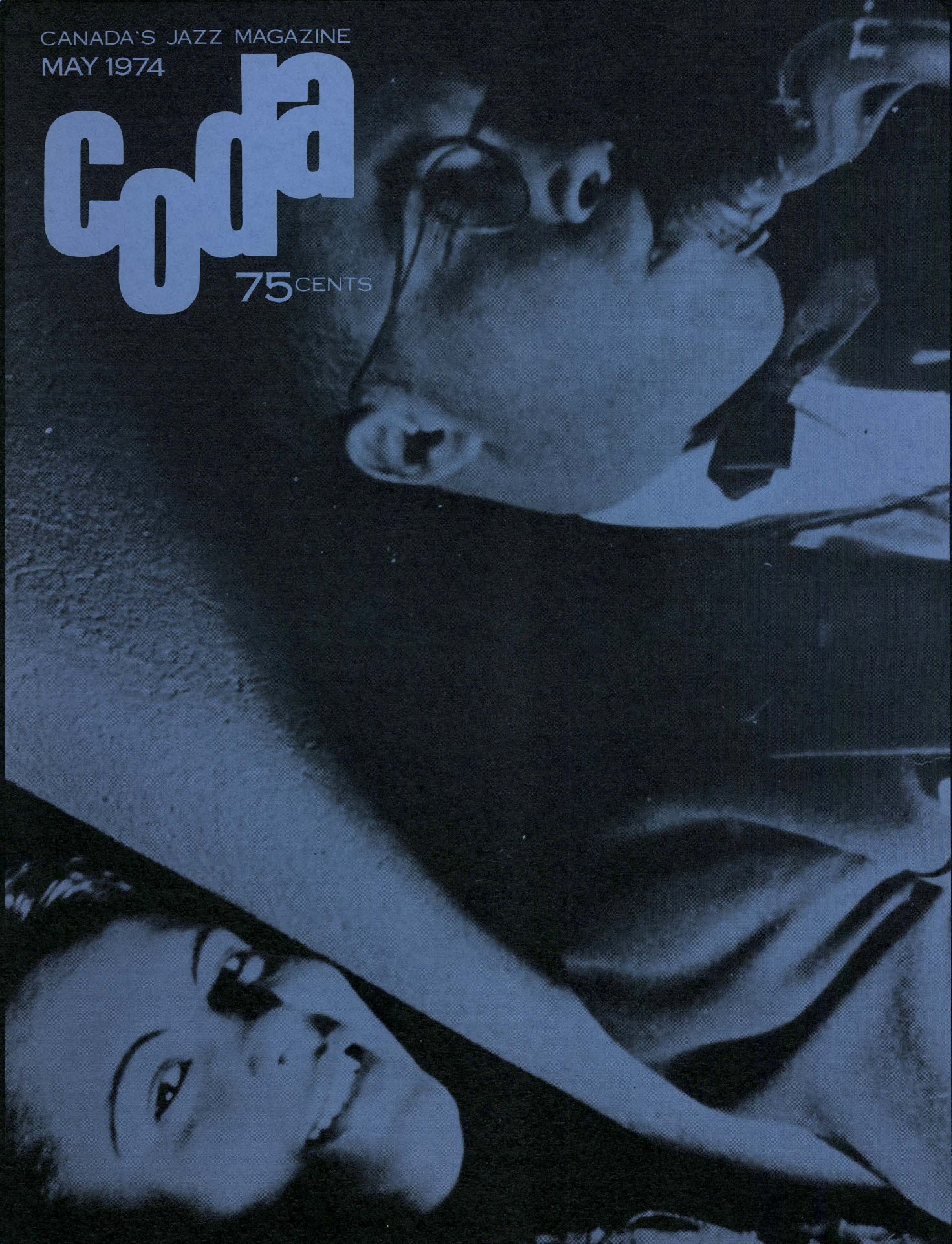


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**BEN
WEBSTER** | Atmosphere
For Lovers And Thieves



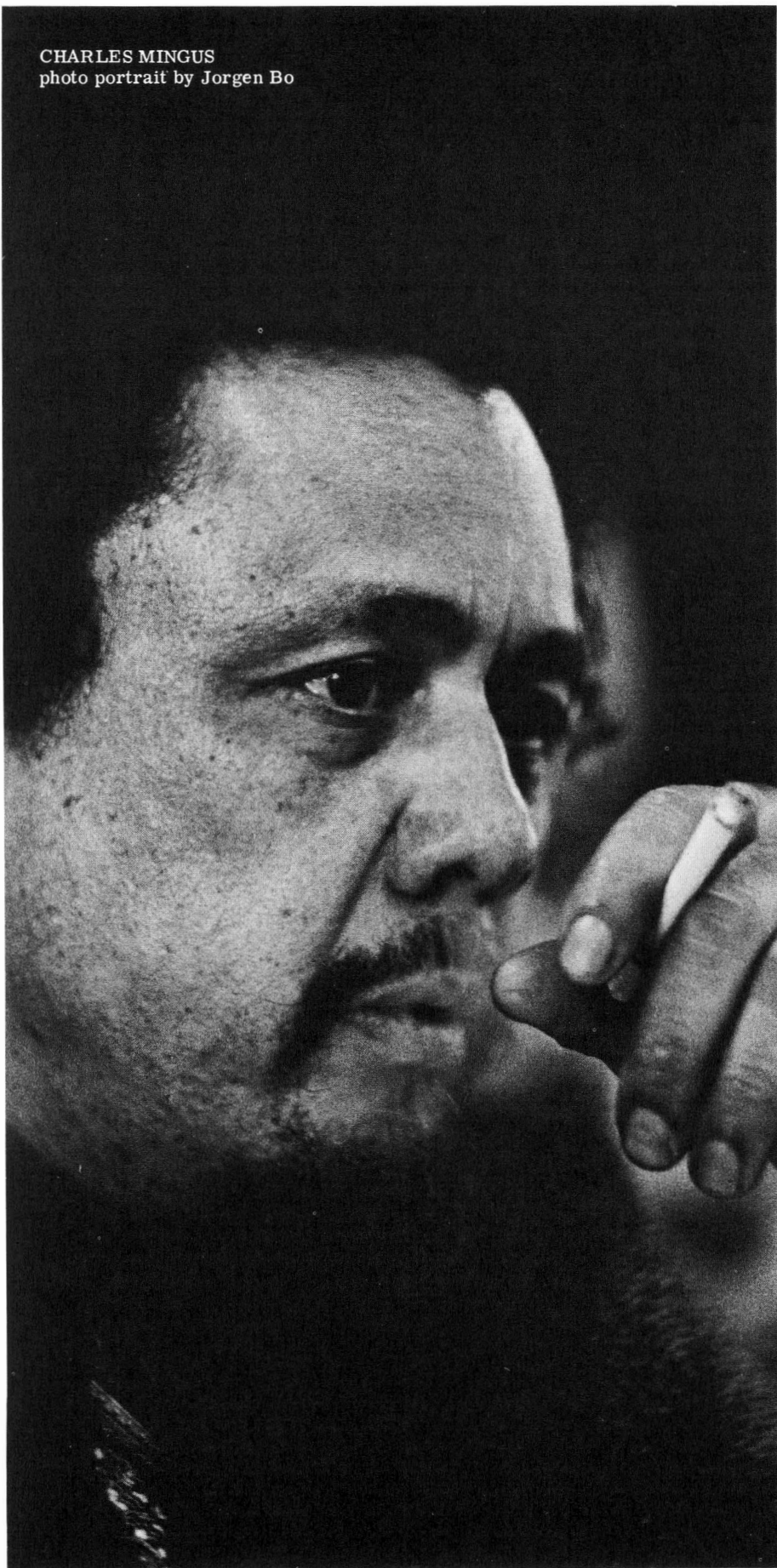
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CHARLES MINGUS
photo portrait by Jorgen Bo



Coda

May 1974 Volume 11 No. 9

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KENNETH HOLLON and BILLIE HOLIDAY
photograph....Kenneth Hollon Collection

EDITORIAL

This short note is designed to offset the letters which will inevitably arrive during the summer months when our publishing schedule takes on a slightly less harrowing pace. The next issue will appear in mid June and cover both June and July. The following issue will appear sometime in August and will cover that month and September. Our monthly schedule will resume with the October issue.

The summer issues will contain an expanded record review section as well as a variety of articles on all aspects of the jazz scene.

The extended features in recent issues is a departure from our normal policy and we have others in the planning stages. We would appreciate hearing your views on this type of in-depth feature.

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AT LAST THE DEFINITIVE BOOK ON BIX MAN & LEGEND

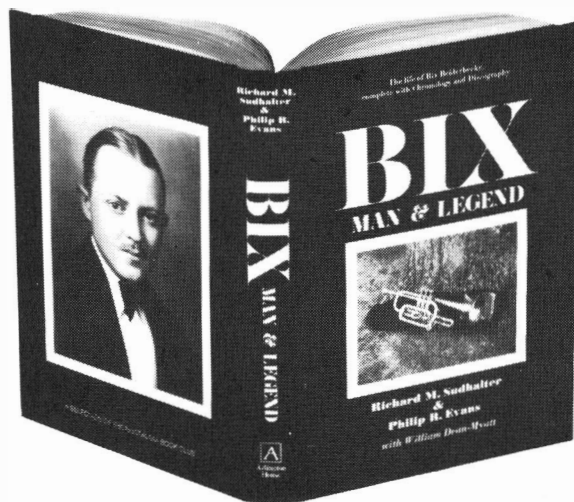
Richard M. Sudhalter & Philip R. Evans
with *William Dean-Myatt*

He was an American musical genius—and an American tragedy. Along with Louis Armstrong, he towered over jazz in the Twenties. And, together with Louis, he brought jazz to maturity.

The genius of Bix Beiderbecke, his lovable yet sometimes eccentric ways, above all his early, tragic death in 1931—this was the stuff of legend, and Bix indeed became a legend, here and abroad, as early as the Thirties. His life loosely inspired Dorothy Baker's celebrated Thirties novel, *Young Man with a Horn* (later a film).

But as the legend waxed, the facts grew fuzzier—until this remarkable book. It restores the real Bix, and actually adds to his stature. Documented in lavish detail are Bix's early years...why his cornet playing with the Wolverines hit American music like a thunderclap...Bix and the trailblazing Jean Goldkette band...Bix's widely misunderstood tenure with Paul Whiteman...his frustrating private life...and the losing battle with alcohol.

Two complementary talents collaborated on this major biography. Richard M. Sudhalter is a former UPI European correspondent and a cornetist who has played with many jazz giants. Philip R. Evans is a jazz researcher and discographer who has devoted most of a lifetime to tracking down every available clue in the Bix mystery, writing and talking to everyone he could find who ever knew him—684 people in all!



Result: the definitive biography—on four counts. First, the Sudhalter text is a sensitive portrait of a great artist—by a literate, understanding fellow jazzman who brings Bix to life. Second, the “diary” documents Bix's career virtually day by day. Third, the discography abounds in new data and renders all similar Bix studies obsolete. Fourth, of the more than 100 photographs, most are published here for the first time.

This volume will never be supplanted as one of the major biographies in the literature of jazz.

A BIX BONANZA

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Kenny

Portrait Of

"For years I knew Kenny Hollon as one of the best tenor-sax men in the business. I did many gigs with him in the forties and always found it to be kicks with him because Kenny is a very exciting player. He has terrific ideas and always swings. We never worked on any regular jobs together because Kenny had a day job in a town office and on account of this he would rarely accept a job with a regularly working orchestra and especially those that were subject to have to travel.

Kenny would replace another tenor in an orchestra if the other man was sick or could not make the job one or more nights for some reason.

It was amazing that Kenny had so many ideas and up-to-date ones and still did not work regularly. But this was his own decision. There was any number of leaders who would have been happy to have had him as a sideman and, I'm sure, he did receive many offers.

Kenny is not well-known enough due to the circumstances outlined and there may be many jazz fans who have never heard of him. But there are plenty of New York musicians who dig his playing and who will back me up when I declare that Kenneth Hollon is a tenor-man who can sit in with the best... and they'll know that he is there!" Bill Coleman (Paris, December 1970).

Kenneth L. Hollon may be an "unknown" to those who are only scratching the surface of jazz. On the other hand, he is highly regarded by the musicians who have played with him and by jazz lovers whose interest in music exceeds the narrow range set by most "critics". Those who don't care whether an artist they like is mentioned in the "standard books" or not, consider Kenneth L. Hollon a superbly inventive artist and one of the great out-and-out swingers on the tenor-saxophone. "Kenny is a real gut bucket man. His music is gutty. That's all." (Ernest "Bass" Hill, April 1964). This is as accurate a summary of Kenny's playing as possible.

Kenny played with the bands of Fats Waller, Chick Webb, Don Redman, Allan and Milton Brown's Louisiana Stompers, Teddy Hill, Vernon Andrade, Frank Newton, Buddy Johnson, Billie Holiday, Charlie Johnson, Luis Russell, Louis Jordan, Claude Hopkins, Erskine Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson, Horace

Kenneth L. Hollon

An Unsung Musician by Johnny Timmen

Henderson and numerous others. He can be heard on a few dozen records by Putney Dandridge, Buddy Johnson, Billie Holiday, Louis Jordan, Frank Newton, Slim & Slam, Slim Gaillard and Kenny Watts.

I was born on Fulton Street in Brooklyn, N.Y. on November 26, 1909. My full name is Kenneth Lynn Hollon but the cats just call me Kenny. Whenever I have seen my name in print it was rarely spelt correctly: Holland or Hollan mostly. But, as mentioned, it's H O L L O N. Thank you!

My background is a rather unique one in that at the age of ten I ran away from the people I lived with after my father and mother had separated (I was five years old at that time). As said, I left my relatives and found my way to Harry Payne Whitney's race horse farm in Brookdale, New Jersey. That's where I learned to break in yearlings - green horses as they were called - and exercised them for two years until my father found me. I don't think that the rest of my young years makes interesting reading but I should mention that when I was a child I couldn't stand music or even listen to the victrola without getting all nervous! But fate plays peculiar tricks on certain people and I guess I just happen to be one of them.....

I got the sax-bug when I was 17 years old. My cousin Clifton Glover - who is best-known for having played many years with Claude Hopkins and who is now on the Executive Board of our Musicians' Local 802 - was playing with a bandleader/pianist by the name of Charley Skeets, at Labor Lycium Ballroom in Brooklyn. While Cliff was taking his solos on the tenor-saxophone one special night, something just came over me. Some sort of inspiration, so much so that I wanted to learn to play just like my cousin Cliff. At first it wasn't my idea at all to make a professional life of it. All I wanted right then was to play for my own amusement. But gradually I became more and more involved. In 1927, I managed to buy a tenor-sax and after some time woodshedding, I played with the first orchestra of many to follow. This was in the spring of 1931 and the leader's name was "Hat" Hunter. I stayed about one year with him. Cousin Cliff's lessons had led to positive

results and I could blow pretty good by then. Incidentally, Cliff was the only teacher I ever had. Also studying out of Varecken's Saxophone Book for Beginners proved to be profitable. Even the exercises I found musical and pleasant to the ear and practically memorized them all!

One night I felt ready to visit the famous Rhythm Club on West 132nd Street in Harlem. I had my horn with me and I will never forget that night! When I entered, Elmer Williams was just playing Sweet Sue. This was one of the tunes that I used to perform as a feature with "Hat" Hunter's band at that period...The rhythm section, backing Elmer, was terrific and the five guys were really jumpin'...Right then something happened to me. You see, usually I am rather the shy type but on that occasion I just asked Elmer could I play, too? I didn't know a soul in the place and nobody had ever heard of me. However, everybody treated me nice and kind. They invited me to play and I took my horn out and got with it. The cats wouldn't let me stop playing! Imagine that! I kept blowing about fifteen choruses before I took down. It was really there that I got my start. I met many of my later musician friends right there at the Rhythm Club. After that first encounter with Elmer Williams - we used to call him "Tone" Williams because of his fine tone-quality - I went back to the Rhythm Club many, many times.

Incidentally, from playing at the Rhythm Club, I got the job with my first BIG orchestra, The Louisiana Stompers (John Hammond liked the band, came to hear us and gave us good write-ups). The leaders were the brothers Milton and Allan Brown, both fine trumpet players. Ulysses Scott and Sidney Grant played alto, the trombone-player was Fondly Jordan, Earl McGee blew the tuba and the drummer was Joe Jones (not the famous Jo Jones). Roger "Ram" Ramirez played the piano. He and I started in that band together. Ram was an exceptional piano-player even already way back then. The Brown Brothers had a large book of original arrangements and, boy, did we have a swinging outfit! Wow! There was also a cat who swung like crazy on his guitar and whom we called "Mother" I don't remember his real name and haven't heard about him for many many years. Have sort of lost trace of

"Mother"...

Thinking of some others musicians who got their start at the period mentioned, it is rather strange to report that I have rarely - and never attentively - listened to the music that was played before I really came on the scene in 1931/32. Such artists as King Oliver, Bix Beiderbecke, Jelly Roll Morton etc. are scarcely more than mere names to me. Even when I listened to the great Louis Armstrong, it was to the records that came out just then and the ones which followed. Somehow I just didn't think of going back to the older music either "live" or on records like many fellow musicians did. I just mention it because you asked me the question. Incidentally, I play soprano-sax and made mad attempts at clarinet! No good...but I was able to bullshit on the clarinet through those arrangements anyway! Perhaps, had I been more successful on the blackstick I would have explored the fields of New Orleans and Dixieland jazz too when many cats of my generation changed over to the older music after the big bands had gone out...who knows?

Generally speaking, my idols on the tenor-saxophone have remained the same that I dug way back when I started out and a while after: Coleman Hawkins (the master), Cecil Scott, Chu Berry, Lester Young, Herschel Evans, Bingie Madison, Ben Webster, Elmer Williams, Johnny Russell, Greely Walton and Prince Robinson. I listened to all of them many, many times and followed their development right through the years. Among men who came up later on, I particularly dig Paul Gonsalves, Illinois Jacquet and Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis. Of course, I listened also to a lot of alto players, especially Johnny Hodges, Willie Smith, Earle Warren, Russell Procope (a special friend of mine) and, naturally, the great Hilton Jefferson.

If I may say some words about the way I play: You see, I am not what you'd call a musician who plays "by ear". There are certain things or selections which I play that I do HEAR a little. But to me there is a difference in a musician who HEARS what he's playing and the one who KNOWS what he's playing and doing on his instrument. I am a cat who rather plays what he KNOWS - well, almost all the time. I'm aware of what I'm doing because I play by the changes in any selection I feature. These things I had studied when

I was learning to play the saxophone. In short: I LEARNED how to bob and weave my chords as melodically as possible so that whatever I played would be pleasing to the ear (I hope!). I think by this explanation you will understand just where I stand as a musician. I wouldn't want you to overplay your hand as a writer and find out later that I didn't measure up to your expectations! (Note by J.S.: I showed this letter to Arthur Briggs and Bill Coleman and they both agreed that the number of musicians who are playing by ear equals that of the men who make use of their theoretical knowledge when they improvise. Both Bill and Arthur thought that it was unimportant whether a musician does his improvising this or that way. They stressed that it was, of course, the RESULT that counted only. Bill Coleman said: "If a guy delivers his stuff with as much fire and punch as Kenny does, you don't ask the question if he played by ear or if he was using his theoretical knowledge. You just enjoy his fine playing." To me Kenny's remark was enlightening in yet another way: He is the kind of overmodest and superhonest person who, as I found out in a few previous cases where underrated fine jazzmen were concerned, not only doesn't do anything to push himself into the foreground but who even feels it is his duty to warn you not to overrate him!" Of course, I assured my dear correspondent that there couldn't be any question of "overplaying my hand" since I have known his recorded work for several decades and have never tired of enjoying it to the utmost. After this interlude our correspondence became even more cordial and animated).

After leaving the Louisiana Stompers I played with many different bands. With some I worked on a regular basis while with a few others I subbed for the regular tenor-man who for some reason couldn't or didn't want to play with the band for some nights. In 1932/33 it was mostly Luis Russell's orchestra at the Saratoga Club while in 1933/34 I worked a lot with Charlie Johnson band at Small's Paradise. Teddy Hill's orchestra employed my services at various times between 1936 and 1940. First we played the Savoy and Connie's Inn in New York for a long time but then we did many one-nighters as well. I took Chu Berry's seat when he left to join Horace Henderson in Chicago. I considered this an honour because I always thought Chu was one of the top jazz musicians regardless of instrument. Chu had everything: great ideas, extraordinary execution, a wonderful tone in ALL registers and, boy, did that man SWING!

I was several times with Claude Hopkins at the Roseland Ballroom as well as on various club dates. This lasted as long as Claude had his big band. With bass player Vernon Andrade's different bands I worked many club dates but mostly at the "Renny" in Harlem (Renaissance Ballroom). I gigged with both Fletcher and Horace Henderson. Three bands I worked only one to three nights with at one time were the ones led by Chick Webb, Don Redman and Erskine Hawkins.

Whenever their regular tenor-man took a leave, I was called up to take their place. Elmer Williams, Bob Carroll and Julian Dash had only one man in mind (or so it seemed): Kenny Hollon. HIS phone number they knew (smiles). Mentioning Julian Dash - a VERY fine tenor-man, by the way - reminds me of a story that I wish to relate here: In 1941, I filled in on a date for Julian at the Hotel Edison in New York City. Julian was inducted into the Masons that night. The Erskine Hawkins orchestra started playing at 8.00 p.m. and one hour later here comes CBS, setting a nationwide hook-up for broadcasting that evening! Of course, at that time I usually could read every score put in front of me at first sight. Everything went fine until Erskine called out Bicycle Bounce! That sheet was impossible to read and there was no chance to have anything explained to me. What a situation! I told myself: I'll just do the best I can. But it was terrible because there were no cues, and those that were there were obliterated and smudged all over. When the time for the tenor solo had come, I just stood up and blew and blew and blew because I didn't know when to go out and pick up the last arranged choruses of Bicycle Bounce! Erskine was having a fit, jumping up and down, trying to tell me I was supposed to take two choruses only and not five or six! The band kept playing all those beautiful figures behind me and I thought I was knocking everyone out. However, inadvertently I actually loused up the arrangement and threw the whole broadcast out of time! After the broadcast, Erskine came over to me and said: "Hey man, what happened on Bicycle Bounce? Can't you read?" I was really embarrassed, went to the bandstand, got the arrangement, gave it to him and said: "Read this." Erskine looked at it and apologized for bawling me out. He added: "I don't know how ANYBODY could have read that so-and-so score". Right after that, then and there, he changed the arrangement and let the tenor-player blow the score out. He told me: "Even though you did louse up the arrangement, it sure sounded good."

In 1941/42 I was frequently playing with Fats Waller's big band (although I seem to remember that even before that time I worked a few gigs with him). The longest stints took place at the Wintergarden in New York, the Howard Theater in Washington and the Apollo and the Harlem Opera House in New York. In 1942 I played a week's engagement at Fays' Theater in Philadelphia with Fats and his big band. We finished our date on Christmas Eve of that year. Fats' wife had given him, earlier in the week, ten brand new twenty dollar bills and Fats stayed juiced the whole week. Two and three times a day he would send the band valet to the liquor store for a fifth of White Horse and he'd drink every drop of it! Well, on closing night, Fats came out on stage to do his number on the organ. He had forgotten to take off his old dirty camel-hair coat. A bottle of scotch was hanging out of his pocket and he was blind

drunk! However, the average person couldn't tell it, unless they knew him. He took off his coat and threw it on top of the organ. Then he took off his shoes and his big fat toes showed through his holy socks (smiles!) which brought a roar from the house! Fats was supposed to play the Jitterbug Waltz but instead he began setting the organ knobs and proceeded to play Silent Night. NEVER IN MY LIFE have I ever heard or ever expect to hear it again played like Fats performed it that night! There was hardly a dry eye in the theater.... After he had finished, Fats just stood up and bowed. He then said: "Good night all" and walked off the stage with the coat over his shoulders and no shoes. The curtain came down but that audience - a full house, standing room only - must have clapped for fifteen minutes after he left! Fats Waller died almost a year to the day I played that date with him at Fays' Theater in Philly... That's something that I will never forget. Fats Waller, a warmhearted and generous person, was one of this century's greatest talents as a performer and as a composer. His work will never die.

I worked a few months with John Kirby when he augmented his sextet to seven pieces: Charlie Shavers, Pete Brown, Buster Bailey, Billy Kyle, a guy named Frazier on drums, John, and yours truly on the tenor-axe. I regret that we didn't make any records because the added fourth horn made the group sound different from the well-known sextet-records. A very musical outfit as were all the combos led by John.

Part of 1938 and almost the whole year of 1939 I spent with Frankie Newton's group, mostly at Cafe Society. The band recorded some sides on its own and we also backed Billie Holiday on a few recording dates as well as at Cafe Society. I knew Billie particularly well. I took her on her first singing job here in this City. This happened at The Gray Dawn, a cabaret on Jamaica Avenue and South Street in Jamaica, Queens, N.Y. in 1930 or 1931. At that time the audience used to throw money on the floor. Billie sang How Am I To Know, What Is The Verdict, My Fate Is In Your Hands, some Blues etc. and she made her first dollar in New York that night. I, too, got my start (a little earlier) in that same place, either with Sam Saunders or Hat Hunter. When Billie made her debut, the Hat Hunter group was backing her. They sold liquor in that joint, it was raided and we spent the night in jail. Of course, I gave a wrong name because I was on the list for my civil service appointment as a clerk.... So I thought it wiser not to tell them my real name at that police station.

"The Lady sings the Blues" is the biggest phony ever written. That whole story - book and movie - was a fake and just a money-making proposition for money-hungry speculators. Billie having been a prostitute: I don't know anything about that part of her life. I met Billie and her mother when they first came to Brooklyn, N.Y. and lived at 7 Glenada Place, in Brooklyn, N.Y.... They explained that they had just arrived from



Louis Jordan Orchestra - Harlem Opera House, August 1940.

Left to Right: Tommy Fulford - piano, Louis Jordan - alto saxophone, Charlie Drayton - bass, Walter Martier - drums, Eddie Roane and Freddie Webster - trumpets, Eddie Williams - alto saxophone, Kenneth Hollon - tenor saxophone.

Baltimore. That was when I just was getting out of the books, studying my horn. She told me that she would never scrub floors or keep house for white folks. Billie said that all she wanted to do was SING and SINGING was what she could do most successfully. After those first years in Brooklyn, Billie and I lost contact for a while but from 1938 on we worked a lot together, mostly with Frankie Newton's fine band. I still have all the records I made with her - original pressings - and I'm even afraid to take them out of the box I'm keeping them in for fear they might get broken. I hope I can put them all on tape real soon.

At the time, when we were good friends, I never saw her drink excessively or shoot dope. This must have taken place much later. All she did was smoke weed. Yes, Billie and I were real good friends and she even came to visit Mamy and me after we were married in 1936.

I remember one funny incident with Billie which happened during the Frankie Newton/Cafe Society' days in 1938. We had a society date to play in the "sixties" (street designation) and Billie and I went there by car. Since we had arrived at the address too early, we stayed in the car until it would be time to get to the place. Billie was smoking pot. I didn't know too much about reeferers at that time. Billie said: "This stuff is good. It comes from

Dakar, Senegal, Africa. Try one." Well, I did like she told me. Billie showed me how to inhale, hold it in and then exhale what was left. I followed all her instructions to the last detail. I was a good pupil (smiles). When we arrived at the place where we were to play, I got out of the car but could hardly pick up my heels. We went inside and everything was going round and round including my head. I made an attempt to set up my stand for the music...but somehow I couldn't do it...I was putting all together the wrong way...All this time, Frankie Newton was watching me, noticing how strangely I was acting, fumbling with my horn and everything else. Finally, even I was ready to play that first tune. I felt so good that I just tried to play the tune from memory. I thought I was knocking everybody out (I sure was knocking MYSELF out!) but when we had finished our first number, Frankie came over to me and said: "What the hell did you think you were doing?" I replied: "Playing my horn, man, what the hell else?" Frankie said: "You think you're raising hell?" I answered: "Yeah man, that's what I'm doing" but he didn't think so: "Well, you AIN'T, he said. When he said this, right then, I got tickled and all I could do was LAUGH! I couldn't play another thing because just watching the expressions on everybody's face, most of all Frankie's, got me

hysterical and they had to play without me! I stayed high for four or five days. I ate like a pig, drank gallons of water... but nothing helped...Never since that night have I touched another reefer. That was some lesson to me. Of course, pot affects some cats much more than it does some others and I happen to be the kind that gets the kicks strongest BUT there's no doubt that the stuff Billie gave me that night was the real McCoy!

I worked with Buddy Johnson during the last part of 1939 as well as during several months in 1940, 1941 and 1942, including a six-months tour all over the country. We also made records around that time. Whether I happened to play with Buddy's band or would be with someone else's orchestra, when these recording sessions came up, Buddy usually called me to make the dates. Today Buddy is a minister and has his own church. He is that kind of a person. I have known him for many years and never heard him use a profane word. He is married now, has a child and lives in the Bronx. A while ago, Buddy introduced me to his wife and told me that the government was killing him with taxes! He explained that the money he was making meant nothing because the more he was making the less he had!

Buddy was one of the finest leaders to work for. He was a modest and kind man who never had the idea of even trying to be the boss or whatever that is. Buddy always saw to it that his musicians got good accommodation and he paid them as well as he could. He's a fine pianist and arranger. Buddy really knows his music.

His sister Ella was a very good singer and most popular with audiences all over the country. Ella and Buddy Johnson and the latter's orchestra meant a lot to Negro audiences of those days and their Decca recordings sold very well.

I must have been a pretty wild young guy at that time as the following story indicates: In 1942, the Johnson band played the Sunset Ballroom in Indianapolis, Indiana and reservations were made ahead of our arrival at the YMCA for that night. When we got in town, the houseman showed me my room. After about an hour it was time to go out to play the date. I returned to the room at 2:00 a.m. and low and behold there was some great big burly cat sleeping in the room and bed I had hired! Well, I proceeded to wake everybody up in that joint in no time at all! I hollered: "If I can't go to sleep in my room, I'm not going to let anybody sleep!" I got put out of that joint as a result of the noise I was making and had to sleep on the steps in sitting-up position. The guys in the band took care of my clothes and my horn and I left town with all my belongings the next morning. I was young then and liked a lot of fun.

The following souvenir of being on tour with Buddy Johnson is far less amusing although through no fault of Buddy himself. One of our trumpet-players Eddie "Popeye" Davis (younger brother of the famous trumpeter Pike Davis, according to Arthur Briggs, who also said that the physical resemblance between the two was extraordinary - note by J.S.) would occasionally get asthma attacks and when one was coming on, his eyes would get big and he couldn't talk until it was over. The only thing that helped him was a quick drink of whiskey and then he would come around OK. One day we happened to be in Raleigh, N.C. at the Station, waiting for a change of engines. Popeye was standing in the white section of the station platform with half a glass of whiskey ready to drink because he was feeling like an attack coming on. You know, North and South Carolina were "dry States" at that time - and here comes a long lanky cracker and asks Popeye what he has in his glass! Popeye wasn't able to speak and couldn't answer the guy and before one of the other musicians could explain, the cracker slapped the glass of whiskey out of Popeye's hand. Popeye immediately turned around and hit the guy right in the middle of his ugly face with all those other white folks watching! Then came the fireworks! The cracker just remained prone on the platform and yelled: "This nigger hit me!" He kept yelling it about twenty or thirty times until two white N.C. policemen came running and grabbed poor Popeye and began to pummel him on the head with their clubs. Very fortunately, somehow between our white road manager and the trainmaster they were able to get him back into the Jim Crow car. The policemen started to climb the train steps with their guns drawn with the intention of shooting at the car but evidently the trainmaster and/or the road agent were both Masons and must have passed some kind

of sign because as the policemen were about to come up the train-steps, the trainmaster drew his pistol and ordered them off the steps. To make a long story short, we had a very narrow escape from all being lynched by that mob right then. They had all gathered on the platform and left no doubt what they would do within the very few next seconds. We owed our life to the trainmaster who ordered the engineer to pull the train out of the station which he, very fortunately!, did! We remained in a siding about a half mile from the station! What an experience! Popeye's head was a mass of blood but, luckily, no fractures. Just plain lucky all of us were...so if asthma is going to cause cats head-beatings like Eddie got in North Carolina, he can have it. This was one of the most morbid experiences of my musical life. It wasn't funny then but as a recollection it is humorous to me now.

I was on several recording-sessions with Louis Jordan and did many one-nighters with him. That was in 1940 and 1941 when he started to become really famous. The personnels you submitted are OK with me although, of course, I can't remember those line-ups to the last man. It's been so long and a lot of exciting things happened almost every day then. Therefore, I have probably forgotten some of the details.

From 1945 to 1969 I worked with the Don Wilson orchestra at the Renaissance Casino as well as on out-of-town dates. The band played mostly calypso music, as a matter of fact. Its personnel wouldn't mean anything to you or anyone else. There were only three real musicians in that band: Clyde Nourse - a truly TERRIFIC trumpet-player, everybody should know but few do, alas! -, Don Christian, another very fine trumpeter and myself. We three kept the band going for all those many years and we were also the ones who insisted on playing some jazz numbers - and in JAZZ-style! - every night. Music that allowed us to relax, stretch out and have a ball! But finally this rock music sort of knocked us out of business. Don Wilson disbanded.

Of course, I have played with many other groups of black and white musicians. Among the latter, the ones closest to me are Corky Corcoran, Vido Musso, Bobby Hackett, Pee Wee Russell, Gene Krupa and Charlie Barnet. I worked with Charlie's band in the late thirties. He's a good friend of mine.

Speaking of society orchestras, I have worked with some of Dave Terrace's units such as Vic Ash, Marty Wolfe, Zeke Lenga, Joey Mack etc. Some of these engagements would be plain dance affairs but we also played Jewish weddings, barmitzva's and testimonial dinners. Not all those gigs were musically satisfying but with a wife and four children to look after, you can't be too choosy because a dollar is a dollar and an empty stomach is an empty stomach.

In one of my letters I informed Kenny that a few musicians had told me about his having taken a day job in the 1930s when such a thing was unheard of among

musicians. "Kenny Hollon and, later on, Talcott Reeves were the first jazz-men in New York who got themselves a day job while continuing to play dances at night and make records too", Bill Coleman once told me. And Ernest "Bass" Hill explained: "We sometimes jokingly called them 'the amateurs'."

Kenny's comments about his double-activity are interesting: "You mentioned that you would like to know how I came to take a day-job in a time when nobody else did. You see, despite all the work available, I had a premonition that this bright situation wouldn't last forever. I wanted some security for my family. Unfortunately, later developments proved me right: 15 to 20 years later, MOST musicians had to look for daywork. However, at their age it was much more difficult to adapt themselves to an almost new life than when I had done the same thing. I was just 22 years old and at that stage of your life you're more flexible with regard to new assignments, situations, surroundings etc.

On September 8, 1931 I got my appointment as a clerk in the Health Department of the City of New York. Today, yes TODAY, I am a court clerk in the Surrogate's Court of King's County with 40 years under my belt. I am eligible for retirement at full pay and, Johnny, that's a heck of a good feeling at my age. I thank God that I had the foresight to stay on the job, no matter what the consequences were." (J.S.: letter of September 8, 1971).

"But now to your second question: How was I able to attend rehearsals, travel, made records, work nights and still hold a dayjob? Well, cutting a long story short, it had been that way: From 1931-1938 I wasn't earning but \$840.00 a year working for the City. During those times I was already quite articulate on the horn, if I may say so myself, and I just didn't give a damn whether I'd get fired or not. I was sure I'd find something else...So I just stayed off the dayjob whenever I got ready but I never missed a pay-check as small as it was (\$32.60 every 1st and 15th of the month during all these years). Any time I got a theater engagement or was travelling out of town, made recordings or special rehearsals etc etc. somehow my time-card was stamped in at 9:00 a.m., to lunch at 1:00 p.m., back at 2:00 p.m. and home at 5:00 p.m.! I never asked questions...but whenever I was not at work, this was done. I had friends in the office and they looked out for me. But in all sincerity, I had someone even more important than these fine friends mentioned. Somebody who was in my corner all those years because he knew how I struggled to support my family and how desperately we tried to raise our children properly. He was my boss, an Irishman and, where he was concerned, I just couldn't do anything wrong. His name is Mr. K.J. (note by J.S.: the gentleman's full name is in my possession and I have Kenny's permission to publish it but I prefer not to - for obvious reasons because it's a small world after all, at least in some cases). I took full advantage of

his kindness and THAT's the reason I could hold that job AND make all those dates! When I had stayed out six months, I came back and went to his office. Mr. J. would look at me, smile and say: 'Where the hell have you been this time?', I'd reply: 'I'm minding my own business and am making much more money than I'm getting here'. He'd smile and say: 'Well, I guess I'll have to take this off your sick-leave'. Always it was my 'sick-leave'! When I was transferred to the Surrogate's Court in 1951, I must have owed the City of New York five (5) years 'sick-leave'! Thanks to Mr. J. I could do all this. Incidentally, he has retired many years ago and resides in the vicinity of New York. I contact him and his family every Christmas and we do and will always remember him and his family in our prayers. He came in our lives a blessing in disguise. Now you understand how I was able to do ALL these things. It was thanks to my 'guardian angel'. Without him my family and I wouldn't be where we are today.

My wife Mamyé whom I married in 1935 and I have four children. The oldest of them is Kenneth Drake jr. who is now 35 and somewhat of a songwriter. Kenneth has over 400 different tunes to his credit. He writes the music and the lyrics to all his works. He's not an accomplished pianist (rather on the b.s. side - smiles) but I have to admit that he does a terrific job as a composer. Unfortunately, there is just no market for his type of writing at the present time because Kenneth's stuff is too pretty for today's trend. So I tell him to hang on. I believe things will soon change and will open up for him and his music.

Our other children are Sheryl Lynn Brereton - married to U.S. Navy Petty Officer Mark Brereton, Darryl who goes to the City College of New York and Karyn who has one more year at Queen's College. I can say that we are a happy family, all being very close to each other.

I still play occasional club dates and dances and to receive your first letter shook me up and made me think quite a bit. Your encouraging words were such an inspiration to me that the next date I played, I just tried to blow all the keys off my horn! It makes me just feel good to find out that someone on the other side of the Ocean is thinking so highly of me. If a European promoter would hire me for a short tour - on which I would only go if my wife could accompany me - he should be informed that I would only play those tunes that I feature best like Sweet Georgia Brown, Perdido, Tea For Two, Body and Soul, Star Dust, I Surrender Dear (both slow and double tempo), Cherokee, Sweet Sue, The Sheik and others of that kind. What I most deplore is the drastic change in the conception of the present styles of songs and so-called DANCE MUSIC. I call present-day "dance music" MUSICAL CALLISTHENICS". I think I still play the same way I did back in the 30s and 40s since I don't dig "modern jazz" and "rock" and as far as I'm concerned they just don't exist. You see, I'm probably just a guy

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from the old school who never graduated!

Recently I played a gig which Roy Eldridge was supposed to be on, too. I would have loved to play with Roy again but he didn't show up because at the last moment he had to go to a hospital for an urgent (and, I'm glad to say) successful eye operation. Well, I didn't know any of the guys on that gig and for the longer part of the night the music wasn't much. But suddenly, near the end of the date, a fairly good time was had by all. Everybody was swinging then and enjoying playing that fine old swinging 4/4 beat which is practically lost with these new styles and types of rhythm. (You see, I'm not a 'Latin rhythm' fan...) Anyway, it was sort of electrifying to the musicians and the dancers alike when during the last half hour or so we really got TOGETHER on some of the old tunes and EVERYBODY got their kicks! So why not stick to JAZZ all along? Anyway it's usually THIS type of music most people prefer IF THEY ARE ALLOWED TO HEAR IT! It's quite a puzzle why most people's favourite music is played so rarely nowadays.

If I play relatively few gigs nowadays it

is not that I have lost interest in music. I'm still getting quite a few calls but these last years I have turned most of them down. There are several reasons. There's the crime situation here in the City. You're just not safe anywhere anymore. Since my car went on the fritz, I just refuse to use the subway and taxicabs in the wee hours of the morning. If it was more like the old times with some solid swing, good chord backgrounds and the love of playing, I could bring up more interest. Don't get me wrong: I still love to play but not this junk they are calling jazz now, mainly "rock" or "free". On account of the crime situation and the bad music, public dances are really taboo now anyway. Most people prefer to ball at home rather than to go out to dances and run into trouble on every second street corner.

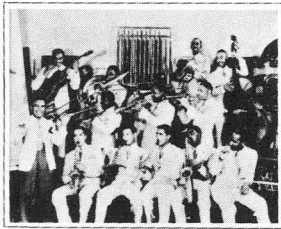
Modern jazz players I dig are Dizzy Gillespie and Cannonball Adderley. I also liked Wynton Kelly. He is the pianoplayer who wrote Little Tracey and I knew him well.

Mention of Dizzy brings back another recollection: In 1943 I played New Year's Eve with Don Redman at The Colonade in Washington D.C. Dizzy Gillespie was an hour late arriving and when he came on the bandstand, he had a long lily sticking straight up out of his lapel buttonhole, high silk topper on, a long black evening coat on his arm and a twelve inch cigar (unlighted) dangling from the side of his mouth - he looked so funny that we all just hollered and laughed. All this time, Don had taken everything in. Dizzy rested his things, got his horn out and proceeded to warm up, playing Ave Maria parts of the Spring Song by Mendelsohn and some other funny ditties which, of course, put us all in stitches. Don let him get set and kept looking and laughing at him. Diz didn't even crack a smile. So finally, after playing all his overtures, he asked Don what he called out? This all happened around 11:00 p.m. Don finally lost his temper and told Diz he was fired and to get the hell off the bandstand. Well that got everybody hysterical...Diz made believe he didn't hear him and proceeded to play the rest of the date out. He was so funny that Don paid him after all and even told him what a brilliant musician he was! We all sure had a ball that night.

My philosophy of life is a simple one. First of all, don't be greedy. I can't stand greedy persons because a person who is greedy MUST have lots of other faults, too. Be like the three monkeys: 1) See no evil, 2) Hear no evil, 3) Speak no evil. I agree that it's not always easy to live up to these basic rules but it's at least worth trying. And I can say in all sincerity that I'm not greedy...Treat others as you want them to do by you. Live up to the moral obligations to your wife, family and other loved ones. Be a man and know to take the bitter with the sweet. Always say yours and thank God for life, happiness and good health."

photographs courtesy of the Kenneth Hollon collection.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND
1935 - 1936



'KEEP THE RHYTHM GOING' JA-10

FRANKIE NEWTON

SWINGING
ON 52ND ST.

1937 - 1939

'EMPEROR
JONES'



JA-9

CHU BERRY

FEATURED WITH

CAB CALLOWAY
AND HIS ORCHESTRA

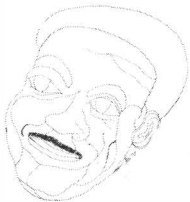


'PENGUIN SWING'

1937 - 1941

JA-8

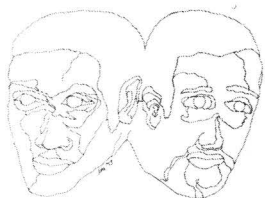
FATS WALLER



'HERE 'TIS'

JA-7

CHARLIE CHRISTIAN



LESTER YOUNG

TOGETHER
1940
JA-6

JAZZ archives

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JA-10 - MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND - "KEEP THE RHYTHM GOING"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On Record

Kenny and I got in touch in the summer of 1970. I wrote him a letter of appreciation for his marvellous playing on many records and thanked him for the great pleasure he had given me over the many years I was listening to his recorded work. After that was done I considered the matter closed. However, from his immediate and enthusiastic reaction I could tell that things wouldn't come to a standstill as quickly as expected. It was easy to realize from Kenny's lively and interesting missives that with the help of a questionnaire and some more corresponding an especially interesting story could be written. Kenny agreed and we have kept in touch ever since. I believe I have all his records with the exception of five Billie Holiday titles and two sides by Kenny Watts (see below).

I have listened to Kenny Hollon's recorded solos many times with my wife and also with such Hollon-fans as George Mathys, Klaus Naegeli, Felix Steinmann and Karl Salzmann (with the latter during three entire Saturday nights until the wee hours of Sunday morning). They all helped me by drawing my attention to particular points which might have escaped my attention. I also want to thank Ernst Steiner for his making copies of the precious original photos supplied by Kenny himself. It allowed me to return the originals within a very short time. I knew how much the pictures meant to Kenny and his family and how relieved they would feel getting the photographs back. And not wishing to deceive them, I felt as relieved as the Hollons when - thanks to Ernst's kindness - all was in order.

I owe it to John Chilton for being aware of the fact that Kenny Hollon is the tenor-player on the four below mentioned sides by the vocalist Putney Dandridge. I had never heard the two records before John told me that Kenny was on them. I then put them on all my "wantlists" and thanks to Bob Altshuler in New York within a few weeks I could hear that John was right. For the Putney Dandridge date of October 21, 1935 the discographies indicate Henry "Red" Allen, Ben Webster, Teddy Wilson, Lawrence Lucie, John Kirby and Walter Johnson. The correct line-up though is - as is easy to verify when one listens to the records - Shirley Clay, Kenny Hollon, Teddy Wilson, Clarence Holiday, John Kirby and Manzie Johnson. Incidentally, it is certainly no coincidence that it was John Chilton who drew my attention to these records and that it was he who furnished the correct personnel. The man's knowledge and understanding for his chosen subject are just about fabulous. If nobody else seems to know the answers, John VERY OFTEN does. I for

one have certainly taken full advantage of John Chilton's seemingly unlimited treasury of jazz information. And what he tells you are not those detestable "guesses" and "suppositions" by the countless phoney who not only don't help research at all but who make it increasingly more difficult to find out what's what to those who seriously go after such things.

Kenny remembers the four Dandridge sides as being the first ones he recorded. He was already a most interesting, fully developed soloist at the time and can be heard in magnificent "hot solos", admirably phrased semi-straight exposes of the melody, obligato work to Dandridge's singing and exciting ride-outs with Shirley Clay. At times, Kenny sounds so much like Chu Berry of the same period that I feel that of all the tenor-men who got on records around 1934-1936, Kenny Hollon came closest to the unforgettable Chu. (Kenny: "Cecil Scott and Chu Berry were two tenor-players I felt especially close to, musically and personally, and I very much concentrated on their playing. Their styles immediately impressed me. To my way of thinking, Coleman Hawkins was the greatest of them all - the master - but Cecil and Chu were easier models for an up-and-coming young cat like me"). Kenny is especially brilliant on Eeny Meeny Miney Mo and Double Trouble but anyone interested in this fine artist's work, should hear all four sides. It is regrettable that until now - with the exception of Hans Herder who on Swingfan 1018 put out four excellent sides by Bob Howard with all-star line-ups - reissue projects carefully seemed to avoid any records made under such singers as Bob Howard, Putney Dandridge, Dick Porter etc. Not all of their work would deserve reissuing by any means but many of their sides are first rate and the musicians used on these dates were among the top jazzmen of this most fruitful period where creativity was concerned. Creativity and individuality. Being familiar with almost every record issued under the name of the three singers mentioned, I can testify that the musicians hired were usually extensively featured (especially on Bob Howard's dates) and are often in peak form. Let it be added that the three singers are better than has often been claimed (particularly Bob Howard). Whatever one may think of them, nobody can deny that they were real swingers and that the great musicians they hired felt at ease and lifted many of the sides out of the "ordinary commercial record" class by their wonderful playing. I have every reason to believe that "Mr. Tax" might come up with some surprises in the near future.

Getting back to the Putney Dandridge date with Kenny Hollon, there are also superb solos by Shirley Clay (a trumpet-player whom no less than Louis Armstrong had much regard for and who has left (relatively) few really successful records). Clay's soulful appearance in the first chorus of I'm On A See-saw as well as his more fierce playing on Eeny Meeny Miney Mo, Double Trouble and Santa Clause Came In The Spring are among the best solos I ever heard him play. He plays as well here as on the four sides he made with Lil Armstrong, especially Let's Call It Love and his most inspired eight bars of When I Went Back Home, fortunately reissued on Swingfan 1014, a fine album doing Lil Armstrong full justice as the peppy, swinging vocalist, marvellous composer and, especially wise and inspiring leader she was. Her taste and unflinching choice in picking the best musicians available were truly something to marvel at.

The following story is of general interest and I tell it here in some detail. When Kenny and I started corresponding, he informed me that he "took Chu's place in Teddy Hill's orchestra when he left, in late 1935 or early 1936, to join HORACE Henderson's band in Chicago." (J.S.: A little later Chu switched over to FLETCHER Henderson's orchestra but Kenny is positive that Chu Berry was for an unspecified period with HORACE Henderson between engagements with Teddy Hill and Fletcher Henderson.) Kenny also wrote: "Altogether I played a long time with Teddy Hill but I did not record with him." However, when I sent him a Teddy Hill discography, he wrote back: "I must have been wrong concerning my belief of not having recorded with Teddy. In the list of his recordings that you supplied, all the boys I played with are listed and I also remember most of the titles of the numbers mentioned. They were in the book when I was with the Teddy Hill orchestra. So I must have made those recording dates despite the fact that I don't remember them."

How typical a case of a correspondence or a conversation between a musician and a "researcher"! And what an opportunity for the latter to jump to wrong conclusions! In this special instance, the tenor player heard on the Teddy Hill sessions of April 1, May 4, 1936 and March 26, April 23, 1937 is undoubtedly Cecil Scott who in May 1937 was replaced by Bob Carroll (who also came with the band to Europe in summer 1937). Kenny's memory had not failed him when he thought that he had not recorded with Teddy Hill! However, seeing the tune titles, he immediately remembered them because they were in the Hill orchestra's book before and after they were recorded and Kenny undoubtedly played them often during his various stays with the band. To anyone knowing the playing of Cecil Scott and Kenny Hollon well, it becomes clear that on the records made during the period mentioned it is Cecil who played all the tenor solos. I make this statement even by taking into consideration that at times Kenny was strongly influenced by

Cecil Scott. For instance the solo Kenny plays on Frankie Newton's Jam Fever is INCREDIBLY close to Cecil Scott's UNIQUE style and tone! As we have already heard, Kenny had listened to both Cecil and Chu. He didn't do so only for a certain time but, as he stressed himself, he followed their playing and musical development for many years. What makes the whole matter even more complicated is that Chu had also listened to Cecil Scott - probably especially when he played in Scott's band after leaving the Sammy Stewart orchestra in New York - and was (for a certain period, at least) influenced by Cecil's very special kind of staccato playing as can be heard on certain of the sides he made with Spike Hughes and such Benny Carter records as Six Bells Stampede, Swing It and the first Synthetic Love.... However despite all this, there cannot be any doubt that the tenor solos on such Hill records as At The Rug Cutter's Ball, Blue Rhythm Fantasy (Vocalion), The Harlem Twister, Marie and A Study In Brown bear the Cecil Scott mark so much that no one but Cecil himself could have played them. Not even Kenny Hollon... As said, it often happens that a musician who, many years after, gets a look at a discography, immediately remembers his former colleagues and the titles of the numbers recorded and in spite of the fact that he knew he didn't record with the band under review, thinks that he had forgotten and then claims that he made those records anyhow. This is very understandable from the musician's side. However, it should teach the "researcher" that it is not enough to ask the musicians' questions but that it is indispensable to aurally check the information obtained. Brian Rust's 1969 revised edition of "Jazz Records 1897 - 1942" gives the accurate Teddy Hill personnels while the original edition shows Kenny Hollon's name by error. A few recollections about the Hill days by Kenny: "I had just taken Chu's place and was playing my first Teddy Hill engagement at the Apollo Theater. No chance for a rehearsal. The first tune Teddy called was California Here I Come, a nice moving instrumental arrangement. There were a lot of figures and cut-outs with two and four measure breaks for tenor-sax... and I didn't know my can from my elbow about the score! Teddy was directing with his long tails and I was watching him and trying to see the score too... When we got to the breaks Chu had taken while he was with the band, there was nothing but complete silence, you could have heard a pin drop in each one of the six four bar breaks!!! Teddy's eyes got as big as saucers and he was cursing under his breath but I didn't know it was on account of me who had loused up the score... After the show we rehearsed that arrangement practically five or six hours. It took me almost three days to half way get the thing under my fingers before it sounded like anything as far as I was concerned."

"Another thing: in 1939, playing a theater date at the Lincoln in Philadelphia, the night we closed I got put out of the

Douglas Hotel which was right across the street from the theater. After the show, my friend the drummer Bill Beason and I went to the PEP SHOP, a luncheonette and killed a couple of hours rapping with each other. When we decided to turn in at the hotel, all the rooms were locked and occupied by the chorus girls and the cats from the Teddy Hill band! When I found out what was going on, I raised hell. I banged at every single door and yelled at the top of my lungs that I wanted to go to bed and get some sleep before we would leave for our next date in Washington D.C. at the Howard Theater! Well, the house detective tried to quiet me down but to no avail: I just yelled louder. So he very gently but firmly escorted me to the door-steps of the hotel and that's where I stayed for the rest of the night. I hadn't been drinking then. I was cold sober but I felt like raising hell because they froze me out of the party. Bill got so upset at the way I carried on that he went to the YMCA and stayed there for the rest of that night. You can see that I was a somewhat wild cat under certain circumstances...."

Kenny plays on the seven titles recorded by Slim and Slam on August 17 and November 9, 1938. On all of them he is heard at length and in truly fantastic form. The very relaxed atmosphere (no trouble to fall in a "mellow groove" with Slim Gaillard around!), the terrific rhythm-section consisting of Sam Allen on piano (who hasn't always received all the credit he'd deserve), Slam Stewart on bass (outside of his famous bowed/sung solos, Slam is one of the most solid accompanists), Slim himself on guitar (and he could really JUMP!) and a great, unsung drummer by the name of Pompey "Guts" Dobson - they all contribute to make Kenny FLY! "Serious jazz-students" (what's that?) sometimes claim that this kind of record is "light-weight" and that there is "too much hokum" going on that it could qualify as really "important jazz". (Again: What is "important jazz"?) How far from the truth they are! Primo, most of the singing and commenting by the two comperes is extremely funny - and what's bad about good musicians jiving around and having fun and communicating some of it to their listeners? Secundo, it is exactly this casual care-free kind of tackling their numbers which allows the musicians to be so very much at ease, spirited and inspired! The result is music of supreme relaxation.

On the first session there is nothing to choose between Kenny's truly terrific solo flights on Vol Vist Du Gaily Star, Laughing In Rhythm and Jump Session. On the latter title, Slim's approving shouts of "solid" and "gone" during the tenor solos are JUST TO THE POINT. All his solos are the very epitome of swing and spicy ideas abound. On all medium tempo numbers you realize that Kenny Hollon's style is a JUMPING one. On the fast (and hilarious) Vol Vist Du... the similarity with Chu Berry is close except where tone is concerned. It is no exaggeration to say that Kenny equals his mentor where ideas and execution are

concerned! The same applies to the second session on which one of his greatest solos can be heard on Sweet Safronia. On this and It's Getting Kinda Chilly, Kenny plays with terrific speed and rare technical brilliance without his inspiration faltering one moment. He is equally at home on Dopey Joe and Buck Dance Rhythm (ideal medium/fast tempo). Kenny says: "If I recall correctly, none of the musicians did the tap-dancing heard on Buck Dance Rhythm. This was probably the work of one of the many buddies of Slim and Slam who followed them around wherever they went, even attending all their recording-dates! These mellow cats (smiles) contributed to the success of those sessions in no uncertain way!" Jump Session, Vol Vist Du Gaily Star, Dopey Joe and Buck Dance Rhythm were reissued on Caete LP3, "Slim & Slam - There's no two ways about it". The transfer to LP wasn't well done and the music is far from sounding as clear and fresh as on the original 78 RPMs. And why that inexplicable sleeve mention: "Omit Kenny Hollon" for the two last-name titles? Don't these people - at least once - listen to the records they choose to reissue? Strange.

On October 11, 1939 Slim Gaillard and his Flat Foot Floogie Boys recorded five titles. William Smith played bass, Lou Morgan was on piano (he's generally very close to Billy Kyle's personal style), Hubert Pettaway was the drummer (another great swing man who "never made it") while Slim himself takes some entirely admirable and some almost amateurish solos on the guitar. According to John Chilton all of Slim's best stuff is in the key of C (incidentally the titles of one of his finest records, containing a particularly outstanding guitar solo) while other keys seemed to fit him much less. In Slim's case the difference in quality is really amazing. Herman "Humpy" Flintall, a popular figure among Harlem musicians of that time and today the arranger/pianist of a famous vocal quartet, played bouncing joyous alto. This group of musicians had already two other sessions to its credit: On September 15, 1939 with Cyril Newman on trumpet (who played excellently but must have been on the scene only a very short time: not a single musician I ever asked remembered anything about him. Or perhaps the name is wrong?) and on October 4, 1939 with Al Killian who was again the trumpet-player on the October 11, 1939 date under review. Killian - later on best-known as a high-note specialist with JATP, Lionel Hampton and Duke Ellington - plays truly magnificent solos on all the sides. He proves to have been the equal of Charlie Shavers of that period.

The session of October 11, which starts with Look Out and finishes with Huh! Oh Huh!, contains a discographical error which would have been easy to detect if more people LISTENED to records instead of just collecting them. While the personnel given is accurate for the last three numbers recorded, the first two performances, Look Out and Matzoh



Left to Right: Eddie Dougherty, Johnny Williams, Tab Smith, Stanley Pargue and Kenny Hollon. (Frankie Newton Orchestra)

Balls And Gefuellte Fish have Kenny Hollon (on tenor) in place of alto saxophonist, Humpy Flintall. And the solos mentioned count among Kenny's greatest: his constant inspiration, maximum swing, great technical facility and fine tone are hard to beat. Kenny: "Very faintly I seem to remember that Slim called me from the studio for a session at short notice because the sax-man hired for the date didn't make time. It could have been Humpy." Both Look Out and Matzoh Balls plus Laughing In Rhythm, Sweet Safronia and It's Getting Kinda Chilly have been reissued on Caete LP-4, "Slim & Slam - Matzoh Balls". Generally, this album is far better reproduced than the aforementioned Caete LP-3. The high musical standard and irresistible hilarity all over raise this to the top class and only an anti-life-enjoying/anti-jazz bloke wouldn't love it. His work with Slim & Slam shows Kenneth Lynn Hollon as a truly great tenor player. An outstanding exponent of contagious JUMP-sax playing. Incidentally, such a connoisseur as Alain Massart, one of the leading lights of the famous Hot Club de Bordeaux, told me in a recent letter: "I have always loved

Kenny Hollon's playing and could never understand why nothing is known about this very remarkable artist."

In 1938 and 1939, Kenny worked several long stints with Frank Newton's group, mostly at Cafe Society in New York. The band, backing Billie Holiday on three dates, recorded thirteen sides with her altogether. On the first one of March 21, 1938, Frank - ill at the time - was replaced by Hot Lips Page. Unfortunately, I only know the often reissued Long Gone Blues (Arild Wideroe who has Why Did I Always Depend On You, informs me that Kenny does not play a solo on this number) but none of the other four sides which must be hard to get - at least each time I wanted them! Kenny remembers that he "took some solos on the up-tempo numbers recorded on the date with Billie and Lips". "The complete Billie Holiday", announced by CBS, is eagerly awaited for many reasons...where I am concerned, last but not least, for a few (to me) new jumping solos by Mr. Hollon! (Note: Since the foregoing was written, several months have passed and it seems rather unlikely that this fabulous project will be carried out. At least not in the

near future. Too bad!) On April 20, the band cut four sides for Commodore with its rightful leader back on duty and with Sonny White (Billie's constant companion at that time) in place of Kenny Kersey. This was, of course, the date on which Strange Fruit and Fine And Mellow were recorded. Both are synonymous with Billie Holiday. The two other sides which, incidentally, I happen to play more often than their more heralded session mates, are I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues and Yesterdays. On the latter, Kenny's tenor is the only horn used. Although he is somewhat underrecorded, it is still possible to note Kenny's understanding of Billie's style, i.e. the great sensitivity with which he accompanies her. After a beautiful interlude by Sonny White, the tempo is doubled-up and Kenny plays a few phrases which smack of Lester Young AND Chu Berry! Amazing but nevertheless true. Kenny: "I had great admiration for Billie. She was in a class by herself. Not just another "girl-singer". Much more: A GREAT ARTIST! She and Sonny liked my way of playing and for this reason Yesterdays was made by just the rhythm-section and myself. Of

course, I didn't want to get into Billie's way and that's why I held back more than I would have done under different circumstances. I considered it an honor making this record and tried my best not to spoil a great performance."

The third date took place on July 5, 1939 with roughly the same band but led by Charlie Shavers instead of Frank Newton. Kenny doesn't remember whether this happened for yet another of Frank's frequent illnesses around that time (often reported in Down Beat and The Melody Maker because Frankie Newton was one of the top trumpet-men in those years). Unfortunately, I have never heard Our Love Is Different but Some Other Spring (Irene Eadie's great composition - she was Teddy Wilson's first wife and is thought to be still living in Chicago - completely blind for many years) is a masterpiece with marvellous work by Billie, Charlie Shavers, the mellow sax-team and Sonny White. Kenny has fine swinging solos on Them There Eyes and Swing, Brother, Swing. For people really familiar with Cecil Scott's and Chu Berry's respective styles, it becomes obvious that Kenny's staccatophrases and rough and ready delivery are closer to Cecil than Chu. This is especially true with regard to his solo in Them There Eyes.

On August 12, 1939 the Frankie Newton band recorded four sides of which Frankie's Jump and Tab's Blues have become deservedly famous. Incidentally, the latter, a superb arrangement by Tab Smith, is almost identical to Billie Holiday's Long Gone Blues. On both performances mentioned, Tab leads the reeds on soprano saxophone and he also takes his solos (very different from each other) on that instrument. While these two sides (Tab's Blues and Frankie's Jump) do not contain any solos by Kenny, he is heard playing wonderful choruses on Jitters (which Tab Smith also arranged for Count Basie - on the chords of Duke Ellington's It Don't Mean A Thing) and Jam Fever. It is interesting to note that almost all of his records of 1939 show Kenny's playing to be closer to Cecil Scott's than to Chu's, i.e. at a period when Chu had found his own style and very little of the former Cecil Scott influence could be detected in his playing. On Jam Fever Kenny's solo sounds absolutely like Cecil Scott and I remember that it took a lot of persuading to convince Felix Steinmann and Georges Mathys that this was NOT Cecil. It's also this one solo which makes me wonder why I was so categorical about Kenny's NON-participation on any of Teddy Hill's records! I hope that everybody will hear Jam Fever and draw their own conclusions. All four sides are quite superb, the band producing a sound all of its own. Tab Smith proves to have been a most capable musical director and all his arrangements are a delight to hear. The three men in the reed section play with a big tone and if you don't listen real hard, you will think you're hearing a saxophone quartet. In general, these are exceptional records. All the players are fully up to

expectations: The unpredictable Frank Newton who could play in widely different moods, even styles, according to the way he felt on a particular day; Tab, one of the true individualists on the alto; Kenny Kersey, very musical but at that time still much influenced by Teddy Wilson, contrary to his very personal style of a few years later - and the terrific rhythm-section with the ever swinging Johnny Williams on bass and Eddie Dougherty on drums. And there was Stanley Payne on third alto who used to grace so many reed teams of that time and of whom Glyn Paque used to say: "I may have played first alto in some bands of which Stanley was also a member because the leader put me on first but it happened a few times that I got lost and it was a relief to have a third alto in the band who would NEVER get lost....listening to HIM I always used to find my part again in no time at all although it should have been the other way around!"

Two other sides, Vamp and Parallel Fifths were recorded on August 15, 1939 by the same outfit plus Dickie Wells added on trombone. For a while I thought that there was also another trumpet player in addition to Frank but I am certain now that it is just the clever voicing used by the arrangers which was tricking me. The very different musical outlook of Frank Newton, who composed and arranged the second number, and Tab Smith, who wrote Vamp, becomes clear at once. Frankie, always a mild "progressive" at heart, created a piece along rather "futuristic lines" for that time. The chord structure is rather advanced for 1939 standards and the composer arranger does himself proud with some delicate muted playing of the kind he did on Minor Jive eight months earlier and The Dream (with James P. Johnson) five years later. Dickie Wells' "pedal notes" in the ensembles are very effective.

Tab Smith's Vamp, on the other hand, tells a much simpler, more direct story. In my opinion it has kept its full charm to this day while I would say so only with a few reservations where Franks' more "recherche" writing is concerned. That this is so will surprise nobody familiar with jazz over a span of three or four decades. It is almost always the spontaneous creations that stay freshest and this gospel-truth applies even more to arranging than to solo playing. It is noteworthy to point out that on the two sides mentioned, the ensembles sound so different that in spots it is hard to believe they are performed by exactly the same group. There is a jubilant solo by Kenny on Vamp. Tab takes exuberant, highly inspired solos on both sides. Dickie Wells drives the Blues down in his two choruses on Vamp. The great trombone player, who has recorded so many blues, always finds something new and worthwhile to say. One can tell that this was a happy band and that the men enjoyed each other's playing. (About Tab Smith: Both Hal Singer and Panama Francis quoted Lucky Millinder as having said: "Tab is - by far - the highest-paid musician I ever had in my band. The day he leaves, we're

in trouble!")

Kenny was present on the Louis Jordan dates of March 13 (six titles), April 29 (four titles) and September 30, 1940 (four titles). Many of the Jordan personnels published belong among the most doubtful discographical "revelations" of them all - second only to the Washboard Rhythm Kings Boys Band data at hand. I remember that some years ago, at the suggestion of Hugues Panassie, I tried to do a piece about Louis Jordan's trumpet players from Courtney Williams to Aaron Izenhall via Kenneth Roane, Freddy Webster and Eddie Roane etc. However, listening closely to all of Jordan's records with the ears of the guy who writes about what he hears and tries his damnest to avoid giving his readers misinformation, I realized more and more that many of the personnels at hand were questionable...I also recall that this was the one case where corresponding and listening to the records with the musicians themselves (those who were supposed to have been on these dates) didn't help much. The artists, willing and kind enough to try shedding light into the dark field of discographical Jordania - Kenneth Roane, Henry B. Turner, Clarence Johnson, Miss Yack Taylor and Kenny Hollon - made such contradictory statements that I got all confused and finally dropped the matter as a hopeless case. The only man who remembered CLEARLY what had happened was Lem C. Johnson who had played tenor on the first eight sides Louis Jordan had recorded under his own name. But after that period.... utter confusion set in.

Anyway, everybody (including Kenny himself) remembered that Kenneth Hollon made the fourteen aforementioned sides and Mr. Hollon I know sufficiently well to positively recognize him. Incidentally, the identification of the tenor players isn't a problem anyway. Outside of Lem Johnson and Kenny Hollon, the man present on most of the Jordan dates around the period under review, was the late Stafford "Pazuza" Simon. This wonderful player, blessed with a strong personality, is almost always immediately recognizable. I hope that some day I will be able to do justice to this all too much neglected artist. It won't be easy, though, since if I know most of his (many) recorded solos, I have very little material on THE PERSON "Pazuza" Simon had been. The many musicians I had asked questions about him hadn't much to tell me and up-to-date my notes are only of the following kind: "Pazuza liked to swing all the time", "he sure liked his whiskey", "although he was usually a nice guy, he could get real mad if and when somebody made him angry" etc. I haven't given up hope, though, that in the not too distant future I will run into a former colleague of Stafford Simon who will be able to tell me a little less prosaic details about this most gifted musician's personality. As said, tenor-players aren't the problem on Jordan records. But when it gets to trumpet-players, and rhythm-men the jungle gets more and more dense...one musician insisting: "That was X, I was

there when it happened" while another is equally categorical: "It was Y. I was on that session and remember all the details." The life of a "researcher" sure ain't no bed of roses!

Of course, all of Louis Jordan's records should be reissued - with or without personnels on the sleeve! He is a marvellous reed-man (one of the finest alto players, he is also heard in superb solos on clarinet, tenor and baritone), one of the greatest vocalists in all jazz and he used to surround himself with some of the wingingest cats around! (My good friend Leon Terjanian produced a great album - TD Records, Vol. I, TD 001 - of Jordan-goodies from 1941-50. Now reissued on JazzClub 123) I insist so much on Louis Jordan's outstanding assets as one of the top jazz men because I know that he is often underrated by many jazz-buffs... as are most musicians who are great entertainers at the same time. This twofold talent is often taboo to the "serious jazz student" and prevents him fully appreciating the musical qualities of an artist who happens to be a gifted actor or entertainer as well. I remember how furious I was last summer when a visiting collector, looking at a pile of 78 RPMs by Louis Jordan, disdainfully remarked: "What do you have these for? They aren't worth much." The gentleman in question is yet another ex-visitor on my fairly long list.... You can praise musicians that I don't understand; that's all-right with me. But don't insult any of the hundreds and hundreds who mean something to me. That's when I will escort you to the door lightly and politely...but firmly. Why, oh why, can't so many people keep their mouth shut when it comes to music they don't know a damn thing about or - at best - simply have no understanding for?

All of Kenny's solos on Louis Jordan's records are excellent and some even better than that. He can be heard on: You Got To Go When The Wagon Comes (8 bars), Lovie Joe (a most inspired break), Somebody Done Hoodooed The Hoodoo Man (16 bars VERY close to Cecil Scott), Penthouse In The Basement (16 bars, delivered with incredible aggressivity and punch), After School Swing Session (two significant statements of 4 bars each), Oh Boy I'm In The Groove and Never Let Your Left Hand Know What Your Right Hand's Doing (8 bars in each case), Don't Come Crying On My Shoulder (4 bars), Waiting For The Robert E. Lee (6 bars), A Chicken Ain't Nothing But A Bird (4 bars - on two occasions - which tell two short but widely different interesting stories) and 8 bars in a lowdown groove on Pompton Turnpike. There are no tenor-solos on Bounce The Ball, Do You Call That A Buddy and I Know You... I Know What You Wanna Do. Many of the arrangements are in the same style as the ones which were John Kirby's trademark and they are performed with the same virtuosity as heard by the Kirby sextet. Which says a lot about the musical discipline and efficiency of the Jordan musicians. (I will never forget the surprise of some Swiss professionals

in 1938/39 that "Negro musicians can play so clean and phrase so perfectly"!!!! when speaking of the Kirby group.)

On the first eight sides recorded by Buddy Johnson - the dates of November 16, 1939 and October 25, 1940 - a little-known tenor player by the name of Sonny Fredericks is heard. This excellent musician who had already recorded four sides with Red Allen in 1936, sounded at times much like Kenny Hollon. It takes concentration, long experience in the jazz field and a good ear to tell the two tenor-players apart - at least in a few isolated spots. Adolphus Anthony "Doc" Cheatham: "Sonny was a fine saxophone player who was gigging a lot with some of the best bands in New York in the 30s and 40s. During the last twenty years of his life - while he still could play, that is - Sonny worked mostly with Latin bands. A remarkable artist who really loved life. It grieves me to report that Sonny Fredericks had a particularly atrocious end. He had developed diabetes and, gradually, lost his legs, his arms, even his eyes until death finally came as a relief for him and his family for which it was horrible to see him suffer that much. Sonny passed two weeks ago." (Letter of September 11, 1972).

In all discographies that I have seen, the personnel given for the date of May 1, 1941 must be applied to the session of April 9 of the same year. The soloists heard and the sound of the band clearly indicate that already on the April 9 date the previously employed group (Courtney Williams, Don Stovall, Sonny Fredericks etc.) had made room for the band comprising Shad Collins, Joe Eldridge, Kenny Hollon, Leonard Ware and the Clarke brothers (Frank and Kenny). Mr. Hollon is heard in a typical, fine solo of 24 bars in Boogie Woogie's Mother-in-law. But more important is the fact that on this date one of his feature numbers with Buddy Johnson was recorded: In There. Kenny: "I wrote and arranged this number and dedicated it to the pregnancy of my wife who was carrying our first child, Kenneth jr. Buddy was enthusiastic to record the number and we had a ball doing it." In There is mostly Kenny Hollon himself and he appears in all his glory. There are many arresting and daring ideas and the delivery is always full of swing. One feels the presence of an important musician who knows all about his horn and who is a born jazz-player. And I have never heard - I have to repeat and stress this point - ANYONE who combined the very contrasting styles of Lester Young and Chu Berry as well as Kenny Hollon did. And what emerges is PURELY ORIGINAL music. Incidentally, this entirely "non-commercial" instrumental record sold very well and Kenny enjoyed being called "Putnam Street's ace arranger".

On the date of May 1, 1941 five titles were waxed including Kenny's own Troyon Swing. According to Kenny the correct label inscription should have been Troyon Club Swing. Kenny: "I dedicated this to my late brother's memory. The Troyon

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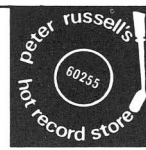
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Club was a neighbourhood fraternity organization of which my brother happened to be a member. Again I wrote the number and did the arrangement myself." The number has an especially interesting middlepart and deservedly added further laurels to "Putnam Street's ace arranger's" reputation. Kenny takes splendid solos on Troyon Club Swing and, especially, It's The Gold. On the later he is JUMPING against effectively scored riffs by the rest of the horns. His six bars on New Please Mr. Johnson are a little less inspired than usual. Incidentally, this applies to the whole record when one compares it with Please Mr. Johnson (made on October 25, 1940) and which was one of Buddy Johnson's greatest hits if not his top-hit record! In general, "re-makes" of a previously recorded performance rarely manage to come up to the original and NEW Please Mr. Johnson, although an agreeable record, is no exception to this rule. I think that it is mostly the over-slow tempo which is to blame. The one adopted on Please Mr. Johnson was just RIGHT and "put everybody right in the alley", as Bill Coleman remarked when we played the record a few years ago. All the other numbers from that session are of a high standard, especially the beautiful Southern Exposure which features some sharp,



biting playing by the leader (the change of key at the beginning of his second chorus is a knock-out!) as well as fine contributions by Leonard Ware on guitar and Scoville Brown on clarinet. Joe Eldridge takes very relaxed and musical solos on I'm My Baby's Baby and It's The Gold. A few years ago I wrote a tribute to the late George "Scoops" Carry (correct spelling) in which I made frequent references to Joe Eldridge's playing. I pointed out that musicians had told me that Joe was very much influenced by Benny Carter but that in 1936/37 he changed his style and tone in order to sound as much as possible like Carry who, like Joe, played in brother Roy Eldridge's band at that time. These 1941 records by Buddy Johnson show that at that time, Joe had turned back again to his former idol Benny Carter. His solos here have some of the grace and beauty found so often in the great Benny Carter's work. On It's The Gold, Lester "Shad" Collins is heard in a terrific solo which would not be unworthy of Roy Eldridge at his most inspired and relaxed! Incidentally, outside of his own characteristic staccato style which Jo Jones so aptly described: ("He (Shad) always popped every note out like he was making spitballs") on the sleeve of Count Basie's "Super Chief" on CBS as told to Michael Brooks. Shad had the special talent of giving amazing imitations of other trumpet players: Bill Coleman, Roy Eldridge, Buck Clayton and Jonah Jones especially come to mind. Incidentally, on the recently issued soundtrack of "Stormy Weather" - Caracol 439 - the solo trumpet on Geechie Joe, erroneously titled Easy Joe on the record in question, is by Shad Collins and not by Jonah Jones. I have seen the movie seventeen times (fourteen times with Glyn Paque who knew both Jonah and Shad) and every time the small, skinny man stood up to take his solo and "answers" to Cab's vocal on Geechie Joe, Glyn nudged me and whispered: "Shad"! However, the solo is so much in Jonah's manner that people, not having had the chance to see "Stormy Weather" fourteen times with Glyn Paque, can be forgiven when they think on their Caracol album they are hearing Jonah Jones on Geechie Joe. Irving "Mouse" Randolph and Jack Butler are the only other trumpet players I can think of who have this same special talent of imitating DIFFERENT trumpet players so well.

On the other three sessions with Buddy Johnson - November 6, 1941, January 26 and July 30, 1942, fourteen titles altogether - Kenny is generally less extensively featured but his solo contributions to I'm Stepping Out, Deep Down In The Miz (close to Chu Berry), I Done Found Out and I'll Always Be With You once again confirm his outstanding class. And there are few things as beautifully moving as his coda on Without The One You Love.

Kenny Watts and his Buddies recorded Putnam Avenue Breakdown, Doin' The Thing, Watts My Name and Brooklyn Bridge on August 9, 1946 with the following personnel: Kenny Hollon and Jimmie Brown, tenor-saxes; Kenny Watts, piano;

Carroll Walrond, bass and Ray Nathan drums. These records would have escaped my attention when I put this piece together (although I owned the first and second titles many years ago) if Dieter Harmann had not reminded me and sent a cassette with the two afore-mentioned titles. To this day I have never heard the third and fourth numbers. Kenny doesn't solo on Doin' The Thing - an excellent slow lowdown Blues with choruses by Kenny Watts and Jimmie Brown - but he takes 64 bars (the second and third choruses) in Putnam Avenue Breakdown. The Chu Berry influence - but now the Cab Calloway days-Chu - is obvious and all in all this is a fine solo although it is somewhat strange and surprising to note those typical phrases "a la Kenny Hollon" are slightly forced and (mildly) screamed by now. Of course, this was (already) the time when tenor-players HAD to play that way (except the few men on top who could afford to remain themselves... a fact that applies to all instruments and all periods in jazz... and which is the reason why so many musicians try to "up-date" their playing and why so many others who don't, disappear. The "critics" have a tendency to praise the former - with little regard to whether the result is musically satisfying or not - and to despise the latter. I have never felt that way because many years ago I noticed that a musician can rarely fully adapt himself to new trends successfully. In a way, most musicians remain attached to their original style and way of expressing themselves when they shaped and developed their musical way of thinking and feeling. This doesn't mean - and here most "critics" are all wrong - that there is a standstill, i.e. that the musician in question stops developing. He still does (if he is a real musician) but in HIS own style instead of making a change and, by doing so, playing inferior music as a result. The world of jazz is crowded full with examples of both kinds and for anyone not obsessed with a yen for "progress" and the wrong idea that the latest styles are the best and that everybody should play them, it is obvious that this forced, "by-all-means" change towards "contemporary trends" had rarely led to good results when older musicians were trying to "get modern").

There would be a lot more to say about Kenneth L. Hollon's playing (it is my regret that I haven't heard him play a slow blues because no artist's musical portrait is complete until you've heard him on a slow blues), his countless souvenirs of exciting happenings in the bands he was a member of and about the lovable, intelligent and warmhearted man he is. However, for the time being this essay about a neglected and never-written-up great artist should at least give some idea of his standing in jazz. I trust that from now on to readers "Kenny Hollon" will be more than just a name in discographies. And that's already a step forward in the right direction, of course.

It took us three years to finish this article: Once Kenny (after his retirement from the City job) managed his own busi-

ness and this took a lot of his time. When he supplied me with information again, I was in the middle of other articles and when I would have been ready to continue his story, Kenny had just bought a "1966 Buick Wildcat with full power, air-conditioned, just everything. I'm really tickled with it and so is my family. Burgundy color, black leather upholstery, five passengers, four door hardtop with a vinyl top (black), five beautiful white-wall tires, 400 horses, 34000 miles on it!" But then son Darryl stepped in and "used the car more than I" and some more information flew over the Ocean! Then I fell ill and when I had recovered, Kenny took seriously ill and had to have an operation. We cheered each other up with "get out of bed and back into circulation quick" cards a gogo and assured ourselves mutually and repeatedly that The Kenny Hollon Story HAD to be finished against all the obstacles and hardships of hospitals, operations, new jobs, plenty other obligations here and there, even the new "1966 Buick Wildcat"! (We also promised each other to "live more reasonably from now on") And we not only finally accomplished what we had planned for so long but through all the many complications during three years, we became really good friends and got close to each other.

I cannot refrain from putting the following final touch to OUR joint effort. (letter from Kenny of March 14, 1973): "As far as the story is concerned, everything is up to you and I hereby legally or otherwise appoint you my soul business agent in any dealings that may arise from this story. One never knows what can happen behind a unique story (smiles). You, your family and ours may just find a windfall in it. If for any reason something amazing happens with it after you've finished and published it, I want you to know and feel completely at ease as far as any legal problems that may arise out of this story are concerned. I'm willing and will sign any papers to that effect for you, only because we love and trust you and your beautiful family. I further authorize you to sign any documents, by affixing my legal name Kenneth L. Hollon, thereon, in my place and stead, in the event of my absence, any place or anywhere in this wide world. I hope and trust that this official authorization by the undersigned will be sufficient and effective enough to cover all or any legal problems that may arise in this or from this story which is being written and authored by one Johnny Simmen, of 20 Kinkelstrasse, 8006 Zurich, Switzerland. The name or proposed name of said story is "JUMPING WITH KENNY"/"The Story or a wonderful tenor-saxophone player, KENNETH L. HOLLON.", written and authored by Mr. Johnny Simmen of the aforementioned address." (letter from Kenny of March 14, 1973)

Well, that sure goes farther than anyone would expect. In another missive Kenny said: "It's fine to do that piece with you. What fun!" I can only add that if dear Kenny had half as much fun as I had, he had LOTS OF FUN, for sure!



Eugene Chadbourne
 Peter Friedman
 Mark Gardner
 Eugene Kramer
 Doug Langille
 John McDonough
 John Norris
 Barry Tepperman
 Dean Tudor
 Tex Wyndham

SUN RA

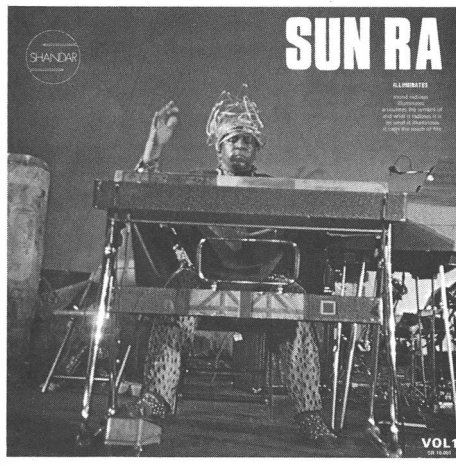
Volume One and Volume Two
 Shandar SR 10.001 & 10.003

When the first astronauts landed on the moon a few years ago, I expected them to find Sun Ra there, relaxing in a crater with his new moog synthesizer. I had seriously underestimated him, though. I'm sure that when the first word of the impending invasion by Apollo jocks came through he packed up his Arkestra and left for new frontiers.

Graciously enough, he's left some more messages for us stuck here on Earth. Shandar, a company that not only has the balls to release Sun Ra (and Albert Ayler and Cecil Taylor, too) but to package them in beautifully designed covers, recorded some of his French concerts. The recording quality is about the only beef I have with Shandar - it's not so much the over-all mix, which occasionally is a bit unbalanced, as it is a tendency toward sloppy engineering. Shandar albums are full of abrupt fades, and when they don't have enough time for these they simply just shut the machines down. The second side of Volume 2 rumbles to a close as if someone had kicked the plug out.

However, the appearance of any new Sun Ra material transcends minor irritations like these. If you want to hear Sun Ra completely clear of engineering foul-ups, perhaps you'd like to talk some big corporation like Kinney into signing him up and issuing a deluxe two-record set at a special low price with liner notes by Ralph J. Gleason.

These Shandar volumes encompass some of Sun Ra's best live performances - and they also contain quite a bit of him soloing on the moog synthesizer. The whole idea of Sun Ra sitting down at this colossal electronic toy is terrifying - but we'll get to that later. Volume 1 kicks off slowly, with two of the Arkestra's better show tunes. June Tyson and John Gilmore sing Enlightenment over sparse rhythm section accompaniment (with the slightest trace of flutes). This is a very pleasant, almost charming invitation to "be of our space world." There's no better follow-up for this than the famous Theme of the Stargazers, again sung by Gilmore and Tyson. Sun Ra takes a beautiful acoustic piano solo, repeating a brief chordal figure as he builds up the scales like a man strolling up a hill. This solo is under-recorded, and to really fathom it, you have to gas your system way, way up - which could be fatal when Sun Ra



naturally segues into the piano riff for Shadow World, bringing in the Arkestra's 10-odd blurring horns.

The communication between the horn section of Sun Ra's band is incredible. At the start of Shadow World, they go through some indescribable paces, suddenly letting up for a whumping conga solo from Nimrod Hunt, played over a simple triplet provided by Danny Thompson on baritone sax. The percussion goes out and Thompson is joined by Pat Patrick, also on baritone, and Robert Cummings on bass clarinet. This simple, somewhat lurching horn part forms a backbone for the composition. Thompson, Patrick, and Cummings walk out into the audience, naturally putting the figure into the background, and Sun Ra starts pummeling away at his organ. Dany Davis whips off a mentally jarring alto solo, the horns coming up in back of him, steaming him up, laying back out, storming back in, finally dropping out with the percussion to let Davis talk it out alone. Davis' solo alternates between bit-reed harmonic squeals and bleats from the lower register. It ends on a final guttural belch, and Cummings, Thompson, and Patrick re-enter. Sun Ra declares war on his keyboards, unleashing an improvisation that spits, yells, stamps, spews, dives, leaps, and blasts into a phantom crescendo of low staccato rumblings pitted against as eerie high dis-chord.

The horns come spiralling back in, building into a climax that will pull you right out of your chair and stand you on your head. Right when you think everything is over, Sun Ra takes a few final words on his organ and electric piano: a solo galactic touchdown with elements of Tibetan chants, gospel music, gamelan,

and Bach tossed in for good measure.

The second side of Volume 1 is completely devoted to The Cosmic Explorer, almost twenty minutes of Sun Ra solo at the moog - a relentless probing into the outer fringes. This is a performance that demands repeated listenings; every time I hear it I hear thousands of crazy things - like a sonorous series of warblings (almost like a soprano sax) that develop into an extra-terrestrial fugue. This performance isn't totally devoted to the moog - Sun Ra switches back and forth from keyboard to keyboard at a mind-boggling speed, going from a delicate acoustic piano texture to washes of white sound that sound like a steam drill gone mad.

The moog is an instrument which is known to fool audiences into thinking twenty minutes of farting around is great music, but let's get one thing out in the open - this is not twenty minutes of farting around. It's twenty minutes of great music, almost frightening in its scope. Don't listen to this casually - it's liable to jar your entire outlook on jazz.

The drummers (Lex Humphries, Nimrod Hunt, and Rashied Salim IV) enter near the end of the solo, battling it out. Sun Ra envelops them in a wailing electronic wind, then washes aside everything with a rapid series of sensuous calls to the outer world. With careful, fleeting steps he settles down amidst a touch of exotic hand percussion. In a celebratory, highly explosive afterthought, the horns shout their approval. And the drummers go into an orgy of rhythmic radiation - cymbals explode, the tom-toms rumble, all the drums snap and steam away. Right before Shandar's instant fade-out John Gilmore starts peppering out a tenor line, with the trumpets of Kwame Hadi and Ahk Tal Ebah laying in right behind him.

Volume 2 is a little less intense stuff - both compositions on side one are Sun Ra at his most accessible. Friendly Galaxy Number 2 is mostly a vehicle for a rambling, occasionally together but often messy cello solo from Alan Silva. The best moment is when Silva holds out a sustained bit of bowing against John Goldsmith's tympani and the spare horn charts. The charts are a bit too spare, however - for the most part they just repeat the same note over and over - a sort of mood-setting chant. Spontaneous Simplicity is a bit better, back in a modal groove similar to an album McCoy Tyner made awhile ago with John Gilmore. This could have been a piece with natural

Traneish solos from Gilmore, Marshall and company - instead Sun Ra solos on piano (again painfully under-recorded) while everyone bangs on some sort of percussion. The percussion is terrific, thick and baffling, but it goes on for about eight minutes, with Sun Ra's soloing limited to a lot of pretty embellishments on the theme. If you're nuts about percussion this will be a gas for you, if not, hang on.

World Of Lightning begins side 2 with a lot of handclapping from the crowd and gong-banging from the Arkestra. Sun Ra's entrance is waves of electric piano, the keys clicking like a harpsichord. There's a biting alto solo from Marshall Allen, and Gilmore on tenor and Patrick on baritone join in for a dynamite dialogue. Soon all the horns are in and the drums are building a monstrous structure. Allen keeps riding out over everyone, whipping the entire Arkestra around. This really burns!

It leads into a series of poems recited by June Tyson - this is a wee bit hokey, although I'm sure seeing it live with Sun Ra's magnificent stage presentation wouldn't be. After World Of Lightning, it is also a bit of an anti-climax but the only thing that wouldn't be is a full-scale invasion of Earth by Martians. The last of the poems, based on alliteration ("This strange world whirls, dreams worlds awhirl, a whirl, a world," etc...) prompts Sun Ra into a highly dramatic, almost stagey organ outburst. This is shortlived - he right away gets down into another brilliant moog solo, again explosive rumblings pitted against rushes of ethereal chords skimming out of the organ. Sun Ra is a man who takes sheer pleasure in sound - the spiritual delight of making a holy noise.

The final track, Sky, seems to have been patched on to fill out the side. It's barely two minutes, and in reality just the beginning of what sounds like a bitch of a piece, led by Allen on oboe. Again, here we have not a fade out, but a short circuit or something - anyone as crazy about Allen's oboe playing as I am will have their heart broken the first time around.

In the meantime, Sun Ra and his Arkestra were back in the States for the Newport/New York festival, and a good friend of mine took in their performance. During one piece the members of the Arkestra came out among the audience, dressed in wierd, flowing robes, and finally Sun Ra, his ominous metal headpiece on, came down, too. Everyone was chanting off and on, and Sun Ra approached my friend with his lips opening, ready to speak. My friend beat him to it by touching the headpiece and saying "It goes on and on - like a song." Sun Ra smiled. - E.C.

RADIO RARITIES

Various artists
Broadway BR - 100

This disc is made to order for those who like unusual items. There are two different species of "radio rarities" on this

LP. The first consists of early transcriptions; the second is made up of air shots. Side 1 and part of side 2 are taken from one-sided 12" 78 rpm Brunswick transcriptions dating from 1929-30 and feature the bands of Red Nichols, Ray Miller, and Coon-Sanders. The Nichols tracks (Ballin' The Jack, Walkin' The Dog, and Call Of The Freaks) are spirited performances by a recording group similar to the star-studded ones that Red used on his regular Brunswick dates of that period. Ballin' The Jack has a knock-out tenor solo by Bud Freeman, who in those days only played knocked-out solos. The inimitable bass saxophonist Adrian Rollini solos on Ballin' and Freaks, in both cases employing the upper part of his instrument's range so that it almost sounds like a tenor. The sleeve notes ask whether it is Benny Goodman or Pee Wee Russell who blows the excellent clarinet solo on Freaks, a Luis Russell composition that is done well by this group. I vote for Benny, since it sounds exactly like him, including some Jimmy Noone trills that were characteristic of Benny's style in those days. Pee Wee - according to Brian Rust - was on some earlier Nichols transcriptions, and I hope Broadway can locate these and put them out too.

I'm glad that Broadway kept in the announcer's introductions on the Brunswick transcriptions. I think that the announcers in those days must have been among the barkers at carnivals. Would you believe the following introduction to Ballin' The Jack?

"Have you ever been in the boiler room of an ocean liner? Temperature 120. Fire on all sides. That's the nearest thing to describe the plutonian abode - that is until you see Red Nichols and his orchestra in action."

A plutonian abode! Did the announcer realize that he was describing the "hot dance" music of Red Nichols as a descent into hell? The Ray Miller tracks consist mainly of some vocals with backing by Muggsy Spanier, but there is very little Muggsy - except on Tell Me Who, which has a full chorus by Muggsy. Tell Me Who is the same song recorded by the Halfway House Orchestra. The 1928 version by the Halfway House Orchestra goes a far way toward proving that a New Orleans band can make almost any number sound good, but the Ray Miller band is not from New Orleans.

Side two opens with a couple of 1929 selections by Coon-Sanders. As the album notes point out it is a switch to find this Victor orchestra on a Brunswick pressing. The band has a different sound quality to it. After listening to old 78's for years I think that if given a blindfold test I might be able to tell whether an electrical recording of the late twenties was made for Victor or Brunswick. Maybe I could guess even whether a Victor record was cut in Liederkrantz Hall or Camden - but probable I'm just kidding myself. Each studio seemed to have its own trademark in the days when they used a single mike, and the engineer simply tried to produce an honest sound. Today, alas, the emphasis is on sound

exploitation, not sound reproduction.

The rest of side two consists of 1939-40 air shots (that is, they are not studio transcriptions made specifically for radio, but recordings taken off the air during a live broadcast.) Big-band era samples of Benny Goodman, Hal Kemp, and Mitchell Ayres are presented. The Kemp and Ayres numbers apparently reflect a desire by Broadway records to include something for everyone. The Goodman tracks (Make Believe, There'll Be Some Changes Made, Jumpin' At The Woodside) are good samples of the swing-era's most popular band. Both Benny and Toots Mondello contribute driving solos on Jumpin'.

This album is available for \$6.00 from Broadway Records, 719 Panorama Drive, Milford, Michigan 48042, U.S.A. - E.K.

RED RODNEY

The Red Arrow
Onyx 204

What a pleasure to see this fine record available once again. Happily I own a copy of the original on the Signal label and have therefore been able to enjoy this excellent music from 1957 for some time now.

The personnel should make it clear to modern jazz lovers what to expect. Red Rodney, Ira Sullivan on tenor sax for five of the six numbers and on trumpet on the one other, Tommy Flanagan, piano; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Philly Joe Jones, drums on side one while Elvin Jones takes over on side two. With a lineup like that you should expect superior musicianship, creative ideas and enthusiastic performance. That expectation is wholly fulfilled. I can find nothing to complain about save perhaps that this same group didn't cut another five or six LP's after one.

The first side features three solid standards - Star Eyes, You Better Go Now, Stella By Starlight - while side two is devoted to originals - two by Rodney and one by Pettiford. All six tracks are bullseyes by the Red Arrow. 1957 was a hell of a good year for jazz. Onyx should be warmly commended for bringing this album back to life again and offering the pleasures of 1957 music to 1973 ears. Lets wish the label a long and successful life in reissuing such rare gems. It would also be nice to see Red Rodney back in the recording studio again soon - maybe even in a reunion with Ira Sullivan? - P. F.

SISSLE AND BLAKE

Eubie Blake Music EBM-4

This Lp reissues 13 tracks cut in 1920-1924 by the vaudeville and songwriting team of Sissle (vocals) and Blake (piano), plus one performance by the pit band of "Shuffle Along" the 1921 hit for which Sissle & Blake wrote the music and which became the first all-Negro show to play

Broadway. The Sissle-Blake duets include five "Shuffle Along" tunes and eight fox trots by other composers.

As Eubie Blake is the only pioneer ragtime pianist to survive into the ragtime revival with his playing ability apparently undiminished by time (most of the other veterans who benefited from the revival were actually about a generation younger than Eubie), it is historically important to an evaluation of his current style to have available recorded examples of the varying types of playing that helped to form it. Here his role is as a vocal accompanist, and though his work in that respect is excellent, the emphasis on Noble Sissle's half-sung half-spoken vocals tends to diminish the record's attraction to readers of this magazine.

Recording quality is much better than you might expect, Sissle's impeccable diction and spirited delivery coming through clearly. The fox trots, of course, have a more flexible, swifter approach than the show tunes, with the last four (Boo Hoo Hoo, Down Hearted Blues, Waitin' For The Evenin' Mail, and Sweet Henry), being somewhat better compositions and providing the team with better vehicles than the others. Sweet Henry, a fine tune, closed the program with its best track, a stomping performance that includes Eubie's only full-chorus hot solo of the Lp.

If a fair amount of this material seems dated today, it still captures the style that made Sissle & Blake top names in show business, and it's hard to criticize that type of success. -T.W.

HEINER STADLER

Brains On Fire
Labor LRS 7001

This LP is an initial scribbling of what Heiner Stadler is up to. He's a jazz composer and arranger, listing his influences as everyone from Monk to Varese. The music here is not that successful, but it is more worthwhile than the album cover, which resembles the type of thing I used to draw during my more creative hours in the ninth grade.

There are three compositions. The Fugue dates from 1966 with Jimmy Owens, Joe Farrell, Garnett Brown, Barre Phillips, Don Friedman, and Joe Chambers. The title is apt - it's a fugue, with the horns scrambling after a lot of hard-bop lines in a madly baroque fashion. There are lots of tempo shifts in the Mingus tradition, and Stadler's writing allows for the theme itself to stay in a state of constant change, evolving around various soloists naturally. It's nothing startling, but there's lots of good blowing, especially from Owens. Friedman is one of those pianists that simply flops his hands around willy-nilly during a solo; beyond that, there are few hitches.

Heidi and All Tones come from a 1971 session with Tyrone Washington on tenor and flute, Reggie Workman and Lenny White filling out the rhythm section, and Stadler sitting in on the piano. That's all

he does, unfortunately - sit. Both compositions attempt to fuse composition and improvisation to a point where it's impossible to tell which is which. This is an intriguing idea, but a bit of an overcoat, which Stadler should have hung up at the door to the recording studio as it results in stuffy playing. All Tones fills up side 2, maintaining interest chiefly through clear and logical playing from Workman and White. It's mostly an attempt to do something "new" with the blues, and everyone would have been better off just playing the blues and knocking off all the horseplay. As is, All Tones stays on the fringe of swinging. Everytime Washington starts getting into anything he gets muzzled by clumsy tempo changing. The piece roams by in an abstract daze, with a Monkish theme occasionally surfacing and Stadler tinkling away (he sounds like Art Tatum making fun of Stravinsky).

Heidi has a honking tenor solo, but again is hindered by ideological commitments. Nothing happens at all, and as for what portion of it was composed and/or improvised, who really cares?

The liner notes mention that Mingus thinks Stadler was successful here. Whether he's right or wrong, mentioning Mingus helps to clarify what's wrong with Stadler's work. Mingus really does write improvisational music, and he can propel soloists (even guys like Eric Dolphy and Booker Ervin who don't need to be propelled) beyond their wildest dreams. Here's where Stadler chickens out. Nobody here sounds propelled in the least. Brains On Fire, though, is Stadler's first step, and the first step is always the hardest.

The album is available from the Jazz Composer's Orchestra Association, 1841 Broadway, New York. Labor is apparently Stadler's own company. Technically speaking the recording is excellent, excepting an annoying echo effect added to Washington's sax on All Tones. - E.C.

BILLY STRAYHORN

Cue For Saxophone
MJR 8116

This 14-year-old session (recorded April 14, 1959) was one of the most important to come out of mainstream in the late 1950s. Supervised by Stanley Dance, it brought together a septet of wholly compatible players in Shorty Baker (trumpet), Quentin Jackson (trombone), Russell Procope (clarinet), Johnny Hodges (alto), Al Hall (bass) and Oliver Jackson (drums) with leader Strayhorn at the piano.

Hodges, who co-wrote two of the tunes, Cue's Blue Now and Watch Your Cue, appeared on the original issues as "Cue Porter" for contractual reasons - not that anyone was ever in doubt as to the authorship of those flowing alto solos. Hodges plays beautifully throughout, but so does Harold Baker whose low keyed approach certainly influenced Miles Davis.

I can't say that I've ever been bowled

over by Russell Procope who must be the weakest soloist here, but Jackson (Quentin) makes some impressive appearances. Strayhorn, for the most part, contents himself with providing unobtrusive accompaniment but he does unfold an attractive solo chorus on Gone With The Wind.

The other titles are: Cherry, You Brought A New Kind Of Love To Me, When I Dream Of You and Rose Room. The playing time is a satisfactory 39 3/4 minutes and the audio reproduction matches the high quality of the music. - M.G.

SUPERSAX

Plays Bird
Capitol ST-11177

Twenty years after his premature death, Charlie Parker and his art are still food and drink to innumerable musicians and writers, none of whom have been able to capture the essence of the man any better than he did himself in his improvisations. Bird defined himself daily through his horn, and in so doing singlehandedly revolutionized a music. No man could extract more meaning, more beauty from his creations than he did himself; and the artist who tries to do so is either a fool or a parasite, because Parker's lines are the timeless crystallizations of a unique human being to whom only homage, not elaboration or improvement, is due.

"Supersax Plays Bird" is an ensemble of California studio jazzmen who love and respect Parker's memory, and who pay musical tribute to him through the painstaking transcription, harmonization, and recreation of his genius. Essentially, it is true, little substance is added to the universe by reproducing his lines - his message remains unchanged and intact. But through not so much the mechanical acts of harmonization and performance (in the tradition Parker originated) as through their exuberant joy in the music, the musicians of "Supersax" have given Parker's inspirations new dimensions. As Leonard Feather's liner notes suggest, it's much as if a Picasso portrait - which has subtlety to the eye but none to the touch - had been transmuted to a sculpture - which is much more rewarding to both senses.

The project was undertaken and carried through with understanding, dedication, warmth, and honesty. Buddy Clark ("Supersax" bassist and, with Med Flory, co-arranger/co-leader of this venture) wrote me after eleven months of woodshedding and three more of public performance, that "in a project like this anything less than perfect won't make it - and some of this is really difficult." At that time (February 1973) the band had had five recording sessions and put all ten titles on this album in the can; then they acquired a new second-chair altoist, and apparently went back to the studio and re-did everything. (Either that, or the liner personels are wrong.)

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Bird" heard here are Med Flory and Joe Lopes (altos), Warne Marsh and Jay Migliori (tenors), Jack Nimitz (baritone), Conte Candoli (trumpet), Ronnell Bright (piano), Buddy Clark (bass), and Jake Hanna (drums) - all of whom were deeply affected by Bird in their own musical odysseys. Six trumpets and trombones were added to play the original string parts for three titles. The saxophone voicings are in fairly straightforward, parallel lines; not very adventurous, but then "everything moves so fast in a Bird solo that if you start breaking it up it becomes kind of logy" (Clark), and "the lines themselves are as important and timeless as Mozart, so we didn't dare do anything that would tend to understate them" (Flory). In fact, the collaboration of Parker's original creations with Flory's and Clark's arranging talents produces some of the finest reed section writing in recent years - certainly on a par with Francy Boland's ensemble choruses for his band. Content is strictly Bird's doing; his solos are recreated and harmonized note for note and nuance for nuance. Where the original solos were brief, improvisations from alternate takes, airchecks, or other less-well-known performances of the same title by Bird were added to extend the ensemble passages. You might expect the sound to be heavy and sluggish - in fact, it's light, fleet, and swings mightily. And it just radiates warmth. Whether or not you'll concede the premise (as Feather states it) that Bird's lines are "works of art worthy of being extracted from its context and expanded through the medium of orchestration" or that such expansion is proper for an improvised art you'll have to agree that this music is creative, and as enjoyable and substantial for the listener as it obviously was for the performers.

The titles are Ko-ko (Savoy, original master); Just Friends ("Bird with Strings"); Parker's Mood (Savoy, original); Moose The Mooche (from a Rockland Palace dance tape with strings); Star Eyes (a composite); Be-Bop (from a Royal Roost aircheck); Repetition (Bird with Strings); Night In Tunisia (Dial original); Oh, Lady Be Good (JATP 1946); and Hot House (composite). Hearing the band blow its way through "Ko-Ko" - or the ebullient four-bar break in "Tunisia" - is a marvelously exhilarating experience. Parker's Mood is an amazingly sensitive performance - much more so than I'd anticipated. All ten pieces are exquisite, and frankly (I think) have given me new insights, a different view of Parker's genius. (How that reflects on me as a critic is your hassle.)

The saxophonists of the band are completely consumed with the tasks of Bird's creations, and don't solo themselves - which is appropriate, I guess, considering the nature of this project. (I gather that they do get some space of their own in live performances.) Candoli, whose role in the charts is mainly that of counter-voice - punctuation and tone colour -, and Bright do get a couple of short spots of their own, which are like sapphires set around a diamond to emphasize the

beauty of the main stone. Nice, but not quite necessary.

Buddy Clark's February letter to me says everything else I'd want to add. "We intent to have at least forty tunes in the book, and it gets easier all the time to write and rehearse them. The copying is what eats up all the time. It is gratifying, though, to look at and hear the parts played by these marvelous saxophone players who have dedicated these last 14 months to this project. A dream come true."

Right on. I want to hear the rest of those forty charts. Okay, Capitol? -B.T.

ROOSEVELT SYKES

Feel Like Blowing My Horn
Delmark DS 632

This records sounds like a blast from the past in more ways than one. No recording dates are given (a distressing fact of modern records today) for the group which comprises King Kolax, a trumpet player who once had John Coltrane under his wing, Oett Mallard on tenor and clarinet, Robert Jr. Lockwood on sparse guitar, Dave Myers, bass, and Fred Below, drums. The brass do not intrude too much, but when they do they seem largely out of place and add little to the workings. They only come close to being acceptable on the slower numbers. Does Sykes really need them? Probably not (and when in Toronto last summer he threw them out, preferring to work solo).

The listener always gets full entertainment value from Sykes. He is the master showman, giving you his presence and always in control (despite the hysterical tone of his voice). "Sleaze with ease," as he would say. Thus, there is a little something of everything in this programme of 10 selections. Sykes Gumboogie is more a loose jam throwaway than a New Orleans boogie, and his highly articulate screaming and hollering lends fun to the proceedings. My Hamstring's Poppin' is the ribald selection. Moving Blues is the good slow number. Eagle-Rock Me Baby is his weak effort at a rock item, while I'm A Nut is another one of his "crazies" songs (as he mutters at the fade of the track: "I must be a nut 'cause of Delmark Records and Mister Bob Koester" - what does that mean?). Rock-a-Bye-Birdie is his exceptional trash with flash item, done in Fats Domino style (or vice versa) with the Bartholomew-like riffs behind him and Mallard's heavy sax break. The only thing missing is a solo piano track. Every now and then there are some jarring errors in timings and rhythms but nothing too disastrous. Sykes had a marginally better album on Delmark 607, and solo work on that label's 616 and 626. His best recent effort was with Memphis Slim on half of the double Barclay Riviera 90013/14. This present disc is only for the larger blues collection. -D.T.

SUPPORT LIVE MUSIC

HOUND DOG TAYLOR

And The Houserockers
Alligator 4701

Hound Dog Taylor is among those rare birds of blues music: a "good time blues" performer (i.e. making the best of a bad situation). It is all great show music as a visual act when the proverbial roof is blown off (or falls in). Good jive, including blues-inflected versions of Tin Pan Alley ditties, and good stomping music are all part of the "revue" - what you see is what you get. And I mean, how many times lately have you seen a bluesman smile while playing? Taylor displays a set of choppers that would shred a head of cabbage faster than a played blues lick. But can a visual act be transposed to a strictly aural media, such as a record? No, of course not - and therein lies one of the major defects of this disc.

I suppose any bluesman who plays slashing slide, as Taylor does, inevitably suffers in comparison to the late Elmore James. Taylor stands up to such criticism, and produces a fair performance on this album. The twelve selections, including five instrumentals, are a mixed bag of "good time blues" spread over 45 minutes. The selections are programmed nicely, like Vivaldi movements (fast-slow-fast-slow), providing variety for the listener, especially with vocals alternating with the instrumentals. The record just spins and spins with constant changes of pace. All the tunes are originals except for two by James (Held My Baby Last Night and Wild About You Baby) and one by Tampa Red (It Hurts Me Too). The Houserockers are Brewer Phillips, second guitar, and Ted Harvey, drums.

Taylor has a screaming voice with rough edges that will put you off unless you are a hardened blues fan. Perhaps he should be packaged with Tina Turner. All the lyrics deal with typical sexuality, booze, and loneliness. The slide is heavily distorted through what sounds like a pre-war Marshall amp. Brewer Phillips' somewhat searing guitar is derivative from Memphis, and his lead on Phillips' Theme, a slow, hard blues instrumental, has some interesting tempo changes.

Lest I make this sound like a favourable review, let me state that the proficient lyrics and music are marred by unacceptable reproduction. The production crew, associated at various times with the Delmark label, should have no excuse for they should have known better. It is one thing to hear a great Louis Armstrong burble through claptrap sidemen, trite material, and bad sound; it is another to have regular music put through the same exercise. The difference lies in the quality of the music, and in this case, every production trick in the book would be a decided asset to Hound Dog. On both stereo and mono modes, the disc needs a treble reduction and a shot of bass. For stereo, additional left balancing is needed. For mono, nothing can pull in the lead slide. On I Just Can't Make It, the sound

is so weak and so bad that the title, for once, is apt, and the producers have the nerve to promote it with a "fade introduction". This could have been a knockout record, but the lead guitar sounds so distant and the drums so overmiked that all of its gutsy effectiveness is lost. And that is really too bad. - D.T.

ART TATUM

Tatum Is Art - Solos
Ri-Disc 7
Tatum Is Art - Trio
Ri-Disc 8

Like Johnny Simmen (whose remarkable appreciation of Art Tatum's genius graces the back cover of both these lps) and other jazz listeners, it took me some time to understand the intricate marvels of Art Tatum's music. He is a genius of the keyboard whose unpredictable conception remains unchallenged. His understanding of the popular song was complete and his unorthodox harmonic variations still leave mere mortals gasping in disbelief. Because of this, everything he recorded is important and worthy of close attention by any astute jazz listener. His 1934 interpretation of Stardust is an astonishing example of his genius. The harmonic layers set down by the pianist point the directions taken by another pianistic genius some 25 years later - Cecil Taylor.

Historically, and musically, these 1934 broadcast selections are extremely important. Despite low fidelity and distortion they clearly show that Tatum's intricate music was fully developed by that time. It is astonishing that he was allowed to perform on radio so early in his career and perform such complex music.

Apart from the five 1934 selections, the solo lp includes two further broadcast items (from 1950) which emphasise the tremendous debt owed Tatum by other pianists. The second side contains ten selections recorded in 1945 for Standard Transcriptions. The fidelity is much improved and the performances are sparkling examples of Tatum's jazz genius. In his playing were fused the left hand techniques of the stride masters, the vigorous attack of Earl Hines and the amazing virtuosity which sets Tatum apart from other pianists. His dazzling runs are both unpredictable as well as perfectly logical. He could take any song and instantaneously create an original arrangement for it. Rhythmically he always remained a part of his time but harmonically and for sheer technical virtuosity he moved into another time slot.

Solo piano was his specialty and yet, for many years, he worked with a trio. (Perhaps here we should mention that Tatum was a superb accompanist who always played just enough to blend with the other musicians.) Guitarist Tiny Grimes has recently pointed out that their arrangements were mostly "heads" and rehearsals were never held. Accompanying musicians had to be quick thinkers when working with Tatum but it

is apparent from the broadcast examples contained in Ridisc 8, as well as the Decca recordings, that Tatum was restricted in this setting. Like Earl Hines he reserved his most audacious flights of fancy to solo performances.

Everett Barksdale is the guitarist on these trio selections and Slam Stewart and Bill Pemberton split the bass chores. There's certainly a relaxed feel to the performances and the interplay between the musicians is exemplary. Soft Winds, in particular, is a tour de force and there is an attractive lyricism to Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams which emphasises the totality of Tatum's conception as a jazz performer.

The selections on side one come from a 1955 Basin Street broadcast while those on side two may well be the last examples of Tatum's music to be preserved. They emanate from location broadcasts from Washington's Olivia Patio Lounge (October 7, 1956) and Pennsauken's Red Hill Inn (October 14, 1956).

Words alone cannot really do justice to Tatum's genius. The solo album is an important historic document which also contains remarkable music while the trio performances are particularly free-wheeling examples of the maestro's style. - J.W.N.

CLARK TERRY

Big Bad Band
Etoile Records CPR 1A

As you might expect, this first album by the Clark Terry Big Band packs a mighty punch. Clark has assembled a bunch of professionals and with arrangements supplied by Phil Woods, Ernie Wilkins and Frank Wess something interesting is usually happening.

Clark allows himself ample solo opportunities but is also generous in giving space to his other soloists - Frank Wess, Chris Woods (an alto saxophonist who generates much heat), Don Friedman, George Coleman, Jack Jeffers and others. The band often sounds like a cross between Basie and Clarke Boland - a pretty fair hybrid.

There's nothing here that will really shatter you if you seek only innovation but these men have plenty to say on their fertile mainstream ground. An especial delight is an excellent version of Billy Strayhorn's Rock Skipping At Blue Note which includes a great trumpet solo by Lou Soloff. The title track is a fastie, opened by Friedman, followed by Clark (his best solo of this live date), Ernie Wilkins (good to hear him blowing again) and George Coleman. This track sums up the exuberance and enthusiasm of the leader and his men. Their good feeling is infectious. - M.G.

TERRY AND MC GEE

Sonny And Brownie
A&M SP4379

This ain't Sonny and Brownie at the Bunkhouse. Basically the album is a mixture of pop music, pop blues, with a heavy emphasis on pop gospel, bringing together such strange bedfellows as John Mayall, Arlo Guthrie, Sugarcane Harris, John Hammond Jr., and other familiar pop figures. The arrangements are extremely elaborate and the musical backing varies from song to song. It would appear that the producers felt it necessary to update Sonny's standardized harp playing and Brownie's familiar acoustic guitar work with a piano, a moog, electric guitars, Sugarcane's electric violin, a dobro steel, a banjo, several other acoustic guitars, a bass, drums and both female and male vocal back-up groups. The listener is not assaulted by electronics - the sound comes across relatively soft and relaxed. Surprisingly enough, Sonny and Brownie seem totally at ease and content in these new surroundings.

The concept and commercial orientation of this album reminds the reviewer of the Leon Russell-influenced B.B. King album of a few years back. Hopefully this new album will introduce this old pair of pioneers to a wider audience in much the same way as B.B. was. They do have much potential as pop singers, as far as pop singers go. However serious blues fans will find this album as down home as a Coke or 7-Up commercial. So if you like blues singers surrounded by hip rock and folkish types and really get off on a tightly arranged pop format, you'll like this one. I suppose that in such a commercial context the album is of quite high merit. - D. L.

LEON THOMAS

Blues and the Soulful Truth
(Flying Dutchman FD 10155)

This is really the Leon Thomas album I've been waiting for. His first solo album, "Spirits Known and Unknown", showed the man's potential, but since then he's floundered on a series of records (two of them live) with Oliver Nelson lending a not-so-helping hand. Albert "Pee Wee" Ellis, who arranged this album, seems more in the groove with Leon's music than Nelson ever was, and the result is Leon's best album to date, a set that comes close to being a perfect "textbook" for a study of black music. The best thing about it is that Leon has translated the most incredible aspects of this music into a language that communicates instantly. He sounds so self-assured and content with what he's doing that it's impossible not to be moved.

Shape Your Mind To Die, a song written by Leon, is an ominous masterpiece with Ellis on soprano, John Blair on electric violin, and Niel Creque on electric piano. This cushion of sound becomes dark and mysteriously brooding, with Leon beginning to laugh in the middle of the song and slowly shaping the laugh into something strange and definitely musical. Ellis' arrangement here (as they are throughout

the album) is so polished it glistens. Gypsy Queen, a Gazor Szabo tune with new words by Leon, has Stan Clarke on bass, Airtio, and the continuous sound of popping firecrackers! creating a texture so hazy and distant that Leon's beautiful vocal begins to sound like the lapping of waves.

There's much more. Leon, with help from Blair, Larry Coryell, Creque, Pretty Purdie, and Ellis on baritone, tackles two of the most overdone blues songs around - See See Rider and Boom Boom Boom - and demolishes them like a shotgun aimed at a bow-and-arrow target. Check out John Blair - he is no jive-and-con Sugarcane Harris. He plays the electric violin (a solid body instrument called the "vitar" here) with an appealing new voice. There's China Doll, a whimsical bit of puff with cooing background vocals from Carl Hall, Hilda Harris, and Albertine Robinson. Leon sings of meeting a gorgeous Chinese maiden, having the urge to speak to her, and then discovering that "All of a sudden I was speaking Chinese..."

And there are three songs you might say are in the "soul" style - funky upbeat, more background vocals, brassy horns, and slapdash lyrics. These tunes (Let's Go Down To Lucy's, L-O-V-E, and Love Each Other) are so much fun that you tend to forget how much they tell you about Leon. Lucy's, a let's-get-a-party-going-tonight song, kicks off the album with tough horns (Ellis, Cecil Payne, Dick Griffin, and John Eckert) and tougher Cornell Dupree guitar. Leon soon starts rapping about what kind of blast the party at Lucy's will be, and it made me remember his opening dialogue on Hum-Allah-Hum-Allah, which after years of disillusion with causes like "love" and "peace" suddenly made me believe again. Now Leon is talking about something else. "So you're 6-foot-2 and your name is Sue," he moans, "What do you want me to do? Grab ahold of you!" Leon Thomas has made a one-way trip from Allah to Sue, and I sure hope he's enjoyed it as much as I have. - E. C.

LUCKY THOMPSON

Goodbye Yesterday
Groove Merchant GM 508

From one perspective it might have been more accurate to call this record "Hello" rather than Goodbye-Yesterday. This, I should hasten to add, is not meant as a criticism. In the years 1962 through 1965 Lucky recorded three quartet albums for Prestige and the current record under review fits in perfectly with that threesome. Not only in musical style and atmosphere does this record share similarities but also with regard to strengths and weaknesses.

Lucky is a consistent player but his consistency is not entirely a virtue. While rarely if ever descending to a level of playing that could be labeled poor, neither does he often take the listener to the heights of pleasure. Rather we usually

get competent, logical enjoyable jazz playing. To put it another way, while finding this record pleasing to listen to I am not inspired enough to want to pick up the tone arm on my turntable and replay a particular Thompson solo. My suggestion would be to pair Lucky with another horn, perhaps even another tenor saxophone, which might stimulate him to reach for higher goals and would certainly add color and contrast to brighten up the results for the listener.

While Lucky comes out of the Hawkins-Webster-Byas school of tenor playing, it is with the latter that I have always found him to be closest. My good friend jazz writer Dave Hunt recently suggested to me that Lucky Thompson was his second favorite living Mainstream-swing style tenor player, the favorite being Budd Johnson. I would concur with Dave's judgement adding that Ben Webster and Lucky are neck and neck in my eyes.

As should be expected we also get a taste of Thompson's soprano sax work on this album. Two tastes to be exact as we get one per side. The main thing that has always impressed me about his soprano playing is that as is also true with Budd Johnson, he has taken it in an entirely different direction than Coltrane and his countless followers. It is his tenor playing however that is his forte.

Joining Lucky on this release we have a heavyweight rhythm section of Cedar Walton, Larry Ridley and Billy Higgins. They do all one might hope for in lending rhythmic support. Walton's solos give us the added bonus that I at least have come to almost take for granted when his name appears on a record date.

All seven tunes were composed by Lucky and my personal favorite is the ballad entitled Lazy Day. One happy note is there is no rock oriented tune to be found and all seven tracks are pure jazz. All too often it seems even the best of jazz releases seem determined to throw in at least one and sometimes two tracks which are attempts to cash in on the commercial market and usually just frustrate the serious jazz listener who is more apt to actually purchase the LP.

To end on a rather unhappy note, I would suggest you be careful before buying this album. Both my review copy as well as the copy I had previously bought have a distracting surface noise which is especially evident at the beginning of side one. - P. F.

I Offer You
Groove Merchant GM 517

Here's vintage Lucky. The kind we usually anticipate from him but don't always get. One reason why the saxophonist plays so well is the company he keeps on these sides - Cedar Walton (piano and electric piano), Sam Jones (bass), Louis Hayes (drums), a heavy-weight rhythm section. Hayes is the sort of crisp and inventive drummer Lucky needs. He drives beautifully and has a perfect understanding with Jones.

The date opens with Munsoon, the first

of five Thompson originals. It's notable for an extended Walton solo on electric piano. Lucky's on tenor and sounds fine. On the slower Sun Out, Thompson switches to soprano and exhibits his fine liquid tone on this instrument in a medium paced blues. Both these tracks fade out unexpectedly. The Thompson ballad Yesterday's Child is sensitively etched by the leader's tenor with great underpinning by the Jones bass. It's a rather melancholy, wistful melody and Lucky is the only soloist. By contrast, Aliyah is a swinger for Thompson on soprano. Jones takes an exquisite solo, followed by Walton (the most interesting soloist on electric piano that I've encountered) with Thompson wrapping it up with finesse.

We hear Walton on regular piano on The Moment Of Truth; Thompson elects to use soprano and over Hayes' alternately Latin and straight four rhythm he strikes a rich musical vein. Walton is as facile as ever. I don't dig the fadeout ending too much. Lucky stays with soprano for the gentle Back Home From Yesterday. Reflective statements are turned in by L.T. and C.W. But yet another fadeout spoils things. The proceedings close with a tenor tryout on the Cherokee changes which continue to serve as an inspirational springboard to an improviser of Thompson's skill and experience. The theme is never stated and the performance cuts off with Thompson still wailing full steam ahead.

An excellent album which would have been further enhanced by sympathetic editing. Most of the fades are pointless and badly done and leave me feeling vaguely cheated. - M.G.

TRISTANO • DEFRANCO

Crosscurrents
Capitol M-11060

Harvey Pekar has already covered the Dutch Capitol reissue series in Coda. Happily, the set has been made available in the U.S.A. (and left in mono!) and this is one of the American copies. Side one consists of the seven titles recorded by Lennie Tristano's revolutionary sextet in March and May 1949 by a group that included Lee Konitz, Warne Marsh, Tristano, Billy Bauer, Arnold Fishkin with either Harold Granowsky or Denzil Best on drums. While just as important as Miles Davis's Birth of the Cool tracks, these seven performances never had the same kind of recognition, partly because they were simply unavailable for years.

Intuition and Digression were, I would think, the very first free form jazz performances. Capitol would not issue them until, as Tristano relates in his sleeve note, somebody smuggled out a test pressing to disc jockey Symphony Sid who repeatedly played them on his show until Capitol finally capitulated and issued them! Due to the high degree of rapport and group interplay, both items succeed where so many similar attempts in the vein have failed. The imposition of the tight, three-minute formula may have had

much to do with these fragments being so darned good. The meat of this side, however, are Wow, Crosscurrent, Marionette and Sax Of A Kind, beautiful examples of Tristano group therapy. Cold? Never! Yesterdays is an impressionistic excursion by Lennie and the rhythm section.

The balance of the album contains five DeFranco performances, the most interesting of which is the hitherto unissued A Bird In Igor's Yard, scored by George Russell for a wild big band. It's a most impressive chart and Russell himself considers it the most profound work he wrote in the 1940s. That it lay unissued for 23 years reflects no credit on Capitol. This Time The Dream's On Me, from the same session, is routine, and there are still two unreleased masters from the date in the Capitol vaults. Extrovert, Good For Nothing Joe and Aishie are neat offerings by a DeFranco small group which includes Jimmy Raney and Max Roach. Listen for Raney's attractive work here. Finally there's Opus 96, a Neal Hefti composition, played by a unit fronted by trombonist Bill Harris whose work, as usual, is delightful.

All the music was made in 1949 when bop and cool not only co-existed but inter-related. The Tristano sessions and A Bird In Igor's Yard are vital and neglected pages of jazz history. - M.G.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Swingin' All Stars
Black Jack 3003

Various broadcast sessions and a V-Disc comprise this miscellaneous collection of music from the late 1930s and the mid 1940s.

The musical highpoints are limited, however, to Just You Just Me and I've Found A New Baby performed by the All American Quintet (Vic Dickenson, Willie Smith, Eddie Heywood, Les Paul, Oscar Pettiford and Sid Catlett). All concerned play magnificently. These two titles are also available on Jazum 3.

Sugar (sung by Lee Wiley) and You Took Advantage Of Me are two more titles from the notorious Alastair Cook BBC broadcast jam session which was once available on Jazz Panorama 9. Condon collectors will welcome these additions but musically they are rather drab.

It's Only A Paper Moon and Sweet Lorraine are sung by Nat Cole in pleasant fashion. They are from AFRS Jubilee transcription 207. So too are the three Benny Carter selections which date from 1946. Trouble Trouble is a dull vocal by Betty Roche but Back Bay Boogie is enlivened by some good solo work from Bumps Myers. Tea For Two showcases the clarinet work of Barney Bigard. Nothing fresh there, of course.

Finally there is Bakery Blues sung by Jo Stafford from V-Disc 537. The backup group includes Billy Butterfield, Hank D'Amico and Lou McGarity. Musically it is predictable.

Sound quality is clean but a little dull.

Collectors will be able to fill in a few gaps but musically it adds little to what we already know about all the artists and is somewhat of a curate's egg. - J.W.N.

Eddie Condon
Jazum 10
Eddie Condon
Jazum 11
Henderson, Oliver, Hines, et al
Jazum 12
Armstrong, Hines, Allen, et al
Jazum 13
Dorsey, Goodman, Nichols, et al
Jazum 14
Casa Loma, Whiteman, Goodman, et al
Jazum 15

It must be spring cleaning time again at Bill Love's place, judging from the miscellany of material he has thrown together in these Lps like so many hair pins and loose change fished from a comfortable sofa. About the only common denominator that links these items together is age, of which they all have a great deal. Like any spring cleaning, however, some fascinating things often materialize, and happily Love's catch-all issues catch some issues of happiness. About that, more shortly.

First, let us consider the two exceptions to the above rules: the Eddie Condon's. These bring to four the number of Lps gathered from the AFRS Town Hall concerts of the mid-'40s, one of which was issued by Hank O'Neal on Chiaroscuro with Condon cut in for a share of the take. Jazum 10 features the second part of a June 24, 1944 program (the first half is on Jazum 4), two numbers from July 1, 1944 (What's New was issued on Palm 30-08), and most of a Bix Beiderbecke tribute from July 22, 1944. The balance is picked up on Jazum 11 which goes on to include a complete July 22 program and part of an August 12 airing.

These are uniformly lively specimens of traditional jazz at its best played by most of its greatest practitioners of the day. Although the format is traditional, the spirit is basically of the swing era. On Jazum 10 there is marvelous Hot Lips Page on Chinatown and After The War, always the Armstrong imitator but doing it so beautifully. Gene Krupa sits in on the Beiderbecke tribute for a rousing treatment of the rather obscure Oh Katherina. Tony Mottola and Carl Kress duet together on Davenport and Harry Gibson solos on In A Mist. Pee Wee Russell is at his most thrilling throughout.

Jazum 11 is perhaps the stronger entry of the two with the presence of Ed Hall, although Lips Page buffs should lean to Jazum 10. In any case, there are, in addition to Hall, who solos on Avalon (with Gene Krupa) and Caravan, regulars Russell, Kaminsky, Hackett, and the swashbuckling baritone of Caceres. There are also two solo pieces from Willie "The Lion" Smith and a number from Lee Wiley (formerly issued on Palm 30-08). Muggsy Spanier is heard on the August 12 program as is a quartet on Limehouse with Krupa, Caceres,

Schroeder and Haggart.

However one might split hairs over the relative advantages of one or the other, the fact is that any follower of the traditional swing school will find these a delight. They are undiluted and sharply focused, yet offer a stimulating variety of musicians.

The remaining Jazums certainly offer variety, but are so diffuse and random in their programming that they lack the focus that make them worthwhile investments, particularly with the heavy competition these days for the collector's dollar.

Perhaps the weakest of the remaining four is Jazum 12. It offers three Fletcher Hendersons (Marmalade, Fidgety, Hop Off) and two Chick Webbs (Dog, Jungle Mamma) that duplicate the Decca Jazz Heritage 9227 and 9222 respectively. The only justification for their issue here might be the absence of echo, which was laid on pretty hard in the Deccas.

Three King Oliver tracks feature no Oliver, who by January 1931 had virtually ceased activity as a creative musician. The trumpet work is probably by Red Allen, or Dave Nelson. Two Nobel Sissle numbers offer glimpses of Bechet, vintage 1931. Don Redman's I Heard is not the same as the one issued on Decca 9242, so it's issue here is welcome. So too is Hines' Blue Drag, an alternate performance complimenting the splendid Hines Lp on Jerry Valburn's Jazz Archives label (JA 2).

Armstrong fanatics will find value in Jazum 13, whose first side occupies itself with various Armstrong accompaniments to singers of widely varying merit. For the record, they include Hociel Thomas, Sippie Wallace, Seger Ellis, and Jimmie Rodgers. There is a sumptuous low register solo from Louis on Listen To Me (1926), but the best work is found on the Ellis sides (muted on S'posin) from 1929, when Louis was reaching a point of maturity.

Early Lips Page is heard on KWKA Blues (1929), in which his muted work sounds like Bubber Miley, and Ye Ye Blues. A couple of sides recorded in Kansas City are pleasant enough, although the only reason for their inclusion appears to be their city of birth. Teddy's Blues by the Washboard Serenaders has 12 moderately impressive bars from Red Allen. Earl Hines adds the main interest in two Clifford Hayes pieces.

Jazum 14 seems almost a total loss, save for 8 fleeting bars on a rare take 4 of Glorinda by Bix and a lively Ballin' The Jack by Nichols, Mole, and Goodman. The rest is a mish mash of various white groups recorded in New York. Some include the Dorseys, Miff Mole, Nichols and so on; others offer no major figures. The Lp raises a question that collectors should stop and ask themselves once and a while: how far is it useful to go on accumulating music of a past age? We can all agree on the value of certain works, the classics as it were. But perhaps there comes a point where the quest to acquire gathers a momentum that pushes aside the ability to really listen to a musical performance, evaluate

it, and place it in a proper perspective. That is what seems to be missing here: a discriminating ear for musical worth.

Jazum 15 leads off with the Happy Feet number from the soundtrack of Paul Whiteman's 1929 film, "King Of Jazz". It's good fun with Bing and the Rhythm Boys in fine fettle. There are also two splendid turns by Jack Teagarden from 1930 and 1934. Two relative unknowns, Eddie Grosse and Al Russo, contribute some charming clarinet and guitar work. A justifiably obscure Goodman solo is buried in a selection by David Edwards Orchestra, 1931.

Six selections by the Casa Loma band from three 1930 sessions fill out the collection. Put aside the corny vocals, and you have an orchestra of considerable smoothness and aplomb. The arrangements are good and wear well considering their vintage. It's essentially a dance band, but one which had grasped some of the essentials of the swing idiom and moved a good way toward refining them.

Love's records have brought some fine sounds to Lp, but one wishes he's program in the future with a greater attention to musical value and unity, and less attention to the trivia that too often waste space on these Lps. We can look forward to his issue of the Benny Goodman RCA material, which he has announced, and hope he'll build other future collections with greater discrimination. - J. McD.

RUSSELL MOORE

Pow Wow Jazz Band
Jazz Art

The Chief has been on the scene a long time and a capsule summary of his credentials appears on the sleeve. Somehow, though, Russell Moore has never made it into the top echelon of jazz trombonists and it's easy to understand

after hearing this lp. He is one of many competent craftsmen working within an idiom carved out by others. And there is nothing wrong with that. In the right setting he can be quite commanding. His touch with mutes is good and he plays with the easy authority of one who has been part of the scene for a long time.

On this recording the Chief is outplayed by a young cornetist called Ed Polcer who displays wide knowledge of the jazz idiom as well as having both technique and conception to match his knowledge. He swings easily while providing an authoritative firmness to everything he plays.

The rhythm section is firm without quite showing the drive one would expect from Dick Wellstood, Gene Ramey and Jackie Williams. Perhaps its the cohesion from continual playing which is missing. The intensity one is looking for does show occasionally - and particularly on Big Chief Stomp, one of the most successful numbers of the session.

It's unclear from the album notes whether this combination has worked much together but enough loose ends indicate that this was unlikely. Under the circumstances, then, this is a creditable production. Some thought has gone into the repertoire. There is a nice balance between standard numbers (Blues My Naughty Sweetie, Wabash Blues, St. Louis Blues), originals and less often done numbers (Amazing Grace, Buddy Bolden's Blues, Tight Like That) and the interpretations are sufficiently varied in format to sustain listener interest.

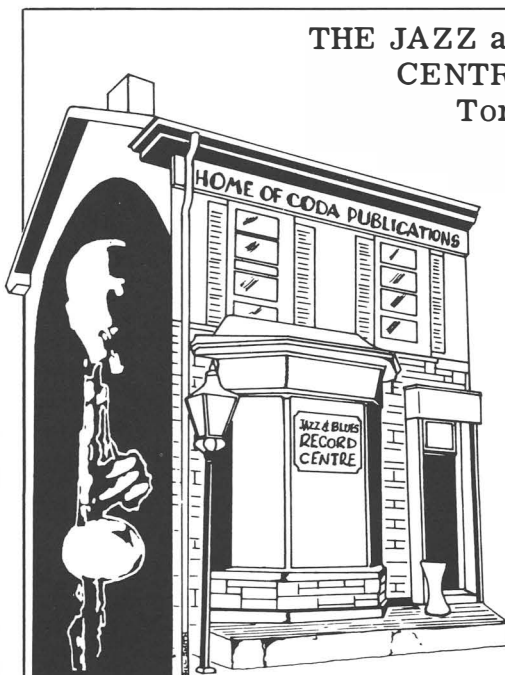
Recording quality is good and the absence of a third horn is not important. In fact it gives more scope to both The Chief and to Ed Polcer in their efforts to create some pleasantly swinging jazz which somehow manages to escape the restrictions of the idiom. - J. W. N.

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UNIVERSAL JAZZ ON THE AIR

Universal Jazz, heard on CBC radio in January, was an exploratory series into the meanings of jazz music. It was created by Greg Gallagher and Lily Barnes who discuss some of the background with Alan Offstein in the following interview:

Alan: Where and how did "Universal Jazz" originate?

Greg: This particular series started with "Music Of The Mississippi" and the attitudes of people in broadcasting, particularly the IDEAS Department of the CBC. They thought that musicians could not express themselves, were not that interesting to listen to. Then the idea came - after years of listening to the bad programming that Canada has - that we were not doing anything about the music that was going to be flourishing in this country in the next ten years. If there is no understanding of jazz as it is, or as it was in the swing era, or as it was in Jelly Roll Morton's days, how could we expect anyone to appreciate it.

Lily: My main reason for wanting to do it started very personally. I grew up with European music - my mother is a pianist and I lived on classical music. When I got turned on to jazz I just couldn't believe it because looking back, I could very clearly see all the misconceptions and myths and put downs and complete misrepresentations that jazz was suffering at the hands of everybody who wasn't aware of its real nature. I saw all the old stereotypes: it's music to dance to, or that kind of thing. For music that is a miracle of the human spirit, considering that its improvised and stands up to any composed music it seemed that something really good ought to be done.

Alan: Was the CBC instantly turned on to the suggestion?

Greg: No. The executive producer was very paranoid about it. Lily and I worked out the ideas that we had over a long period of time and went and met with the producers. We wrote a convincing outline and that sold it.

They were paranoid about the fact that it was three weeks. Originally there was a whole week on Canadian jazz and they said a flat NO to that. They didn't think that there was enough Canadian jazz to fill a week, so I had to change the structure of the last two weeks and we ended up with only one Canadian performer, Sonny Greenwich.

Lily: The IDEAS people felt that they didn't know enough about jazz so they just handed it over to us and left us alone, to do with it what we could. Other than cutting out the Canadian jazz there were very few directives, and we had a pretty free hand to do what we wanted to do - which was very important.

Greg: Our biggest problem once we gathered the material was getting it all down to the point where you are ruthless. We had SO much good material. It got very political about who should be heard and who shouldn't be heard and why and the whole gamut. By political, I mean

that there are choices that are made even before a program was done. For example, when I got to the point who I should use to represent early piano styles, there was Eubie Blake, Jelly Roll, and so on and you can't use them all in a one hour show. One's own biases come into play and I chose Jelly Roll.

Lily: Technical decisions were important, too. It's FM and the sound of the material was a lot better than some other stuff available. You can get the best interview in the world and if the sound is so bad that the audience can't hear it properly or gets distracted, then it's not acceptable. On the other hand, we have used stuff on FM because of the rarity of the material that would not be generally considered FM sound quality. The Charlie Mingus interview was one instance. But if you've got an interview with a Charlie Mingus or a John Coltrane, you don't say "Forget It!" just because the sound isn't so good!

Greg: Fortunately, very few limitations were imposed by the musicians, and their co-operation was fantastic. Cecil Taylor actually gave us the tapes from a live concert he recorded himself and which has now been released as an lp. Others like the Institute of Jazz Studies and an American radio station accounted for tapes from the Jazz Symposium and the John Coltrane interview.

Alan: In speaking with Mingus, Tyner, Elvin Jones... which were the good ones and which were the bad ones?

Greg: The good ones come to mind right away: McCoy Tyner for me was the best. You expect a certain thing, and a lot of times I felt let down by the quality of the man. But with McCoy, this wasn't the case. He was just beautiful.

Lily: I dug Charles Mingus a lot. He was so kind and warm and... I don't have the idealization thing. I grew up with musicians and I know they can play like angels and be real bastards to people, so I don't go around expecting angels. But in some cases, men like Mercer Ellington... I can see we were friends after this one afternoon together. We just had a marvelous time. And there are other people like that, like Bill Evans. You get surprised.

Greg: I think it's a personal thing. First impressions are important and the thing builds over the afternoon until you are feeling really good or there is static and it's time to split. Some interviews were awkward, such as Donald Byrd's. We had waited around all afternoon to see him in a bad situation. It was in Montreux and he was conducting classes and had just given a concert the night before and he had agreed to a certain time and two hours later we just weren't interviewing him. Eventually we got to a classroom with him and it was sort of touch and go.

Lily: We met head-on on one topic. I was asking him about the change in attitude people were beginning to have, seeing jazz not as entertainment but as an art form, allowing Black Music

departments in universities and so on and I think he got pissed off with me about that. He knows the situation about that a lot better than I do. He felt that the only reason that was happening at all was because people like himself and others were pushing for it, pressuring for it - it had nothing to do with anybody's change of attitude. It was a case of people getting so up on their subject that they were experts and HAD to be hired, and so on.

I think the only reason he came on like that was that he's got his own axe to grind. The whole serious music versus jazz thing preys rather heavily on a lot of musicians who have to take a lot of shit even though they are as good as anybody going because they are considered a second-rate citizen in music.

Alan: About the show, is each episode separate and clear?

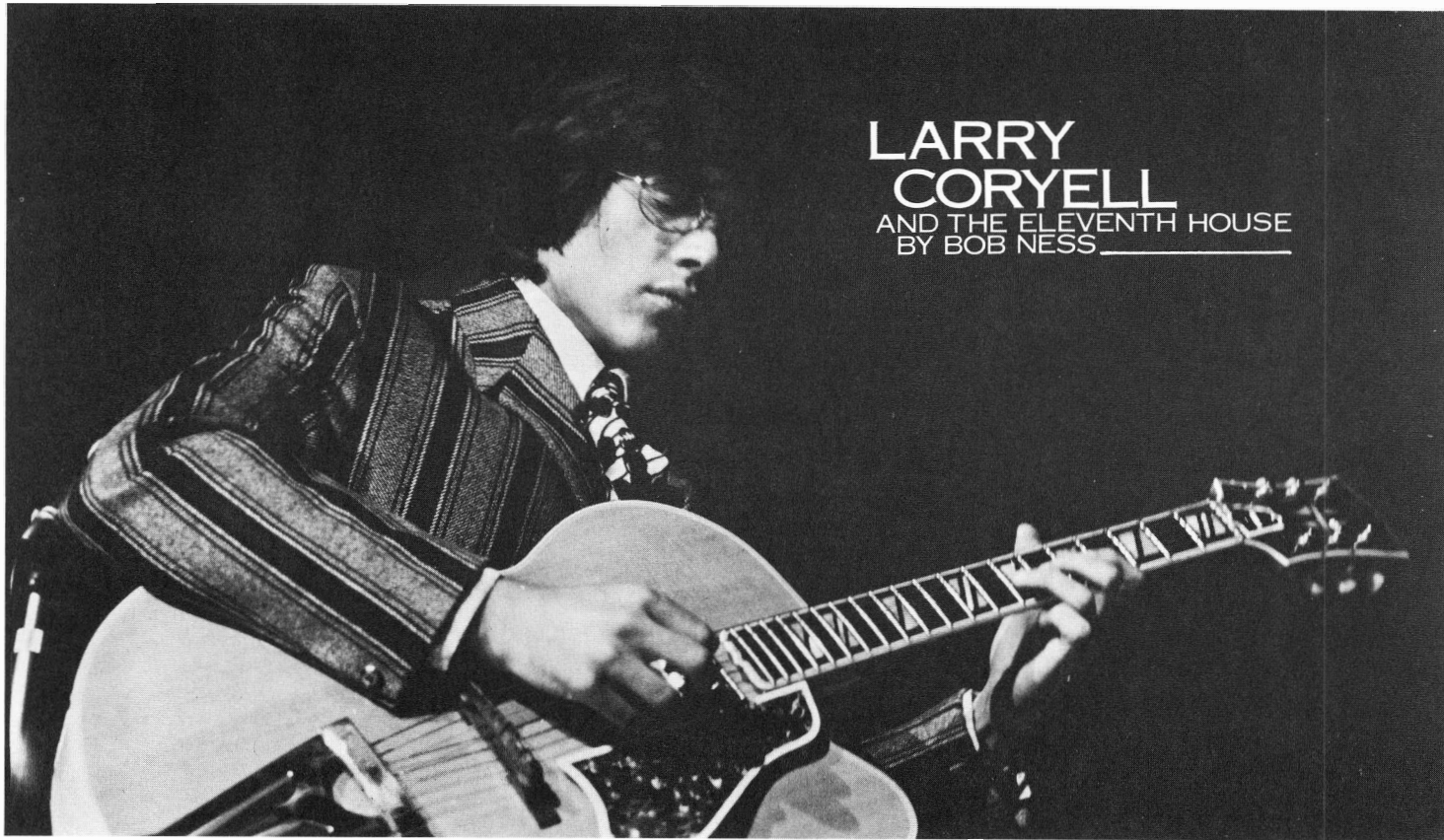
Lily: What we tried to do was determine the central focus for each program from the man and the music we were presenting.

Greg: The only guide lines we had were the music and how we knew that music and what we had learned from all these people that we interviewed. I knew quite a bit about the history of jazz before we went out on this thing, but I know a hell of a lot more now. The way the programs ended up are certainly different from the outlines that we put in to the CBC, but that was an understanding. Looking back, just about all of them fell together in about twenty-four hours. Once we knew who we were going to use, it was like having all the pieces of a puzzle - just a matter of putting it together. Two hours would have been a better time segment to work with. We did some shows for "Bringing Back The Future" that were two hours, one with Sonny Greenwich and another with Brian Barley and I like that format much better. In a sense, with this kind of series, it would have enabled us to get much more in to the media of it and to do some very creative things as far as radio is concerned. Our creativity went into developing ideas and the completion of those ideas.

Lily: Our main goal was to open up some love and respect that we personally have for the music among other people. The material and what we wanted to do with it dictated its own optimistic setting, given the time of one hour and the audience we're addressing.

Alan: Where does Universal Jazz go from here?

Greg: Things have come up like films and jazz departments and so on. I wouldn't want to be hooked into anything permanent. What I would like to see happen is that some sort of door has been opened a crack for some type of regular new music programming. Something that would enable people from all over to do the programming and not with the restrictions that mess up the serious music departments of many broadcasting businesses.



LARRY CORYELL

AND THE ELEVENTH HOUSE
BY BOB NESS

I first saw Larry Coryell in the summer of 1967 at the old original Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco. He was with Gary Burton and Steve Swallow on a bill headed by the Cream and Mike Bloomfield's Electric Flag. It looked so strange, with Clapton's huge stack of Marshall amps at the back of the stage, to see Coryell playing out of a small suitcase-sized Fender amp. With only a fraction of the other groups' volume, they still immediately won over the audience. Since then Coryell has gone on to lead a number of his own groups, the latest being the Eleventh House which was named after the strongest house in his astrological sign, Aries. Without question, Coryell is one of the best guitarists now playing.

The Eleventh House is composed of Coryell, Randy Brecker on trumpet, Mike Mandell on keyboards and synthesizers, Danny Trifan on bass, and Alphonse Mouzon on drums. They have recorded one album which has just been released on Vanguard called "Introducing The Eleventh House", and are set to record another shortly. They have completed a successful European tour and at this writing are winding up a tour of the States and Canada.

About his recent musical changes, Coryell says, "The old band just kind of disintegrated. It had been together for two years or more and it was time for a change. I have a much better band, better musicians now. There is a stronger cohesion in the Eleventh House. It's more than five individuals. Even though everyone is very strong on their own, it's the togetherness that's the focal point in the group and that's what's going

to carry us through.

"Mike Mandell is the only member of the old group who I felt had the ability, the preparedness, to move into this new kind of music. I would have kept Steve Marcus except that I needed a stronger horn. The trumpet is much stronger in this loud electronic music. The poor soprano just gets drowned out. A trumpet adds an extra dimension. Randy is not only a good jazz horn soloist but he makes the ensemble passages much stronger, and he writes.

"When I was forming the Eleventh House I originally wanted to have two horns, but I just couldn't afford it. I do want to keep things fluctuating. I want to keep the personnel changing if there's ever any let down in the creative effort. If there's a bad apple in the works, even if it's me, I'll remove it. What the Eleventh House will do as a group is more important than any individual effort in the long run. My goal is for the world, the mass audience to receive us while we're still playing at our peak. I'm not out there to get good reviews, I'm out there to make some money, as terrible as that may sound."

Mike Mandell speaks up on the question of money: "Number one, a musician needs money because when he's on the road he has to lay out in, say a seven day period, from \$100 to \$200 just for a place to stay - as well as paying rent for his apartment at home. Money is needed for equipment and for traveling. I for one do not intend to be some poor old jazz musician who, when he's 43, is laid up with a liver condition in New York City and all through. I want money so I can

live in a good place in a good climate and so when I'm ready to raise a family I can do it in a healthy environment. Playing music is one way of doing it and it happens to be my choice. Why shouldn't we make money? When people make records, the record company makes a bundle."

All of the members of the Eleventh House are aware of the developmental history of improvised music. Randy Brecker is currently listening closely to the records of Kenny Dorham. Mandell is most impressed with Chick Corea and Jan Hammer. Coryell has this to say:

"Contemporary music has absorbed the whole thing called rock or rock and roll and what's coming out now is a wide variety of creative efforts by people with both jazz and rock backgrounds. It's not classifiable as either jazz or rock, it's just music that is as good as the people doing it.

"In order to carry this kind of music forward there are certain past musicians who you must have listened to. They're the required reading: Billie Holiday, Lester Young, Clifford Brown, Charlie Christian, Charlie Mingus, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, John Coltrane and all the people who ever played with Miles Davis, The Montgomery brothers, Art Tatum, Charlie Parker, Ornette Coleman - a lot of beautiful people, man.

"I got into jazz through my first guitar teacher. He played me some records of the foremost jazz guitarists at that time - Johnny Smith, Tal Farlow, Barney Kessel, and even Les Paul - and when I heard them, I said that's for me. All those complicated, fast, beautiful sounding single note lines and chords."

"There's a distinct difference," Mike

says, "between what Ornette is doing and what the Mahavishnu Orchestra, Chick Corea, and the Eleventh House is doing. We're a hybrid and synthesis of everything that young people have listened to for ten years and it's a kind of marketable thing right now, especially since Mahavishnu blazed the trail. Ornette is still traditionally a jazz and that label can be a stigma. Why shouldn't Art Blakey and a lot of other jazz people fill auditoriums and make five grand a night?"

"A lot of jazz players make the mistake of aiming just for the listener's head and don't try to get to their body. Rock gets to people's bodies and people have to be moved. Some jazz players do an artistic masturbation trip where they play just for themselves and don't really try to reach the audience at all. Their excuse for what goes down is that they're too good for the audience. Cannonball Adderley, on the other hand, always makes sure the audience can participate in anything he does. Herbie Hancock is another giant who cares about the audience."

Like Miles Davis, Charlie Mingus, and Herbie Hancock, Coryell knows instinctively how to lead a group. To the casual observer, there doesn't seem to be a leader and this is a tribute to Coryell's ability to support and inspire the other members.

"My managers are always telling me to dominate but I don't know... I call it like I see it. If I want Mike or Alphonse to take a long solo they do. That's what they're there for. There's no reason why they should be held back and play merely supporting roles when they've got that much raw talent."

"The thing I'm really interested in is organized playing together. That's where I like to dominate. I like to be the quarter back. I don't like to be the tight end and the fullback and the half-back all the same time. A good leader is supposed to get the best out of his sidemen. If you don't have the guys who can put it out then you're forced to be the hog, the so-called star up there on stage, and it can be very damaging."

"I try to check and balance myself. I'm never really happy with my own playing. I just want to keep improving and keep on my own back about my own artistic duties and responsibilities. I've been lucky to be able to play with the right people and gotten a decent enough reputation to be a leader and get gigs and acquire musicians of the stature of my present group. I'm a very lucky cat, man, a very lucky cat. I've got a beautiful wife and two healthy young children. I should get down on my knees every day and thank Karl Marx or God or whoever it is that made this possible."

Coryell resists talking about Mahavishnu John McLaughlin and his own short association with the guru, Sri Chinmoy. "I have no comment on Mahavishnu and I'll tell you why. That's the standard question that I've gotten for the past three years and I've given a hundred different answers, totally inconsistent, depending on what kind of mood I'm in."

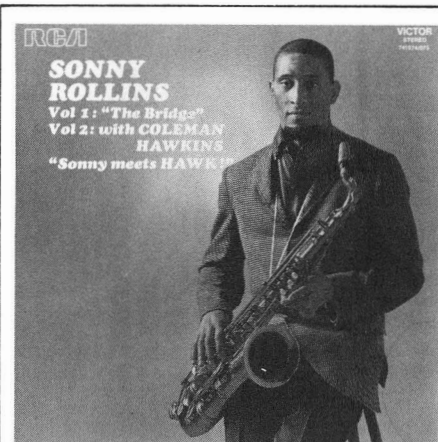
Mahavishnu's an incredible guitar player. I think he's about the fastest cat around, but speed isn't everything. Speed doesn't make you number one.

"Carlos Santana is another fine guitarist. He's embarked on a very strict, rigid, spiritual discipline with McLaughlin and Sri Chinmoy. I had some beautiful experiences with Chinmoy, but I'm just not a disciplinarian. I would rather forge out my own way and not try to wear someone else's cloak. I entered into it for awhile in the spirit of trying to improve myself and found that it just wasn't my cup of tea. Maybe I'd be much further ahead if I'd stuck with it but I didn't."

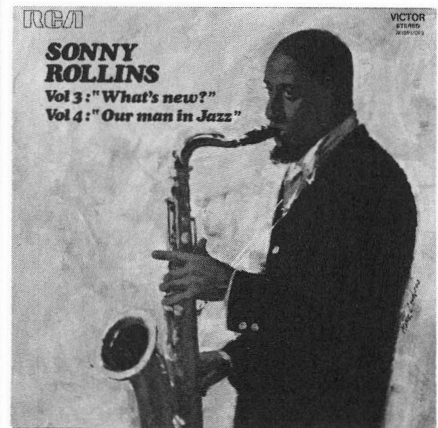
Larry is, of course, aware of the looming presence of John Coltrane in the new music. "There's no getting around him. Unfortunately, 85 million saxophone players are stuck with him, and that's why I admire people like Albert Ayler who were completely non-Coltrane in all of their music. Ayler was Coltrane spiritually but he didn't play note for note Coltrane licks. Great players like Steve Marcus and Mike Brecker are kidding themselves if they won't admit that they've copied Coltrane licks."

"The whole Albert Ayler story is weird. It was his emotion that was great. That's all he played. Musically speaking, he played really dumb garbage. (Coryell scat sings the melody of Ghosts.) Yet he had the guts to be different at a time when everybody else was copying the sheets of sound of John Coltrane. You can be a great craftsman or you can be a pioneer, and Ayler, through no fault of his own, was designated to be a pioneer. He was designated to be a ghost. And I'll be damned if it didn't break my heart and everybody else's when they pulled him out of the East River a few years ago - dead. That was a drag, man, a big drag. Albert Ayler was all right. He had a kind of pseudo-hit right before he died. It was a rock vocal called, New Generation - kind of a Little Richard thing: 'It's a new generation, ya know/Gotta give 'em a chance.'"

Conversation turned to some of Coryell's contemporaries. When asked about Billy Cobham's album, "Spectrum", he said, "Billy Cobham would never make anything less than excellent. Chick Corea's "Light As A Feather" is a great recording - Spain is just beautiful. And his new group Return To Forever I like very much. Chick has a great guitar player in that group, Bill Connors, who is definitely one of the guitarists to contend with in the future. The Larry Coryells will be going down the tubes and the Bill Connors will be taking over. There's a whole younger generation of guitarists... there's some cat named Spencer Bearfield in Michigan who's really good, and some cat in Worcester, Mass. named George who plays his ass off. These are two black cats. There's a lot of great players out there. Generally, the scene is very good and I can only see it getting better. The quality of the younger musicians is better than before. Their hopes are higher and their level of aspiration is deeper."



RCA 741074-75 - THE BRIDGE - Sonny Rollins (tenor), Jim Hall (guitar), Bob Cranshaw (bass), H. T. Saunders or Ben Riley (drums). God Bless The Child - John S. - You Do Something To Me - Where Are You - Without A Song - The Bridge. SONNY MEETS HAWK - Sonny Rollins (tenor), Coleman Hawkins (tenor), Paul Bley (piano), Henry Grimes, Bob Cranshaw (bass), Roy McCurdy (drums). Yesterdays - All The Things You Are - Summertime - Just Friends - Lover Man - At McKies'.



RCA 741091-92 - WHAT'S NEW - Sonny Rollins (tenor), Jim Hall (guitar), Bob Cranshaw (bass), H. T. Saunders (drums), Dennis Charles, Willy Rodriguez, Frank Charles, Candido (percussion). Don't Stop The Carnival - Brownskin Gal - Jungoso - Bluesongo. OUR MAN IN JAZZ - Don Cherry (cornet), Sonny Rollins (tenor sax), Bob Cranshaw or Henry Grimes (bass), Billy Higgins (drums). Oleo - Dearly Beloved - Doxy - You Are My Lucky Star - I Could Write A Book - There Will Never Be Another You.

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around the world



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

TORONTO

The festival season has arrived, and data has been falling into my mailbox like confetti; but the most interesting and out of the way jazz happening takes place at a small college near Hamden, Connecticut. It is the seventh annual Quinnipiac Inter-collegiate Jazz Festival and uses three days in April to parade the talents of American college students.

It was born in the summer of 1966 under the auspices of Dominick and Sam Costanzo, faculty members of Quinnipiac College, and from the outset has commanded widespread public enthusiasm. This festival has become the North-East regional site for the American College Jazz Festival, a nation-wide organization formed for the sole purpose of promoting jazz at the collegiate level. Jazz is making itself felt in scholastic music departments where theory, performance and the history of Black Music is enjoying an increasing student response. In fact, the music departments of one Toronto university, York, has provided workshops with Roscoe Mitchell and Karl Berger, for students eager to learn improvisation.

But it is in the United States where College jazz has developed to a high degree of instruction and organization. More and more, college ensembles are student-led and much of the music heard is also the work of student composer/arrangers. The instrumentation is departing from the traditional with the appearance of sitars, melodicas, double-string sections, synthesizers and other electronic instruments, plus expanded rhythm sections utilizing various South American and African percussion. The bands are not here merely to perform, however, but also to compete for the chance to appear in a national college jazz band performance which climaxes the year.

Adjudication takes place during the performances, and if one can generalize from the festival's advisory board, there are some tough heads to turn. Advisors include Lee Konitz, Jimmy Lyons, Ernie Wilkins, Stanley Dance and Dave Brubeck.

An established tradition of the Quinnipiac Festival is the dedication of the festivities to an individual who is considered a leader in the world of jazz, and this year the honor is conferred upon Dizzy Gillespie who will be the guest of honor

at a black tie dinner, on the last night of the festival.

By the time this issue of CODA appears, the festival will be over, but information about next year's event may be obtained by writing to Prof. Sam R. Costanzo, Quinnipiac College, Hamden, Conn. 06518. A friendly and outgoing man, Mr. Costanzo will be pleased to discuss the College, the Festival and any kind of participation with interested students and teachers. GEORGE WEIN is extending the tentacles of Newport into the Niagara Peninsula with a two day affair at a new 43 million dollar cultural centre. The exact dates are July 26 and 27, and no artists have been announced as yet. In NEW ORLEANS, the annual Jazz and Heritage Festival got under way on the Steamer "President" and at Preservation Hall. Kid Tomas' band presided along with Don Albert's band including Louis Nelson, trombone, and three former members of the Kid Ory Band - Andrew Blakeney, trumpet, Edward "Montudi" Garland, bass, and Joe Darensbourg, clarinet.

Other artists performing on the three days were Gladys Knight and the Pips, the Jimmy Smith Trio, Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder and Yusef Lateef.

TORONTO will have a jazz festival as well this summer. Sponsored by a tobacco company, it will take place in July at Varsity Stadium with as yet unannounced artists...

DUKE ELLINGTON'S 75th birthday was celebrated in various ways around the world. In New York, Jazz Interactions held its ninth anniversary marathon fund raising affair in Duke's honour. The lineup - as at most JI events - was incredible, and included Junior Mance, Robin Kenyatta, the Countsmen, Randy Weston, David Amram, the Manhattan Wildlife Refuge Orchestra and the Neighbourhood Youth Corps Dancers of Bedford-Stuyvesant and many others. In TORONTO, however, one of the most unpleasant examples of backstabbing went down. CJRT FM had decided to co-operate with the Musician's Union Trust Fund to sponsor a program of music by Duke Ellington. The featured artist was a brilliant choice suggested by Ted O'Reilly: SADIK HAKIM and his trio. In addition to playing Ellington compositions, Sadik was asked to write an original piece as a tribute to Duke. As soon as the Executive Board of local 149 got hold of the idea, however, it left Sadik standing out in the cold. In place of Sadik would

be Ron Collier, a composer, a fine musician and a collaborator with Duke Ellington. In place of the trio would be a sixty-six piece orchestra. This sudden switch stunned Sadik, and equally heavy-handed was the union's promise that Sadik would definitely get his turn, but not until September. Hurt deeply by this unexpected blow, Sadik was saddened even more. "Here was a chance," he said, "for one Black man to play for another and they didn't let it happen."

VOICE OF AMERICA

The Detroit Hot Jazz Society staged its second annual Dick Saunders Memorial concert with ten bands and proceeds going to the Michigan Heart Fund... Jim Taylor still working on the Detroit-Windsor Jazz Festival. Sponsor tickets, \$75.00; individual concerts, \$6.00... LIVONIA, Michigan's L.E. Schmidt Auditorium was the setting for a concert by Clark Terry's Orchestra. Sponsored by the Clarenceville Entertainment Series, future events will be Don Ellis with Sid Blair and Visions on Sunday May 19; The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra directed by Murray McEachern on June 2 and Supersax for two days July 22 and 23. All tickets \$4.00 and mail orders accepted by Mrs. Bonnie Garrison, 20135 Rensellor, Livonia, Mich. 48152... CHICAGO: News from Delmark informs that Trio Records in Japan has a hit with The Legend Of Sleepy John Estes. Country and urban blues are enjoying a surge of popularity in Japan and Trio Records is issuing several other blues masters from Delmark, including items by Junior Wells, Jimmy Dawkins, Big Joe Williams and Roosevelt Sykes. Delmark celebrates its twentieth birthday this year... NEW YORK: Radio station WKCR FM (89.9) began a weekly lecture series presented by percussionist ANDREW CYRILLE. Cyrille, master drummer and long-time associate of Cecil Taylor will focus upon the art of contemporary jazz drumming, its history and African/Asian roots. The series will be broadcast each Thursday evening on Jazz Alternatives, 6 - 9 PM... JAZZ INTERACTIONS will accept donations of the following items: a typewriter table and chair; a large foldable table for mailings etc. Volunteers every day may report at 9:30 AM and sometimes in the evening. May 27 JI presents Jimmy Smith. Call JAZZLINE (212) 421-3592. Office (212) 866-6316.

SUMMER SCHOOLS:

The Creative Music Summer Studio will

be extended to two weeks: the last week in May and the first week in June, in WOODSTOCK, N.Y. and N.Y.C. Karl Berger, David Holland, Sam Rivers, Lee Konitz, Frederic Rzewski, John Cage and many other noted composer-performers of the jazz and classical avant garde will participate in an intensive workshop-concert series, will 2 - 3 sessions daily... Young musicians of all instruments are invited. For further information and for applications write to CREATIVE MUSIC FOUNDATION, P.O. Box 671, Woodstock N.Y....the CONCORD SUMMER MUSIC CAMP near Lake Tahoe offers two week long sessions in intermediate and advanced guitar, bass and drums. High in the Sierra Mountains, acoustic and electric guitar will be taught by Barney Kessel, who also serves as the camp's musical director. String and electric bass will be taught by the master, Milt Hinton. Of interest to Toronto residents, well-known drummer PETE MAGADINI will instruct percussion. For information write to the Concord Summer Music Camp, Dept. of Leisure Services, City of Concord, Civic Center, 1950 Parkside, Concord, California, 94519....

PUBLICATION: Bud Freeman's memoirs, "You Don't Look Like A Musician" has been released by Balamp Publishing of Detroit. 133 pages, Bud recalls his life with Armstrong, Bix, Condon and other greats of the golden era of jazz. \$5.95 plus \$.35 shipping to P.O. Box 7390, North End, Detroit, Mich. 48202.... -BELLS, a newsletter of opinion, news and reviews of improvised music, currently a well-made but economically produced publication has appeared. Bells focuses on the latest Black Music from The Art Ensemble of Chicago and Charles Mingus, and includes news and record reviews. The name and logo appear to be derived from Albert Ayler's ESP record of the same name, and the editorial policy remains loyal to Albert's musical direction. Published in the San Francisco Bay Area, copies may be obtained by writing to Henry Kuntz, Jr., 1921 Walnut, #1, Berkeley, California 94704.

TORONTO: The Charles Mingus Quintet will appear at MacKenzie's Corner House for one week starting April 22 instead of Jimmy Smith who was originally booked. MacKenzies was the scene of the Ed Blackwell Benefit, but has no intention of presenting jazz on anything resembling a regular basis. KARL BERGER and DAVID HOLLAND will appear on Sunday May 5 at the Masonic Temple, 888 Yonge Street. There will be an afternoon workshop starting at 2:00 PM which is free to musicians who bring their instruments and the general public will be admitted for only \$1.00. The evening concert will begin at 7:30 PM and feature two bands. The first is the CLAUDE RANGER QUARTET with Michel Donato, bass, John Tank and Glen MacDonald, reeds. Accompanying Karl Berger and David Holland will be Ing Rid, vocal and percussion and Steve Haas, drums. Admission to the evening twin-bill is \$5.00. This concert is

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presented by Healing Force Music, and other new music concerts will follow during the course of the summer in Toronto... Bourbon Street saw the reunion of Horace Silver's former front line as tenor player JUNIOR COOK joined featured performer BLUE MITCHELL. This gig was followed by the Al Gray-Philly Joe Jones combination which struggled through their week with a mis-mated rhythm section... At the Colonial FREDDIE HUBBARD was billed as "Famous Trumpeter in the Style of Miles Davis". The quintet with George Cables on electric piano bore only superficial resemblance to the Miles Davis band and musically, well, I must have been there on a bad night... George's Spaghetti House won top honours for music as Alvin Pall's tenor and Claude Ranger's drums gave out some solid jazz sounds. Don Thompson and Dave Field on piano and bass respectively provided excellent back up and at times some inspired laying-out while Pall and Ranger played memorable duets... The following week, the Don Thompson Trio, Alvin's rhythm section substituting Rick Homme for Dave Field put out the most satisfying music heard in any club since James Moody played Bourbon Street. Not surprising, either, since this was the rhythm section that Moody flipped over.

MUSICA ELETTRONICA VIVA (MEV) is, as its Latinate name implies, a chamber group of new music composers/performers whose work bears a strong resemblance to that music which has developed out of jazz and new music improvisation. Assembled and directed by RICHARD TEITELBAUM who plays synthesizer and is a professor of experimental music at York University, MEV gave a concert March 25 with Jon Gibson, (alto, soprano and flute), Garrett List (trombone), Gregory Reeve,

(percussion), and Frederic Rzewski, (piano). The works - Opening Music, Ghosts, Gregory's solo, Jon's solo and Attica - were all original pieces that showed the stabilized and coherent approach of MEV. The group has recorded for Polydor ("Friday") and for BYG ("Sound Pool").

On the west side of Avenue Road, near Yorkville, in the basement of one of those restored Victorian mansions, is a tiny cafe-restaurant called THE GARDEN PARTY, owned and operated by a pianist named Joel Shulman. Mr. Shulman plays piano in the florally decorated salon and has become the musician's musician. Don Thompson, his most vocal admirer, insists that he has learned more about playing piano at the Garden Party, than he imagined possible. A small recital took place there a couple of weeks ago with duets by Don Thompson and guitarist Ed Bickert. The date was not publicized, but Don feels that there will be a repeat in the near future. Check out the Garden Party any afternoon for light sandwiches and fine piano playing.

The Royal Ontario Museum is offering a "History of Jazz" concert series, free at 5:30 PM. For additional details call the ROM.

For some inexplicable reason, the great bluesman B.B. KING took second billing to Gladys Knight and the Pips. As far as I'm concerned, B.B. King has got his own, and deserves top billing on any program, no matter how many grammy awards the other act has won. It will take a lot of fancy steps to outdo Sweet Little Angel and Gladys Knight doesn't even come close!... Chuck Mangione plus orchestra and Esther Satterfield pack the O'Keefe Centre for five days in April... Mani's Sunday jazz sessions feature SYNERGY 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM, no cover and great food... Clementines the Friday after hours room seems to be alienating more clients than it is attracting. A disappointing letter from one CODA reader tells of lousy treatment and offensive condescension from the management, who seem to place a little too much emphasis on attire. This man, a visitor from Ottawa writes, "I had visited numerous clubs and was never treated in such a way. Also, I have never been treated like that in Ottawa or in Montreal. What this man is doing is effectively only letting those into his club who follow his own lifestyle (affluent) and code of dress (hootsie-tootsie). That is his business, but what is disturbing to me is this: Jazz musicians have a hard enough time getting gigs and audiences without a self-appointed Mr. Best Dressed of 1974" turning people away at the door because they are not dressed according to his standards. To me, jazz is a music that cuts across all social lines and castes, and thus should be for the enjoyment of all. The manager is doing the music, the musicians and the listening public a gross disservice"... RECORDS: The Downchild Blues Band, a Toronto based group which has long called itself "Canada's Blues Band" has signed a contract with Bell Records, a division of



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Columbia Pictures Inc., in New York, for world release of its hit single. Flip Flop and Fly. The tune was written in the early fifties by Big Joe Turner who later went on to write Shake Rattle And Roll with his partner, Charles Calhoun.... TELEVISION: Canadian Jazz pianist OSCAR PETERSON will host his own series which premieres on the CTV network June 23. The run of eight half-hour shows indicates the escalating fascination of the media with jazz. In addition to in-concert performances, viewers will see and hear musicians like T-Bone Walker, Joe Turner, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie and others in conversations reminiscing about the history and growth of jazz.

...JODI AND GENE is a mini-series on CBLT (CBC Toronto) with five half-hour programs starting in June. Starring Jodi Drake and Gene DiNovi, the format will be pure music and purely informal. Jodi has been chosen by Broadway conductor, Lehman Engel to perform new Canadian compositions at the upcoming BMI Canada 'MUSICAL THEATRE SHOWCASE.' Good breaks for a talented singer and a very nice lady.

JAZZ HOT, the well-known French Language magazine published by Charles Delauney, often has much of interest to the contemporary jazz devotee. Issues from 1973-1974 October, November, December, January and February - are

available from CODA post paid at \$1.50 each or \$18.00 for one year.

DECEASED:

Losses to the world of jazz are losses to everyone, and we regret to announce the passing of the following musicians. Peter Tunk, German bassist, January 5 in New York... Eddie Safranski, another marvelous bass player on January 9 of a heart attack... Willie Baptiste, famous New Orleans banjo star, October 16... Perry Botkin, guitarist, October 14... Ed Allen, January 28 and pianist Bobby Timmons March 2.

Record producer Herman Lubinsky, who founded Savoy Records in 1939, died in Newark, N.J. on March 16 following a lengthy illness. His pioneering efforts helped document the bebop era as well as making gospel music a commercially viable medium. - Alan Offstein



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MONTREAL

L'Atelier de Musique Experimentale has received from the Canada Council an exploration grant of \$3,000. That money is being used to pay the rent of two small studios for workshops on Craig Street, 211 West, across the street from the Metro station, and the little left is for general expenses, publicity, transportation, postage, etc.

AME group, a collective ensemble of more than ten musicians played at L'AMORCE recently in between sets of Le Quatuor du Jazz Libre du Quebec, and Ron Proby. Proby now plays with Michel Madore (guitar) and as a duet they create meaningful music. Ron has also been playing solo concerts at Cafe Prag and is planning to go to Europe to meet and play with the more inventive musicians there.

AME musicians have also played a concert of minimal music with Don Druick from Vancouver at the art gallery Vehicule. Again at L'Amorce, musicians Yves Bouliane, Robert Lepage, Francois Brunetta, Bernard Gagnon, Michel Paul Chabot have been rehearsing Yves' composition "Bois Sous Bois" and several performances were taped.

AME member Vincent Dionne, composer/percussionist, will be playing several concerts in the Montreal and Quebec area as well as giving lectures for "Les Jeunesses Musicales du Canada. Together with Robert Lepage (clarinet) and Yves Bouliane (bass) he has been improvising a score for les Ballets de Port Royal at le Monument National, and will perform a few live concerts with this Dance Troup. Vincent is very much interested in the making of new instruments (as a friend of les freres BASCHETS - structures sonores - he has given concerts in Europe using their wonderful instruments). He would welcome any information on this subject, books, names of people actively involved in instrument making, etc.

Together with L'Institut de'art contemporain, AME is still organizing concerts with guest artists. Following Dollar Brand's concert on March 14, Karl Berger appeared on the 22nd. April and May are unscheduled, but on March 31 the JAZZ RENAISSANCE SOCIETY presented two hours of jazz films.

There is a new magazine on music in Montreal: Rhythme et Musique. It is the only other music commentary outside of TILT, which is a cultural magazine which covers all the arts, not strictly music. Since there is virtually no criticism on the subject of NEW MUSIC here, there is a need for this particular approach: Historical, panoramic in a way that is showing what happens somewhere else at the same time you indicate the lack of it here. - Raymond Gervais

ALBERTA

Jazz activity continues with a steady series of concerts. In fact, activity has been so steady - for this section of the

wilderness, at any rate - that Mark Vasey of the Edmonton Jazz Society is ready to take an extended vacation. In the meantime: Norman Connors and The Dance of Magic featuring Carlos Garnett, vocalist Jean Carn, pianist Elmer Gibson and bassist John Coulson, performed for three nights in Edmonton in late March. Since Connors' albums are not distributed in Canada, the less-than-average turn out was not surprising. The music was always excellent - Barnett played extremely tough soprano, alto and tenor, Connors was all over the drums, and Miss Carn's singing left most members of the audience speechless... The Sam Rivers Trio with Dave Holland and Barry Altschul performs in Edmonton April 7-8 and in Calgary April 10. Possibility at press time that an Ed Blackwell benefit concert might be added to the schedule... more details later... tentatively scheduled future concerts include Big Joe Turner, Larry Coryell, Elvin Jones and Keith Jarrett. - Eugene Chadbourne

ENGLAND

Jazz occasionally flits on and off British television screens these days. We had Ellington on the Palladium show, Ellington being interviewed by Michael Parkinson and imparting little information but smiling nicely, Ellington last year in a much better interview, albeit a stilted conversation, with Stanley Dance. The topper of the Parkinson chat gig was Duke rising to play a couple of numbers with an outfit called the Harry Stoneham Five - a normally bland combo who, with Duke along, led us to believe they are actually alive. Duke did his always memorable solo tribute to Strayhorn plus a rollicking Satin Doll. This little interlude only made us painfully aware that the gab should have been stowed much earlier. Oscar Peterson also did his thing on the Parkinson show. More music this time. Oscar firmly put the critics in their place and demonstrated, without being patronising, the differences between "straight" and jazz piano. There was an embarrassing moment with the uneasy Parkinson attempting to play a duet with Peterson - that's showbusiness, folks. Then, would you believe, Johnny Dankworth as guest on "This Is Your Life" (his wartime landlady, the Beverley Sisters etc., etc., were dredged up for the occasion). Once again the minutes of consequence were few - a nice tribute from Yehudi Menuhin, and a musical reunion between the original Dankworth Seven (now a half hour of that would have been a bitch, as opposed to the heavy heartiness of presenter Eamonn Andrews). Anyway Kentjazz want to stage a proper concert reunion of the Dankworth Seven in their next season of Arts Council-supported shows, and I hope it happens.

But back to the small screen - and a pretty dire package from Carnegie Hall(?) compered by Doc "Mr. Smoothie" Severenson. Ella unwrapped her usual bag of tricks, outwore her welcome and

was just plain dull. The programme was worth seeing for one of our last glimpses of Gene Krupa, plainly enjoying his work with the reunited Goodman Quartet (plus unidentified bassist). Hamp was an groovy as ever, Goodman a little rusty and Teddy immaculate. The rest of the proceedings was a shambles, aside from a couple of nifty solos from Dizzy Gillespie in the massed trumpet battle. The presentation was gimmicky, the sound poor, and one was left with the feeling that producer, cameramen, and most of those involved were doing a job that their hearts weren't in.

Meanwhile, back on the record scene, Tony Williams is about to swamp us with Spotlite goodies - including his own productions. There's an Al Haig Trio date made in Paris last December with Kenny Clarke on drums; a Pepper Adams Quartet (with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis rhythm section) and he's planning to record trumpeter John Eardley (maybe with pianist John Burch). Eardley was here in early March and did gigs at the Bull's Head, Barnes, and Jamfs Club in Canterbury. Pianist Dick Wellstood came in for a few dates back in December and made an album for Doug Dobell's 77 label. Dick had just returned from a couple of weeks in South Africa and fitted in a TV date in Switzerland before coming to England in the middle of our national crisis. He was heard at the 100 Club, at Brighton and on a couple of sessions in the Midlands.

It was a drag to hear from Val Wilmer that Bobby Timmons had died at the age of 38 after a lengthy illness, culminating in kidney failure. I checked out some of Bobby's early sides with Kenny Burrell, the Jazz Messengers and Adderley. A much better player than we were misled into believing. His work on Kenny Dorham's "Matador" (United Artists) album is superb. Dorham, of course, used Timmons in his Jazz Prophets group of 1956 and they made beautiful music together on the Blue Note LP taped by Van Gelder at the Cafe Bohemia.

A trans-Atlantic call to the Bronx confirmed that Don Schlitten was just off on a working vacation to record Red Rodney in various contexts in LA for Muse. Don was also planning another date by singer Eddie Jefferson who, with Schlitten producing, did those two excellent sets for Prestige a few years ago. Legend producer Patrick Boyle visited Europe to sound out some artists for recording. He may also make a date with John Eardley.

Records, like most everything else, seem to be going up in price here and the majority of labels are now priced well over 2 pounds, many around the 2.50 pound mark. The Pablo platters are 2.50 pounds, imported from Germany, and talking of Pablo, for those who bought the fine Duke Ellington "Big Four" set, it was recorded in LA on January 8, 1973 (the date ain't on the jacket) and there is one unissued title, Caravan, still in the can. When can we expect the Duke/Ray Brown duets, recreating the Blanton things, Mr. Granz? The piano

seems to be coming back into its own.

Canterbury Jazz Appreciation Society's March concert "The Piano In Jazz" was a real hit, a sell-out in fact. The pianists were Pete Gresham (used to be with Bob Wallis' Storyville Jazzmen and Steve Lane's Stompers), John Burch (who played in the Don Rendall Band which recorded for Jazzland, and wrote hits for Georgie Fame) and Paul Jury (a most accomplished modern musician). This package should go out on tour for these three between them have the whole scene covered. - Mark Gardner

NEWS NOTES

I am happy to report that James D. Shacter, a close friend and long-time admirer of the great pianist, is working on a book about Ralph Sutton's life. Says James: "It is my special goal of presenting this top jazz artist as a flesh and blood human being, not merely as a character who plays great music."

Knowing James Shacter as the profound and enthusiastic man he is - and what a fine writing style is his! - I suggest you make a note in order not to miss this book when it comes out (probably near the beginning of next year). Anybody interested, willing and able to contribute any kind of first-hand information on Ralph Sutton, might do worse than drop a line to Mr. James D. Shacter, Lake Shore Drive, Apt. 902, Chicago, Illinois 60657, U.S.A. - Johnny Simmen

On February 5 and 6, Clifford Thornton directed a workshop with the Jazz Composers' Orchestra. These two days should have ended with a recording session, which did not take place, the rehearsals having been cut short for various reasons (car breakdowns, the fuel shortage among others).

On this occasion Clifford Thornton presented his compositions inspired by African themes (war songs, children's songs, songs of welcome and farewell, chants of wandering peddlers of Africa and the United States).

The orchestra is composed of a very strong rhythm section: African percussion with A. Adzenia as master drummer, Afro-Cuban percussion with Jerry Gonzalez, Afro-American percussion with Rashied Ali, and Charlie Haden and Andy Gonzalez on the basses. On piano, the only woman in the orchestra, Carla Bley.

The wind section is large (5 saxophones, 4 trumpets, 5 trombones and a tuba) and outstanding as much as for the renown of certain musicians as for the talent of everyone.

Clifford Thornton directed this orchestra with calm and patience but ended with a kind of very spirited dance which carries from one section to another revitalising the musicians who seemed to have then a better understanding of the complex arrangements even though the themes themselves may be simple.

Two new rehearsals were scheduled for April 2 and 3, followed by a recording

session on the 4th.

The record, which will be called "The Gardens of Harlem", should appear in 3 months and will be distributed by JCOA. This record is a co-production of the JCOA and Clifford Thornton and for the second time (this arrangement was already in effect for Don Cherry's record "Relativity Suite") all the musicians of the orchestra will receive a part (1.5%) of the total royalties which will be shared between them and the producers.

Last-minute news item: Archie Shepp gave 2 concerts at the ORTF in Paris on March 23, accompanied by Kessler (piano), B. Reid (bass), Noel McGhee (drums), Ted Joans, and Basil Grey.

- Christine Jakobs

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TAX m-8004 BENNY CARTER: Melancholy Benny 1939/40

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TAX m-8002 BOOTS AND HIS BUDDIES: San Antonio Jazz 1935-36

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TAX m-8000 THE ALTERNATIVE LESTER: 1936/39

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MUSIC IS THE HEALING FORCE OF THE UNIVERSE

Ed Blackwell Benefit Concert
Mackenzie's Corner House, Toronto,
Sunday, March 17, 1974.

To hell with St. Patrick. March 17, 1974, in Toronto, was Saint Blackwell's day, a day devoted to helping to keep one man alive. And because of a lot of selfless work by organizers and volunteers and an audience that loved people and music, it happened.

For those with the stamina, there were two different concerts, making for better than twelve hours of near-continuous music. And "local talent" has really

come of age; the concert was an occasion of exceptional inspiration for almost everyone who played.

The afternoon opened (at the ungodly Sunday hour of one p.m.) with an exhilarating set by the Bernie Senensky trio with guest saxophonist John Tank. I have to confess that I'm not used to hearing such intensity from Senensky; this day his lines flowed intricately from the keyboard in flaming spirals that built their impetus cyclically from within. Bassist Dave Field was where he had to be, and underneath Terry Clarke belted things along proudly. John Tank took up his soprano and with Senensky's synergy molded Chick Corea's 500 Miles High from lame prettiness into a slashing,

lifting beast. Moving to tenor he became a meaty hard-bop horn with a deep blue sound and a rhythmic intricacy that Clarke was hard-put to follow. Throughout Tank and Senensky played with incredible empathy. But like the other sets, this one was too short. Our man Senensky stayed on, though, without a break to accompany Salome Bey's voice with a near-superhuman devotion. If you've not heard her since the "Andy and the Bey Sisters" days, let me explain that Ms. Bey has a deep, rich voice that preaches her song with almost operatic drama, teaching us once and for all what soul (!!) is. She took us through new views of some standards, a swingingly affectionate look at Fats Waller



(Honeysuckle Rose, Ain't Misbehaving, and I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Write Myself A Letter), even a Beatles' tune, and her own storefront social commentary. She enunciated the entire purpose of the day with "It Is Time (For All Good Men To Come To The Aid Of Each Other)". Her voice, in front of the spare, sympathetic backing from Senensky, Field, and drummer Gerry Fuller, was intensely vivid.

New York Artist #1 for the afternoon was vibist/pianist Karl Berger and his Free Music group, with wife Ingrid on voice and percussion, and bassist Tom Schmidt. Native son Claude Ranger, whose astute percussion fit the group as if he'd been working with them for years, and was in many respects the key to this set. Berger and company played at length, kinetic free sound improvisations moving out of naive heads that had no form other than their telegraphed rhythmic intensity; and that seemed to dissolve into nothingness during the interludes when Ranger sat out. The group's phrasings and sound placements seemed aimless and stilted without the kind of drive that Ranger had to inject. Berger's occasional vibes solos were brittle, dancing, and deliberate; Tom Schmidt is a monster; but if you didn't know about Claude Ranger by now it's your own fault.

Since we were running behind time by now, Stuart Broomer's set was cut to twenty minutes - or just enough for him and Larry Potter, playing in and on the piano, to establish and develop one improvisation. The vibrations were right for him, though, as he drew an amazing vocabulary of sound from the prepared keyboard at a screaming intensity that was distinctly uncomfortable for the idle browsers in the audience. He played with a sardonic irony that drew together modal and rhythmic energies out of the jazz traditions and a vocabulary and formal surprise close akin to his work in electronic music. He moved rapidly from the jagged realms of Taylor-like density/kineticism to a romantic, music-box lyricism with little self-consciousness. He was happy with it; and it was good to hear him back after some six years away from performance.

After four sets of heavy piano, Mackenzie's little Yamaha grand was getting noticeably out of tune. That didn't bother Sadik Hakim much, but on the other hand he never really seemed to be getting into anything. He played placidly, with comfortable lyricism and great empathy with his sidemen (Bob Boucher, bass, and drummer George Reed), but the most personal part of his performance was his sparse, brittle touch. He never unleashed the power we knew he commanded. (Incidentally, the piano was retuned before the second concert.)

I've already noted Claude Ranger's singular drumming talents. Apart from the diversity and power of the drive he generates, he seems to be able to play well and stay on his own terms with just about anyone. Michel Donato has a

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

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graceful, open power, one of the most attractively rich bass sounds in existence, and an impish sense of humour. Together they mesh into unequivocally the finest rhythm section in the world. They played two sets - the last of the afternoon concert and the evening's opener - behind the ideally-matched horn of Sonny Rollins. What else is there to say except... Sonny Rollins was here; and is still here in the heads and hearts of those who heard him? Apart from the extraterrestrial intelligence of his manner - his eyes and sound seem intimately aware of everything happening around him - there is the subtle, elastic irony genius of his music. But the irony has none of the slashing viciousness that (say) Miles commands; it's a commentary laughing with and at itself. The gems of the two sets included duplicate versions of St. Thomas that abstracted the buoyant song into subtly-varied riffs (the second set's version seemed to pick up exactly where the first left off); an Oleo that stretched rhythmic malleability and harmony to almost breaking - and then beyond without losing coherence; two visions of Alfie's Theme; When Lights Are Low and Pettiford's Blues In The Closet; and a glorious cappella cadenza, opening the last title of the first set, that seemed to sum up everything his music was to him. His logic was compelling - as if, no matter how complex his lines became, there was naturally no other way for them to move. Few artists get ovations of the enthusiasm these three received; Rollins, Donato, and Ranger all deserve each other.

And so into the second concert. The Ted Moses Quintet is well-known around Toronto as one of the more substantial

local post-bop bands. Its charts are close and muted, and but for their harmonic extravagance would closely resemble the Miles Davis-Wayne Shorter collaborations of the mid-1960s. Their ensemble skills seem to be the achievement of a sustained mood with little variation in intensity, no peaks or troughs; the unfortunate part of this is that such little expressive range occasionally means aimless meandering in extended solos. The front line sound, from trumpeter Mike Malone and flautist Cathy Moses, is burry but serene, and for some reason recalled the Eric Dolphy-Booker Little collaborations of celestially long ago. Ms. Moses is one of the more hard-driven and inventive flautists around, and plays in close empathy with pianist/leader/husband Ted and with the other horn. Trumpeter Malone has a fleet, kinetic attack, but tended to be inaccurate and seemed overly busy tonight, while the pianist sat back in a self-cast Herbie Hancock role that occasionally said nothing at very great length. The quintet is very together. However, the bass is very important to their entire ensemble sound, and for some reason Rick Homme was virtually inaudible; as always Terry Clarke was less sensitive than one might wish.

The Terry Logan Movement is perhaps best summarized as an erudite organ quintet, whose repertoire is more indicative of their musical stance (Woody Shaw's Zoltan, Herbie Hancock's Sly, and Freddie Hubbard's Red Clay for this set) than its instrumentation. John Tank's tenor and soprano gives the band all the up-front power it needs; Logan plays and comps sparely behind his Hammond with an exciting intelligence that brings Larry Young to mind; guitarist Miguel Zabaleta ran fleet, subtle single-string lines; and the two percussionists (Jesse Foster and Bob McLaren) meshed well underneath. The band occasionally got carried away in sound; but this was robust, good-timey music for an audience that needed a bit of a breather from intensity by now.

Gary Morgan and Friends is another empathetic Toronto band inhabiting the world of the post-Miles cool. Morgan himself plays fleet, dark, snakey tenor. The band's trumpeter, Herbie Spanier (another recent emigre from Montreal), has a brash, brassy sound that flows in cascades with some very personal harmonic twists and turns. Pianist Gary Williamson is an intricate, lyrical bebopper; and as in their other sets, bassist Dave Field and drummer Bob McLaren accompanied closely and astutely. The only problem was the sound system - which, by now, had been turned up to ear-shattering levels of distortion.

The night's final set promised great things. After Sonny Greenwich had had to bow out because of illness, tenorist Alvin Paul was asked to play in his place; unscheduled musicians started to ask if they could help out, and by the end of the evening it had grown to a prospective massive jam with Paul, Junior Cook, and a number of the horns from the earlier

sets, over rhythm. Unfortunately, time had marched on, beyond one a.m.; and after twelve straight hours of music, with the prospect of my own early morning dues, I was too exhausted and numb to withstand the assault. My apologies to all concerned for not being able to report on the apocalypse.

Net results of the benefit - a day of love, with little to mar it. Over \$4000 went on to help Ed Blackwell. (He also got a full tape of the day's music.) Thanks to Alan Offstein for the energy and imagination that moved everything, to everyone who worked to put the concert together - especially the artists who made it what it was, and particularly to the management of Mackenzie's which - even though it isn't a jazz club - came through with the premises when all of Toronto's regular jazz rooms (including Blackwell's last Toronto employer, the C*P*n**1 T*v*rn) declined. If music is the healing force of the universe, the sounds heard at Mackenzie's should have raised the dead. But - with the benefit over - Ed Blackwell is still sick, and still needs help to make it. Thank you Toronto.

- Barry Tepperman

TEDDY WILSON

Ramada Inn, Dolton, Illinois

LIONEL HAMPTON

London House, Chicago, Illinois

Back in Chicago for the first time since last July 15, when they joined Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa at the Ravinia Festival, Teddy Wilson and Lionel Hampton this time played separate gigs and never crossed paths.

Wilson came in for a one-night concert sponsored by the Illiana Jazz Club. Supported by a trio of local musicians, Wilson drew a surprisingly large crowd of about 400 that nearly packed the large ballroom. Yet, it was a disappointing show.

Teddy, the honored guest, was his usual polite self at the piano. His work will never grow corny or even badly dated. But its harmonic and rhythmic simplicity, although technically immaculate, is elementary today, and as a consequence sounds occasionally dull and bloodless. His solo on Sophisticated Lady was highly Tatumesque in its flurry of arpeggios, but too often his playing with the group was restrained and uninspired. Only on Love Is Just Around The Corner (which turned into Slipped Disc) did he rise above routine levels.

Wilson's support seemed equally unchallenged by the whole affair. Jerry Fuller, who was heard for a decade with the Dukes of Dixieland, is a clarinetist very much in the Goodman tradition, although his clean sound in the upper register often suggests Artie Shaw. He seems obsessed with the thought of the perfect clarinet solo. Or so he seemed this night. Every note in precisely the correct slot, and perfectly intoned. Symmetrical phrases parceled out with



imperturbable propriety. Fuller is capable of a formidable intensity when challenged. But there was little intensity this night. And little challenge.

The rhythm section must take perhaps the greater share of the blame here. Bob Cousins' played with brushes almost throughout. His apparent desire to play an entire concert without anyone noticing was almost achieved. Cousins is an exceptional drummer who can spark a group. But he totally failed to give this one the boot it needed. Bassist Ed DeHaas was a further drag, playing two beat most of the time.

Meanwhile, 20 miles north, pandemonium prevailed at the London House, where Lionel Hampton opened with his 10 piece group. It was the usual combination of superb jazz and pure hokum. His rhythm section now includes bongos and a variety of percussion handled by the hornmen. It intrudes in material like Sunny Side Of The Street and How High The Moon but is at home in such charts as the 2001 theme, which Hampton turns into good jazz material.

On drums, he's more interested in twirling sticks about than keeping time.

The set would have been just so much good fun were it not for a surprise. "I feel like jamming," said Hamp as he invited Bob Snyder of Petoskey, Michigan, to the stand. Who's Bob Snyder? A bearded man built like a 50ish Al Hirt stepped to the mike with a clarinet clenched in his fist. Hamp jumped into Flying Home, and Snyder proceeded to turn his horn into a black stick of dynamite. He played clarinet as I've never heard it done before. Incredible volume and ferocious attack, but without

ever losing control of either tone or stride. He dominates the entire group with long passionate flights full of complex clusters of notes broken by intense, sweeping glissandos. Stabbing notes flew from his horn like shrill bullets of sound, coalescing into solos of shimmering inhibition. Snyder made this Hampton set a truly memorable one, as the house went wild with enthusiasm.

Teddy Wilson and Lionel Hampton. Two giants of jazz still doing what they do best. And sometimes, making it happen in a big way. - John McDonough

WEATHER REPORT

Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti
March 3, 1974.

Weather Report came to this medium-sized southeastern Michigan college as part of a double feature with a popular rock group called Earth, Wind, and Fire. Apparently such combinations work; the crowd responded enthusiastically to the group's relatively short (45 minutes) set.

Three-fifths of the group - Joe Zawinul, keyboards; Wayne Shorter, tenor and soprano; and Dom Um Romao, percussion - have been with the group since its inception. And Weather Report seems to have some difficulty in keeping drummers, so it was no great surprise to find Ishmael Wilburn, a new face, on drums. However, one of the founding group members, bassist Miroslav Vitous, had just left; his replacement, Al Johnson (formerly with Chuck Mangione), proved to be an inventive and facile improviser with plenty to add to Weather Report's



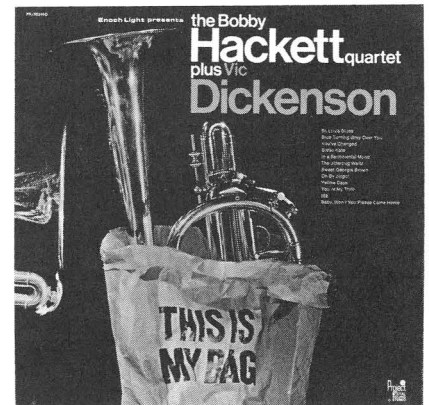
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whose sudden appearance on the scene in the last few years have added much to the character of jazz. He provided the chief visual interest during the performance: his various percussion instruments were lined up on a long table at the back of the stage and he shook, rattled and pounded throughout the concert.

One by one the various members of the group joined Romao, until Shorter, on tenor, finally stated the theme of Second Sunday in August by Zawinul. Shorter's solo developed considerable energy, and the interplay between him and Zawinul at times rose to the level of a duet. Zawinul also contributed a strong solo.

Another Romao percussion interlude led to a short but very pretty keyboard solo by Zawinul, with almost Scottish overtones. Zawinul without pause kicked off his Boogie Woogie Waltz, which despite its archaic-sounding title is a powerful and modern rock tune. Shorter first played a strong solo on soprano and then began repeating an ostinato, over which Zawinul created considerable tension with a pattern of varying dissonant chords. It was all quite powerful, and the crowd, which had mostly come to hear Earth, Wind and Fire, responded with a large round of applause. — David Wild

NEW YORK JAZZ REPERTORY COMPANY

Carnegie Hall, New York,
April 6, 1974

The few listeners who went to Carnegie Hall for an evening of the music of Thelonious Monk played by members of the New York Jazz Repertory Company heard an unexpected guest soloist, Monk himself, in a superb concert. In his first New York appearance in more than a

year, the seminally influential pianist and composer joined a 13-piece band augmented by strings on some numbers, and sparked one of the most satisfying offerings of the repertory company's season.

The band was extremely well rehearsed by conductor Paul Jeffrey, a tenor saxophonist who has played in Monk's quartet in recent years. The collective rhythmic thrust applied by the ensemble to the late Hall Overton's arrangements of Monk compositions sent them forward with the kind of chugging, churning swing achieved by Monk's best quartets. Although beset by illnesses of late, the pianist appeared hearty and healthy, and his solos were full of skipping high-energy passages and eccentric good humor that had his fellow musicians beaming at Monk and exchanging knowing smiles.

The string section negotiated Jeffrey's sketches with accuracy, aplomb, and feeling for the music. The only exception came when two of the violinists entered late after having been mesmerized by Monk's lovely solo on Pannonica.

Of the other soloists, 64-year-old Budd Johnson was the most consistently interesting, playing soprano saxophone with fire, imagination, inventiveness, and a composer-arranger's understanding of the core of Monk's music. Johnson's choruses on Evidence showed total mastery of the maverick soprano sax, with breathtaking doubletime passages and flawless swing. A young trumpeter named Charles Sullivan also demonstrated affinity for Monk in excellent solos on Oskata and Evidence. Alto saxophonist Charles McPherson seemed victimized by an inability to achieve momentum in the early numbers, although he tried to gather steam in several overlong solos. By the end of the evening he was less

fluid music.

Late starts seem to be a feature of large arena concerts, and this one was no exception. After 45 minutes, over a dark organ-like texture from Zawinul, Shorter and Johnson stated the melody of Zawinul's Orange Lady. Weather Report has its own distinctive approach to improvisation, in which the rhythm, carried by the drums, remains constant while the bass, keyboard and saxophone are free to move in and out. Thus Orange Lady was characterized by occasional incursions by Shorter's soprano and attractive repeated riffs and punctuations by Zawinul and Johnson.

After Orange Lady, Dom Um Romao provided the first of several solo percussion interludes. Romao is another of those South American percussionists

dependent on his bag of Charlie Parker phrases, hit his rhythmic stride, and produced superior solos on Evidence and Epistrophy.

Cecil Payne cajoled Jeffrey into letting him solo on Epistrophy and gave a magnificent, rolling, baritone saxophone performance that was one of the highlights of the evening. Eddie Bert imparted his glorious trombone sound to the ballad Monk's Mood, embellishing the melody only slightly but putting his unmistakable personal stamp on it. The veteran Monk tenor saxophonist Charlie Rouse soloed consistently well, teaming up with Jeffrey and the rhythm section in a quintet version of Straight, No Chaser, the classic Monk blues line. Rouse's dry, cool, somewhat detached style contrasted with Jeffrey's juicier, R & B-tinged improvising. Richard Williams brought his spacious classical tone and his boppish linear conception into play in an impressive trumpet solo on I Mean You.

The bassist, Hal Dodson, kept the time right down the middle where Monk likes it. Thelonious Monk, Jr. may be the best drummer for Monk since Art Blakey, from whom young Monk has apparently learned something about swinging and about how to stimulate soloists.

Had Monk not agreed at the eleventh hour to play the concert, the pianist was to have been Barry Harris, who helped Jeffrey organize the musicians and rehearse the arrangements and who took a deserved bow before intermission.

As usual at concerts of the New York Jazz Repertory Company, there was no written or spoken announcement of the names of the compositions and only the most fleeting (and nearly inaudible) introduction of the musicians. If the listener could not identify the tunes by ear and the players by sight, he was kept in ignorance. Producer George Wein might contemplate the effect of this informational blackout on attendance before his next on-stage speech deploring the public's lack of support for the repertory concerts.

(Monk, piano; Hal Dodson, bass; Thelonious Monk, Jr., drums; Charlie Rouse, tenor saxophone; Budd Johnson, soprano saxophone; Charles McPherson, alto saxophone; Julius Watkins, french horn; Cecil Payne, baritone saxophone; Jack Jeffers, tuba; Charles Stephens, Eddie Bert, trombones; Charles Miller, Charles Sullivan, Richard Williams, trumpets; Paul Jeffrey, conductor and tenor saxophone; 13 strings including bassist Dave Holland.) - Doug Ramsey

KARL BERGER

York University,
March 18, 1974

On March 17, at the Ed Blackwell Benefit Concert, Karl Berger played his kind of music - that which flows with time and in space, allowing listeners to feel continually changing levels of the energy uniquely found in musical sound.

The next day, Karl, with his wife,

Ingrid, and bassist Tom Schmidt, came to York University in Toronto to share some ideas and experiences with jazz music students. York is building a strong jazz program under excellent instruction from musicians John Gittins and Bob Witmer. During the last year, many local and visiting musicians have performed or carried out workshops for students.

Karl talked about time. Time always exists; we should get on board what is already here and moving rather than try to make it happen ourselves. If time is initially considered as a continuum and not discrete points, then one can join with the flow as he chooses, and with sufficient practice become very exact in his choice. Using syllables rather than numbers allows you to better feel the continuum. Instead of saying "one two", say "taki"; instead of saying "one two three", say "gammala". Syllables fill in the whole space and numbers do not. As well, thinking words while playing will help a musician better project what he is trying to say, and he should be trying to communicate something.

Sitting around as a circle, we practiced rhythm exercises, hitting hands against knees and singing "taki" and "gammala" and combinations of the two so that in fact we were playing in various time signatures. These syllables represent eighth notes and can be used for exercises in 2/4, 3/4, 5/4 etc. After playing back a recording of one of our exercises, Karl said that when you feel everything begin to rush, relax and approach the time from under it, not on top which will only move your pulse faster. He continually stressed the value of practice to expose the talent we all have for expressing rhythmic (and harmonic) complexities.

We then sang a soft simple melody with beautiful lyrics. "The smile that you send returns to you." Listening to my own voice and others was a lesson in intonation and gave me a chance to sense subtle tonal changes which usually take place in group singing. We gathered around the piano and when Karl played different chords beneath our sustained B flat, we heard overtones and learned how you have to be aware of the harmonic context in which every note is used.

Everyone with his instrument, including voice, of course, then played or sang the same melody and later a second with a more complex rhythmic structure. As we played, Karl prompted certain people to hold notes while others continued the line unchanged. Volume increased and diminished. And while he played vibes or piano, and while Ingrid played piano, and Tom bass, I with my horn and everyone else playing could hear and feel individual notes and phrases and a slight rushing or slowing of the time and that indescribable essence that belongs with musical ensembles and healing forces.

York jazz music students experienced a unique workshop by Karl Berger, a warm, sensitive soul from the Creative Music Foundation. All of us are very appreciative and more enthusiastic than ever.

- Larry Licht

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STEVE LACY

Dragon Centre, Paris, France.
March 7, 1974

In and out of Africa one can see and one can hear and two can taste and three can feel and four can smell (if his/her nostrils are large enough) the eternal surrealist vibrations that swing (un-monkeylike but Chico Marx and Thelonious-like) across and under the natural landscape and the asphalt/concrete cityscape which are still in the shadow of huge old baobab trees and tall elegantly rooted cotton trees, one can conjure sufficient mental stamina to summon that vital force that inevitably erases Western trashes from the important functions of our human bodies. In the correct etiquette setting of maroon drapes (background) and fullhouse of full frontal faces (predominately French) at the Dragon Centre (official culture center of the U.S.A.), one could have witnessed last Friday eve the Steve Lacy Ensemble, known as the Around The Sun (the latter word has nothing to do with Brother Ra).

Steve Lacy is one of those rare white U.S. musicians that has been consistent, come what may, to pay the dues that serious American white musicians have to pay IF they desire to spiritually create valid classical (jazz) music of today. This man is still paying his dues and unlike many white others, such as Getz, Haig, Evans, Allison, Rudd, Hall, etc. he has found no "set style" of creation, thus his music is a constant "seek, find, and move on" bag. Lacy is one of the very first consistent soprano sax cats that I dug, wayback in early Greenwich Village Fifties. In those "good old, bad old days" he was learning Black music directions by observing the vast maps of Thelonious Monk. This later aided him immensely to chart his course across the Atlantic, where Lacy himself became an "influence" on those whose jazz musical taste needed navigational consultations. Lacy's musical group at the Dragon Centre performed his music, which I call Free Cool. It is an impressionist jazz sound, that is founded on each musician's personality to express Lacy's compositions in a very loose "twogetherness". This "twogetherness" is often lacking in many of the expressionists-free jazz groups, especially the white groups even when Black Musicians are included.

Lacy opens up with a smoking Monklike piece called The Crust. The loose twogetherness and the short (good taste) improvised solos lifted the audience up by their ears and they remained up/out there throughout the evening. I for one had fun up/out there. The musicians were in a non-competitive groove, which is a healthy thing on this side of the Atlantic, for a good example of what I be rapping about; Michael Smith played on piano, "free support", that is to say he did an "our thing" instead of the usual free pianist "own thing". Smith created a rug of loose sound on which the solo dude or

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the entire group could magic-carpet itself in any directions that was desired. The strings of Kent Carter and Irene Aebi (the latter perhaps is the finest female creator on cello in jazz) when into an arco bag, sounded like several sweaty armpits rubbed together on a dance floor. They caused their cellos to sing "twogether". I heard what they said! Kent Carter's bass lines are like a natural mountain range of musical awe. Or should I say, "breath-taking". Each note is like a fist filled with thousand dollar bills being handed out to the poor. The percussionist Kenneth Tyler is one of those rare drummers in the Free music field today, because he is listening, supporting, and inventing. One should watch Tyler, his tomorrows are going to be marvelous. Steve Potts unfortunately played himself down, that is to say he blew only as a sideman. He only came through when he and Lacy did a double soprano (two saps zap you) bit, which was one of the higher points of the too short evening. On Snorts Lacy created Olduvai-first-man grunts that led to a beautiful primeval gaiety in music. The group swung as Lacy built a smoke stack solo. The only member of the Around The Sun group that I felt was not in the same groove as the others, was trumpeter Ray Stephen Oche. He is very visual, but his style of trumpeting is rooted in the Clifford Brown/Freddie Hubbard bag. Throughout the evening when he would

solo (more often too often) he was struggling to fit in, but couldn't quite make it. It was painful for me to witness his effort. Only on the composition Crops did Ray get into his natural thing, that was when the drummer Tyler went into a traditional four-four bit for a short moment. Ray must face his music, for he like Hubbard and many other good trumpet players are not Free music creators. Hubbard was a misfit on Ornette's famous "Free Jazz" album as well as out-of-place on Coltrane's masterpiece "Ascension". Ray and many other traditional styled musicians shouldn't frustrate themselves by attempting to do something that does not come out naturally.

Speaking of natural, the voice of Irene came as a natural surprise to me. It is a commanding voice, very distinct diction and clear. She rhythmically recited a white music manifesto. And why not? Haven't we Black musicians stated in words what we have on our Black minds before audiences and on discs. So Irene Aebi, a young Swiss Ms spoke eloquently of white pathos, white desires and paid dues. It was sincere and well accepted by the full house of full frontal faces, which were predominately French/white, during the last few musical minutes of the Steve Lacy Around The Sun night at the Dragon Centre, that official U.S.A. culture center in the heart of the French capital, Paris.

- Ted Joans

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- Woody Herman and Orchestra
- Louie Bellson and Orchestra
- Maynard Ferguson and Orchestra
- Carmen McRae Trio
- Buddy De Franco
- Jack Wilkins
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