men. (Even Bean himself never phrased anywhere but dead on the beat.) But Berry's ballads wallow in syrupy sentimentality. Neither his Stardust nor Body And Soul, both here, have anything on Byas' impromptu versions in the Onyx album. (To say nothing of the fact that Body And Soul was supposed to belong to Hawkins, and to him alone, in the first place.) In any case, Chu doesn't say that much to me either way, but he certainly was hot. Far more interesting are Clyde Hart (on piano both times) and Berry's front line partners - Roy Eldridge the first time, and Lips Page for the second, both in crackling fine form. (And then there's Lips' vocal on Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You - priceless, inimitable jazz artistry.) Roy doubles the tempo for his Body And Soul outing; when you compare that with Guy's attempt at the same thing behind Don Byas, you begin to get a very, very clear insight indeed into the what and why of great trumpet artistry. In that solo, Eldridge strikes a knife-edge harmonic balance that accounts more than ever for the entire Dizzy Gillespie style. Sid Catlett turns up all over the place - the Ben Webster date, both sessions with Hawkins, and Berry's 1937 titles - and was very close to the ideal swing small-group drummer. But as the Webster sides show, that wasn't always quite enough. Ben's four titles are good (with his full, ripping, honeyed sound and the rhythmic poise that only Lucky Thompson was able to equal, how could they be otherwise?) but - for him - routine and rather uninspired. The giant awakens briefly, only for Just A Riff. Lightweight, light-handed rhythm sections (Marlowe Morris ?!? and John Simmons) give him no impetus for anything but coasting.

Hawkins himself recorded for Commodore twice during those prime years - in 1940 with an all-star aggregate of Fletcher Henderson alumni, and in 1943 with an Esquire Poll Winners' Band. Both times, he was in fine, mellow form and in groups where the interplay was warm and closely-knit. I Surrender Dear, from the earlier session, would have been the definitive Hawkins ballad had Body And Soul not been recorded. (The alternate version of I Surrender Dear on this album is even better for all concerned - particularly so for Eldridge - but it's a splice job which doesn't give a true picture of the proceedings.) For all his urbane grace, Benny Carter is unaccustomedly abrasive in the two versions of Smack!; Roy shines warm and clear throughout. But the 1940 rhythm section chugged along in a steady four; in 1943 the unabashedly all-star section - Tatum, Al Casey, Pettiford, Catlett - bounced with a Cadillac precision, power, and grace that sounded thoroughly modern. Hawk was unboundedly inspired for the later session, and gets right to the heart of things in Esquire Bounce. Ed Hall and Cootie Williams are bluesy and majestic; Al Casey's complete, personal guitar style is a great and forgotten pleasure. Above all, these men had mastered the art of the miniature; as Feather points out, they made sure that every note they played meant something.

The other five tenorists are pretty heavy company for Frank Wess. Wess was a tough, full-bodied Hawkins acolyte with more than hints of Pres in his phrasings and Bird in his harmonies. In retrospect, his main distinction was the respectability he brought to the flute as a jazz vehicle during his stint with Basie. On tenor and flute for two 1954 Commodore sessions, his groups were populated with latter-day Basieites (Henry Coker, Benny Powell, Joe Wilder) and various other respectable inhabitants of the mainstream/modern world - Urbie Green, Jimmy Jones, Pettiford, and Osie Johnson. The music they play is rhythmically meaty and riffing out of the KayCee tradition, warm and happy with a boppish feeling. But for all that it's high quality, pleasant small-band music, it's hardly distinctive. - B. T.

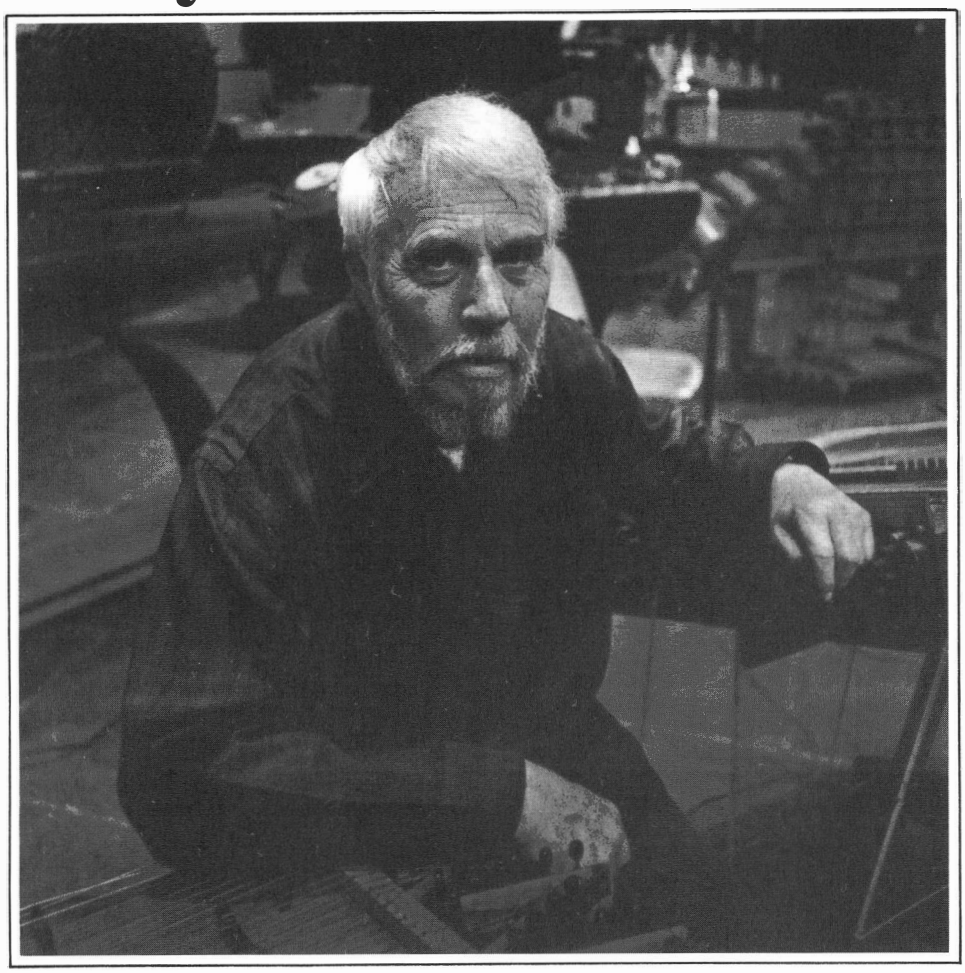
THOMAS SHAW

Born In Texas
Advent 2801

These first recordings of Thomas Shaw show him to be a talent not of promise, but of matured reality. Having played in the '20's and '30's with Blind Lemon, Blind Willie Johnson, J.T. "Funny Papa" Smith and most of the other well known Texas bluesmen, he is now finally beginning to get the rewards and recognition that he deserves.

Although his roots are country blues, this Lp consists not of an acoustic effort recreating old times, but rather an updating. Using an electric guitar, and some additional piano and vocals by Bob Jefferey, he makes the songs very much contemporary and alive... Such topical items as Richard Nixon's Welfare Blues stand along with established classics such as Motherless Children - a combination which produces the best of both worlds. Generally speaking I prefer the best of a single world, namely pre-war country blues, so I tend to prefer his second Lp on Blue Goose to this one. But pre-war freaks are a minority of the blues audience, and an issue like this which successfully bridges the two (and perhaps even lures some with modern tastes back to the earlier performers) must be recommended highly. - R. M.

Harry Partch 1901•1974 IN APPRECIATION



Harry Partch, 73, far out American composer and instrument maker; of a heart attack; in San Diego. Feeling hemmed in by tradition, Partch added thirty-one tones to the twelve possible in the existing octave, then built entire orchestras out of cloud chambers, shell casings and auto exhaust pipes. With casually carpentered but poetically named instruments (the Boo, Whang Gun and Surrogate Kithara), Partch played compositions bearing such provocative titles as Visions Fill The Eyes Of A Defeated Basketball Team In The Shower Room.

Time Magazine

I have never been involved with the development of modern or avant-garde music. I have always been a loner. There is nothing like my work in the modern world that I know of.

Harry Partch

The Time obituary is the usual, if slightly condensed and appropriately respectful, story. Taken with Partch's own characteristic statement regarding his autonomy from the historical motion of music, it contributes to a view, perhaps shared by much of his audience, that his work is idiosyncratic in the extreme. Before one has even heard it, Partch's music, performed on instruments of his own design from occasionally bizarre materials to accomodate pitch theories of his own making, carries the impression of a willful antithesis to traditional musical methodolgy, a work of dadaist inspiration carried through a half century to surrealist lengths. What is most remarkable in Partch's career, in fact, is that in that long sojourn of virtual isolation from academic or popular acceptance he managed to build on his formidable theory of pitch, a music that included, rather than assembled, juxtaposed or co-habited with, elements from areas of world musical traditions formally irreconcilable with the practices of western art music.

In the strange milieu of twentieth century cultural interfaces, where young Asians through constant exposure to western music lose the ability to discriminate the slight gradations of pitch that are the greatest richness of their traditional musics, and western pop musicians strive modishly to emulate the values of Indian music and culture; where symphony orchestras' repertoires give the impression that nothing of consequence has happened in the realm of serious music in sixty years, and academics wrestle with the finite brilliance of School of Vienna, Harry Partch is a beacon.

Though Bartok, for example, had made occasional use of quarter tones, there is no precedent for Partch's tonal basis in modern music. Rejecting tempered tuning, instruments designed to conform to it and the harmonic vocabulary that proceeded from it, he reworked the mathematics of just or perfect intonation, the system responsible for the early system of western modes and similar to the microtonal ragas of Indian music. Arriving at a 43 tone octave, he did not restrict himself to using its minute divisions in particular scales but rather for a vast array of new relationships and subtle elisions within a narrow tonal area. Before communication theorists made such ideas popular, Partch demonstrated that the sixteenth century untuning of the sky, the radical shifts from perfect to tempered tunings and from oral to written modes of communication, could be reversed.

The instruments that he constructed were a natural extension of his tonality. Instruments in conventional use, if not of fixed tempered pitch, tend to have narrow harmonic spectra to prevent clashes between natural overtones and tempered music. Instruments of perfect intonation, either ancient or oriental, are usually designed for seven tone scales of variable tunings. Partch's innovative use of intonation both fixed and just necessiated the making of new instruments and noval adaptations of old. Though some of his instruments were fabricated from the refuse of industrial society, others were adapted from instruments in common use: viola, pump organ, koto and guitar. Still others were constructed on fairly conventional principles to accomodate his particular needs. His preliminary work assumed an almost heroic dimension at times, as for instance during the depression when he carried out experiments with microtonal guitars while riding the rails that criss-crossed America as a hobo.

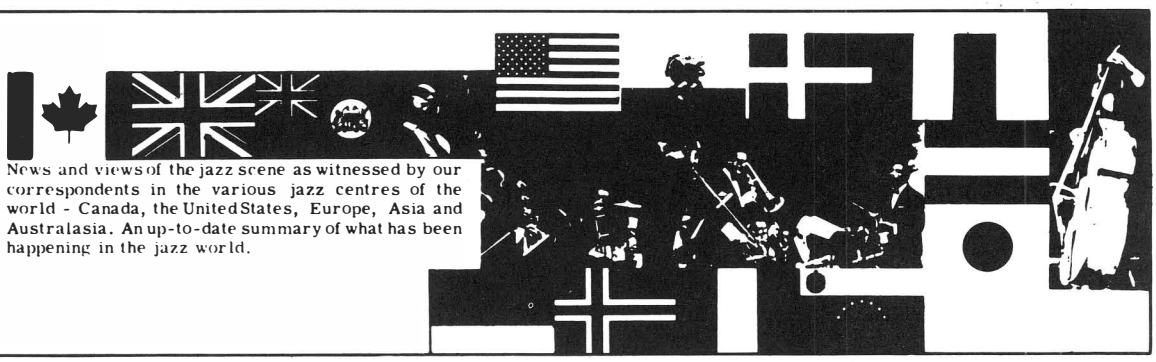
The works that Partch created were not demonstration pieces for his theories, exercises in antiquarianism or exotica, or experiments. They were fully realized compositions at times capable of functioning as vehicles for a fresh musical theatre integrating dance, mime, acting and sculpture. The Wayward, from the thirties, made use of a found libretto, providing musical settings for hitchhiker grafitti and newsboy pitches. Other works made discrete use of improvisation and electronic manipulation and overdubbing. His late masterwork, Delusion of the Fury, begins as an adaptation of a Noh play and ends with a comical African folk tale, yet remaining of a piece throughout owing to the extraordinary integrity of Partch's musical and life view.

If there is a difficulty in Partch's work, generally so much more vital than the main bodies of contemporary music, it is in the originality of all its essential parameters. No other composer of our time ever strove so mightily to create from so few presumptions. Though he may or may not reside in the mainstream of our musical future, he is one of the tradition's divine mutations and should never rest far from the heart of any music that follows him.

- Stuart Broomer

Photograph courtesy of Columbia Records

around the world



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

TORONTO

Activity at the various clubs is continuous despite the seeming lack of challenge in much of the music presented. Bourbon Street presented Jim Hall with Don Thompson and Terry Clarke followed by Al Cohn. The guitarist's desire for intimacy often results in his music not projecting beyond the first row of tables and completely different responses to his music are felt depending on where you sit. Undoubtedly he is a musician best heard on record. Al Cohn, on the other hand, is a forceful disciple of the Lester Young school and he generates considerable drive. He needed a more high-powered rhythm machine than that provided by Carol Britto, Michel Donato and Ron Rully - but that is a problem which constantly plagues New York musicians when they hit the road. CTI Records had the Colonial locked up for a month with their polite, funky brand of near jazz. It was a distinct pleasure to hear guitarist Calvin Newborn with Hank Crawford but overall the music is oh-so bland.

The Artists' Jazz Band delighted or dismayed those who came to the Annex Theatre for their Sunday afternoon concert in mid-October. Some of their numbers get disorganized - but when the direction is sorted out the music can be quite spectacular. Particularly impressive on this afternoon were trombonist Graham Coughtry and saxophonist Nobby Kaboda.

Two Sundays later "Summersong" performed at the same location and gave us an opportunity to hear tenor/soprano saxophonist Michael Stuart in some detail. He is an impressive musician whose utilisation of the Coltrane legacy (and what post-60s saxophone player of stature hasn't taken this direction?) is personal and honest. The group is pleasing - their repertoire is interesting and they have a unified sound. Bob George (piano), Ihor Kukurudza (bass) and Howie Silverman (drums) complete the lineup. This concert gave evidence, if such a thing was needed, that Toronto does have capable musicians who are working cooperatively towards their own musical goals within the framework of today's ideas.

Sonny Greenwich returned for a week's stay at George's Spaghetti House and sounds none the worse for an extended lay-off. Doug Riley's electric piano combined well with Don Thompson and the rhythmic drive generated by Claude Ranger gave the group fresh momentum. Greenwich is scheduled to perform November 24 at the Annex Theatre and then on December 8, Sam Rivers and Barry Altschul will give a duet concert at the same location.

GRT have just released a new album (two discs) by Moe Koffman which is the most adventurous yet made by the flutist/saxophonist. Extensive solo space is given to Sonny Greenwich and there is much more looseness in the playing. Overall musical direction varies from selection to selection due to the differing viewpoints of the writing - Rick Wilkins, Doug Riley, Fred Stone, Moe Koffman, Ron Collier and Don Thompson.

The 567 Gallery on Queen Street is currently showing a painting by Bill Kort entitled "Yellow Up: A Tribute to Anthony Braxton"... Tormax Music (the organisational body behind the Climax Jazz Band) is organising a charter flight to the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival next April. More information can be obtained from the secretary, Chris Daniels, at 922-9074... El Mocambo, Toronto's Home of the Blues, becomes the Home of Jazz for one week in December with the appearance of Charles Mingus' group from December 16-21... Toronto Centre for the Arts began its winter series in November with concerts by Bernie Senensky (November 17) and Howie Silverman's Quintet (December 1).

Lloyd Peach is organising a series of Sunday afternoon "Jazz Parties" at the Captain's Table on the Lakeshore in Bronte beginning December 1. Following a buffet lunch (12 noon to 1:30 pm). Peach's band, the Steel City Six, will play music in the classic style of the masters of the 20s, 30s and 40s between 2 and 4 pm. Admission for the series of four concerts will be $20.00 and a single admission is $6.00. More information and tickets can be obtained from Lloyd Peach, Music Unlimited, 475 Burlington Avenue, Burlington, Ontario L7S 1R6.

- John Norris

THE SCENE

ALBERT'S HALL, THE BRUNSWICK
481 Bloor Street West
Ron Sullivan's Trillian Jazz Band - six nights a week
BOURBON STREET - 180 Queen St. W.
December 2- 7 - Junior Cook w. Gary Williamson, Rick Homme, Claude Ranger
9-21 - Milt Jackson w. Carol Britto, Michel Donato, Jerry Fuller
23-
January 4 - Bernie Senensky, Dave Field, Marty Morell
COLONIAL TAVERN - 201 Yonge St.
December 2- 7 - Muddy Waters
9-14 - Boss Brass
16-21 - John Mills Cockell
EL MOCAMBO - 464 Spadina
December 9-14 - Hound Dog Taylor
16-21 - Charles Mingus
23-
January 4 - Downchild Blues Band
GEORGE'S SPAGHETTI HOUSE
290 Dundas Street East
December 2- 7 - Moe Koffman
9-14 - Alvin Pall
16-21 - Glenn McDonald
23-
January 4 - Ginni Grant
GROSSMAN'S TAVERN - 379 Spadina
Monday/Wednesday - modern jazz
Fridays and Saturdays from 8 p.m.
(Saturday matinee 3 p.m.)
Kid Bastien's Camelia Band
MALLONEY'S - 85 Grenville Street
Saturday afternoons - Climax Jazz Band
OLD BAVARIA - 5 St. Joseph Street
Climax Jazz Band - six nights a week
SAPHIRE TAVERN - 14 Richmond St. E.
Paul Rimstead with Jim Galloway - nightly
SAM RIVERS and BARRY ALTSCHUL
Annex Theatre, St Paul's Church, 121 Avenue Road - Sunday December 8 at 2.30 p.m. Tickets $3.00 from Jazz and Blues Centre (929-5065)
HOWIE SILVERMAN QUINTET
Toronto Centre for the Arts, 390 Dupont Street - Sunday December 1 at 8.30 p.m.

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FOREST CITY GALLERY, 432 Richmond Street, LONDON, Ontario
Nihilist Spasm Band - Mondays from 9 p.m.
Whole World Orchestra - Sunday December 1 at 8 p.m.

MONTREAL

As Montreal, except for occasional concerts, has been without a regular flow of jazz since the closing of Norm Silver's Esquire Showbar, it was just the right touch when our newest jazz spot opened on June 4 that Norm was the guest of honor and his contribution to the local scene was laid on a full house of media, promo and just plain fans by the man who is jazz to fans of all tastes, Rahsaan Roland Kirk. A most exciting opening from Kirk's group with Kenny Rogers, baritone; Hilton

Ruiz, piano; Medatheus Pearson, bass and John Goldsworth, drums. The new spot is called "In Concert" and is located in "old" Montreal, at the corner of St. Lawrence and Le Royer, a block south of Notre Dame Street. Harry, the owner, is a rare member of that breed - he treats the musicians as human beings and would seem to do his very best to satisfy their whims. He has an excellent P.R. lady in Phyllis Padgham and Larry does his utmost to get just the right sound and lighting for each of the featured artists as well as keep the best of sounds happening on records between sets, the waiters, etc. are young, loose cats, and, Doug Willson take note, Billy Ince is the doorman.

Since the explosive Kirk opening which included a moving tribute to Duke there have been groups to please just about any taste. McCoy Tyner was in with Azar Lawrence, Calvin Hill and Billy Hart for a particularly musical and memorable week. For blues fans, Howlin' Wolf with Detroit Junior; Luther Allison and Bo Diddley have been in. Ahmad Jamal with Frank Gant (Grant according to all the local reviews); Esther Phillips; a poorly attended but musically charged week of Charles Lloyd with Celestial Songhouse, bass; Blackbird, guitar and the still incredible drums of Transcending Sonship (Woody Theus); The new Charles Mingus group that got that rave review for their Toronto appearance from Bill Smith and he wasn't the least bit off; Eddie Harris including the fine bass of Rufus Reid; Pharoah Saunders with Bill Henderson, piano; Norman Johnson, bass and John Blue, drums; Grover Washington Jr.; Cannonball Adderley with Nat and the excellent rhythm section of Hal Galper, Walter Booker and Roy McCurdy; An exciting week of latin sounds from Mongo Santamaria with a lot of the excitement coming from Ray Cruz on timbales and three musical hornmen. The repertoire included some Coltrane; the new Art Blakey Messengers with the leader as exciting as ever and a fine new trumpeter (I lost my notes and his name); George Benson; a not unexpected musical week from Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez and Marty Morrell (check out the Tokyo Concert lp); the fine vocal styling of Carmen McRae with Donald Bailey, a third of the trio backing her up; Joe Farrell with Jimmy Madison, drums; Herb Buschler, bass and the excellent guitar work of Sam Brown; Keith Jarrett with Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden and Paul Motian - the flu bug made me miss that one, by all reports - wow!; Mose Allison, a charmer, as well as a swinger, in his first local appearance with a together trio of Jack Hannah, a fine new bassist and Toronto's Pete Magadini, on drums. What a ball! Freddie Hubbard with George Cables but without Jr. Cook and Alex Blake, now ensconsed. Groups are booked Tuesday through Sunday and upcoming are a return from Mingus on November 26; ditto Luther Allison, December 3; Elvin Jones, December 10; Sonny Stitt, December 17; Gary Burton, January 7; Ron Carter, January 14; Muddy Waters, January 28; Rahsaan returns February 4; Sonny Rollins, February 18; Dizzy Gillespie, February 25 followed by Wee Willie Dixon, March 11. For information call Phyllis Padgham at 861-5669/861-6077.

The Jazz Renaissance Society has been quiet of late - their last efforts were an afternoon and evening of jazz films and the presentation of a concert by Philly Joe Jones with Sadik Hakim, Vic Angellelo, bass and Leo Perron, alto. Fine playing was heard from all and the evening really picked up when Billy Robinson sat in on tenor. The Society's Sonny Greenwich concert was shown (video-tape) on Cable TV. Cafe Campus on Queen Mary Road near Cote des Nieges would appear to have had some attractive evenings, but a lack of publicity (I learned of them after the fact from tattered posters). Koko Taylor, Sunnyland Slim, Shakey Al, Son Seals, Larry Coryell and Otis Rush were mentioned. Paul Horn did two concerts at the Outremont Theatre and Chick Corea put in two appearances, the second with Al DiMeloa, guitar, Lenny White and of course Stanley Clarke. Both presented by Donald K. Donald who was to present Miles Davis (early in the year), but Miles was no show (the night of the Foreman-Frazier fight). DKD also had a Herbie Hancock offering. Roy Cooper's Premier Concerts brought in the Preservation Hall Jazz Band including Jim Robinson, Percy and Willie Humphrey, Cie Frazier and Alan Jaffe, as well as Chuck Mangione and Muddy Waters. Upcoming from Premier is a return from the Preservation Hall gang and Maynard Ferguson. Russell Thomas continues at Cafe Mojo and Ivan Symonds at Rockhead's Lounge. Concordia University (the Sir George Williams division) will be presenting the "Artists Jazz Band" on November 15 with Graham Coughtry (Billy Georgette's cousin, by the way), Mike Snow, Jim Jones, Nobuo Kubota, Robert Markle, Gerald McAdam and Gordon Rayner. This to coincide with the opening of an exhibit of their works here.

MEDIA/RECORDS, ETC.
A fine piece in the September 21 Montreal Scene by veteran newsman Walter Christopherson on one of the real gentlemen of the local nightclub scene, Rufus Rockhead with excellent photographs from Gordon Beck. Jazz coverage improving in local papers with Juan Rodriquez covering for the Star and Herb Aronoff for the Gazette, who also have a monthly jazz column by Claude Rachou ("The Nighthawk") - they even sent their classical reviewer to cover the Chick Corea concert.. ?... New CBC releases due from Ted Farrant include the long awaited Lou Hooper lp and also Ted Moses; Sonny Greenwich and Sadik Hakim's tribute to Ellington with Dale Hiliary on alto. Back to the press - Ron Sweetman's Ann Arbor review for the Star was headlined "A Festival Too Well Policed". Newsweek finally caught up with Coda (circa 1961) and discovered Carla Bley. Word from Dick Wellstood that he was at Michaels Pub in NYC with Billy Butterfield, Kenny Davern, Milt Hinton and Ronnie Cole as sidemen - wish I was there. Henry Kahanek whose Excellent photograph of Luther Allison appeared in the October issue is a constant haunt of the local jazz scene and an exhibit of photographs was found in old Montreal just around the corner from "In Concert".

Last, but far from least, in 1949 the Oscar Peterson Fan Club was founded here, in 1950 it became the New Jazz Society and in '51 the Emanon Jazz Society. Plans are under way to have a 25th anniversary re-union of former members. If you were a member, please contact Len Dobbin, 5735 Adam Street, Brossard, Quebec.

- Len Dobbin

LOS ANGELES

George Butler, president of Blue Note Records, recently instituted a series of quarterly informal concerts featuring major Blue Note artists, the first of which showcased Bobby Hutcherson. The by-invitation-only affair, entitled "Jazz For Art'sSake", was held in the private studios of noted commercial photographer, Albert McKenzie Watson. The atmosphere combined nightclub intimacy (without the alcoholic vulgarity) and concert hall dignity (without the belabored stiffness). Accompanied by Harold Land, Sr., tenor; Harold Land, Jr., keyboards; Henry Franklin, bass; and Larry Hancock, drums, the amazing Hutcherson played marimba exclusively, dazzling the select audience for an hour and a half with four tunes that spanned the gamut of time and style: his own composition, Shame, Shame, from

"Total Eclipse"; a piece by Stanley Clarke, Tse Tse; the ancient but viable Body And Soul; and the legendary bebopper, Salt Peanuts, played at an absolutely searing tempo. Hutcherson's technical facility and dexterity alone astonished the audience, while he matched it all, note for creative note, with an ability to think and to express that thinking at virtually the speed of light. After the concert, Leonard Feather mediated a question-answer session between the audience and Hutcherson. The evening was a total success - graciously presented, inspiringly performed. Horace Silver, who also attended, will be the next featured Blue Note artist. Thank you and congratulations, George Butler!

Mahavishnu John McLaughlin brought his Orchestra, complete with strings, to UCLA's Royce Hall and performed one night only for a sold-out house. Although plagued by feedback, distortion, and mush-mix from the tenth-rate Royce Hall sound set-up, Mahavishnu and his top-flight improvisational partner, violinist Jean-Luc Ponty, nevertheless managed to transcend the distractions midway through the three hour concert, finally attaining the magical heights. If you have not yet experienced the presence and impact of Mahavishnu's vision, do so at the first opportunity. He stands high among the few giants on the music scene today.

Cleo Laine also visited Royce Hall, presenting a wide-spectrum program that combined the best of Las Vegas with the best of musical training; show biz with taste, scope, and considerable depth. She scat-sang Perdido, did several light comedy pieces, performed an achingly tender rendition of Buffe St. Marie's immortal Til It's Time For You To Go, a Noel Coward medley, and several classics by Gershwin. John Dankworth's sax improvisations were always very tasty, very British, as was the backing by Paul Hart, piano; Rudy Collins, drums; and Bryan Torff, bass. A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Billy Cobham put together an all-star line-up and blew the roof off of Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. Showcasing the inspired improvisations of Bulgarian keyboardist Milcho Leviev, Cobham centralized the combined talents of Glen Ferris, trombone; Michael Brecker, tenor; Randy Brecker, trumpet; John Ambercrombe, guitar; and Alex Blake, bass. The team of brilliant soloists (especially Milcho Leviev) and ensemble men drew two encores from the packed house.

Tom Scott, noted studio musician, composer, arranger, and reed player, goes out on the road with both Ravi Shankar and George Harrison. Scott, 25, has helped Ravi integrate Western horns into the Eastern conception, an exciting and well-executed venture.

Roland Batista and the Rhythm Planet recently showcased at Hollywood's Soul'd Out club, featuring the driving jazz-funk of keyboard player, Michael Cavanaugh. Guitarist Batista blends jazz, rock, soul, and show-biz, and is shooting for the big time. He's got a lot of goodies, and we might well be hearing more about him soon.

Howard Rumsey, owner and operator of Southern California's finest jazz club, Concerts By The Sea, featured Willie Bobo, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Woody Herman (one nite only), Joe Henderson, and Cal Tjader throughout November, welcoming Charles Earland, Ron Carter, and Mongo Santamaria through December.

Art Pepper and Tommy Gumina continue to hold down Thursday nights at Donte's, playing up a storm of new and old material. Guitarist Lee Ritenour and pianist/arranger Dave Grusin handle Wednesdays. Supersax played two weekends recently, and their idea has caught on: Tony Rizzi put together five guitars playing Charlie Christian licks. Coming up: Tommy Vig and Don Ellis, Ray Anthony and Charlie Shoemake, Miss Ann Richards, Blue Mitchell and Richie Kamuca, Gabor Szabo.

The Lighthouse has been featuring the L.A. Four - Laurindo Almeida, Ray Brown, Shelly Manne, Bud Shank. Gloria Lynne will soon appear, as will guitarist George Benson, and saxman Gary Bartz and the NTU Troop.

OTHER NEWS: Count Basie at El Camino College...Etta James at Anaheim Convention Center...Chick Corea at UCLA...Stevie Wonder at Long Beach Arena...Terry Gibbs at the Atlantic-Richfield Plaza...Benefit for the Duke Ellington Music Scholarship Fund with Bill Berry at L.A.'s newest jazz spot, the Times Restaurant. - Lee Underwood

MINNEAPOLIS

A magnificent new $10 million auditorium for the Minnesota Symphony Orchestra opened October 21 in Minneapolis, and besides appearances by the Symphony, Metropolitan Opera, and other "longhair" music, there will be jazz concerts in the new building, described as "acoustically perfect" and an architectual "triumph" by the NEW YORK TIMES.

Called simply "Orchestra Hall", the auditorium featured English jazz singer Cleo Laine and her husband Johnny Dankworth October 26, Weather Report on November 4, "Sounds of the 40s" November 7 and Gunther Schuller and his Ragtime Orchestra next January 19.

The design, comfort and acoustics of new Orchestra Hall make listening to music, including jazz, a highly enjoyable experience in the new structure, located only a couple of blocks away from the heart of downtown Minneapolis.

Apparently, a home for contemporary jazz has been found in Minneapolis on Fifth Street, just off Hennepin Avenue, in the city's loop. The place is called "The Music Room", and it's upstairs in the new Longhorn Restaurant, formerly Nino's Steak House.

I investigated the Music Room on October 8 to hear jazz guitarist Howard Roberts, and the place was packed solid. The next night, the same situation prevailed. Roberts enjoyed his brief two-day stay in Minneapolis and was very vocal in his praise for his Twin Cities' sidemen - Bill Peterson, bass guitar; Bobby Rockwell, tenor sax; Bob Peterson, keyboard; and Bill Berg, drums. They teamed up for some excellent modern jazz.... playing a wide variety of tunes including LeRoy Anderson's Serenata, Herbie Hancock's Cantalope Isle and Roberts' own composition called X-O. Roberts is heard frequently on AM radio playing pop tunes with his own group, but he really let it fly during his Longhorn show. Regularly featured at the Longhorn are the Mike Elliot trio, Rockwell, occasionally the Whole Earth Rainbow Band and other local Twin Cities jazz musicians including trumpeter Sam Bivens and award-winning pianist-organist Bobby Lyle.

Meanwhile, the traditional jazz scene continues to thrive at Mendota's Jazz Emporium, with the Hall Bros. Jazz Band playing weekends except when other top jazz musicians and jazz bands are performing. Kid Thomas returned for appearances September 26 and 28, following performances September 13-15 by Max Collie and his Rhythm Aces from London.

Barry Martyn and his "Legends of Jazz" have been playing throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin this fall and appeared November 9 at the Jazz Emporium. The band includes Andrew Blakeney, trumpet; Joe Darensbourg, clarinet; Ed "Montudie" Garland, bass; Martyn, drums; Louis Nelson, trombone; and Alton Purnell, piano.

The World's Greatest Jazz Band, minus pianist Ralph Sutton, but now with Dick Wellstood, will be featured January 16-19 at the Emporium, which now seats 319 persons, including barstools, after its enlargement and remodeling. In the past six months, business has never been better at the Mendota Jazz Hall, which now has a lounge and is located across the hall from a fine restaurant featuring seafood, "The Hot Fish Shoppe".

The Milo Fine Free Jazz Ensemble, featuring Fine, Cox and Maistrovich, continue their free jazz concerts at the Lutheran Student Center, University of Minnesota, and the Coffee House Extempore, near the University's West Bank campus. The group performed October 13 at the Student Center and October 20 at the Coffeehouse Extempore. More details on this group and their Shih Shih Wu Ai Record albums can be obtained from Milo Fine, 7700 Penn Ave. So., Apt. #2, Richfield, Minnesota 55423, U.S.A. ... Max Morath came to Minneapolis with his hit one-man show, "The Ragtime Years" for a five week run, starting November 5, at the Minnesota Music Hall Dinner Theatre. The show has been consistently selling out throughout its theatre, college and nightclub run...from coast-to-coast, in the U.S. and Canada. Max plans to take the show to England next year...The Whole Earth Rainbow Band played an October 13 concert at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and pianist Chick Corea and jazzman Chuck Mangione appeared at the St. Paul Civic Center October 27...The Joe Hill Jazz Ensemble performed at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts on November 3, and the Port of Dixie Ragtime Band was featured October 6 at the Shakopee High School.

The Hall Brothers Jazz Band has been

playing some community concert series gigs around Minnesota. The band appeared October 16 in Faribault, Minnesota at the Faribault Junior High School, and October 22 in the Redwood Falls, Minnesota High School auditorium.

A jazzfest, of sorts, was held at the Left Guard Restaurant Sunday, October 13, in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. It combined the bands of Bob Hirsch and his All Stars, from LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Conrad Johns and his Swing-Dixie band, (the house band at the Left Guard), and the Hall Brothers. The music began at 3p.m. and continued until 1 a.m., with the last set featuring everyone who wanted to sit in. The event was sold out way in advance, and was billed as the: Chippewa River Dixieland Jazz Festival.

Stan Kenton and his "Big Powerhouse" jazz band was featured October 9 at St. Paul's Prom Center, and coming up at the Prom are Woody Herman and his umpteenth "Herd" on November 27, and Maynard Ferguson December 18.

Herbie Hancock appeared at the St. Paul Civic Center Theatre on October 20, and both Ella Fitzgerald, at the O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, and Sarah Vaughn, at the Guthrie Theatre, were seen and heard in October in the Twin Cities.

Richard (Butch) Thompson, regular clarinetist with the Hall Brothers band, and a ragtime-Jelly Roll Morton pianist, took a five-week leave from the band to make a tour of Europe. Butch appeared with the Crescent City Joymakers band in Stockholm, stayed over to help open a new nightclub there with a 17-piece big band, then played dates in Copenhagen and Brussels before returning home. He played mostly piano, but also some clarinet with various European bands. Thompson is now playing music full-time, giving up his newspaper career, and is also teaching piano and clarinet at the Westbank Music School near the University of Minnesota West Bank campus. He also plays, along with Tom and Bob Andrews of the Hall Brothers, with the Upper Mississippi Jazz Band, and has solo piano dates coming up at the Red Lion in New Prague, Minnesota, November 24 through November 27.

- Ron Johnson

NEW YORK

One popular theory has it that the Newport Jazz Festival moving to New York City in 1972 is what did it. Others will tell you that the decline of hard rock - with its fans seeking greener aural pastures - is responsible. Whatever the reason (and we feel it's both of the above factors combined with the periodic and quite predictable cycles common to the music biz) the ol' Apple has more jazz clubs and better patronage of these clubs than has been seen in many years. And if you dig pianists, the current Gotham scene offers your lobes a true embarrassment of riches.

A favorite hangout of musicians and fans alike is Bradley's in the Village. The last 60 days has seen such masters and monsters (no, Virginia, you're thinking of Masters and Johnson) as Tommy Flanagan, Barry Harris, and Jimmy Rowles. Flanagan did a week in one of his infrequent gigs in town during a brief layoff from his regular duties as Ella's fella. Rowles has practically become the resident player here, having been at Bradley's spinet since mid-summer, with the exception of two weeks when Barry Harris came in. Pianists here all work duo (the club not being licensed for drums) and Bill Takas, on Fender, is the usual partner of the guys on the keyboard. An exception was when Wilbur Little accompanied Flanagan, his musical associate of the mid-late-50's.

We're used to hearing the adjectives "sly" and/or "humorous" applied to music made by Rowles, but these words don't go nearly far enough. He has far more depth than he's usually given credit for. Whether examining one of his store of obscure ballads, or digging in on a Wayne Shorter or Carl Perkins or Cedar Walton tune, or playing entertainer with one of his unique original songs (hear Carmen McRae in Atlantic's "The Great American Songbook" doing his Ballad Of Thelonious Monk, or listen to his Frasier, The Sensuous Lion on the newly-released "Sarah Vaughan with the Jimmy Rowles Quintet" on Mainstream) Rowles is original in any context.

Barry Harris has taken the Bud Powell idiom, doused it liberally with distilled essence-of-Monk, and taken the whole mixture on to yet another plateau, his own personal expression. One recent October eve, he did a Cherokee which was half again the tempo of Bird's Koko and left the whole room gasping. A plus in listening to these giants is the super-relaxed ambiance of Bradley's, the great food, and waitresses who don't hustle you. Maybe that's because they all dig the music themselves.

Although this is not a restaurant-review column, when we speak of ambiance we feel obligated to appraise out-of-towners as to the distinct lack of same at that vaunted ripoffery Michael's Pub. It's a shame that it's such a bat-out joint (ten buck minimum and a maitre d' who couldn't care less whether you stay or leave) because for the past 18 months or so they've offered a truly impressive array of talent. October saw something that had to be named by a tyro press agent, (are you ready for this?) JazzMaTazz. But don't let the tag scare you folks; it was Cape Cod's gift to the talented eardrum, Dave McKenna, fronting a crackerjack quartet with "The Great" Zoot Sims (seems to be his official billing now, and who deserves it more?), Major Holley, and Ray Mosca. Early in November, Marian McPartland came in for a lengthy stay... Cedar Walton doing most weekends at the Angry Squire... November 23 saw Cami Hall offer "Jazz Pianistics Extraordinaire" with Walton, Barry Harris, and Walter Davis and their trios. A review in next month's column; also included will be a report on the November 24 concert by three comers whose careers will bear watching: Stan Getz, Gerry Mulligan, and Chet Baker.

- George Ziskind

SCRAPPLE FROM THE APPLE

Jass and the new Black music rode the crest of an almighty wave of musical happenings in New York City this summer. The end is not (Amen) in sight. Augmenting George Wein's Newport in New York festival, there were festivals of sound sponsored by; Studio Rivbea, Studio We, Ornette's Artists' House, The East, Jazz Interactions, Jazz Adventures, and many other clubs, studios and concert series. The East, that venerable home for contemporary Black music, on August 2 hosted Archie Shepp with seven pieces. This marked the first time since his geographical relocation to Massachusetts, that New York audiences were treated to his ever expanding group. With him were, Charles Majeed on trombone, Dave Burrell on piano, Charles Persip on drums, NeNe Defense and Abdul Rahman on congas, Joe Lee Wilson on vocals, Don Pate on bass. We don't know what they have up in Massachusetts, but whatever it is has been a positive creative vibration for sure. Archie Shepp, has always been a bitch with his shit but he's better than ever now. His sound on soprano was clear, crisp and jubilant; peerless in fact. From lilting lyricism in an Eastern tonality; to the rawest reaches of soul felt screams and shouts, Shepp had the audience participating. His every change was greeted with outbursts of applause and signification. It was reminiscent of the ring shouts from the antebellum south. Call and response; Shepp would riff, and the audience would shout, Shepp and shout, clap/sing/chant, all in meter. The virtuosity of Dave Burrell did not go unnoticed either. In a time when so much play is given to the commercial wanderings of some of our great or would-be great pianists, Dave Burrell's seriously relevant compositions and artistry, have been grossly underplayed and neglected. His reception this night however, was like a reaffirmation of the faith. This audience at The East proved that music does not have to be

commercial to be loved and appreciated. From stride to ride, from rocking and reeling to a Tayloresque feeling, Dave Burrell did it all. Burrell glided. He is perhaps the perfect complement to Shepp's sound. Not only is there a harmonic and textural empathy, but rhythmically, he pushes and drives the music as hard as any drummer taking the music and the audience higher and higher.

Charles Majeed was featured in a composition of his own that was at once mysterious and obvious. His performance that night did much to stimulate further interest in him and his own group. The obvious comparison arose in many minds to Grachan Moncur III and he stood the test very well indeed. He has the same feeling for the great varieties of sound/texture of his instrument, and has developed an unusually beautiful lyricism and grace that the trombone is not always noted for. The drum section was smoking behind Charles Persip's dynamic lead. The congas, masterfully handled by Abdul Rahman (who sat in that night), and NeNe Defense, provided the warming textures of a skin on skin complement. In fact, the drums were such an integral part of Shepp's music that we wondered if Shepp has thought about using two trap drummers. (His sound would certainly not suffer because of it.) A long time associate of Shepp's, Joe Lee Wilson did a command performance, delighting all who were present. His voice soared, sighed and sang as the ascending lark. A member of the audience inquired if he had an album out of his own and where it could be purchased. When the answer was no, the immediate response was why not. We would like to know why not also. This was truly the "connoisseur's" concert and the audience knew it and acted accordingly. Bravo to all who attended and put their money where the music is.

August 14, Boomers ("The downtown home of jazz") hosted the Mchezaji Buster Williams Quartet featuring Mchezaji on acoustic bass, Sonny Fortune on soprano, alto, Al Foster, drums, and Onaje on piano. We happened in on a middle of the week night and the place was semi-empty, folks mainly at the bar; drinking, conversing. As the musicians entered, there were several salutes, greetings and then nods; everybody returned to their drinks and conversations until the first eight bars. The music was so hot and funky, EVAH REE BODEE listened (paused). A token as to the effectiveness of the group; no ambivalence, no antipathy, just let's all groove with Buster. It was quite a switch (commented a listener) from his days of the electric boogie-ing bass with Mwandishi Herbie Hancock. Here was a thing of rare and uncompromising beauty. A big brown four stringed bitch (lady) on which he rode, walked and talked with, hummed, strummed and generally turned it out. Sonny Fortune (who is with Miles Davis, and his own group) provided a searing passionate voice on soprano and faithfully bopped through some of the standards. Another member of the current Miles Davis group was Al Foster who brought his own, hard hot and heavy brand of playing with him. Altogether, the group as a unit played a little unevenly but mainly well and certainly good solid jazz. A few of the heavies walking around New York, Ben Riley, Clifford Jordan, stopped in and dug it. Will be a definite bet, if they can work together more often.

September 26, Studio Rivbea: The Black Artists Group (B.A.G.). Joseph Bowie, trombone, miscellaneous percussion; Abdul Wadu, cello; Julius Hemphill, alto; Charles Bobo Shaw, drums; Dominique Gaumont, electric guitar; Hammiett Blueitt, baritone; and special guest Lester Bowie, trumpet. The meeting of the minds in the new Black music happened here. Although we had to wait over an hour for one of the musicians, the wait was well worth it. These are some of the freest, cookingest, young men to burst upon the New York scene in many a day. After a two year odyssey in the capital cities of Europe (most notably an extended stay in France) the BAG unit has returned to this country with three albums and a sorely needed sound. All of the expansions and spiritual awakenings that were most evident in the late sixties and early seventies have not died. Yes Virginia, there IS FREE music being played. The first piece started with the whole group blasting heat waves of eclatique energy at a furious pace. Domonique Gaumont, the Guiananese by way of Paris guitarist who is also currently playing with Miles Davis, kept pushing and driving the music higher and harder. The first soloist was Julius Hemphill with a dry, biting linear tone supported by strong, rumbling, heavy-on-the-bass-drum licks by Bobo. Julius' tone and intensity were reminiscent of the work of John Tchicai. It was a blessing. Abdul Wadu was as strong and relevant on his cello work and in fact provided many of the basic rhythmic lines as well as providing the necessary harmonies to complement the group.

Joseph Bowie, entering the solo towards the end, held a 64 bar conversation with Julius riffin' and riding. His trombone work is enough to make anyone take another look at the possibilities of the instrument. It does his every bidding and releases caverns of sound unexploited by any trombonist since maybe Kid Ory. It is just too cold! Lester the magician leapt in low; blowing and exploring the diameters and structure of sound. The soft and hollow sounding blowing was similiar to his work on Roscoe Mitchell's Tnoona ("Fanfare For The Warriors", Atlantic). His grace and familiarity with the music of the group made it seem he was as much at home with them as with The Art Ensemble. It was the "other voice" that many of us who had heard the BAG group before had been listening for. He took the theme line by line, tore it apart, constructed converse lines and in jumped Joseph. While they were "doing the do", Dominique came up softly, strumming Spanish flavoured chords and Abdul Wadu entered with complimentary bowing. By the time the audience knew it they had turned the whole set around and were playing some very contemporary, electric rock music sounding strangely familiar...Only it was Lester Bowie blowing, and he blew hard, loud and long. No sputtering trumpet playing every third or fourth note while the sidemen filled in. No, just a for real honest you get what you paid for trumpet solo. He was burning. We'd love to be able to hear that more often. Hammiett Blueitt, came up slowly, lowly like a surfacing sub and blew it out. We had to look to make sure he wasn't playing a tenor. Gerry Mulligan beware! Your reputation (or what's left of it) is in imminent danger. The superstructure, or form of the piece was not exactly Virgo tight, but it was definitely ordered and essentially free. Somebody should take it to the Philharmonic Hall; music like this deserves the best because it is the best. Some of the artists in the house that night who enjoyed it and jammed during the last set were: Frank Lowe, Jerome Cooper, Leroy Jenkins, Mtume, and Philip Murray. The performance was video taped and recorded, and we can but only hope that the tapes will be shown somewhere?

October 10, The Village Vanguard - Pharoah Sanders - Pharoah Sanders, tenor, soprano, vocals; Neil Hemmings, piano; Calvin Hill, bass; Thabo Michael Carvin, traps; Jimmy Hopps, (sitting in) percussion. Pharoah Sanders is always a musician to be reckoned with. His music is of course some of the very best contemporary Black work in the Eastern/African inspired avant garde. This night was a musical success on many levels. The musicianship and artistry of the band was on a very high level, and the vibes in the house were like the return of the prodigal sun. All good things are wished to this prolific contemporary composer and artist whose many facets are constantly expanding and diversifying. To his already long list of musical accomplishments must now be added that of vocalist. PHAROAH CAN SING SOME BLUES. — miz redbone

SAN FRANCISCO

The scene in the Bay area remains unstable, but there have been some developments which may improve the situation if someone can figure out how to generate some interest among the mellowed-out citizens of the area. Todd Barkan, who runs Keystone Korner, has been going out on a limb to bring some spectacular music to town, but the response has been so small that in all probability Todd will have to back off of his plans to bring much more really challenging music to the Keystone in order to stay open. (A trio of Sam Rivers - Dave Holland - Jack DeJohnette which was scheduled to appear in December will not, evidently be booked after all.)

This lamentable situation, non-support of creative music by the community, is not new, but usually it is the club owner who is made out to be the villian. In this case, the blame would more properly be placed on those parts of the media which pass off the plastic jive which passes for music as the real thing, and those musicians whose recent conversion to the "money" school of thought has led them to tell their new found public, in effect, not to bother with "elitist" music. Ultimately,

too, one would assume that individuals are responsible for their own bad taste. One way or the other, things look grim for what we call jazz as long as the current trend to commercialism continues without even acknowledgement from what's left of the jazz press that that's what's going on.

The less-than-half capacity audiences which did turn out to hear Cecil Taylor with Jimmy Lyons and Andrew Cyrille witnessed musical creation of the highest level. No description or even recording of this group can give more than a clue to the awesomeness of the Taylor unit. To what has been said recently in Coda about Cecil, I would add only that his appearance at Keystone was the most satisfying musical event this year in the area. To those who would actually claim that Cecil is not making effort to communicate there is little to be said except that you won't get much out of a book of Shakespeare's works if you don't read English, and that maybe you'd better learn the language before you criticize the book.

The Keystone has featured a lot of the best local people lately, usually Monday and Tuesday with the "names" coming in the rest of the week. When Ornette played the Keystone Infinite Sound did a set between Ornette's on Sunday. Roland Young is developing into an impressive reedman and could actually develop into a real stylist on bass clarinet and clarinet, a rare thing outside of Dolphy, but curiously Roland owes little of his style to that source. Augusta Collins has joined the group to make it, with Glen Howell, a trio, and showed himself to be a percussionist of originality and sensitivity. Infinite Sound is well-named drawing on all the sounds you can think of for their music, and one of the most exciting contemporary groups in the area.

Three other groups operating in the space generally occupied by what used to be called avant-garde musicians are worth listening to for anyone interested in the current state of the music; Dialectical Sound Ensemble, Brujeria, and the David Murray-Butch Morris Quartet. Dialectical Sound is led by trumpeter Robert Porter, a sort of elder statesman in a young group. Dialectical Sound seems to have strong players and strong ideas (for reference sake, something like a cross between the Art Ensemble and Don Cherry's Blue Note groups) and are potentially a very important group. Unfortunately, the band chooses to obscure its best efforts with the totally irrelevant and distracting carryings-on of the Jackson Mime and Puppet Troupe, which whatever their own merits, contribute nothing to Dialectical Sound except confusion. Brujeria is a less spectacular group whose members are generally not that impressive individually, but who combine well, listen well, and play the music straightforwardly and convincingly (which would seem to be more important aspects for a band than individual technical prowess). David Murray is a tenor saxophonist quite consciously out of the lineage of Archie Shepp, Sonny Rollins, Johnny Griffin, etc. He is at the point now of using what I would consider the best parts of Shepp's style as a springboard into his own personal creation, and therefore at the point of self-discovery which makes his playing even more exciting. The foil for Murray's fire is the icy cornet of Butch Morris, who is not quite as advanced a player but a more original one than Murray (if one can accept such a statement, made out of necessity - after all, these men are complementing, not competing with each other, and trumpet players in contemporary jazz have a hard row to hoe.) Both men play solos which maintain a high flow of ideas, and the tunes which both have written are quite impressive, most notably Murray's Dewey Circle.

Among other local groups which should be mentioned are the Sons of Armageddon, The New Fourth Way, and Light Year. The Sons of Armageddon, despite the name, are an un-apocalyptic group which has achieved a very consistent sort of new-Mainstream sound, in which a large percussion section is impressively welded together and several solo voices of promise can be heard, most notably Robert Burch. Mike Nock's New Fourth Way is in the style of the first Fourth Way and Weather Report, an attempt to infuse rock-oriented musical situations with jazz invention. Persons attracted to this type of music should check out the New Fourth Way and also Light Year, a group of similiar concept but louder, and more like Mahavishnu.

Other developments locally include the departure of Cecil Bernard from Eddie Henderson's band, to study electronic music. His replacement is Mike Nock which is made up of three-fourths of the new fourth way; Mike, bassist Pat O'Hearn, and Terry Bozio. This band has happily been pretty active lately, and about the only thing wrong with it is that sometimes the solos go on for too long, a common problem in jazz, since it takes an unusual musician to realize his limitations and not try for too much. Julian Priester is playing with a new group for the first time in months this week, as is Sonny Simmons who will be at Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society. John Handy recently played his second club date in something like seven years, at the Off Plaza, which has embarked on a jazz policy deserving of the support of anyone in the area with an interest in the condition of things. John's group was strong - Calvin Keyes, guitar, Ratso Harris, bass, and Brent Ramponi, drums; but pretty laid back the set I saw. Like all first-rate players, John really has to blow to challenge himself, and his playing on this occasion never rose to the exciting heights of which he is capable. (I heard things did get hot after I left.) Nonetheless it is certainly nice to see Mandy back at work, and it is hoped he'll be able to become a bit more visible. (People in Canada can hear more of some of our best players, John in particular, than we can.)

Efforts to hear the fine traditional jazz played in the area have had some satisfying results, which will have to wait till next month to be described, due to space limitations.

- Richard Baker

ITALY

CLUB REPORT - The first of October the "Music Inn" the only jazz club in Rome has reopened it's door. This year's program will be full of great giants of jazz from all over the world.

From the 1st to 3rd the Giorgio Gaslini Quartet was on stage with the leader on piano, Gianni Bedori on soprano and tenor sax, Bruno Tommaso on bass and Andrea Centazzo drums who played avant garde jazz with great feelings.

On the 4th and 5th the jazz-rock group "Perigeo" presented to the numerous fans the music from their third LP "Genealogia". The group was formed by five well known jazz musicians named Claudio Fasoli, reeds; Franco D'Andrea, keyboard; Tony Sidney, guitar; Giovanni Tommaso, bass and Bruno Biriaco, percussion.

From 7th to 12th the Slide Hampton and George Coleman Quintet played very good modern mainstream jazz with a great local rhythm section.

From the 14th to 19th was the turn of the Charles Tolliver Music Inc. including John Hicks on piano, Clint Houston on bass and Clifford Barbaro on drums who played a very interesting post-bop style.

The next group was the one led by trumpeter Dusko Goykovich with Andy Scherrer on reeds, Vince Benedetti, piano, Burt Thompson, bass and Joe Nay, drums. They play music in the style of the Miles Davis Quintet. They were at the club from the 21st to the 26th.

The October program concluded with a group from Brazil led by guitar player Irio De Paola with Alessio Urso on bass and Alfonso Viera Alcantara on percussion who play a very well set up jazz-samba.

RECORDS NEWS - Aldo Sinesio an independent producer who issued recently records by Frank Rosolino Quartet, Giorgio Gaslini and Mario Schiano Group, Johnny Griffin Quartet and others for his label HORO under the imprint "Jazz Compared With Jazz", has just put out two other numbers in this series; one by The Franco Ambrosetti Quartet with Jasper Van't Hof, piano; J. F. Jenny Clark, bass; Daniel Humair, drums. The other was piano solos by Teddy Wilson.

Some other records to be issued next month are a Marcello Rosa Group featuring Tony Scott, Mario Schiano Group with Don Pullen, Jerome Cooper, Sheila Jordan and others who were recording in New York last June, and three albums by pianist Joe Albany - one is solo piano, one is a trio accompanied by Giovanni Tommaso, bass and Bruno Biriaco, drums, and the last is a quartet with violinist Joe Venuti. At the Durium record studios in July trumpeter Wild Bill Davison made a record with a group led by Lino Patruno, while in September Joe Venuti recorded with the Milan College Jazz Society.

Even Gerry Mulligan has cut a record with Argentinian Astor Piazolla backed by a studio orchestra in Milano in October.

FESTIVAL NEWS - The Bologna Jazz Festival on November 14-16 included an evening dedicated to Charlie Parker with a Big Band directed by Jay McShann, Earl Hines and Billy Eckstine plus Dizzy

Gillespie, the Stan Getz Quartet, McCoy Tyner Quintet, Gato Barbieri and some Italian groups. - Mario Luzzi

BOB GREENE

One of the great pleasures of jazz is discovery. It may be a song - a musician - a friend - a club - a style - a record. It was a warm sunny Saturday afternoon in May several years ago that we showed up early for Bill Donahoe's annual Bix stomp, at that time located at his home in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. The Stomp, an outdoor affair that runs from mid-afternoon to early the next morning, is a marathon performance by fifty or so musicians and a party for a couple of hundred friends, as well as the musicians.

Why we happened to be early for this particular occasion, certainly not one of our characteristics, I no longer recall. But the musicians were only beginning to gather when we got there and it looked as though it would be some time before a band collected itself. There was soon to be music, though, because a somewhat slight man, with the appearance of a professor approaching his middle years, hunched over the piano keyboard and for the better part of an hour treated a handful of us to some extraordinary piano playing.

We remembered the name and the face, and each year at the stomp looked eagerly to see if he was there. Some years we were disappointed, some years rewarded. Two years ago was the most memorable occasion. The Donahoes had by then moved to Long Valley, in rural western New Jersey, and the Stomp inevitably moved with them. The Stomps' weather luck had run out and a soggy day chased us indoors. The affair was held in a nearby barn, with the music in the loft and the people upstairs, downstairs, and spilling out the doors and windows. When the big parade began to form - when the whole battery of musicians march and play their way down the road and back to the party - the piano in the loft wasn't abandoned. After all, a pianist can't play much music in a parade unless he wants to double on bass drum. Once again, for the first time in years, a handful of us had the rare treat of hearing a lot of solo piano from this outstanding but unknown musician.

By this time, we could make the distinction that he was still unknown, but not totally unknown. We had found an obscure quartet record on the Pearl label that featured him. And then he showed up on a two-volume set issued under Zutty Singleton's name on the Fat Cat label. Once again the ears picked up - a piano that was a real joy to listen to. A third record was a Blue Note reissue of a 1951 Sidney DeParis session. Following that came a marvelous set of duets with Don Ewell from Fat Cat again. Then, too, there was the Monday night we encountered him at Arthur's Tavern in Greenwich Village, sitting in. Bill Dunham is the pianist as well as the leader of the band, the Grove Street Stompers, but frequently has sit-ins. The Monday night gig has been going on there for many years and it has become a gathering place for musicians in New York.

And now we've seen this unusually talented person again, but the circumstances were vastly different. It was in February, 1974, at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center with a sell-out crowd gathered to hear Bob Greene's World of Jelly Roll Morton. No longer is Bob Greene obscure. For many people, that was their moment of discovery. Perhaps you have experienced the pleasure; if not, this is the beginning of that discovery for you. For you're bound to hear more of him. He did a much-acclaimed shortened version of this presentation at the preceding Newport Jazz Festival in New York and his scheduled a return visit to Lincoln Center this December along with other concert engagements. It's a combination of solo piano and Jelly Roll's band pieces- the Red Hot Peppers arrangements and others - with brief and effective commentary on Morton's life and music. And Bob's piano playing is Jelly Roll reincarnate.

Also, he leads a Danish band through a set of recreations of Red Hot Peppers recordings on a recent Fat Cat release. You can obtain a recording of the February concert on RCA Red Seal. That he should emerge on RCA's classical label is no doubt a consequence of the ragtime revival phenomenon, itself a result of the classicists having just made a belated discovery of their own - that ragtime is real music. Perhaps the same will happen with Jelly Roll's ragtime and jazz.

It's a long way from Pearl and Fat Cat to RCA Red Seal and it's a long way from a barn loft in Long Valley to Lincoln Center, but Bob Greene is in the process of giving a lot of the music world the thrill of discovery.

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The World of Jelly Roll Morton
- Dick Neeld

LIVING BLUES

Sleepy John Estes & Hammie Nixon in New York

An interview with Hammie Nixon and Sleepy John Estes is more a matter of talking head from the former with generous cutaways of the latter. Sleepy John's magnificently muted upstaging of his often garrulous buddy and partner of fifty years just by sitting quite still and taking up one of his timeless positions, is something to behold. He is a kind of Blues Monk, apparently contributing little or nothing to the conversation but occasionally interjecting a remark that signals an overall suss and grasp of everything that's gone down up to that point. With Monk one feels that it is his private world which stakes the major claim on his earthtime, with Estes it is the more mundane call of sleep. Also like Monk, the opaque shades offer no clue; is he really asleep behind there or is he just reluctant to join in?

They are a marvellous pair these two, their lives intertwining for half a century and tracing thereby a spiritgraph of the Blues. Nixon is a fascinating example of the religious and secular influences residing in one body. "I've been sickly with High Blood and arthritis at home but the Lord done blessed me to get up and go make me a few dollars up here. You see, I'm too old for manual work and not old enough for social security so I have nothing to depend on except God." His conversation, like that of many older bluesmen, is salted throughout with a religious fatalism which has its expression in such asides as "I couldn't keep a dollar in my pocket 'til I turned around" or "they call me Reverend in Chicago". The next moment, however, he is embarking on a bawdy anecdote as complicated as it is outrageous and retold with lip-smaking enjoyment: "We went up on the roof with ten women - had to spread a tent." Then, ruefully: "In those days with the women, we didn't see no leg, nowhere. Didn't see their titties either." He muses silently a spell, punctuating this pearl with a well aimed gob at a strategically positioned spitoon - appropriately in this case a Colonel Sanders Kentucky chicken relish carton. "Yes, yes, there was no temptation then like there is now. Lawdy lawd, but it's almost got to be another day." Sleepy John stirs in his chair as if endorsing the continuing wisdom. There is another pause. Then finally the episode, the anecdote and the era are summarily despatched into the memory bank of ages with the timeless epitaph of all bluesmen: "Pretty women don't do you no good no how." There is a grunt of agreement from the chair - or perhaps it was only an afternoon fly careless enough to alight on the old man's glistening forehead. "We was s'posed to be dead, John and me", Hammie goes on. "It was Memphis Slim over in Paris who told them where to find us."

Brownsville, Tennessee is where they were found and where they live still. It was here as a lad of eleven that Hammie first picked up with John, absconding for a six month spell to travel with the older man, playing for country dances and picnics. It was inevitable that this should set the pattern of their future life together. They became travellin' men. "We stopped in 1941 when those new-fangled freight-cars came in."

"We'd play in little bitty towns where everybody would come in from the country and gather at the fish dock on a Saturday night. People 'ud be asking John to go over here and play, and go there, and all over! And John, he'd be saying yes to all of them - twelve people in a night! We'd play, and I'd eat up and drink up and next morning I wouldn't have a dime. But John, he raised me, looked after me."

John mutters something incomprehensible that seems to endorse the younger man's ceaseless flow of recall. Then abruptly he croaks: "He's too young to reminisce." "He may be older than me but

I've got the white hair", says Hammie. "He must have been at the shoe polish."

"Now Muddy Waters and John Lee Hooker - none of them was out there when we started", Hammie continues, with tough-edged pride. "I doubt whether they played for the Rabbit Foots or Dr. Grim."

Who was Dr. Grim?, I venture, keen to engender ebb and flow to a thirty-minute monologue.

"He had a medicine show, and a good one", says Hammie. "He usta wear a big ole cowboy hat and boots and things, and an old snake around his neck." He calls over to the older man, "Where'd he come from, John?" But John is away now, dreaming of pretty women who show their legs at least.

"Anyway, he'd put something on your lip and pull your teeth out clean as a whistle. Don't know what it was but sho' was effective." He spits again with the same uncanny accuracy.

Had they met other bluesmen as they hoboed their way through twenty states and as many years?

"Well now, there was Peetie Wheatstraw, Arvella Gray - and Jimmy Rogers; we rode with him in a 'frigerated van one time. Mostly we met up in camps tho', hobo camps that is. 'Course, there was plenty of professionals in them days too as well as singers and musicians. Winchester Slim, Two Gun Pete, oh lots of 'em. Yes yes, we've had it good and we've had it bad. We just sang the Blues, got us some food and a little taste and kept moving right along."

Sleepy John snorts awake and eases his palsied body upright. I feel that a tentative question should at least be attempted. Who were his influences when he was starting out?

"Hambone Willie Newbern", he replies almost without a pause. So crisp and final is the method of its offering that I press no further. However, the unfamiliar discourse has triggered some long seized-up mechanism: "We'd play all kinds of music with all kinds of instruments in them days. Horns, banjoes, country fiddles, clarinets and saxophones. Usta play for a lot of white folks. They usta like to do the two-step, white folks, so we played for 'em."

What did he think of the younger generation of bluesman, particularly people like Taj Mahal who, lovingly I suggest, sing and record his blues?

"Yeah, I've heard of him. I guess he's alright. Like to meet him."

"You've earnt more royalties off of him recording Diving Duck Blues than you have yourself," offers Hammie. The older man ponders the accuracy of this remark and nods.

"Yes, I'd sho' like to make his acquaintance," says John and slips back into another timeless position, sleep claiming him once more. I ask Hammie if he still plays around Brownsville for local gatherings.

"No, I don't fool with that no more. No house dances, cuttin' and carrin' on. No sir."

When they are travelling through the States, playing for concerts, colleges and clubs, how do they find the modern audiences, particularly the young blacks?

"They're turning round, they're coming on the process. Yes, they pay more attention to Blues now. We've noticed that." He smiles and chuckles with obvious pleasure. From across the room the frail figure in the chair seems to stir in concurrence.

- John Jeremy

LEO SMITH

I am a creative musician, a multi-instrumentalist on brass (trumpet, flugelhorn and piccolo trumpet) and percussion instruments. I have performed extensively in western Europe and the U.S., and have performed on radio and television in France, Germany, and Holland. I have performed and/or recorded with LeRoy Jenkins, Anthony Braxton, Clifford Thornton, Steve McCall, Richard Abrams, Marion Brown, Richard Davis, Melvin Jackson, and others. I have had workshops and/or performances of some of my orchestra music by the A.A.C.M. Experimental Orchestra and by the Jazz Composers Orchestra. I have performed at festivals in Belgium and Holland; and, as the music director of New Dalta, performed with this group at the Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival in 1972. In 1972 I also released my solo record Creative Music - 1 on my own label, Kabell. I am co-subject of a documentary film (See The Music) on American music by German film director, Theodor Kotulla. I am author of notes (8 pieces) source a new world music: creative music, published in 1973. I have recently returned from an extended stay in Europe; and while there, performed in France, Austria and Germany. Since my return I have completed an exercise book for creative musicians that will be released in the fall. I have received a National Endowment of the Arts grant to complete an orchestra work in progress.

Leo Smith has indicated that he does not wish his record, Creative Music - 1, be reviewed. Coda acknowledges that right, so in place of a review we have simply published the above statement.

The record and the book (which will be reviewed later) are created out of his own energies and should be supported. Both can be obtained from Leo Smith, P.O. Box 102, New Haven, Connecticut 06516, U.S.A. Price for the book is $1.75.

- Bill Smith

SOME OTHER STUFF

Marion Brown and Ralph Samuelson gave concerts of "Music for Bamboo Flutes" at the University of Connecticut on October 26, New Haven's The Theatre & The Space on November 1 and Wooden Ships at Hartford, Connecticut on November 22. Marion and Ralph are interested in giving further concerts together.

New York area concerts have included a Monday night bash at the Riverboat on October 28 with Count Basie to launch Jazz Interactions' new season of monthly sessions... Frank Foster's Living Color and Loud Minority performed November 8 at Yonkers Public Library... The Dick Griffin Ensemble were heard at Cami Hall on November 16.

Detroit's Music Hall (350 Madison Avenue) present Sarah Vaughan January 8; Woody Herman, February 1; Buddy Rich, March 14; and Preservation Hall Jazz Band, May 3.

Anne and Bill MacPherson presented the sixth meeting of the Blue Angel Jazz Club on November 30 at the University Club of Pasadena. It varied somewhat from the past when freewheeling combinations of talented individuals made up exciting combinations. This year saw the specially reconstituted "Time-Life" Orchestra of 15 musicians on hand along with the Red Norvo Quintet (with Joe Pass and Sam Most) and the Rosy McHargue Ragtimers - who promised to revive the flavor of white jazz as performed by the Memphis Five, Ladds Black Aces etc. Presumably a recorded document of the event will eventually appear.

Trombonist Phil Wilson has been named Chairman of the Jazz Division of the Afro-American Music Department of the New England Conservatory of Music... The Rainbow Multi-Media Corporation, following the financial disaster of this year's Ann Arbor Festival, has faded into the past. However a new operation, Rainbow Productions, is trying to gather together the threads and start a new existence at 208 South First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108. They also announce, with sadness, the Rainbow Room of the Shelby Hotel is no longer part of their existence.

Graham Collier, bassist-composer, has just released an album of his music on Mosaic, his own label. Entitled "Darius" the album features a sextet recorded live at the Cranfield Institute of Technology on March 13, 1974... Trumpeter Bob Barnard has recorded a new album for Swaggie (his first as leader) with a medium-sized group playing arrangements by Laurie Lewis and George Brodbeck.

Sleepy John Estes and Hammie Nixon began a Japanese tour on November 25, their first of the Orient where music lovers are discovering the roots of American music in large quantities for the first time. Heading in the opposite directions was Jimmy Dawkins, another Delmark artist, who began a five week European tour on November 6.

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CECIL Taylor Reviews and Short Interview in December "Bells" (Improvisational Music Newsletter). 35¢ from 1921 Walnut, #1, Berkeley, California 94704.

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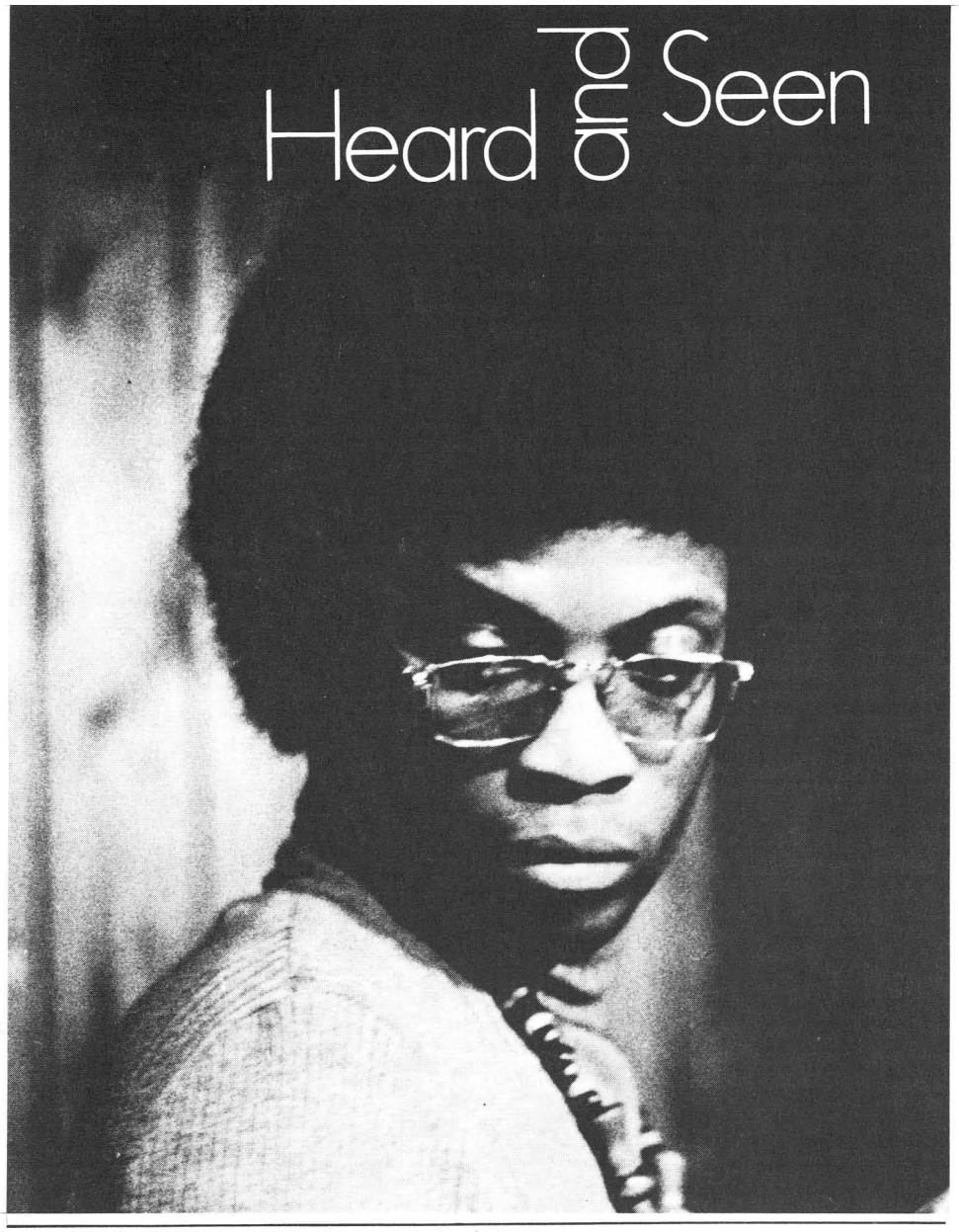

HERBIE HANCOCK

Detroit, Michigan
October 12, 1974

Listening to Hancock live the other night reminded me of that stock "jazz novel" plot, "Will... Sell Out to Achieve Success?" In this down variation on Horatio Alger, an excellent player, at the height of his creative powers but starving due to lack of gigs, is taken aside by a smooth-talking promoter who tells him, "Play what I tell you, kid, and we'll make a million." They go into a studio and record an album of old Italian lovesongs with Lawrence Welk, or maybe an album of the Beatles' greatest hits with 101 Strings and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Needless to say, the album sells big, and our player is pressured to abandon his art in return for recording contracts, nationwide tours, and lots of money.

While the outlines are not nearly as exaggerated, Hancock is in such a situation today. Chicago-born and classically trained, Hancock possesses solid jazz credentials - five years as part of one of Miles Davis' best groups, a composer at least one of whose compositions - the modal Maiden Voyage - has become something of a jazz standard. Hancock's own sextet, formed after he left Miles in 1968, developed an arresting blend of his rich arrangements, the group's free solos, and electronic sound.

Hancock's newfound success apparently had its roots in a 1973 engagement pairing his group with the Pointer Sisters. Hancock was amazed by their ability to establish rapport with the audience, and he subsequently broke up his sextet to form a five-piece group which he hoped would communicate more effectively.

Hancock's new group, retaining only reedman Bennie Maupin from the earlier band, recorded an album late last year in which the earlier band's fragmented rhythms were replaced by a heavy backbeat. The album took off (it has sold over a million copies), and Hancock suddenly found himself a success - in his Detroit appearance Hancock headed a three-act bill and drew nearly a full house.

As befits the star of the show, Hancock didn't appear on stage until some three hours after the concert began. Minnie Ripperton, a small girl with a huge voice and exceptionally high range whose only problem is a tendency to drop names, led off the concert. She was followed by Brian Auger's Oblivion Express which, hampered by a brand new and unrehearsed drummer, stuck to long jamming versions of such tunes as Inner City Blues and Compared To What.

The change in Hancock's approach was apparent from the first. The group, minus Hancock, filed onto stage and began to vamp on Palm Grease (from their newest album). Announced separately to a roar from the crowd, Hancock then bounded on stage resplendent in leather pants and a shirt cut open to his navel.

The band performed several numbers from the two albums they've so far released. Hancock sounded best on his portion of the three-part Sly, where he played an inventive electric piano solo against free doubletime swing rhythms. Maupin, who performed on tenor sax, saxello, and bass clarinet, played his only really coherent solo (on saxello) on the slow Butterfly. Maupin's free style of improvising represents one of the main links to Hancock's earlier music (the use of electronic sound is the other), but, at this concert at least, he seemed hemmed in by the music, oscillating in his solos from basic blues licks to wild shrieking with no apparent logic.

The concert's finale neatly displayed the paradox in Hancock's new approach to music. After a long showy display by percussionist Bill Summers of his dexterity with a bead-filled African gourd, the group swung into Chameleon, the most popular tune from their first album. Hancock began his portion of the tune on the synthesizer keyboard but treated it like a regular piano, developing lines and ideas in the way he used to do when keyboards only meant piano and organ.

Halfway through his solo, however, Hancock switched to a device that creates different noise textures in response to hand movements inside its field. While the band continued to backbeat, Hancock stood up and moved off in front of the group, all the while waving his hands theatrically at the noise machine. As the noise reached an earsplitting intensity, the lights suddenly went out, Maupin exploded some sort of large firecracker, and with its loud bang, flash and a cloud of smoke the concert was over.

Hancock's showy closer nicely summarizes the problem he faces. Most of the elements that made his an important voice in the sixties are still present in his music today. The danger is that in the name of communication the music will be covered by crowd-pleasing noise and smoke.

- David Wild

JOE HENDERSON

Students' Union Theatre, University of Alberta, Edmonton - October 27, 1974

Photograph by Jorgen Bo

Edmonton has been fortunate in having concert presentations by the two outstanding tenor saxophonists in jazz today - Sam Rivers and Joe Henderson. Henderson's basic approach is clearly derived from Sonny Rollins but, fine as Rollins is, I feel Henderson is even better. His strong, fluid approach to jazz is (or should be) familiar from his large and distinguished series of recordings (most recently on Milestone) and was much in evidence. In addition to the approach evident in recent recordings, he used a bit more use of sound without definite note value and, once, blowing over the reed and then producing sound with the keys only. Also, he played without accompaniment for fairly extended periods. His fluency and imagination are really enjoyable. My only criticism is that the predominate choice of medium and up-tempo pieces needed some contrast from a few slower ones.

The rest of the group provided the kind of strong support Henderson needs. Tom Grant played a full, percussive piano with several exciting solos. He was original but his approach struck me as somewhat odd at times with some choruses sounding like they had been played by a rhumba pianist. John Toulson provided stronger support than he sometimes does on bass playing better than I have heard him play before. I only wish his solos had been more coherent. On drums, Ronnie Steed was also fluent and strong. Playing with a musician like Henderson must be a considerable strain on a rhythm section, especially the drummer, and Steed played both strongly and lightly throughout.

The second half of the concert was better integrated than the first for which lack of rehearsal was to blame. Grant and Steed arrived only 45 minutes before the concert due to the zeal which jazz musicians seem to inspire in Customs officials in Vancouver. - Kellogg Wilson

ORNETTE COLEMAN

Keystone Corner, San Francisco
September 4-15

The fact that Ornette has only been associated with three basic groups in 15 years as a moving force in the music makes the new Ornette Coleman group a matter of interest in itself. The current quartet is further intriguing in that it represents a departure from the whole evolution of Coleman's approach. The essential lyricism of Ornette's music, which has been distilled and redistilled over the years, as evidenced by records like "Chappaqua Suite" and "Crisis", has now been pushed way to the back in favor of the fire and guts one associates with his early Atlantic days.

Behind Ornette were James Ulmer, guitar; John Williams, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. Nothing need be said, of course, about Higgins' part in the music at this point, other than perhaps that this man has remained in Ed Blackwell's shadow far too long. His own invention, drive, and telepathic powers make him a figure requiring reference to no one else. And if anyone is ever in doubt about the basic nature of the music, a glance at Billy's perpetually amused features will clear that up.

Ulmer and Williams are new to Ornette's groups and new faces to me. Ulmer would seem to be the determining factor in the sound of this group. His style is rooted back somewhere in Wes Montgomery but his approach is cubist; long, intricately developed lines which turn back at times strangely on themselves, and baldly chromatic chord patterns emerge occasionally. His support of Ornette is more by way of contrast than sympathy, and some of the music conveys the strange impression of two men (Coleman and Ulmer) pulling things apart while the other two keep them together. Ornette seemed to be challenged by this situation; his outings were consistantly rigorous and he obviously is finding new points of reference for himself in Ulmer's stylings.

One of the most surprising things to me about this group was the extent to which Ornette has obviously been thinking in terms of his violin and trumpet playing, which formerly seemed to me to be a bizarre sidelight of a music which was basically communicated on alto. With this group, however, the trumpet and violin playing fit more with what the rest of the group is doing than does the alto.

Those who, like myself, miss the lyrical depth of the Redman-Haden-Blackwell group will be compensated by the fact that Ornette, in this time of blurred aesthetics and decreased output by many giants, has continued to challenge himself and is still seeking to create something new out of his own musical persona. - Duck Baker

SADIK HAKIM

Ontario Science Center, Toronto
November 11, 1974

Legends often promise more than they actually deliver. Shaded by antiquity, some of the lesser luminaries of the Bebop Era have re-emerged on the International scene in the past few years. Anyone whose finger nails came close to Parker are considered worthy of this adulation. Hence the renewed activity of Joe Albany, Duke Jordan, Red Rodney and Sadik Hakim.

The reality of their life and music is, seemingly, a little more pedestrian, a little more ordinary. But then, perhaps, we are constantly awaiting a miracle and most musicians are merely human. So it is with Sadik Hakim - a warmly sensitive and somewhat frail human who makes music which reflects his life experience. The melodic and harmonic ambiguity of his lines can be traced back to such other craftsmen as Tadd Dameron - his voicings have that same sparseness and angular tautness. As a pianist he is intricate and articulate without having the explosiveness which made Bud Powell unique. He is a better musician today than he was in the 1940s and can stand on his own performances.

Idiomatically, Sadik Hakim's concept is rooted in another time and the energy re-

sources of today's music comes from a different direction causing tensions and internal conflicts which restrict some of the smooth flow of the music. At this concert Sadik's original material was only partially resolved by the divergent feelings and abilities of the musicians chosen for the task.

From Sadik's own viewpoint, the opening Tour De France was the most successful. It's lightly dancing lines and melodic twists served as a delightful framework on which he could build interesting piano lines. The ensemble riffs accented and linked his improvisations in a logical manner. The cohesion of the group was not to be the same from that point on.

The crux of the problem lay in the rhythm section's inability to groove. Bassist Bob Boucher consistently failed to set down the kind of walking lines and root patterns so necessary in this style of jazz. Percussionist Clayton Johnson's sparkling cymbal sound and sharp accents gave dynamic impetus but the hole in the bottom was constantly being felt.

There were inconsistencies in the horn players as well. Dale Hillary is a splendid bop-oriented alto saxophonist whose concept, like Phil Woods, has moved beyond Charlie Parker without forsaking the formalism inherent in Bird's music. His solos were concise, well structured and heated. In contrast we heard the indecisive, halting phraseology of a struggling jazz soloist in trumpeter Brian Lyddell whose technical ability was as much a hindrance as his rhythmic/harmonic weaknesses.

Best of all, though, was Michael Stuart. His tenor and soprano playing is firmly rooted in the contemporary expression of Coltrane but his command of the jazz language is completely assured and his lengthy solos spiralled upward with the kind of tension and release one expects from important voices. His musical viewpoint fitted comfortably within the framework of Sadik's music without a compromise of Stuart's own personality. His playing was the spiritual essence of jazz and the regenerative spark of this particular night's music.

Overall, then, some of the parts were better than the whole on this brief performance. The short, one hour, concert was broadcast live over CJRT-FM and those restrictions and lack of rehearsal time might have interfered with the natural flow of some of the music. The band, as an ensemble, sounded uncomfortable too often for the music to move naturally. Still, it was good to hear Sadik Hakim and his Ensemble and the effort put out by the musicians was well received by an audience who came to listen to jazz music - with or without the warts. - John Norris

Sadik Hakim photograph by Jørgen Bo

BABS GONZALES

Copenhagen
September 22, 1974

It has been said that Copenhagen is one of the best jazz towns in Europe. But in truth, the only spark in the otherwise vacuous desert of rock and roll and dixieland jazz, Montmartre, closed its doors on September 7, due to severe financial problems.

A host of Montmartre regulars were on hand to help Dexter Gordon in his five day farewell appearance, and there were salutes and praises for the old days of Montmartre, but when it was over with, Copenhagen's great legacy of jazz was in danger of vanishing. Numerous efforts are underway to revive the jazz house, and there is much hope for a successful conclusion to these efforts, but in the meantime, the outlook is bleak.

One visitor to Copenhagen who did add a bit of life to the town on an otherwise lazy Sunday afternoon was the bebop singer Babs Gonzales. "Babs is crazy," several friends who knew confided to me. Their observations proved to be accurate. To be honest, I'd never even heard of Babs Gonzales, having missed his era by a good (or bad - take your choice) fifteen years.

But buoyed by innumerable beers, (His, not mine) his inimitable approach to performance - something like a jazz Little Richard with a ghetto consciousness - entertained, offended and amused a small crowd gathered in Tatuba, the barren top floor of a unique complex of bars collectively known as Huset. There's not too much to say about the music. Horace Parlan played a solid if perhaps excessively unobstrusive piano, Bo Stief demonstrated that his skill on the electric bass is at least as good as his fine acoustic work, and despite the fact that Babs couldn't remember the name of his last minute replacement drummer - Svend-Erik Nørregård - he was quite equal to the task. It was Babs' performance, however, that was most noteworthy.

He's not so much a bebop singer as a bebop person. He was wearing a floppy purple knit hat, a baggy old suit that was shiny enough to glow in the dark, and he bounced around the stage with his knees flexed and his forearms dangling limply from his elbows, tapping his foot, placing a hand on his hip as he puzzled over the first few lines of a song, and then ripping into it with a giant grin under his mustache.

His voice was rough and direct and he moved around, laughing through a verse, telling that "connections are essential, like the Panama Canal". But then there was the sensitive side, as he sang his haunting words to Monk's 'Round About Midnight: "That's the time you feel so lonesome; it's tragic."

"La la!" he said, going into another song. The translation of that curious expression, he told me, was quite simple: "Expubidence", whatever that means.

He played three sets, avoiding the difficulties and tendency towards monotony that one might have expected in the absence of a horn in the group. Actually, a trumpet player was on hand for several tunes, and a girl who may or may not have been a friend of Babs' sang a few blues numbers. And then Babs finished up and left, angered for some reason (having to do with money, or the lack of it, I believe) by the proprietors, and promised, 'I ain't never comin' back", but in fact, he'll be returning to Copenhagen soon, trying to drum up some interest in a new book, "Moving On Down The Line", due out in New York on November 2. The book is a continuation of his first book, "I Paid My Dues", which has sold 81,000 copies in the last four years, according to Babs. The new book will overlap the time period covered in Dues, and includes 50 photographs from Babs' associations with other major bebop figures. In anticipation of that book, he declares, "La la!".

- Jim Wake

Photograph by Raymond Ross

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