

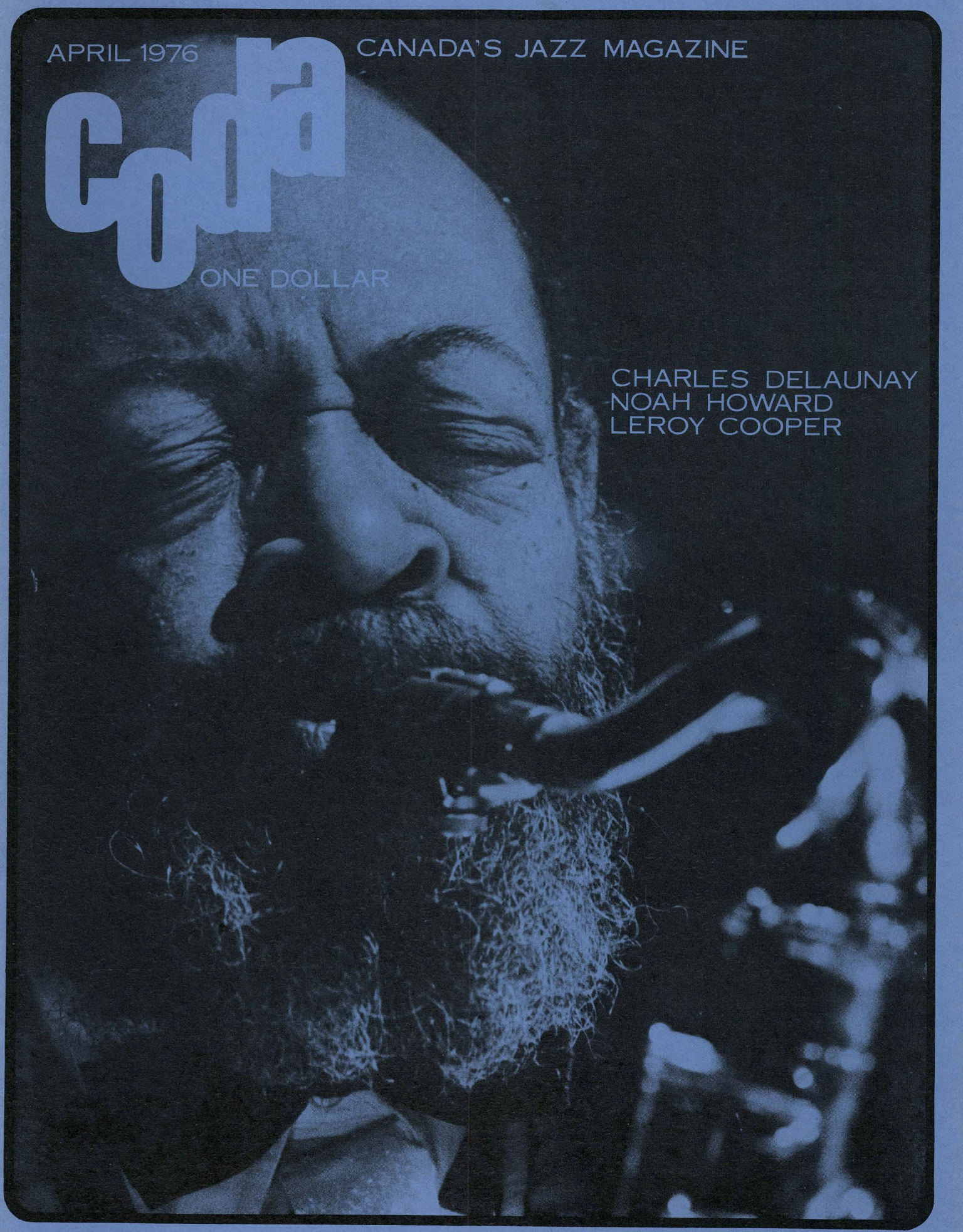
APRIL 1976


CANADA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

# Coda

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# Coda

April 1976 - Issue 146

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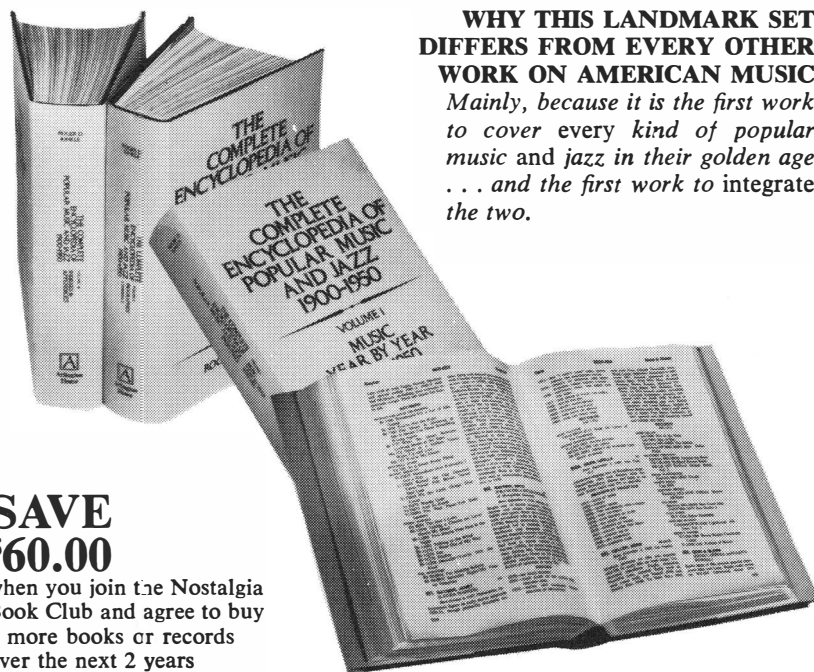
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# DELAUNAY'S DELIGHT

CHARLES DELAUNAY IN CONVERSATION WITH TEDDY LEYH



Part II: Paris in the Thirties  
(continued from Coda 133 - Vol. 12 No. 1 -  
November 1974)

"Forty years are a rather long period, making memories fade away. Although the Thirties are often considered as a miserable decade, in my memory that epoch remains one of the most happy and enriching times of my life and I congratulate myself every day for having been born at the right time...."

STANLEY DANCE, Jazz hot No. 314  
(March 1975)

"While 'Jazz hot' is not the oldest review still existing ('Melody Maker', 'Down Beat' and 'Orkester Journalem' had been started earlier), it is, however, the first one devoted exclusively to jazz at a time when its fans could be counted on the fingers of one hand."

CHARLES DELAUNAY, Jazz hot No. 314  
(March 1975 - on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of JAZZ HOT)

## CHORUS IV

T.L.: You mentioned earlier that one of the biggest impacts made on you by jazz was hearing the Duke Ellington orchestra "in the flesh" for the first time...

C.D.: That's right. That was in Paris, in July '33. It was at a time when already the holiday season had started. (French holidays used to start on July 14). And it was exactly at the same time as the finals of the Davis Cup. And I don't know what happened, because until then we never had more than probably 50 people at any jazz concert, but there were two concerts of Duke Ellington at Salle Pleyel and each of them was completely packed....

T.L.: How many people?

C.D.: Well, Pleyel holds nearly 2500... And moreover, there were so many people who could not get in that they had to improvise a third concert two days afterwards. It was the same day as the Davis Cup Final, a Sunday, if I remember right. And this concert was packed also. Yet, in fact, very few people knew the name of

Duke Ellington in those days. It seems that the publicity came at the right time. It also happened that the people were excited by the Davis Cup Final here in Paris. It was in the days we had the good players. I still remember that very well because I was playing tennis myself. There were Cochet, Borotra, Brugnon, and Lecoste. In the American team there were Tilden and Johnson.

T.L.: In Germany, we had Gottfried von Cramm...

C.D.: That's later...

T.L.: I think he was prominent by '36...

C.D.: Yes, but we are in '33.

T.L.: Do you remember who won the Cup in that year?

C.D.: It must have been France, then. But it was the last year we won. We were World Champion for five years...and we never came back.

T.L.: Who arranged the Ellington concerts?

C.D.: It was Jack Hylton who handled Ellington for a British tour. After a

month or so in England, they came to France, before returning to America.

T.L.: Was Jack Hylton in the States, for exchange, or how did that come about?

C.D.: That I don't know...

T.L.: You know, the musician's union in England was...

C.D.: ...very tight, I know. But since Jack Hylton was a big shot in England, he might have had enough influence to persuade the right people to grant permission for Ellington's visit.

T.L.: You said that Ellington's concert was one of the biggest impressions of your life...

C.D.: For whoever came to these concerts it was just simply terrific. Imagine what it meant for someone who never had a chance to hear such a band before! The whole program was terrific, not only Ellington having this outstanding band, for in those days he also had dancers, couples of dancers, single dancers, a snake dancer, a couple of lindy hoppers...

T.L.: What's that?

C.D.: It's a kind of dance which stems from Harlem...generally two teams of two, - two girls, two men, - and generally dancing with the most eccentric inspiration. And what a beat! Apart from dancers, there were singers - it was a show, a terrific show, the excitement was great and it had an enormous success. I don't know whether people exactly understood what was happening, I don't know whether they liked jazz, but it was just like the impact of a bomb...

T.L.: Do you remember any one tune that made a special impression upon you?

C.D.: The one that impressed me most - I don't know for what reason, outside of all his typical tunes such as It Don't Mean A Thing etcetera - that was Dinah.

T.L.: Dinah - !?!?!?

C.D.: Yes! They played it...if I remember right, it had a terrific trumpet solo by Cootie Williams. I was just stoned. But everything was terrific - from the very beginning, even numbers like Mood Indigo, real sweet. There was so much movement on the stage! Things we never had seen before. It was just a new kind of show for us. Now, when I think of it, I can not understand that things like that have never been attempted ever since, because that was the best way to get the band into high spirits.

T.L.: Maybe one should tell Count Basie?

C.D.: I told it to...oh, band leaders have nothing to do with that, it's the impresario's business, I think... Once George Wein asked me: 'What should I bring to France next year?' and I told him: 'Why don't you try bringing dancers along with the bands?' - but nothing ever happened... It's stupid... If I were in that business, I would promote dancers with a band - soloists on the bandstand and - in the aisles - dancers... Not always - but lots of things like this to compete, stimulate and create excitement...

T.L.: You could find many great talents among them.

C.D.: Of course. They are just starving in America...

T.L.: Probably every Negro is a born dancer.

C.D.: No, I don't think so, don't imagine so, but there are many top professionals...

T.L.: I guess you've got a point there. Come to think of it, something that amazed me sometimes, you might even say it left me flabbergasted, was the fact that there are some, quite some Negroes who don't like jazz.

C.D.: There are many! You'd be surprised: When I used to go to America regularly, I was very often in Harlem and when I asked them who were their favorite singers, they were either Sinatra or Bing Crosby; when you asked them to name the best band, that was Benny Goodman or Tommy Dorsey - and they didn't care for what you might have called "their own bands"...

T.L.: Nowadays, it's at least Marvin Gaye or Diana Ross on their "charts", but compared to jazz singers, that's just the same superficial attitude towards music. If they compare Diana Ross, for instance, with -

C.D.: I know, Billie Holiday -

T.L.: that's just a joke.

C.D.: Haha.

T.L.: But at least there's one good thing: It got people interested in the recordings of Billie Holiday again.

C.D.: That's true.

T.L.: And so back to the 30's - after Ellington had been to Paris, you had written: "Et c'est le vice, laissez par ce passage". You meant to say that after Ellington was here, everything seemed so meaningless? Empty, I guess?

C.D.: - so quiet, exactly.

T.L.: I take it that was more a question that you put there - after Ellington, what more can you expect?

C.D.: Yes.

T.L.: But all the same, the Hot Club carried on - and not necessarily as quietly as your post-Ellingtonian question mark might have anticipated...

#### INTERLUDE

Everybody familiar with the development of those institutions surrounding - or invading - the jazz musician's sphere - such as clubs, promoters, critics and particular apostles attached to certain styles, fads, fashions and whatever may catch the public's eyes and ears, knows of the sometimes sad, sometimes amusing, mostly bewildering private feuds behind the scenes of that seemingly free-wheeling, easy-going, liberal brotherhood of jazz. Sometimes they have been carried out in public, mostly in writing, with certain musicians of this or that writer's preference being called upon as a witness for the truth of his arguments and theories. Luckily enough, hardly a case is known where a musician should have stopped playing because a critic had told the world that from here on, jazz was dead and only the past still alive. On the other hand, no real jazz musician felt obliged to turn to a certain style, however unfamiliar to him, just because Mr. XYZ made it known in writing or on the air

that henceforward, this style was the "real" thing, in fact, the only creative art of the day. To me, the appearance of a self-styled, omnipotent Jazz Messiah has always invoked fearful forebodings of Macchiavellian mischief coupled with the nauseating eloquence of certain politicians. Alas, the history of the Hot Club de France in the making had its own intriguing chapter in this vein.

#### CHORUS V

T.L.: You mentioned something about "the rivalry with Canetti". What happened?

C.D.: Well, this involves, among others, Hugues Panassie. You know, generally speaking, some critics have a funny and somewhat childish attitude. They think the fact that they have been the first to write about an artist entitles them to have some rights on him or/and that no one else is allowed to have another opinion than critic no 1...

It happened that Canetti was the A&R man at Polydor in Paris. In this function he was releasing Brunswick records for France. Panassie would surely have liked to be in his place. Canetti, being a businessman in the first place who was in charge of the jazz catalogue, also wanted to promote jazz and in his turn wanted to do what Panassie was doing, to make a name for himself. So the interests of these two strong-willed personalities could not be consistent.

T.L.: Was Panassie still living in Paris then?

C.D.: No, he was living in a castle in the Tarn valley, near Rodez.

T.L.: You mentioned that "Panassie's retreat" - if we may call it that - also diminished his participation in the activities of the Club. In which way?

C.D.: Panassie was not interested in the Hot Club administration. He mainly was a writer and as such he had the feeling that he was the first and only one to have understood well the music and the musicians. It was in his nature that he always liked people admiring him as such. - Of course, if there were important concerts such as the Duke's or Louis Armstrong's, he would come to Paris.

T.L.: His merits then were chiefly in his writing...

C.D.: No one can deny that he did a lot of writing. And he was deeply interested, he was enthusiastic about jazz - you can not say the contrary. But, in fact - for the historical record, not as a criticism, - he was not at all interested in the Hot Club. He was interested when the magazine started, because for Panassie it was almost a need to write... (And Canetti having become editor of "Jazz-Tango", he and Panassie could not remain for long in the same magazine).

T.L.: Continuing with the Hot Club history... Pierre Nourry became Secretary General - when?

C.D.: I don't remember the exact date. However, during the first year, after the first 6 months, after Ellington came to Paris, Pierre Nourry had finished his studies at school and he had entered in

the Ecole Centrale - engineers etc. - and he could devote more and more time to jazz and he was in fact the most active among us, he was the one running the concerts, looking for the musicians...

T.L.: And Michael Prunieres?

C.D.: He was one of the first, from the original group, he helped a lot because his father was directing a classical music magazine. He was working for the club; for instance, when we did not have a hall for concerts, he was looking after that. He was a great help because all the work - until the war - had to be done by us. For instance the magazine; the envelopes in which we mailed the magazine - we used to get together at Nourry's place and Nourry's mother, Nourry's sister and brother and myself and all those who were volunteers would write the addresses and place the stamps - we have done that for years - and in fact we still do it now - to avoid expenses... Not for the magazines that we send to subscribers, they are done mechanically. But for instance we are sending records to subscribers, so we have to take the car, get the records, bring boxes from Vogue to put the records in - and for the addresses, since it never goes fast enough, I usually say: "give me the addresses, I'll do it at home... to-night."

T.L.: Speaking of records, let's go back to your own record collecting.

C.D.: Having too few chances to hear top U.S. jazzmen "in the flesh", recordings were our main means to hear good jazz. In those days we knew very little about all the good jazz on records. And local record companies didn't release many records anyway. So, most of us would pay a visit to the "flea-market" each weekend and we can say that most of what we knew about jazz records we found there. Duplicates were used for trades with local or foreign collectors. I was also in contact with ODEON. It was a label in Paris that had released Armstrong records, and in those days, when they were putting out those Armstrong, Trumbauer, Eddie Lang records from the OKEH catalogue, they were only pressing about fifty or a hundred copies.

T.L.: Were they pressing them here in France?

C.D.: Yes.

T.L.: So they got matrixes -

C.D.: - from England, from Parlophone. Since we knew that there were at least 20 or 30 fans all looking for those records with Bix and so on, I used to go to ODEON trying to persuade them to re-issue them and they said: 'Well, if we have an order for 50 copies, we can re-release them for you', so we obtained subscription pressings just for our members, announcing 'the Hot Club will promote the re-issue of two Armstrong records, Chicagoans, and one Bix' and we would get just the necessary amount of orders. They were sold by the few jazz fan record stores we knew at that time. We found out later that for instance in Romania they were getting records which we could not find elsewhere, so we started exchanging records between the two countries.

T.L.: With Romania?

C.D.: Yeah. I got from Romania two Bix records which were not available in the rest of Europe. There was a friend of mine by the name of Michel Andrico, professor at the Academy of Music. He was a jazzfan, and a well-known composer (he was a friend of George Enesco). He wrote some articles for the magazine and he was the one who revealed to us the famous article Ernest Ansermet had written on Sidney Bechet in 1919. But we were mainly exchanging records with him. He was telling us which records were available in Romania and we were sending him the records which were pressed here on an exchange basis. It was just one of those innumerable cases of exchanges between collectors...

T.L.: I guess every collector from the good old days of the 78's has his own bunch of stories, of adventures and excitement which would fill many a book... But now on to autumn 1934, when quite a few things happened... Panassie then was working on the last chapters of his first book.

C.D.: I think he came to Paris - I'm thinking, I'm not sure of that - but at least he came to Paris for the two Armstrong concerts, and also because his book "le Jazz Hot" was to be published soon.

Louis Armstrong came - he arrived in Paris in September '34 - just for a short vacation after a tour he did in England. It was about the same time that Django started playing with the Quintet. And we were getting ready to launch the new magazine. The Hot Club contemplated organizing a Coleman Hawkins concert as soon as his contract with Jack Hylton would be finished. All these things happened at the same time, sort of all mixed up together.

T.L.: Did you get anywhere - you personally, or the Hot Club - with Louis Armstrong at that time? Did you talk with him?

C.D.: Of course, Louis was the idol of every jazz fan then. His being in Paris, we tried to meet him as much and as often as possible. Being a painter, I paid him many visits in the apartment he had at Rue de la Tour-d'Auvergne. Sometimes it was for a portrait, sometimes I would bring some records to play and learn who played. I remember one visit in particular when I had managed to bring Django and his brother with their guitars to play for him... And Django looked at him like this: "Aaaaaahhhh! (IN A WHISPER) That's Armstrong! Armstrong!! Ahhhhhh!!!". I had a record with me by Jean Sablon, it had only 16 bars of solo by Django. So I wanted to say to Armstrong: 'Louis, I have a very good friend of mine here who plays guitar'. Now there was another guy there by the name of Bullard. He must have been a boxing champion. Armstrong used to get together with him for physical exercises - to lose some weight. That was his problem.

T.L.: Was it?

C.D.: Always was.

T.L.: I thought his only problem were the beads on his forehead and always

having a large handkerchief with him... But there's probably a connection to the weight-problem.

C.D.: Anyway, Armstrong was busy with that man, when we came and finally he said: "Just play that record!" - and disappeared in the bathroom. He never really listened to the record, I think. Just once he came back to the room, mumbled something and said: "Go on! Go on!". I remember, on that day we left Armstrong's apartment in very low spirits, if not completely down... (1)

T.L.: I can imagine that.

C.D.: But generally, we used to enter his apartment as if we were going to see a king. He was never objecting to our being there. Sometimes he was going into the bathroom, calling out to us: 'go ahead, make yourselves comfortable!'; and then he would be shaving or having a bath. I also remember he had his dog with him - and his wife.

#### CHORUS VI

T.L.: Exactly how and when did you start with "Jazz Hot"? Who was in it from the beginning?

C.D.: Well, in fact, roughly, we were three. I was in charge of all the editing. I spent whole days at the printer's place, because we had a terrible printer. Since we had no money, we could hardly find anybody to make the magazine. Come to think of it, we were not even in touch with the printer in the first place, but rather with someone who was trying to get business for the printer. But he was a crook, by any means!

T.L.: The printer or the agent?

C.D.: The man who arranged it. He was using printers who were in financial trouble, who didn't have enough work to do. So I had to do everything - up to putting the letters into blocks - the old-fashioned way (you had to do it in at that time). I did that because I wanted the magazine to come out. I would spend a whole night to put out a few pages more. The first issues of the magazine are terrible, including mistakes and all... Anyway, as I said, we were three: Pierre Nourry who was at that school for engineers, he did not have too much time...

T.L.: And the third man?

C.D.: That was Panassie, but he was out of town. He lived 400 miles away!

T.L.: But he was writing... Your Number One Writer...

C.D.: Oh yes, he was writing. He supplied most of the writing. (2)

We thought, in organizing the concert with Coleman Hawkins at about the same time, it would be the big start for us as concert promoters.

T.L.: But was Coleman Hawkins that well known at that time?

C.D.: He was known just by the few jazz fans, that's all. But we had a big program - with a dancer, with Freddy Taylor, with the Hot Club Quintet which was just beginning to be known. (3)

T.L.: How did Hawkins come over to Europe?

C.D.: He came first to perform with Jack Hylton's band, and as such he played



at the Rex Theatre (which was just near where the Hot Club was). We were picking up Coleman Hawkins after his show - they were playing on stage between two movies! - and we were taking him along to Nourry's home which was just nearby, and we did a lot of talking with him, because, first of all, he was a very sweet person, real nice, and he was very happy to have someone in Paris who was taking care of him. We became pretty friendly. I was drawing him whenever I could and we started talking about making a concert. So every day after his show, we were picking Coleman Hawkins up and bringing him home where he was drinking like mad.

**T.L.:** What? Wine? Whiskey? Absinth?

**C.D.:** I don't remember what, but he really was drinking. And late at night we would be going to clubs where he would be jamming because in those days musicians liked to play and they were all looking for a place where they could have a ball blowing, every night, after work.

**T.L.:** Where would the clubs have been located at that time?

**C.D.:** Half the clubs were in Montmartre, the other half in Montparnasse. And in Montparnasse is where he played.

**T.L.:** Do you know how he got his nickname "Bean"?

**C.D.:** No, that I don't know. But you might find out soon, because there's a British cat who is putting out a book explaining what all the names of the musicians mean...and all the titles of records, for instance the titles given to what we call "originals".

**T.L.:** That's a good idea... a funny idea...

**C.D.:** Indeed. We've had a lot of correspondence because he wanted to know why most of the SWING records I recorded have that particular title and so on.

**T.L.:** Continuing the "Bean" story...

**C.D.:** So we said to Hawkins: "Whenever you are through with Jack Hylton, we would like to organize a big concert". - In the meantime, Armstrong gave his concerts in Pleyel, so we had in mind to do like Canetti. If Canetti was able to promote two concerts with Armstrong, why wouldn't the Hot Club be able to do likewise with Hawkins?

**T.L.:** The concert was staged for February 23rd, 1935.

**C.D.:** Yes. The magazine was supposed to come out in February, '35, in time to be sold as a program. Unfortunately the magazine was not ready! And the programs arrived during the intermission of the concert! The program was supposed to be contained in the magazine. So that was what we would call the "Zero Issue" of the magazine. And the magazine - No. 1 - came out only a month later, that was in March '35.

**T.L.:** And the Hawkins concert was at Pleyel too? How many spectators did you get?

**C.D.:** I don't remember exactly, probably around 1500. But before the concert started - and when we looked from behind the curtains - the big hall to us seemed completely empty. It happened that many



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**COLEMAN HAWKINS**

avec la participation de **Arthur BRIGGS** et son orchestre renforcé par de grandes vedettes  
et avec le concours de **Django REINHARDT** et son

**Quintette du HOT CLUB DE FRANCE, FREDDY TAYLOR et GARLAN WILSON**

**Billet à prix réduit valable de 1 à 4 personnes**

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people came little by little and by the time of the intermission the hall was quite nicely filled. But since we had no experience about paying artists and all such things, we paid them much too much. Not for what they did, because they had to rehearse for a long time, but for the money we got and finally we lost a terrific amount of money - which we didn't have in the first place. That was the problem!

T.L.: Did you make enough publicity for the concert?

C.D.: Sure we did! With the members of the club we organized two or three teams. Those who had a car, for instance Pierre Fouad who was a jazz enthusiast, (he was a nephew of the king of Egypt and he became a good drummer later, he's living now in Egypt again) - so Fouad would take his mother's car - when his mother would have finished using it, let's say around midnight - and we had the stick, the brushes, etc., and we would - all night long, in the streets of Paris - stick the placards to the walls. So I can tell that the publicity was well-done and there was not a street safe from us. We could not afford to rent the reserved places, so we had to stick them wherever we could and of course the next day part of the posters were already covered up so we had to start all over again. We did everything we could. But in those days Coleman Hawkins was not known at all by the public. Even saying that he was "the greatest saxophone player in the world", nobody would care.

T.L.: Now you mentioned that Django - at that time - had asked for a fee of 5000 Francs.

C.D.: Yes, Django used to be like that. Just naming a sum that would come to his mind.

T.L.: But he didn't get it?

C.D.: I don't remember exactly what he got. It was Nourry who was in charge of the financial problems... As far as Hawkins was concerned - we were just able to pay him part of what we had agreed upon, and he never cared for the rest. The same thing happened 20 years later: he was one of the few musicians who did not care as long as he was satisfied with what we had been doing and arranging for him.

But our enterprises in February-March, 1935, put us into so much trouble that we had to borrow money from several sources, for payment of the printer, the concert fees etc. etc... I don't remember just how much money we lost, but to us it was tremendous. In any case, it was a lot of money. So we borrowed money - which we had to return, of course, - and we were in bad shape, we were just strangled for a long period of time.

T.L.: That's what you called "le temps difficile" in your HCdF history...

C.D.: Yes. From there on, we had to organize more concerts, but we could not hire the concert halls, not even the small ones. So we did a concert at Pierre Nourry's home - as a sort of benefit event - and we had to find musicians willing to play for that kind of concert without being paid... Everything was going

wrong - !

T.L.: But, musically speaking, how was the concert?

C.D.: Oh, it was good. The best French musicians played in the accompanying band. There was Arthur Briggs - who wasn't French, but good! - but of course there were Alix Combelle, Andre Ekyan etc. - they all gave their best. Well, you know, in those days, French musicians were real poor musicians.

We also did a record date, in fact, to satisfy Coleman Hawkins, so he would not feel too bad, a record date which we managed to arrange for 'Gramophone' - the French 'His Master's Voice' - these recordings are still on the market: Stardust, What A Diff'rence A Day Made, Blue Moon, Avalon - that session. (4)

T.L.: How long did Coleman Hawkins stay in France?

C.D.: Not too long. He had to make a living and no one could book him in a club in Paris. He returned to Holland, to play with Freddy Johnson.

T.L.: And the Quintet of the Hot Club - did that stay together in those "difficult times"...

C.D.: More or less, yes. You know, as I said somewhere, for a long time the Quintet never was a steady unit, because there was no place for them to play continuously. But luckily, in the spring of '35, they had an engagement in a night club, "Le Nuit Bleue", and that must have lasted one or two months because it was a good deal. But each time we needed the Quintet, we would call on one of the musicians, take a car to find Django and make a date. But the Quintet for 3 or 4 years never existed as what we would call in France "un entite", a steady formation.

T.L.: How did you get on with the magazine?

C.D.: The magazine was published every two - or three - or four months. We had to wait with a new issue until we were able to pay the costs of the previous one. And each time we were organizing a concert and telling the musicians: "We still need some money for the next issue, would you come to play that concert?" - and they would come, definitely. And so we made a few hundred Francs, sometimes a few thousand Francs, maybe, always reckoning: "How much do we have? Well, we might get started with the next issue soon" - then we would go to the printer and start again. And that lasted a long time. There were between 5 and 8 issues a year - it's easy to check up.

T.L.: Another question: You mentioned that you made contact with other collectors with the purpose of getting information on certain records. How did you start?

C.D.: I guess that you are thinking of the first discography?

T.L.: Exactly. I mean, what gave you the idea for it?

C.D.: Of course I never stopped collecting records and with that I collected dates and information on these records. And since there was no literature available giving this, I started thinking about issuing a book containing the list of all the jazz records published with the per-

sonnels, recording dates etc. That was to become - years later - the first 'Hot Discography'".

T.L.: We will return to that monumental enterprise later on; for now, back to "Jazz hot": Who else was writing for the magazine in the beginning?

C.D.: Panassie had lots of contacts and we found friends in Holland, in England - eh, not too many in England, because for some reasons Panassie was not on good terms with some Britishers.

T.L.: Why?

C.D.: I don't know exactly. Probably because Britishers had their own magazines, "Melody Maker", "Ballroom and Bands" and especially "Swing Music", edited by Leonard Feather. And likely Panassie did not agree with their tastes and opinions.

T.L.: Was Feather in Great Britain at that time?

C.D.: He was British.

T.L.: Then he settled in the States later on?

C.D.: He went there in about 1939 - well, just before the war. And Panassie and Feather were already kind of enemies before that time. That wasn't the case with Stanley Dance, however, who wrote in the first issue of "Jazz hot". (2)

Then there were two correspondents from Holland, one was Henk Niessen - I don't know what happened to him ever since; the other one was Joos van Praag, whom I believe to have become a victim of nazism. Both were writing steadily. Then there were some correspondents from America like John Hammond - who was writing once in a while, - and Helen Oakley, (who was to become Mrs. Dance).

T.L.: Had you begun working on your "Hot Discography" in 1935?

C.D.: In the first issue of "Jazz Hot" there was the Bix discography and a small article on "Leon 'Bix' Beiderbecke", after an interview I had with a pianist, John Ferrier, who was playing in Freddy Taylor's Band at the Villa d'Este. Ferrier had known Bix very well, and you know, Bix was our idol in those days and I got lots of information, most of what we know about Bix, he knew it already. In fact, it's funny, in those days, it appears that Bix had died only three years before, so stories and news, everything was so close, so easy to get, but yet it was a legend. And most of what we know now on Bix, I learned from that pianist.

T.L.: How would you judge Bix today, his place in jazz history?

C.D.: Bix? Well, he seems to have been very important for white musicians because he influenced lots of musicians. Nowadays, I still like the sound of Bix a lot, by any means! He's got something, which might not be "Negro" as far as the music itself is considered, but something which touches me a great deal. As soon as he is featured in a band such as Goldkette or Whiteman, the whole band sounds different! Just to hear a note of Bix makes me feel something. There is something in his playing which moves me. Oh yes, I still like him a lot!

T.L.: What else happened in '35?

C.D.: The Hot Club Quintet was recor-

ding steadily for Ultraphone. We asked Ultraphone whether they would be interested to make what we called then "Anthology of French Jazz" and we made a few record dates for them, with Andre Ekyan, Alix Combelle, Big Boy Goudie, etc. etc.... We made half a dozen records, I don't recall how well they sold, but the idea of an anthology, sort of a collection, that was something new. On the other hand, the following year we started to record for "la Voix de Son Maitre" - 'His Master's Voice' - a young pianist who was brought to Europe to replace Herman Chittison in the band of "Willie Lewis & his Entertainers" - on the advice of Benny Carter who was arranging and playing in Paris with the Willie Lewis band. (5)

T.L.: Do you remember the name of that pianist?

C.D.: Sure: Garnet Clark. I made sketches - drawings - of him, too. He was a terrifically gifted musician but probably he was too young to smoke reefer and to drink - as in fact most of the musicians did -

T.L.: Was there a special reason for it?

C.D.: Well, most musicians were both gambling and drinking at night, you know, that special type of life, anyhow, that pianist became insane shortly afterwards and had to enter a hospital where he died a couple of years later. (6) I should not forget to mention that for Ultraphone we also made recordings with Freddie Taylor, and later with Joe Turner, Adelaide Hall - some of which never came out - and Bill Coleman (1936).

T.L.: What about Henry Bernard?

C.D.: He was a great record collector in Paris. But more than that, he was inviting all the jazz fans we knew to his home once a week, every Monday. We used to meet (at Henry Bernard's), musicians, fans, everyone who was an enthusiast and wanted to hear some records that we could not get otherwise. And I myself, being involved with discographies, had a special interest in those meetings. (7) Each musician who was coming to Paris, I was asking him: "What was the first record you did? Do you know who played there? What was the personnel?" etc. Because in those days no record company was taking down the names of the musicians.

T.L.: You have written in your Hot Club history that first, when you started collecting records, of course, you only bought what you liked personally; and later on you found out that, in order to get a clear picture, you had to extend your collection and even consider records of lesser interest or minor quality.

C.D.: I started with Bix, buying any record by Whiteman or Goldkette, because we didn't know at the beginning whether he was to be heard in it or not. I was buying everything and listening to it with the other cats - as soon as we would hear a note from a trumpet we would wonder, we would compare, we might say - 'no, that can't be Bix', for example. And we almost made the complete Bix/Whiteman discography featuring Bix through the re-



cords which we were able to find! That was the only way we could get at it. Of course, we could get a few catalogues once in a while where we had the titles. But we had to listen to the records by any means. For instance Trumbauer records - we had to sort them out. Some of them had Bix, some of them had Andy Secrest, a cornetist who was much influenced by Bix and sounded real close to Bix's playing, and some had Bix, but playing like that other trumpet guy and not so much like Bix, because he probably was sick at the session. So we had big discussions after listening to these records at Henry Bernard's. And as soon as I heard that Benny Carter was in Paris, I went to his place, and I brought him records to listen to, for instance the McKinney Cotton Pickers, because at first we didn't know a damn about the musicians who were playing. It happened that Benny Carter was saying: "You know, that clarinet player, that's me", while we hadn't even known that Benny Carter had played with that band, to quote just one example. So it was becoming a big puzzle, and little by little, we got the information, discussing while playing the records. And all the information was annotated. We wrote to various collectors and musicians. Panassie did a lot for the discography,

too, we must not forget that, because he already had information he knew from letters he had received from So-and-So that that trumpet player was featured in that band and so on and so forth... So, from many scripts of mine I used to send a copy to Panassie. Sometimes he would change something, sometimes he would add something.

T.L.: In your HC history, you mention - well before the Hawkins Concert - an "impressive office" at Pleyel. Was that the same place as Salle Pleyel?

C.D.: Yes, in the same building. A brand-new building (with a telephone connection).

T.L.: "...avec trois lignes telephoniques", it says here.

C.D.: Oh yes! Well, we had only one telephone, but the building had three lines, which meant a lot in those days.

T.L.: But the disastrous result of the concerts rapidly put an end to such extravagances, you wrote. And so you went back to private quarters?

C.D.: I was living with my parents still; at daytime I was working in an architect's atelier or study; and the magazine's office was at Pierre Nourry's place, because his parents had a big apartment and when they had finished

eating, we had a big table at our convenience, so we could lay out all the contents of the magazine there.

**T.L.:** The gramophone you used at that time....

**C.D.:** It was a "Voix de son Maître". It was rectangular and you had to wind it up all the time, and we were carrying it everywhere. It was not too heavy. In those days, it was a good machine.

**T.L.:** You mentioned the "marche aux puces", the flea market...

**C.D.:** Every Saturday morning at 8:30 we would go there and, looking around, we would find lots of records in those days; once I found no less than 5 Bessie Smith records, you know the Columbia label with the flag, just imagine what a discovery that was!

**T.L.:** Does the flea market still exist?

**C.D.:** Yes, of course. It's such an institution, it would be very difficult to give it up! It's a walking place. People spend a whole day there just for fun, having lunch there with the "frites" and "moules" and potato chips, just hanging around, even if there's nothing really worth a dime, it's fun to look at all these things. And you always figure you'll find a hidden treasure...

**T.L.:** We have a flea market annually at Stuttgart and people suddenly discovered that they could buy things there for a few marks which are sold in so-called Antique Shops for ten times that value.

**C.D.:** Here it's the contrary. It's more expensive at the flea market! In fact, many of the stands you have at the flea market belong to Antique Shop dealers, you'd be surprised! They sell there whatever they can't sell in their shops and much more expensive at that. And you can sell just anything at the flea market, whatever the price is. I saw records... but records I would not give a single Franc for, the music is not interesting, the label is not interesting, nothing is interesting indeed, yet people buy them by the bunches for a hundred Francs and more - it's very funny.

**T.L.:** They probably think they have a bargain there anyhow... Now back to the 30's. One thing I would like to know - for the background of the time - 1934, '35, '36: How was the situation in France then, I mean, cost of living etc. - do you have any particular memories, or were you in the safe haven of your family, of your parents, so that you didn't have to worry about life...?

**C.D.:** Oh, I did have to make my own living - and very difficult it was in those days. I remember - I was not the only one - once I lived three days without eating at all.

**T.L.:** Just because you had no money?

**C.D.:** No, just because the parents of Pierre Nourry had gone on vacation, and that was the place I used to go for meals... my place was always with them. They knew the situation and they said, "Well, whenever you come, you're welcome".

I was almost a member of the family, in those days, and I always thought, at least I have one meal a day. The rest of the time I would buy a sandwich and I knew of all the cafes in Paris



where I knew that here you paid 60 centimes and there it would be 75. I knew all these places and in those days I was walking like mad. I never took the Metro, or a taxi, of course that was out of the question. I was always just walking, getting up very early and walking from one place to another. Naturally, there were shops with records where I would go, collecting material, for the articles, for the publicity, for the magazine, visit Francis, Day, Selmer etc. - then go to the printer's plant. I had my room at my parents' home where I was coming after midnight every night and got up at 7 in the morning - I never saw my parents. I had the key, I had my room, I had a meal at least once a day and that was all, because I was working for things I could not make any money out of. Until then, when I found a new job in the publicity area - it was in '36, must have been '36, - it was getting better.

**T.L.:** What did you do there? Drawings?

**C.D.:** Partly publicity of my own sket-

ches, but I was on safer ground working with a publicity agent who was doing a lot. I was making lithographs myself. Sometimes we had to make big posters which were painted on the walls - we had our atelier near the Place Blanche - and we would paint, reproduce the sketches. There were three of us, working there. It was easy because the boss was a nice man, and he knew of my activities, he would let me come back from the printer at 11 o'clock if I had to stay there because of the magazine.

**T.L.:** You had a fixed salary, then?

**C.D.:** I had a fixed salary, quite a decent one, and naturally, part of my salary was going to the magazine... However, considering the little money I had, we must also say for the contemporary reader to understand the situation, that life in those days was much easier. You could live without much money - at least in France; I don't know how it was in other countries. One could live a la bohème, what we call "la bohème" in the good sense of the word, the artist's

sense - spending most of the time at the cafes, just talking, working once in a while. One could live normally without trouble because we were invited everywhere. Money didn't count in those days. It would be impossible nowadays to live as I lived for the first 4 or 5 years of the Hot Club, just with a few Francs in my pocket once in a while, sometimes with just 25 centimes, and yet with nothing to worry about. Nowadays, even if you can make an easy living with the help from anywhere, it's not the same. Now you always need more money. There's a pressure for money...

**T.L.:** ...and a pressure for time...

**C.D.:** I remember for instance - it might be interesting: Every day was almost the same scheme - going to the printer, writing articles, all these things, with no money, with not caring, not being bothered by the thought - and at night, after the day was finished at, say, 8:30, after dinner, all of us would meet in a cafe in Montmartre called La Brasserie Alsacienne where all the musicians used to meet - after dinner and before they went to work, they all met there to have a coffee or a beer, and we were all hanging around the cafe. If we didn't have money, we wouldn't buy a drink. The main thing was: we were talking, discussing - we had time to talk, time to discuss, not in order to make articles, but just because that was our music and we were deeply concerned - and that was our life! And things have changed so much in that respect...

APPENDIX: ANNOTATIONS & CHORDS,  
KICKS & LICKS, RIFFS AND REMARKS

(1) In his book "Django mon frere" (Eric Losfeld, editeur; Copyright by Le Terrain Vague, Paris), Charles Delaunay describes this somewhat deplorable rencontre in even more colorful words: "The event happened in autumn of 1934. Louis Armstrong lived at an apartment rue de la Tour-d'Auvergne and Django who had not yet made any recordings with the Quintet (of the Hot Club de France, TL), burned with desire to meet the "King Of Jazz", convinced that if he would only hear him, Louis would engage him without hesitation for his orchestra and carry him off to America!

A meeting was carefully planned and prepared. Armstrong would be induced to listen to the only record made so far: "Le jour ou je te vis", de Jean Sablon, containing a guitar solo. Louis accepted the rendezvous without showing much enthusiasm and Django arrived, his heart pounding, securely 'covered' by his brother. After some hastily made introductions, Louis announced that he was invited out to dinner and had to get dressed in a hurry. Our musicians, expecting that their host would invite them to play, saw him just traversing the place from time to time, his forehead covered with those well known beads of sweat. Finally, the decision was made to have Django play: certainly the sound of his guitar would catch the attention of the great

trumpet king.

But the endless chorus Django, accompanied by his brother, produced was in vain; Armstrong, very much occupied with his getting dressed, continued to hurry across the room, searching for a shirt here and a necktie there; only at one time, some faint grunts could be heard, coming from the bathroom: "that's very good! go on!..."

By now, pearls of sweat appeared on the temples of a mortified Django. And it was in a gloomy spirit of complete collapse that our small delegation - the two brothers, Pierre Nourry and myself, - was crawling down the sombre staircase." (+) "le jour ou je te vis" (from the film "Too Much Harmony") has been re-issued on a French Emidisc LP (C 048-50660). Apart from Django and Jean Sablon, it includes Andre Ekyan (alto saxophone), Eugene d'Hellemes (trombone), Stephane Grappelly (violin), Michel Emer (piano) and some unidentified musicians. It was recorded on June 15, 1934 (CL 4661). Jean Sablon was certainly a good-looking, sympathetic, youthful chansonnier, but this song was nothing out of the ordinary music-hall and saccharine movie style of the 30's, so Louis must be forgiven for not paying attention. The 16 bars of Django's solo however are a bright and shining message - even to this very day!

(2) The contents of "Jazz hot" no. 1, March 1935, included:  
 COLEMAN HAWKINS (Hugues Panassie)  
 LES LOUISIANIANS (Preston Jackson)  
 LETTRE (John Hammond)  
 MILTON MESIROW (Joost van Praag)  
 "LE JAZZ HOT" d'Hugues Panassie (Georges Hilaire)  
 LEON "BIX" BEIDERBECKE (Charles Delaunay)  
 THEODORE WILSON (Stanley F. Dance)  
 REVUE DES DISQUES (Hugues Panassie) plus news about musicians, orchestras, a "record market" and the "Hot Club Magazine". The "Jazz hot" magazine also listed the following record releases in the March 1935 issue:  
 Quintette du Hot Club de France:  
 Dinah/Lady Be Good Ultraphone 1422  
 Tiger Rag/I Saw Stars - 1423  
 Louis Armstrong:  
 On The Sunny Side  
 Of The Street (1/2) Brunswick 500491  
 Super Tiger Rag/Saint - 500490  
 Louis Blues  
 Casa Loma Orchestra:  
 Avalon/Corinne Corinna - 500477  
 Wingy Mannone:  
 Send Me/Walkin' The Street - 500463  
 Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra:  
 Judy/Annie's Cousin Fanny - 500444  
 Red Nichols:  
 I'm Just Wild About Harry/  
 After You've Gone - 500405

(3) The program (translated from French) read:  
 Salle Rameau (Ex-Pleyel), 252 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honore, Saturday, February 23, 1935, Evening, at 2100 hours LE HOT CLUB DE FRANCE presents for the 1st time in Paris under the auspices of of the review "JAZZ-HOT" the most fam-

ous saxophone player in the world:  
 COLEMAN HAWKINS  
 with the participation of  
 ARTHUR BRIGGS and his orchestra  
 reinforced by some great stars and with the cooperation of  
 DJANGO REINHARDT  
 and his Quintette du Hot Club de France  
 with Stephane Grappelly, Freddy Taylor, Garland Wilson.  
 (reprinted in the March 1975 Anniversary issue of "Jazz hot", the program also features a drawing by Charles Delaunay of a quietly musing Coleman Hawkins, reclining in a relaxed sitting position, holding the precious tenor saxophone somewhat nonchalantly but nevertheless with a firm grip across his lap...) Prices of the concert, by the way, ranged from 10 francs (2nd balcony) to 50 francs ("Loge reserve").

(4) All four titles were recorded in Paris on March 2, 1935, three of them with the following personnel: Coleman Hawkins (tenor saxophone) acc. by Michel Warlop and his orchestra: Arthur Briggs, Noel Chiboust, Pierre Allier (trumpets), Guy Paquinet (trombone), Andre Ekyan, Charles Lisee, Alix Combelle (saxophones), Stephane Grappelly (piano), Django Reinhardt (guitar), Eugene d'Hellemes (bass), Maurice Chaillou (drums); the fourth (Stardust) with Hawkins only accompanied by the above rhythm section. All four titles are available as LP re-issue on French EMI-Pathe C 054-16001 (Djangologie, 1928-1936, the first in a set of 18 LP records dedicated to Django up to 1950).

(5) Some interesting samples of the Willie Lewis Band, "one of the best American bands to flourish in Europe between the wars, led by a saxophonist who had arrived in Paris with Sam Wooding's orchestra a few years earlier", according to Charles Fox, can be found on the following LP records:  
 Parlophone PMC 7104/7105 - Bill Coleman a Paris 1936-38 (Volume 1 and 2).  
 Benny Carter went on to arrange for Henry Hall and the BBC Dance Orchestra from Spring 1936 to Autumn 1937.

(6) The afore-mentioned LP EMI Pathe C 054-16001 ("Djangologie", Volume 1) contains 3 tracks with "Garnet Clark and his Hot Club's Four": Rosetta, Stardust and The Object Of My Affection, with Bill Coleman (trumpet), George Johnson (clarinet, alto saxophone), Garnet Clark (piano), Django Reinhardt (guitar), June Cole (bass); recorded in Paris on September 25, 1935 (OLA 730, 731, 732).

(7) On these Monday dates, the records tracked down and ferreted out at the flea market during the weekend hunting and rarity divining were brought in by all members of the party and big discussions ensued to discover the soloists and make comparison with other records already at hand...

Part One of this interview appeared in CODA, November 1974 (Issue 133) and is still available for \$1.50 postpaid.

Noah Howard was born in New Orleans in 1943, where he grew up singing in the church choir, then studying alto saxophone and trumpet. After a short period in Los Angeles and San Francisco, where he studied with Byron Allen and Sonny Simmons, he moved to New York in 1965 where he met Albert Ayler and joined Sun Ra for some time. Then he went to Europe, to Paris, following many Afro-American musicians who had already left the States that year (1969). He played with almost everybody there: the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Leroy Jenkins, Archie Shepp, Clifford Thornton, Alan Silva, etc. In 1972 he was back in New York and co-founded the New York Musicians Organisation, an association with many purposes: expose the lesser known musicians, free concerts, economic assistance to sick and old musicians, free classes for kids etc.

Noah Howard actually lives in Paris, one of the very few to have not gone back (the Art Ensemble, Anthony Braxton, the Black Artist Group of St. Louis have also departed from France in the last few months).

His music is accessible to anyone with ears and heart, it is about those feelings and those emotions Albert and John were talking about. When Noah opened the second set of the concert in Pisa (October Revolution Circles, April 20, 1975) with an apocalyptic reading of Leo, the band so close to him, our hearts seemed to burst open. "The Heaviest Spirit" would have enjoyed it, and this is the highest compliment I can make to Noah Howard.

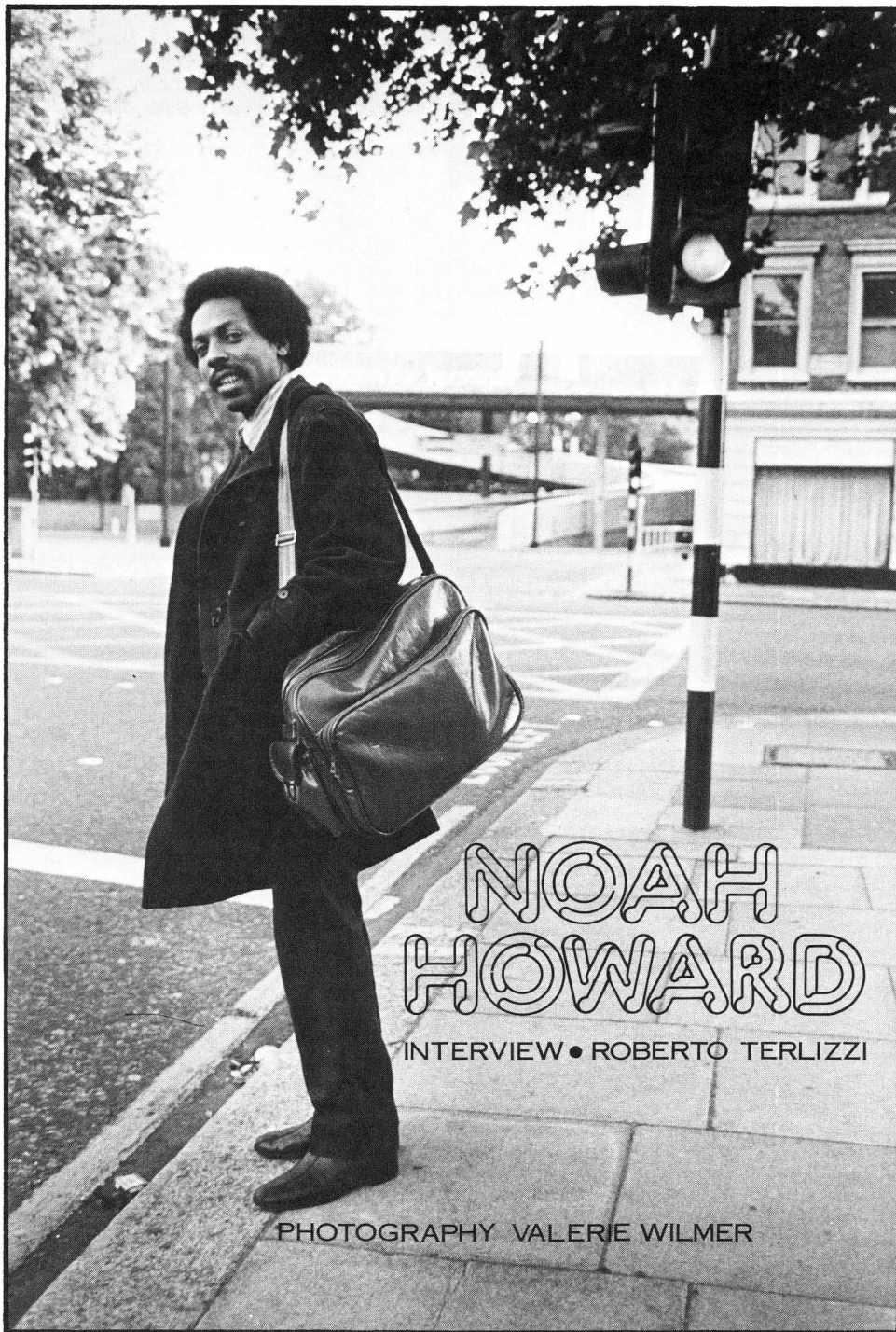
Unfortunately, there was not enough time to talk to the other members of the band, nor to the brilliant pianist Takashi Kako, nor to the powerful, beautiful drummer Mohammed Ali. I can only recommend Kent Carter's forthcoming solo album on Emanem. Kent had the tape with him, and this record will place him among the very best bassists, if not something more.

**Roberto Terlizzi:** What kind of relationship did you have with Albert Ayler?

**Noah Howard:** Albert and I were very close as men as well as artists. He understood me as a person, as a young artist moving ahead to do something; he recognized this in me. I greatly appreciated his gift to music, he was a very great artist. It was a very strange thing between me, Albert and Coltrane. Albert was as close to me as John was to him, there would be days he'd talk to Coltrane on the telephone and, say, three hours later he'd talk to me.

**R.T.:** Did he ever talk to you about the irony in his music, if there was any?

**N.H.:** I would say no, of course I may give you my interpretation, you can have yours, but we are not in the mind of the artist, so he knew what he was doing, the only thing I can do is being a receiver and enjoy it, enjoy the gifts he gave to the world. I've heard of other artists that have done the same kind of thing, like the American composer Charles Ives, who took contemporary folk themes and built a whole improvisational structure on



them. The same we may say of Trane playing My Favourite Things or Chim Chim Cheree. Only the artist knows what he is trying to do.

**R.T.:** You have been part of the Arkestra....

**N.H.:** Sun Ra is one of the most gifted musicians and composers on the planet. He is a very strong influence on the contemporary scene. My work with him was very exciting and very interesting, he had the only orchestra involved in the new kind of music, so you could play in small groups but if you wanted to play in an orchestra you had to play with Sun Ra. It was extremely beneficial for me in terms of musical education.

**R.T.:** It should be something to play

together with musicians like John Gilmore, Pat Patrick, Marshall Allen, whom I think are some of the greatest of all time....

**N.H.:** It surely was! They are extraordinary, absolutely fantastic.

**R.T.:** Looking back at your career, you were also an active member of the New York Musicians Organisation at the time of the counter-festival in 1972. What happened to NYMO?

**N.H.:** NYMO had to face many problems. It grew out of a political and economic situation; I was one of the bureau directors together with Sun Ra, Juma Sutan, Ornette Coleman, James Du Boise, Andrew Hill and some others. It was a kind of situation where at that time it was needed to do that, for a lot of people to

get together and do something. It was not so much of a manifestation, it was taken as a manifestation, it was a determination of musicians. Newport was coming to New York and they were bringing the same musicians they always bring wherever they go, the same show. Originally they were in Newport up in Rhode Island, but you don't come to New York and put on a festival of, say, one hundred musicians in a city where there are thousands of talented musicians and just ignore what they are doing, right? So the basic decision we made with NYMO was a collective thing in order to expose all of the musicians to the public that was there and let them be heard. This was the most positive aspect of the NYMO.

**R.T.:** Talking of the musicians in New York, are there some leading musicians or are there only many good musicians?

**N.H.:** I would say there are many good musicians. Unlike the bebop era where Charlie Parker set up the system and a lot of people followed the exact same pattern that he followed, New Jazz or whatever you want to call it, set up the basis for personal expression and so you don't have twenty groups that sound alike, there may be some similarities in terms of technique, but it is much group sound, it is built on personal expression which I think was what Charlie Parker was talking about anyway.

**R.T.:** What is your point of view about the difference of the music in New York and the music played in other places?

**N.H.:** Well, basically there isn't any difference, however an artist is very susceptible to his environment, so I would say that New York musicians take a kind of more stronger approach to sound, than musicians in Los Angeles or in Rome. That may be not necessarily so but it can be that way. Remember back in the Fifties when you had East Coast jazz and West Coast jazz? West Coast jazz was a little different from East Coast jazz; the guys on the West Coast were sitting in the sun, life was more relaxed than it was in New York City running around with ten thousand cars, people everywhere.

**R.T.:** Many musicians are now finding the solo expression a valid medium for their art: I'm thinking of records and concerts by Roscoe Mitchell, Leo Smith, Braxton, Derek Bailey and some others. Do you have any reason to explain this or do you think it is just some kind of development of an artist who needs to face his music and himself more deeply?

**N.H.:** It is very interesting and also very difficult to play solo music. The motivation behind what each artist does it for I don't know. As for myself I am in the process of doing it; I have been working at it for six months. I like it because it is a challenge to myself, but I am fascinated with the quartet for mat. There are a lot of things that you can do with piano, bass, drums and saxophone. But I think the conception we have developed in the music opens the way for all kinds of expressions; there are no limitations, the limitation is in the human being itself, not in terms of the music, because music

is open. The world of music is incredible, beautiful, there are lots of things you can do. We had a group in New York, called the New York Musicians Ensemble with me, Frank Lowe, Juma Sutan, Rashied Ali and Milford Graves: we were musicians with different personalities and styles but it worked very well.

**R.T.:** Do you feel the need of bringing your music to as many people you can or your music is first of all for yourself?

**N.H.:** Let me put it this way. I have spent the last ten years on the road. But I need my music also...

**R.T.:** Do you need to listen to other musicians or is your music enough for you? I mean you happen to put on a record or go to a concert of a musician you know, like Braxton or Lacy or Michel Portal?

**N.H.:** That's an interesting question. All the guys you've named are friends of mine. I appreciate their music very much. But I haven't listened to any people's music in two months, because I spend a great deal of time with my own music. When I'm not travelling, I spend much time in my studio in Paris where I'm playing all day long, so I'm listening to me really. I'm not saying that I don't listen to other people's music. I like music, all kinds of music; when I have time I do but I found out in the last few years that my time is more and more involved in what I'm doing.

**R.T.:** Do you make a conscious attempt to maintain in your music your musical tradition, or is it a natural thing that comes out and that your music reflects?

**N.H.:** I would say both, because I don't think that if one is really rooted in a tradition you could get away from it.

**R.T.:** You were on the New York scene in the Sixties, when there was a spiritual awakening in the music. People like Coltrane and Ayler were speaking of "spirit" and "feelings" more explicitly than the musicians of generations before; Archie Shepp was saying "Uhuru" following Max Roach's and Mingus' paths. Is this spirit always present in today's younger musicians?

**N.H.:** Well, the spiritual essence that you are speaking of was personified in the Sixties by people like Trane; however it didn't begin then, it began with Louis Armstrong and he got it from the Southern Black Baptist Church. So what I'm trying to say is that music has always been spiritual. In the Sixties America was really sick, we were suffering from the Vietnam war, young people were fucked up; it was a period of general awakening, there were people like Martin Luther King, Malcolm X... It was a period of people beginning to destroy all the lies and dealing with true values. What went on of course was reflected in the music. I think it was a very complex situation and black people in America were responsible for this spiritual awakening. And once the seed is planted it continues to grow. How long it takes to get into a tree, of course, I don't know. Things are changing, slowly, but they are changing. They have to change. Creative artists still have many difficulties in being ex-

posed, they are not encouraged not only in New York, but in any other place. In Europe things are a little better, but certainly it is not an ideal situation.

**R.T.:** We still have to rely on individualistic efforts. Kent Carter was telling me that Martin Davidson put all his money in Emanem. Music still has to rely on music lovers, the big record companies probably don't want to sell certain things, they must be afraid of the implications of this music.

**N.H.:** I don't know, it might be that way. The fact is that only a few artists have the chance to be exposed in all the periods of their creativity.

**R.T.:** And this is not only sad for an artist, also his audience suffers for it. I would like to hear what people like Giuseppe Logan or Patti Waters are doing now, but I can't because someone has decided that they are not saleable. Something has changed in your music also.

**N.H.:** The direction in my music is basically the same, but I realize the music I play now is different from the one I played in the States in the Sixties. An artist is supposed to evolve, I wouldn't want to be there and probably in some years I wouldn't want to be here. I simply have reached another plateau in terms of what I'm doing. That was the atmosphere of the time in New York. We are in 1975, I live in Paris, I am a little older, all these things are reflected in my music. I think I have developed a more melodic approach to my compositions. At the same time I am also interested in improvisation, I build a theme on which I can improvise as much as I like, just like a book or a painting. I would also like to develop a visual aspect of the music on stage, though nothing is as important as the music itself.

**R.T.:** You don't give to your music a direct political meaning...

**N.H.:** I think this is an individual choice. I have a lot of respect for those artists that take a position, but I deal with people on a different level, as individuals, not as whites or blacks. I try to reach all the people I can without separating them into categories. As a matter of fact I am not able to give solutions to a social problem. When you get to politics, it is always a difficult subject, it can easily be misunderstood. We could talk about it, and agree on most arguments. I'm totally aware of the situation, what's wrong with it, but I can't spend my time talking about the system; that's not my work, my work is music, I spend all of my time on it, so when you hear me, you hear some good music....

**R.T.:** Of course I know talking about politics in music is not too important, but I also think that an artist can influence people to some degree. So if I see a photograph of an artist, take Duke Ellington for instance, with Mr. Nixon, that knocks me out... Even if you don't deal with politics, sooner or later you'll come to terms with it and you could find yourself at dinner with Mr. Ford...

**N.H.:** I understand what you're saying, of course. I take a position, when I choose to do what I want to do, and how I

want to do it. I think that the very mere fact that I am an artist is a position, because that definitely doesn't put me on the side of the fascists, doesn't it? We are talking about artists, and the artist by merely being an artist takes a position, he doesn't agree with the system anyway, naturally, because he is saying that everything that he sees, feels and perceives is not like what's out there, because he tries to change the world and shape it for himself the way he sees it.

**R.T.:** I agree but Ellington was a great artist and this didn't prevent him from accepting Nixon's invitation.

**N.H.:** But then we get to personal shit; people have their own personal things that they go through, and I don't judge people by what they go through personally, not artists anyway. Because an artist could do anything he wanted to; when he plays music it's great to me and gives me something. We must separate the external influences from the music. There are the "political" musicians, the "yoga" musicians. All these separations. All of these people, for good or for bad, whatever their personal things, the fact is that they are giving something beautiful to the world. When they walk on that stage that's it, that music, at that moment! I think we have distorted things to some degree.

**R.T.:** You mean art is always revolutionary, so even a non politically involved artist is revolutionary....

**N.H.:** Sure, because he is making people think, he tries to express the inner beauty of the human being, he is not a part of the system because he is an artist. This is the essence we are dealing with. Art doesn't need any other connotation.

Special thanks to Stefano Arcangeli who transcribed the tape and to Afo Sartori, who made this interview possible.

#### Discography

Noah Howard (as), Rick Colbeck (tp), Scotty Holt (b), Dave Grant (d)

New York, January 1966

Henry's Street ESP 1031

Apotheosis

Apotheosis Extension 1

And About Love

Noah Howard (as), Rick Colbeck (tp), Dave Burrell (p), Norris Jones (b), Cathleen Norris (cello), Robert Capp (d)

New York, Judson Hall, October 1966

This Place Called Earth ESP 1064

Homage to Coltrane

Noah Howard (as), Don Ayler (tp), Don Pullen (p), Norris Jones (b), Reggie Workman (b), Mohammed Ali (d)

New Jersey, March 1969

unknown titles JIHAD unissued

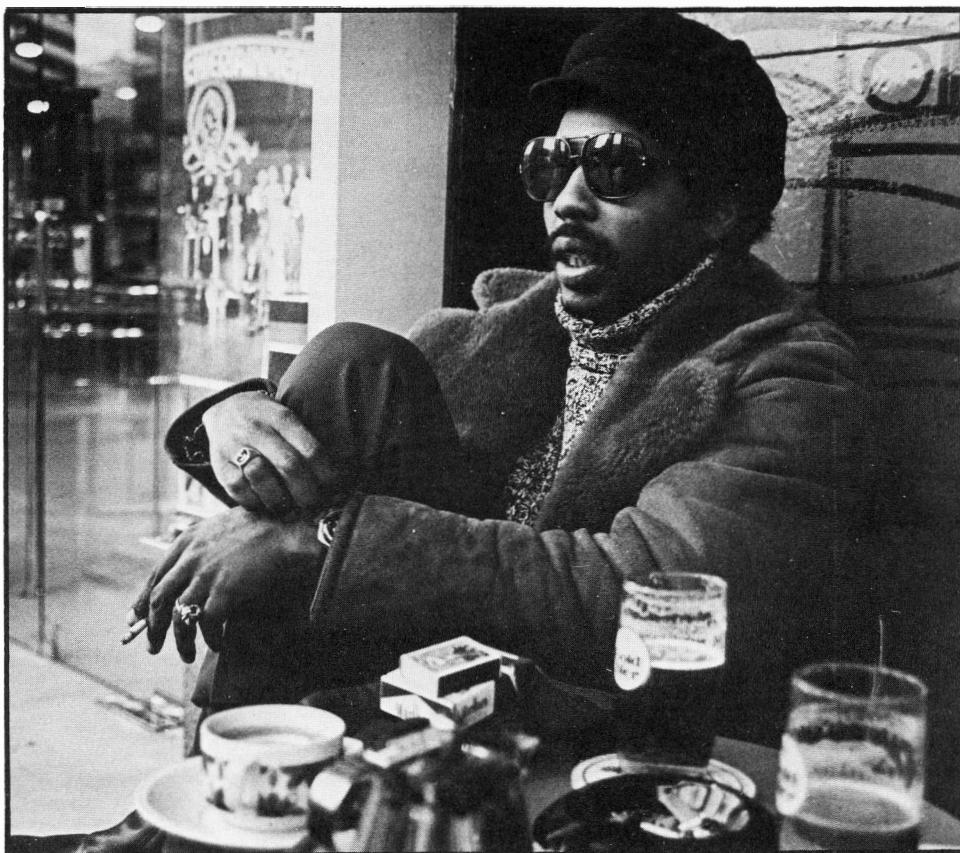
Noah Howard (as), Arthur Doyle (ts), Earl Cross (tp), Leslie Waldron (p), Norris Jones (b), Juma (conga), Mohammed Ali (d)

New York, 1969

Domiabra Polydor 2383093

Ole Negro (all titles also on Freedom

Mount Fuji FLP40105, Freedom 28426-



Queen Anne 5U, and Trio PA7035)

Archie Shepp (ss), Noah Howard (as), Clifford Thornton (tp), Leroy Jenkins (vl), Julio Finn (harmonica), Chicago Beauchamp (voc), Dave Burrell (p), Earl Freeman (b), Sunny Murray (d)

Paris, November 1969

Black Gypsy America 30 AM6099

Epitaph of a small winner

1. Rio de Janeiro
2. Casablanca (both titles also
3. Chicago on Fantasy 86009)

Pitchin' Can America 30 AM6106

Noah Howard (as), Frank Wright (ts), Bobby Few (p), Mohammed Ali (d)

Paris, December 5, 1969

One For John BYG Actuel 529336

China (parts 1 & 2)

Same personnel, Paris, March 1970

Church Number Nine Calumet C 3674

Noah Howard (as), Frank Wright (ts), Bobby Few (p), Art Taylor (d)

Paris, 1970

Oriental Mood America 30 AM 6104

Aurora Borealis

Grooving

Being

Pluto

Noah Howard (as), Frank Wright (ts), Bobby Few (p), Art Taylor (d). Mohammed Ali (d) replaces Art Taylor on \*

Paris, 1970

Space Dimension America 30 AM6108

Viva Black

Church Number Nine\*

Song For Poets

#### Blues For Thelma

Noah Howard (as), Frank Wright (ts), Burton Green (p), Mohammed Ali (d)

Amsterdam, September 1970

From Down To Planet X Bovena (unissued)

Noah Howard (as), Frank Wright (ts), Bobby Few (p), Mohammed Ali (d)

probably Paris, 1970

Snow And Sunshine EMI (unissued)

Noah Howard (as, perc.), Misha Mengelberg (p), Earl Freeman (b), Steve Boston (conga), Jaap Schoonhoven (el. g), Han Bennink (d)

Hilversum, October 1971

Patterns (suite) ALTSAX

Noah Howard (as), Frank Lowe (ts), Robert Bruno (p), Earl Freeman (b), Juma Sutan (perc.), Rashied Ali (d). Noah Howard (as) solo on \*

New York, Village Vanguard, August 22, 1972

Back O'Town Blues Freedom 28488-5U

Conversation\*

Dedication (To Albert Ayler)

Noah Howard (as), Michael Smith (p), Bob Reid (b), Noel McHugh (d)

Torino, Swing Club, April 20, 1974

ALTSAX-Ricordi SNIR 25055

Paris Dreams

Lecke

Mardi Gras

Noah Howard (as), Takashi Kako (p), Kent Carter (b), Oliver Johnson (d)

Berlin, Quartier Latin, January 1975

Free Music Productions (unissued)

unknown titles



Jack Chambers  
Peter Friedman  
Mark Gardner  
Doug Langille  
John R. Nelson  
John W. Norris  
Vladimir Simosko  
Bill Smith  
Ron Sweetman  
Barry Tepperman  
Tex Wyndham



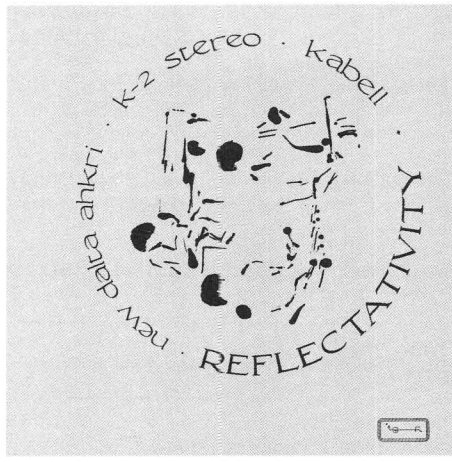
## LEO SMITH

New Dalta Ahkri - Reflectativity  
Kabell K-2

It has surely become readily apparent in recent years that creative improvised music, formerly known as jazz, has settled firmly into a new tradition. A tradition that has developed out of the attitudes presented mostly by musicians that have evolved from the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music (A.A.C.M.). I suppose it would be proper to refer to them as the post-Coltrane-Taylor-Coleman generation, but even if this is so, quite unlike the N.Y. faction of this generation, they have brought to the music a new, original, and very much alive creation. After Coltrane's death, it seemed to me that music would develop out of that heritage, that Shepp, Sanders, and that particular stream of player, would maintain the tradition, and eventually develop it to its next level. History has occurred and this of course did not happen. It seemed that after the energy of the master musician was gone we were to be left with little more than memories. Energy, that is the very word, the very concentration that changed its own force, energy was not the key, but the error. Energy did not mean violent force - or volume power, it did not substitute for creativity, and so lesser men eventually brought about noise boredom. The developments taking place in Chicago in the mid 60s were to become a most important factor in the shape and direction American music was to take. That direction was to do with a new order of organization, a new original attitude to improvised music.

And so to Leo Smith.

Leo Smith, alongside Richard Abrams, Anthony Braxton, members of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, the Sun Ra Arkestra, and the Revolutionary Ensemble were to form most of the nucleus of a music that was to change the attitude of many of us to what we were hearing and make us even more aware of the possibilities of the music we had previously listened to. Bird, Dolphy, Taylor, Coleman and Coltrane took on new dimensions and it showed us a perfectly clear path to what had arrived. Leo Smith, like many of the Chicago school (?) is a virtuoso musician and a composer, and arranger of startling magnitude. In many respects he represents the traditions that preceded him, his knowledge of music, historically, is broad, his attitudes toward Ellington, whom he calls the master musician, Arm-



strong with Joe Oliver, Bechet and New Orleans and his own heritage of Mississippi create for him a knowledge of immense proportions, an experience that allows him to create the music he plays with such authority.

There are three musicians participating in this recording. Leo Smith - trumpet, flugelhorn, piccolo trumpet, Indian and bamboo flutes and percussion, Anthony Davis - piano and Wes Brown - bass and Ghanaian flute. The music was recorded in concert at the Educational Center for the Arts, New Haven, Connecticut on November 22, 1974.

Side One is entitled Reflectativity - In Memory of Edward Kennedy Ellington and descriptively it seems that it would have to be dealt with on a level of musical theatre form. Repeating one's thoughts in music, of a situation such as a tribute to another man, necessitates relating it, in my mind, to my own experiences of Duke Ellington's music. Duke wrote multitudes of songs, some of international reputation, but it would be more appropriate for me to realise my joy of him as a creator of very distinct orchestral colours, of producing attitudes to be considered contemporary before their time, and never to forget that he was a great pianist... (The fat brassy prologue burst forth, with no sadness, almost in solo acclaim, the piano and bass intermittently darting around him like fireflies, sustaining the mood. But when Leo Smith is left alone the mood changes to the blues, lonely thoughts with such strength that the piano has to overpower the mood before it can change into silence.)

Anthony Davis is an extraordinary new pianist whose heritage has much to do with Duke Ellington in that he is influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by him in

much the same way as Monk, Randy Weston, Andrew Hill, Dollar Brand and Cecil Taylor are. I have often thought that many people who are dedicated to Duke's music had never quite considered his piano in the fullest light, and that the recording Money Jungle, with Charles Mingus and Max Roach, was one of his most important occasions. Anthony Davis has once more reinforced the growing number of post bebop pianists, he does not accompany himself on the piano, there are not two lines, one of chords and one single line improvisation, but he approaches his instrument as a self-contained string and percussion orchestra. If your tastes are inclined toward the pianists mentioned earlier in this paragraph then you will want to hear him. He is a truly original piano improviser.

(Once again happy and joyous, the piano alone, later to be joined in duet with Wes Brown's bass, dances in the mind, throwing forth the images of a youthful exuberance that will not readily be subdued. Leo Smith's percussion/gong slowly brings about a stately serenity, introduces the realisation of respect in the eventual trio forms of sound that only the muted trumpet can produce.) I once remember having a recording of Roy Eldridge playing Echoes of Harlem. That is the sound.

The final section is conversations between the trio bridged by the very sure bass of Wes Brown. One more new name - how many more is this new era yet to discover? A strong bassist completely involved in the full body approach of his instrument with a traditional "fat" sound and a positive technique. (The conversations are much like a summary, for if the statements that produced the bulk of this music in extended form were individual beliefs, then the final section acts as a discussion between them. Perhaps an epilogue to which each does not entirely believe its finality.)

Side two is dedicated to the Fishermen of the World and is entitled twukl-D and brings about a new situation. This music is collectively indulged in continuously by all three members. A feeling of being orchestrated or composed prevails, but this is not entirely because the music is written, although some is, but because of an empathy between three players, and a strong leader, who perform together often and with one accord. As a continuous piece it has a greater strength than Reflectativity, compositionally, the structures are very sober, the textures of dark hue, and not until almost halfway through the piece is there any relief from the extended landscape of sobriety. Pop-

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ping up to sunburst colour, accelerating the sounds, but even then with a careful composed determination. Interacting surrounds of percussion, the bass and piano as well, the flutes insistent for an interlude section, only to return to the prevailing sober sadness that is the real whole of this composition. It was intended this way, it is intended as the blues sound of Leo Smith, a continuation of the tradition from where he has come. A most powerful music.

Leo Smith exists as part of the small nucleus of trumpet players of this decade, amongst Bowie, Cherry and Ayler, brass players who have already shaped the thoughts of a whole new concept for this generation to develop one more phase. Leo Smith is one more of those singular originals that (jazz music) creative improvised music is so fond of surprising us with. Open the door, reality is just on the other side.

- B.S.

### DAVE LIEBMAN

Drum Ode  
ECM 1046

Dave Liebman's role on "Drum Ode" is more like a sponsor than a leader. The music is, as he says at the beginning, his way of saying "thanks to the men who play drums." Consequently, it is not a particularly good place to hear Liebman himself. Apart from the tenor solo on Loft Dance and the soprano playing on The Iguana's Ritual, he uses his horns to colour the rhythmic texture. The other non-drummers (Richie Beirach, piano; Gene Perla, bass; John Abercrombie, guitar) are similarly underworked. The drummers have their day, and they turn out in force for it. Collectively, there are eight of them, among them Barry Altschul, Bob Moses, Badal Roy and Patato Valdez. They spell one another on various tracks so that the working percussionists range from a low of two (on The Call) up to six (or perhaps seven, on Loft Dance). Much of the interest in multi-, poly- and cross-rhythms, however, is dissipated by one incredibly out-of-tune track called Oasis, featuring a vocal by Eleana Steinberg. Once you hear it, you are likely to pass the whole album by, unless of course you are a percussion freak of Liebman's magnitude to begin with.

- J.C.

### PROFESSOR LONGHAIR

New Orleans Piano  
Atlantic 7225

Roy Byrd, or Professor Longhair, is one of the legends of postwar music and like other legends he has failed to benefit from the fruits of his talent. His original recordings in the 1940s and early 1950s have served as the wellspring for the piano sound of the Rock Generation. He directly influenced Huey Smith, Clarence "Frogman" Henry and Fats Domino who, in turn, influenced thousands. Now it is possible,

once again, to hear these original sounds in this superb reissue. All the original singles are restored to circulation (except for Tipitina - an alternate take is included here) as well as these previously unissued tunes - Hey Now Baby, Ball The Wall, Who's Been Fooling You, Boogie Woogie and Longhair's Blues-Rhumba. Longhair's hoarse vocal style is unique. It is short on range but tall on expression. Still, it is his piano style which grabs your attention. It's primitive, unpredictable and full of the Spanish-flavoured rhythms which are an integral part of New Orleans music. The perfectly idiomatic drumming fits beautifully and the Mardi-Gras "Indians" musical tradition is much in evidence throughout this record.

This music and where it went from here is splendidly documented in John Broven's "Walking To New Orleans" - essential reading for anyone interested in this music.

Professor Longhair, like Jimmy Yan- cey, has influenced music out of all proportion to his own horizons. This is an essential record.

- J.W.N.

### MIFF MOLE

The Early Years  
Jazz Studies JS-2

Ross Wilby's first collection, Hot Dance Obscurities (reviewed in the January 1975 Coda) concentrated on music issued on early Canadian pressings, with all the Compo Company labels beautifully reproduced on the sleeve. The same format is used on this set but only five of them are on the familiar dark blue and gold label - two on Crown (Puttin' On The Dog, Pierrot Syncopaters, and I've Seen My Baby, Rialto Dance Orch.), two on Apex (both by the Six Hottentots, I'm In Love Again and Rosy Cheeks), and one on Starr (Perry's Rhythm Kings, Say Mister Have You Met Rosie's Sister?). The Starr disc is deviously marked "Canada Sales Limited, Toronto" but it is nevertheless a Compo product. Canadian content on this disc is completed with two Brunswicks, Ray Miller's Red Hot Henry Brown, and Red Nichols' Alabama Stomp.

The remaining records include one on Emerson (Shake It And Break It, Lanin's Southern Serenaders), a Broadway (Quality Clear Through) by the Original Memphis Five (Sister Kate), two Columbias (Ross Gorman's Rhythm Of The Day and Don Voorhees' My Blue Heaven), two American Brunswicks (Original Memphis Five's Chinese Blues and Red Nichols' Poor Butterfly) and one sample of the jazzy-looking red and gold label of the National Music Lovers (Stepping Along by the N.M.L. Dance Orchestra). Rounding out the package are two Victors, Slippin' Around by Red and Miff's Stompers and The Tap Tap by Roger Wolfe Kahn's orchestra.

All the discs come from Ross Wilby's extensive 78 RPM collection and all feature Mildred "Miff" Mole in the early days from 1921-1930. Some of the Red Nichols titles, especially the twelve-inch "Popular Concert" Poor Butterfly, will be familiar

to collectors, but the remaining titles would never be considered for LP reissue except on this unique Jazz Studies series. It is all very listenable material, and even the occasional vocal chorus (by such ubiquitous people as Arthur Fields and Irving Kauffman) is relatively painless. The personnels, all gathered from Brian Rust's Jazz Records 1897-1942, are listed on the sleeve which also includes a biographical sketch of Miff Mole's career in jazz.

I recommend this disc strongly to all dyed-in-the-wool collectors, even those who may possess some or all of the original 78s. It is also a natural for label-hounds, Mole enthusiasts, and just anyone who enjoys listening to the distinctive music of that era.

It costs real money to have a major record company (Victor) process a high-quality LP like this, especially in a limited edition, and if Ross Wilby can at least break even on his expenses, he may then be persuaded to proceed with Jazz Studies Number Three. You can help by sending \$5.98 to Coda and getting a copy into your collection. - J.R.N.

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## ONYX REISSUES

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### HOT LIPS PAGE

After Hours In Harlem  
Onyx ORI 207

Tootin' Through The Roof; Volume 1  
Onyx ORI 209

Cafe Society  
Onyx ORI 210

Ellingtonia!  
Onyx ORI 216

52nd Street; Volume 2  
Onyx ORI 217

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Although my heading refers to "reissues", much of the material in the important Onyx catalogue is, in fact, completely new to record. The label now has around 30 LPs on the market, and they constitute a rare and vital body of music. The series has been masterminded by Don Schlitten, and to him we owe the discovery and release of some truly incredible items. Nobody, for example, suspected the existence of the marvelous sides that comprise the Lips Page set.

The nine items on this LP are taken from the collection of the late Jerry Newman and are part of the legacy of recordings he made on location at Minton's in 1940/41. With such a dearth of Page in the current listings, this set is a must, doubly so because it finds him in a relaxed after hours atmosphere where he can stretch out. The discographical details are far from complete and there are mysteries that will probably never be solved. Nevertheless we know that Thelonious Monk is the pianist on at least two titles (Sweet Georgia Brown and Topsy) and that others present include Herbie Fields, Joe Guy, Tiny Grimes and Donald Lambert. Page plays some exquisite "hot" trumpet and even offers a sample of his inimitable vocal

style on Old Yazoo. Page was definitely one of a kind and these casual dates are a fitting memorial to the way he really played; the way he should be remembered - driving and inventive.

There is more good Page, though in a studio setting, to be heard on the first volume of "Tootin' Through The Roof." He leads a 1945 sextet (including Hank Jones on piano) through five pieces with two takes of Bloodhound. Lips is great throughout and his vocal on I've Got The World On A String is a pip. The first four titles of this compilation feature the underrated Joe Thomas with a quintet sporting Ted Nash (tenor) and Bernie Leighton (piano). Like most trumpeters of his time, Thomas worshipped Armstrong, and the influence of Louis is certainly felt in these performances. But Thomas had qualities of his own and they are very evident on When You're Smiling and You Were Meant For Me.

The last six numbers in this 16-track production boast a Charlie Shavers quintet with Buddy DeFranco on clarinet. You might think this an odd partnership, but in 1945 the dividing lines between bop, mainstream and swing were far less rigid than historians would have us believe. Anyway the rich Shavers trumpet and the cool, correct clarinet of Buddy sound nice together. As Dan Morgenstern says, the feeling of the date recalls Artie Shaw's Gramercy 5.

"Cafe Society" brings together four sessions made between 1944 and 1946. On four are a band led by drummer J.C. Heard and the chief point of interest here is perhaps the tenor sax of Budd Johnson. Pianist Mary Lou Williams heads an all-girl quintet on the next four and two of her companions are well worth hearing - Mary Osborne (guitar), an early Charlie Christian devotee, and vibes player Marjie Hyams. However it is the superb Mary Lou, always so very contemporary, who makes these cuts essential listening fare.

The following four numbers are given over to an Edmond Hall band that includes Ellis Larkins and Henderson Chambers. Hall and Larkins give out with some attractive stuff here. Finally we hear four unpromising selections by the elegant singer Maxine Sullivan who to this day remains a superb jazz vocalist. Here she is hampered by weak material but she tries hard to make something of it.

"Ellingtonia" ranges across three decades to pluck three sessions featuring Johnny Hodges from the maw of oblivion. The first two (Esquire Swank and Midriff) are by the 1946 Ellington band with Hodges soloing on the former but not the latter piece. After these come four pieces made in Paris by five Ellingtonians, Don Byas and French pianist Raymond Fol. Here Hodges is really in command, although Don Byas gets a good piece of the action and Shorty Baker and Quentin Jackson are also heard from.

The second side of the record is given over to a previously unissued session from 1964 on which Hodges is assisted by an Ellington contingent (Cat, Brown, Procope, Gonsalves, Catlett, Woodyard) with, surprisingly, Vic Feldman on piano. The

pieces here are old familiars - The Jeep Is Jumpin', Good Queen Bess, Dooji Wooji, Jeep's Blues - but it is good to dig them updated and slightly re-styled. This is fine latterday Hodges with excellent support all around.

Players already mentioned in this necessarily condensed review also appear on volume 2 of "52nd Street". Shavers, for one, plus Tiny Grimes and Ed Hall turn up together on one date but the star of that particular show is Coleman Hawkins who dominates all four sides - Riding On 52nd Street, Memories Of You, Step On It, All The Things You Are.

Two contemporary tenormen of the Hawk are spotlighted on further sessions - Ben Webster with a compatible backing trio on such favourites as I Surrender Dear, Perdido and I Found A New Baby; Don Byas holding sway with different backing on You Go To My Head, Don't You Know I Care, At Home With The Blues (Tony Scott plays piano on this!) and Gloomy Sunday. Dates of this calibre were taken for granted in the mid-1940s. With the benefit of hindsight - plus the records - we know that men like Hawkins, Webster and Byas were turning out classics almost daily. It was a great period.

Of earlier vintage are three piano solos by Nat Jaffe. These are from January 1938 and were apparently made for demonstration purposes, never having been issued before. On Body And Soul, Liza and I Can't Get Started, Jaffe shows his startling modernity. Not surprisingly he became involved in bebop early on but he left behind few recordings which makes these early examples of his style especially valuable. Had he lived Jaffe would have made a substantial contribution to jazz in the 1940s. As it is, these fragments provide tantalizing glimpses of his rich talent.

There must be, surely, something for everyone in these five LPs that help to fill in some of the gaps during a quarter of a century in jazz, with particular emphasis on the 1940s, a decade that produced influential, striking and diverse musical happenings due to a unique set of circumstances. - M.G.

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## MAX ROACH

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We Insist! - Freedom Now Suite  
Amigo AMLP 810

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The 1954 "Brown vs. Board of Education" decision by the U.S. Supreme Court was the epoch-making event that unleashed the second Afro-American renaissance of this century - the realization that the wrongs of American society could potentially be restituted from within by those most victimized, the Blacks themselves. This was the occasion of a great sociopolitical and cultural awakening in the ghetto community, expressed not only in terms of the forum, but in verbal and creative pronouncements by their artists. Musicians spoke out over the persecution which previously they had accepted, with frustration, as an almost routine occupational hazard. In the decade to follow, Ellington - a product of the first great Black renaissance -

was to continue producing his ode to his people, culminating with the massed forces of the bluntly-titled "My People"; mass commerce would squelch Sonny Rollins' "Freedom Suite"; even as inveterate a beast of compromise as Oliver Nelson would create an uncompromised set of "Afro-American Sketches"; and a whole artistic edifice would be erected out of the growing AfroAmerican social militancy. Of all such works, this one - "We Insist!", created in collaboration by Max Roach and Oscar Brown, Jr. - stood out as musically and socially the most substantial. Listening to it now, in 1975, it seems incredible that these works could have had the impact they did in 1960; and retrospectively in an era of revolution it seems hard to picture this suite alone provoking a major and futile controversy over Crow Jim racism in jazz. (An episode summarized in the lyrics of a later Roach-Abbey Lincoln work, Mendacity - "but try to tell the truth, the people scream 'not fair'"). Nevertheless, "We Insist" was brought to market in 1960 by Candid Records - chiefly by them because Roach's regular affiliation, Mercury, felt the material too highly charged to handle, while Candid was a small, young company with little to lose. It was lost to most listeners in 1962 when Candid died. Somehow - likely for the same political reasons - it was passed over for release when Columbia reissued several selected Candid sessions on their short-lived Barnaby label in the early 1970s. (Suitably, its substitute, Abbey Lincoln's "Straight Ahead", was no less compromising musically but sounded somewhat more conciliatory toward white liberal sensibilities). This music, creatively and politically the most important contribution Roach has ever made, had to wait until the composer could license the masters to Amigo, a small Swedish firm, before it could become available to another generation of listeners.

The effect of this work is the sum of many isolated factors. One, alluded to above, is the social impact of a work of this nature in its own time. Another is the conviction which all the players involved brought to their performance. Roach and the three added percussionists - Michael Olatunji, Raymond Mantillo, and Tomas du Vall - achieve a tonal subtlety and rhythmic complexity that few percussion passages in the music since - even those dominated by "drum fever" - have attained. In the true sense of the word, the sound is beautiful. The other personal essentials of the ensemble - Abbey Lincoln, Booker Little, Coleman Hawkins, and lyricist Brown - equal them in the complexity and inspiration of their commentaries. The lyrics date the work slightly (not detrimentally) because of their cry of social responsibility rather than revolution. ("Freedom Day" speaks of freedom "to vote and earn my pay"). Ms. Lincoln has never sounded better - before or since. Her voice boasts a bold, acid eloquence that abandons the typical coy pleading of the "female vocal" in favour of positively articulated demand - simply in keeping with the content of her music. For all that, she avoids stridency.

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Her pitch is always exact, her nuance elegant, her swing irreproachable; and in Triptych - Prayer, Protest, Peace she achieves - intertwined like an additional drum in Roach's kit - an expressive intensity unknown to most of her contemporaries or successors. Her tongue is as sharp as the lash; each syllable seems to draw just a bit more blood than the last. Coleman Hawkins, confined to but one solo, (Driva' Man) is magnificent. Belying both his physical and idiomatic age, he is the only macho tenor conceivably strong enough to counterpart the soaring power of the voice.

Perhaps the most exacting definition of the ensemble characteristics of the suite is in the interaction of Roach's drums with trumpeter Booker Little. The textures of the large band seem to spring as extended series of overtones from the drummer's tonal playing, but it is the harmonic character of the trumpet lines for Little as it was before with Clifford Brown - here, a flair for polytonality and dissonance as a means to open structures, that allows the fleshing out and detail of the roles of the individual players. Little does not play percussive trumpet; and unlike the Brown-Roach quintet, here the rhythmic impetus lies in Roach's hands alone. Little preferred to concentrate more on the development of his intricate harmonic command (a concept which brought him into association with Eric Dolphy for one of the great partnerships in AfroAmerican creative history). Next to the panache of this pair, the regular instrumentalists of the ensemble seem rather pedestrian. Tenorist Walter Benton stands in the middle of the evolution that started with Coleman Hawkins and ended with Clifford Jordan - a busy, full-toned second-generation reed man too busy tripping over long lines to attend to content. Trombonist Julian Priester is almost as vehement as Little, but rather than ride with the complexities of Roach's beat, he lets the drum fills poke up through his lines and chop his phrasings into incoherent bits. Still, Priester circa 1960, fresh out of Sun Ra, is far more important than Priester circa 1975, fresh out of Herbie Hancock.

Individuals are not the story of this music. The essence is the complexity of their interaction, and in their universal inspiration. The regrets to be felt are minor - that Amigo jumbled the order of titles in mastering this issue, and that "We Insist!" was never produced as intended, a large-scale choral work with ballet. This music stores for the mid-1970s the invigorating social breezes of two decades ago. Black society has progressed beyond their inspiration, but the art remains. This creation is timeless. You know the tears and sweat that went into every phrase.

I don't know how readily - or even if - Amigo releases will be available in North America. It may be difficult and expensive; but this is a rare sort of music, and price and time and hassles would be well worth it to get to hear it. - B.T.

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## LUIS RUSSELL

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And His Louisiana Swing Orchestra  
Columbia KG 32388

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Frank Driggs must have twisted a few arms at Columbia for them to consider issuing a domestic Luis Russell reissue, and even then at the later stages it must have got away from his control as the set appears without master-numbers and recording-dates. But any Russell collector worth his salt will be able to figure these out, although he may complain about the contents of this two-disc album.

It contains all four titles by the Heebie Jeebie Stompers, and two each by the Jungle Town Stompers, Lou And His Ginger Snaps, and Higgy's Six Hicks. Of the numbers issued by Luis Russell And His Orchestra and His Burning Eight (see page 7 of the December 1969 issue of Coda) during the "classic period" of March 10, 1926 to December 17, 1930, it omits the Russell Hot Six Session entirely, The New Call Of Freaks, and the Brunswick/Vocalion date that produced Saratoga Drag and Ease On Down (or "Case On Dawn" as English Brunswick quaintly labelled it). From this latter session it would have been a stroke of genius to include Honey, That Reminds Me on which Vic Dickenson (of all people) plays trombone and sings the vocal, and also I Got Rhythm which was issued on Melotone. Instead, we are fobbed off with six numbers by a mediocre Russell orchestra which lacks the fire engendered by such stalwarts as Henry Allen, J.C. Higginbotham, and Albert Nicholas. True, these "replacements" comprise the complete session of August 8, 1934: Darktown Strutters Ball, My Blue Heaven, The Ghost Of The Freaks, Hokus Pokus, Moods, Ol' Man River. But this was a cumbersome, commercial aggregation, cluttered with vocal groups and such, and the whole session (originally issued on Banner/Melotone/Oriole/Perfect) could well have been left to languish in the vaults.

This album does include both takes of Louisiana Swing and On Revival Day - but these were issued long ago on Swaggie. Surely more alternate takes of other titles could have been unearthed? And while I am in a carping mood, not one of the original 78s was issued under the name of Luis Russell And His "Louisiana Swing" Orchestra.

In spite of these shortcomings, it is good to see 26 "classic" Luis Russells generally available on a mono LP, and Frank Driggs is to be congratulated on his efforts. His most interesting and copious liner-notes cover all facets of Russell's career and those of his stellar sidemen. Henry Allen, J.C. Higginbotham, Charlie Holmes, Albert Nicholas were the great soloists but it was Russell's arrangements that showcased their considerable talents, aided and abetted by a fantastic rhythm section consisting of Will Johnson (guitar), Pops Foster (bass), and Paul Barbarin (drums). Not only did the Luis Russell Orchestra make Louisiana swing, but the other 47 states as well. - J.R.N.

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## ROOSEVELT SYKES

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Dirty Double Mother  
Bluesway 6077

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## HOMESICK JAMES

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Chicago Blues Festival Volume 1  
Black and Blue 33034

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Roosevelt Sykes was one of the original shapers of the blues in the 1930s and he has enjoyed a long and successful career. His style and sound is built around a few melodies and continuing lyrical imagination. Since the advent of the LP he has made numerous sessions - a few of which are outstanding (Bluesville, Delmark and Barclay).

This sounds like a pick-up session in New Orleans. The musicians feel the beat a little different to Sykes and this creates a tenseness in certain numbers. All the tunes are supposedly new but have often appeared in other guises. And disguise is part of Sykes' makeup as he unfolds the highly dubious stories of Double Dirty Mother, Persimmon Pie and Double Breast-ed Woman.

Sykes' piano playing is the basic blues and his solos are not really improvisations in the longer numbers where the band open up the music. Nonetheless he is one of the major individuals of the music and anything he records has a certain class to it. Clarence Ford's idiomatic tenor saxophone playing is often a bonus - his solo on Life Is A Puzzle is particularly pleasing - and if you are looking for a continuation of the sound served up by Roosevelt Sykes in Bluesville 1014 some 15 years ago you will be pleased with this LP but, in my opinion, it is far from being a definitive example of the Honeydipped.

There's more of Sykes on the first side of the Black And Blue record. This was recorded in France with instrumental support from Eddie Taylor, Louis Myers, Homesick James, Dave Myers and Fred Below. There's little enthusiasm from anyone and all three guitarists are very tentative in their support while Below's drums are often overly prominent. Even Roosevelt Sykes is less than his usual effervescent self and fails to bring much life to his songs. It reaches a low point in the maudlin sentimentality of Thanks But No Thanks. Unlike Fats Waller, who is referred to in the liner notes, Sykes can't transform a melody. The sharp-eared will notice the occasional similarities to Waller in Sykes' piano styling - such as Mighty Men and Persimmon Pie in the Bluesway album.

Side Two is devoted to the slide guitar and vocals of Homesick James Williamson. He remains engrossed in the music of Elmore James but lacks the burning intensity which made Elmore's guitar and voice one of the incredible experiences in American music. The backing is particularly tedious and dull. Chicago blues musicians have turned the vitality of their idiom into a similar dead-end to that experienced by traditional jazz. Homesick James is a minor figure who has little to say on this

occasion.

- J.W.N.

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## PHAROAH SANDERS

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Love in Us All  
Impulse ASD 9280

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There are no liner notes or personnel given for this 1974 recording. The inside of the album consists of contact prints of photos taken at the session, mostly of Pharoah. Unfortunately I do not recognize his sidemen from the few, mostly blurry shots which include them.

Each side consists of an extended performance. Side one is called Love Is Everywhere. There is strong rhythm with congas, bells, tambourines, and so forth. The pianist provides a simple accompaniment while Pharoah and the band chant or sing off-key, "Oo-oo, love is everywhere!" back and forth. After about five minutes of this monotony there is a fade-out, and after a suitable silence the group returns with the same background for the rest of the 20 minute side, while Pharoah noodles aimlessly on soprano or lays out to let the conging and rhythm ride. The net effect was somehow sort of like Gato Barbieri and his whole band tranquilized into somnolence.

Side two is titled To John, obviously referring to Coltrane. The group works up quite a lather, with Pharoah shrieking and hooting through his tenor as he would in his days with Coltrane. There is also an "out" trumpet solo, followed by another tenor solo, an appropriately styled piano solo during which an arco bass slowly takes prominence, leading into a pizzicato bass duet with the piano which is quite nice. The suspended theme, with a coda by rhythm and two arco basses, concludes the performance quite effectively. Love almost put me to sleep, but To John is the most interesting recording by Sanders I have heard since his work with Coltrane. This album therefore seems to represent the two sides of Pharoah Sanders quite graphically and at their complete extremes. - V.S.

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## HERBIE SPANIER

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Forensic Perturbations  
Radio Canada International  
Transcription 376

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Thought trumpeter Herbie Spanier tells us that he despises labels and categories, for the benefit of Coda listeners I must report that he is, in the broadest sense, a mainstream player. He digs Brownie, has a beautiful tone and you don't hear him blowing any clams. This is an extremely musicianly set with eight compositions all composed by Spanier.

He is surrounded by compatible colleagues in Alvin Pall (tenor/flute), Bernie Senensky (piano), Michel Donato (bass/electric bass) and Claude Ranger (drums). They cover a fairly wide range of music - from the conventional climate of Ballade For Gina to the loose framework of Rapido on which the soloists move in and out but

never freak out.

The record gives, I imagine, a fairly accurate picture of the considerable ability of Spanier as leader, writer and soloist. His compositions have a real freshness about them and there is a similarly original flavour to his horn-work. Hope I will be forgiven if I remark that besides digging Brownie, Herbie has studied his Booker Little (witness his Saints Alive solo).

I can't say that I enjoyed the presence of electric bass, even though it is tastefully played by Donato. Ten years from now electric basses will sound as corny as banjos do on records from the 1920s.

Spanier has worked with a lot of heavy people - Jackie McLean, Zoot Sims, Lee Konitz, Paul Bley, Ornette Coleman, Charlie Haden, Carla Bley - and this diverse experience has obviously been beneficial. He has a lot to say and there is clearly much interesting music in store from him, providing he gets recording opportunities like this. Meanwhile Ted Farrant is to be congratulated on giving Herbie this chance - one that the trumpeter firmly seized with both hands to produce a first class LP. - M.G.

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## RONNIE SCOTT

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At Ronnie's  
RCA LI 5056

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Scott's husky sound on tenor is good to hear at such length on a record, and recording him with his Trio at his London club may have sentimental value for listeners who remember swinging visits there, but truth to tell the Trio sounds pretty ordinary out of that ambience. Organist Mike Carr is so adept at pedaling the bass line that you would sometimes swear the Trio included a bassist, but his soloing and comping are matched by house organists in a lot of less auspicious houses. Drummer Bobby Gein and percussionist Loughy Amao (on Sombrero Sam only) provide the wheels for Scott all right, but they are purely functional. Scott's gutsy drive is so infectious that it is the Trio's only dimension, even on a ballad like The More I See You. "Scott at Ronnie's" is for listeners who need an entr'acte in their living rooms. - J.C.

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## SONNY STITT

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Satan  
Cadet CA 50060

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Several cuts above Stitt's other recent Cadet album, Mr. Bojangles, that unfortunately fell into my sweaty reviewer's hands, this album still leaves something to be desired. First let's consider the good things - three nice tunes by Roland Hanna, A Crazy Mixed-Up World, Big Bad Henry and Anone. Then the really excellent things - a pair of duet performances, Gee Baby Ain't I Good To You, It Might As Well Be Spring - by altoist Stitt and bassist Ron Carter. If these two superb tracks are anything to go by, a complete duo al-

bum would have been more productive and considerably cheaper!

Elsewhere we find competent arrangements for either strings or horns by Wade Marcus and an over-abundance of electronics, not always tastefully handled. However expensive the setting, Stitt is only moved to play for keeps when the company is right, the framework challenging and the producer sympathetic. Otherwise he is inclined to go through his very professional motions, without really extending himself.

Stitt has been given the horns and strings treatment many times before and it is just another gig. But, suddenly confronted by just a bass player, he is spurred into pulling a little extra out of the hat, as on Gee Baby and Spring.

Don't get me wrong, none of this record is objectionable but in the context of what we know Sonny can do much of it becomes superfluous. Incidentally Stitt is heard on alto saxophone only on these seven tracks. He sounds, if anything, despondent on the rock calypso that lends the package its name (Sonny looks suitably evil with fire blazing behind him in the lurid cover photograph). Still, as already stated, the Hanna songs are nice and do sample those duo items which, for reasons best known to the producer, are placed at the end of each side, indicating, perhaps, their lack of commercial appeal. There are no sleeve notes to tell you anything about either Sonny Stitt or the music on the record. - M.G.

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## LALLE SVENSSON

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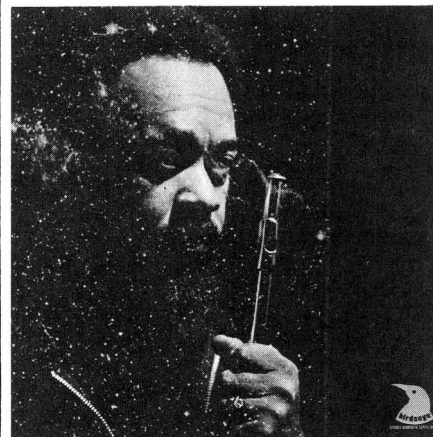
Cockroach Road  
Cockroach CLP-101

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If "Cockroach Road" were an elaborate put-on, as I thought it was at first, this review would be a simple matter. It would begin by stating flatly that Lalle Svensson is the worst trumpeter ever to share a studio with bona fide jazz musicians, and then go on to elaborate the flatness of his tone, the fluffs that mar every phrase, and the limits of his range. It would cite some of the extravagant praise sprinkled throughout the accompanying text (like "Bear in mind that Lalle's trumpet playing is original to the point of uniqueness. Try to avoid comparisons") and probably fool around with the ironies implicit in the praise.

However, I am afraid that it is not a put-on. The other musicians are too earnest in their attempts to cover for Svensson, especially Bernt Rosengren, who actually salvages short stretches of the record. Their written comments are defensive when they are not ironic. And the 9,000 word insert, purportedly an autobiography of Svensson (with help from Keith Knox), is edged by paranoia, hints of breakdown, and threats of suicide.

The musicians and friends who supported Svensson in this recording venture apparently did so out of sympathy, and not for fun. Their sympathy seems misguided: the recording merely broadcasts his private anguish to the public domain.



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He had only resumed playing a few months before it was recorded, I gather, after a layoff of several years. Unless the critical reaction to "Cockroach Road" is too paralyzing, Lalle Svensson should continue to gather his strength. I wish him well.

- J.C.

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## EDDIE TAYLOR

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Ready for Eddie  
Munich Records BM 150 203

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Jim Simpson of Big Bear Productions has a winner with this Eddie Taylor set. The sides were recorded in the Spring of 1974 over in England and feature Eddie fronting a small sympathetic rhythm section. Backup includes Big Bear regulars Bob Hall on piano, Pete York on drums, with Graham Gallery and Bob Brunning sharing the bass chores, plus the occasional addition of Roger Hill on second guitar. On this particular set these sidemen seem to follow and not lead.

Eddie is his usual together self offering a straightforward, rocking, and varied Chicago set with very few gaps left within which to lose potential listeners. He lets fly with some damn exciting guitar work. There are six original vocals by Eddie. All of which seem to borrow from standard themes. There are also two competent instrumental workouts. One is a burning uptempo ditty while the other is a pleasing guitar After Hours.

On top of all this, Eddie works through Jimmy Rodger's Sloppy Drunk, Willie Cobb's You Don't Love Me, Driftin' Slim's My Little Machine and Sam Chatman's Cross Cut Saw.

All-in-all this is a warm, refreshing and well-played set with guitarist Eddie Taylor definitely functioning as the leader. It is also well packaged and well mixed with a high quality pressing. Not much hesitation in recommending this one. Along with Eddie Taylor's excellent Advent LP, this is a worthy addition to any Post War Chicago collection.

- D.L.

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## CHARLES TOLLIVER

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Live in Tokyo  
Strata-East SES-19745

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In an age when the grass roots usually stay buried under bureaucratic asphalt, Charles Tolliver seems to have gathered his strength and pushed straight up through it. From a middling reputation as a sideman beginning a decade ago, he has emerged in the last couple of years as one of the most individualistic and interesting trumpeter/leaders around. His unfashionably acoustic Music Inc. located an audience for tiny Strata-East, and is proving that the audience is not just some kind of a mouldy fringe. Even with at least 180 minutes already available on records of this trumpet and rhythm quartet (not counting the LP with a big band), the fifty additional minutes of "Live in Tokyo" (recorded in December 1973) will certainly rally the audience again.

Essentially it is more of the same, but that comment is not damning when the same is so hard to come by. Tolliver stands up and plays with a jittery emotionalism. Stanley Cowell, who is unfortunately no longer a regular in Music Inc. but is fortunately a regular on this one, mixes his lines with Tolliver's in a style that blends about equal parts of the conservatory and the blues. The bass and drums are unstable chairs in Music Inc. (only two LPs have had the same musicians) but Clint Houston and Clifford Barbaro certainly do not play as if they are pick-up players. They share in the music as equals, which is absolutely necessary for this group to make it, and it is some tribute to Tolliver as a leader that he can keep changing the men while retaining the cohesiveness.

If the group has a conspicuous fault, it is that the uptempo tunes are all played at the same nervous pitch, which is close to feverish. Because "Live in Tokyo" mixes the tempi judiciously, it may be the best album so far. Only Drought is overexcited, which is by no means too much. Effi, the only Cowell tune on this one, is tense but attractive. It is the long crescendo leading up to "Round Midnight, which is almost as long a diminuendo. A high point is the version of Tolliver's Truth, which he previously recorded on his first album ever (Jackie McLean, "It's Time", Blue Note ST-84179, ca. 1965) and again with an earlier Music Inc. (ENJA 2016, in 1972). It has become gospel among jazz buffs that familiarity with a tune leads a musician to increase its tempo and alter its melody. Not so with Tolliver. He lingers over it as affectionately as he did the first time and waits for the release to find fresh harmonics. Familiarity breeds no contempt in Tolliver; in fact, it sharpens the feeling.

This is plain, honest, straightforward improvisation, and its value increases as it gets rarer.

- J.C.

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## TOUBABOU

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le ble et le mil  
Kot'ai KOT - 3305

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## CONTRACTION

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la bourse ou la vie  
Deram XDEF - 106

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One of the remarkable aspects of the Quebec music scene, and I suspect one of its great strengths, is the lack of musical blinkers worn by the musicians. They just refuse to be categorized and pigeonholed. For instance, in his early recordings pop-rock idcl Robert Charlebois chose to be accompanied by a free-jazz unit - Jazz Libre de Quebec. A later Charlebois accompanying band included percussionist Michel Seguin, who moved on to found the Ville Emard Blues Band, and then Toubabou, an exciting amalgam of electronic rock and African drumming. Two of the members of Toubabou, Denis Farmer and Robert Stanley, can also be heard with Contraction, a superbly con-

trolled and sensitive electronic group.

This is Toubabou's first recording, and was recorded live at the emotionally-charged final concert of the International Young Francophone Festival held in Quebec City in August 1974. The group is enhanced by the presence of a number of African musicians and singers who were attending the festival. The concept of appearing together is typical of the open-mindedness of the Quebec musicians, and particularly characteristic of Michel Seguin, who had already lived and drummed with a Senegalese tribe in the Sahara. (Toubabou is part of an African phrase meaning "White man who plays drums").

The album starts with Oasis, composed by pianist Yvan Ouellet, featuring the wordless vocalizing of Lise Cousineau, accompanied by a mixture of European and African rhythm instruments. The amplified piano, guitar and bass tend to overwhelm the African instruments, which have more intimate voices. The Africans dominate on Man Yaka Ghane, a traditional Togo wedding song, with a lead female voice backed by other voices and two African instruments. The question-response pattern will be familiar to gospel buffs. The two cultures merge to good effect on guitarist Robert Stanley's Ambush - a complex and exciting mingling of European and African rhythm instruments. Purely African is Noumoulou, a hunting song from Mali, which is semi-spoken over intriguing pulsating rhythms. Mali is also Lise Cousineau's inspiration in Carignan, which she sings in French. This has the allure of an old french folk song, with the exotic addition of African polyrhythms. Yama Nekh is a traditional Senegalese air, arranged by Michel Seguin with lyrics by Lise Cousineau, which comes out as a mixture of Chicago blues riffs, African rhythms, and singing in French and Senegalese. The album ends with Doudou N'Diaye, a jam of almost all the rhythm instruments, sometimes complex, sometimes confused, but overall an exciting success.

Contraction's album is their second, a beautifully packaged and polished performance. The album was obviously conceived as a whole, is not the usual haphazard juxtaposition of unrelated themes, and really has to be reviewed as a whole - a carefully balanced and coherent program of music. Every time I play this record I am amazed at the craftsmanship and thought that has gone into it, but I am also perplexed at how to adequately describe those sounds in words. Can you try to visualize the instrumentalists of the Mahavishnu Orchestra teamed with the voices of Les Double-Six, and the whole given a piquance of French Canadian awareness? Even if you can, we're not doing them justice. The jazz fan may regret the lack of extended improvisations, but will surely respond to the real beauty of so much of this music.

We are lucky in Quebec to have such a diversity and vitality of musical expression, of which these two albums are good examples.

- R.S.

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## MC COY TYNER

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Sama Layuca  
Milestone M-9056

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This album, recorded in March 1974, provides further documentation of McCoy Tyner's work in the early 1970's, being not dissimilar from other recent LP's I've heard, or his work "live" of a year or two ago. Here again are the simple, driving themes, intense piano solos, strong rhythm, and loose reed solos which do not seem to be as effective as they might. Reed ensemble work is provided by Gary Bartz, Azar Lawrence, and John Stubblefield, while the rhythm section includes Buster Williams' strong bass, Billy Hart on drums, Mtume on congas and percussion, and Guillermi Franco also providing percussion. Bobby Hutcherson on vibes and marimba fills out the group and is the other strong soloist on the album.

Sama Layuca includes, besides typical solos by Tyner and Hutcherson, a short soprano solo by Lawrence vaguely reminiscent of early Sam Rivers but lacking a strong sense of direction. Above The Rainbow is performed by Tyner and Hutcherson only, a short but effective study in textures. La Cubana has a short alto spot by Bartz that goes nowhere, but the long, passionate solos by Tyner and Hutcherson (on marimba) are among the highlights of the album and well worth hearing. Desert Cry is an exotic, lovely piece with John Stubblefield's oboe work evoking Yusef Lateef's experiments along similar lines; it is a nice, tight little track. Paradox is the longest cut on the album. It sports a sort of "mid-60's Joe Henderson" solo by Azar Lawrence on tenor, and, surprisingly, the most intellectually satisfying of Gary Bartz' solos I've heard to date, loose, relaxed, and abstract. There is also some typical work from Tyner and Hutcherson.

This is neither the best nor the worst of Tyner's albums, but the bulk of La Cubana (following the empty alto solo) and Desert Cry stand out. - V.S.

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## CHARLIE VENTURA

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Shavers/Clayton Jumping  
with Charlie Ventura  
Trip TLP-5536

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## COZY COLE • RED NORVO

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Jazz Giants, Volume 3  
Trip TLP-5538

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In the golden days of bebop - the late 1940s and early 1950s - the affable rasp of Charlie Ventura's tenor was one of the more popular sounds on the scene. Ventura was in great sympathy with the boppers, but never one of them himself. He was interested enough to provide many of them with stable employment, and certainly had learned the newer harmonic progressions and substitutions well enough to deal with them on the more "modern" musicians' terms. But his phrases landed

dead on the beat, and - as the 1945 Let's Jump It For Rita shows - he had a great deal of difficulty swinging over an old-style four-beat rhythm section, never mind coping with the more liberated accompaniment of the then-new music. And he simply was not inventive enough for extended improvisation. His first three choruses or so were usually substantial, but after that he faded rapidly, and his extended ballad features with large orchestra - Miserlou and Moon Nocturne get rather dire beyond that length. What attracted people to him, I suppose, was his flair for drama in his lines - his playing was always mellow/dramatic if nothing else. That, and the quality of his sidemen. To that degree, I begrudge him the amount of solo space he uses (here, several choruses on each title), but that seems to be a leader's prerogative.

His 1946 orchestra carried on in the tradition of the then-recently-disbanded Herman First Herd, where kindred spirit Flip Phillips was a featured soloist, and from which he hired trumpeter/arranger Neal Hefti, pianist Tony Aless, vibist Margie Hyams, and guitarist Billy Bauer. Hefti's charts for the band - How High The Moon, Miserlou, and Annie Annie Over (yet another I Got Rhythm substitute) - continue the interest in the harmonic developments of bebop that had dominated his writing for Herman, even if - Miserlou, especially - Ventura chose mainly material that complemented his dramatic inclinations. Hefti's own trumpet solos - Moon and Annie - are tasty distillations of the Gillespie and Sonny Berman influences. Both titles also feature rewarding short spots for clarinetist Tony Scott - Scott, like Ventura, being one of those musicians who seem to benefit from being forced to condense his statements and extract a maximum from a very few bars.

The remainder of the album features sextet-septet material from 1945-48. The aforementioned Rita, a Rosetta variant, is an outstanding showcase for Buck Clayton's urbane swing over Basie-ish rhythm. Blue Champagne features Charlie Shavers and Bill Harris, both in a very lyrical manner, over Herman-bred accompaniment - Bill DeArango, Ralph Burns, Chubby Jackson, and Dave Tough. Ventura really knew how to pick his bandmen. Note, however, that the album is over-titled if not mis-titled, since this is all there is of Shavers or Clayton on the disc. The other selections find his band mainly as a setting for then-up-and-coming boppers. Apart from aping the Herman sound, Ventura enjoyed the company of great trombonists - here Kai Winding, heard to great advantage in Eleven Sixty and in obbligato behind Buddy Stewart's Baby, Baby All The Time vocal; and Benny Green, at length in the jam versions of Oh, Lady Be Good and Sweet Georgia Brown. These selections are never less than fine jazz. One only wishes that the tenorist had been as astute an improviser as he was an organizer.

For more reliably excellent tenor playing - and much else of merit - one need look no further than "Jazz Giants,

Volume 3" and the four Cozy Cole sides. This 1944 Keynote session was farsighted enough to bring together Coleman Hawkins and Earl Hines, along with several others of not-much-less-stellar ability - Trummy Young, Joe Thomas (trumpet), Billy Taylor (bass), Teddy Walters (guitar), and Cole himself. The best-known of the four sides this septet produced is Just One More Chance, which was recognized virtually from the day of its original issue as a major triumph of rhapsodic balladry for Hawkins. It's good to see it on issue again, but the other three titles are no less excellent examples of jumping small-band swing, - Blue Moon, Father Co-operates, Through For The Night. Hawkins and Hines both seem on form for all four pieces, but the piano solo of Father Cooperates - along with the expected melodic invention - has a rhythmic audacity that no pianist of Hines' own generation, and few since, have equalled. Joe Thomas plays crackling-good Eldridge trumpet throughout, Trummy Young is his sophisticatedly swaggering self, Cole and Taylor swing solidly underneath. Teddy Walters' meatily expansive Christian-derived guitar, heard at good length, is an unexpected pleasure. These four titles would be well worth the price of this album even were the other six utter trash.

Which they certainly aren't. While I confess that I find Red Norvo's clipped, vibratoless vibraphone tone and frequent overplaying of notes rather nerve-wracking at times, his choice of sympathetic companions and the overall conception of the music gives his titles a rather distant warmth holding the same attraction as Artie Shaw's music. The parallel doesn't end quite there, because the ensemble voicings feature prominent clarinet leads, and in Hank D'Amico and Aaron Sachs Norvo found two fine journeymen clarinetists whose phrasings - if not their sound - carried the same coolish relaxation as Shaw's. These 1944 sessions build around a rhythm/solo nucleus consisting of Norvo, Teddy Wilson, and Slam Stewart (and, for the latter of the two sessions, drummer Specs Powell) - which, apart from the closely-knit swing they generated, was conceptually enough advanced to function with flair and understanding (even if not crossing musical boundaries themselves) behind Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie less than a year later. But given the very transitional rhythm setting of Norvo's version of Seven Come Eleven, the ability to minimize boundaries on the later Hallelujah date is hardly surprising. Wilson's delicate swing is always delightfully inventive, even if there are no great insights forthcoming from these performances. Russian Lullaby features a languorous, slowly-shifting septet voicing that might even recall Claude Thornhill. The two later titles here, Lullaby and I Got Rhythm, give extra chances to sample from Joe Thomas' tasty horn, and Vic Dickenson's thoughtful trombone artistry is a major asset.

Trip has a habit of perpetuating consistent typos in liner notes. That aside,



production is good, and certainly the obsessively untampered sound quality of these releases is to be applauded. - B.T.

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## LEROY VINNEGAR

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Glass Of Water  
Legend LGS-1001

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This is a record that grows on you. The first time I heard it I was very disappointed. The main problem being the playing of Dwight Dickerson. He has the disturbing habit of producing the effect at the beginning and end of some of his solos that cause you to think his electric piano has submerged under water. After hearing the record a few more times I was able to see some of the better points which balanced out to some extent those annoying Dickerson practices.

There are no horns on this album so Dickerson's piano is the dominant solo voice. His playing apart from the aforementioned tricks is decent enough. He has a light touch (if touch is possible on the electric instrument?) and gets quite funky at times but in a pleasing manner. A more creative pianist though would have brought the level of this record up considerably.

Leroy Vinnegar has long been a bass player I have admired. He doesn't dazzle you with pyro-techniques but is content to lay down rock solid rhythmic support. He takes a number of solos here but continues in his previous wellgrounded pattern. Drummer Chuck Carter does his job in an unobtrusive and positive manner. The recording fidelity of this record is excellent as is the original cover design.

Vinnegar's two previous records on the Contemporary label are both better than this one by a goodly margin. In the scheme of things today, I would rate this LP at no better than average, and perhaps at just a bit below that. - P. F.

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## TERRY WALDO

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Snookums Rag  
Dirty Shame 1237

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This fine LP contains twelve ragtime piano solos by Terry Waldo, whose knowledge of the field combines with sure technique, resulting in satisfying and sympathetic readings of the selections. Terry sticks pretty closely to the printed scores, but his understanding of ragtime is so complete that his occasional fills or other departures seem inevitable, and thus are unnoticeable (unless you're following along with a manuscript).

Perhaps the best feature of these performances is their rolling, comfortable rhythm. Take the rather stately and structured Pastime Rag #1 or #2, for instance (all five are included, by the way) - Terry gives you Artie Matthews' arrangement all right, but also draws you into the performance with an infectious pulse that proudly displays the down-to-earth midwestern folk tradition from which rags like these emerged.

Waldo's own raggedy Yellow Rose Rag and Charles L. Johnson's early A Black Smoke emphasize even more strongly the cheerful country origins of the music, effectively contrasting with comparatively sophisticated material such as Luckey Roberts' passionate and dramatic Spanish Venus, here rendered with full realization of its emotional potential. Filling out the program are two lighter, Tin-Pan-Alley-type rags, Chinatown Rag by George Meyer and Snookums Rag by Charles L. Johnson, and the only weak entry, a version of Morton's The Pearls that seems too jazzy and too lacking in the haunting qualities normally evoked by this unusual piece.

A first-class, full-blooded job, sure to please the ragtime purists as well as the fans who want their piano to have some punch and roots. Recommended.

- T.W.

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## LITTLE WALTER

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Confessin' The Blues  
Chess 9033 - 416

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Here is a surprise addition to the defunct Chess Vintage Series. A reissue collection of fifteen Little Walter singles sampled from the ten year period between 1953 and 1963. There is no denying Walter's harp proficiency, as is attested by the instrumentals Lights Out, Rocker and Quarter To Twelve (all included here). His style was innovative, accurate, and hard driving. Backing for this collection included the Aces with appearances by bassist Willie Dixon, guitarist Luther Tucker, Robert Junior Lockwood, Buddy Guy, Freddie Robinson, and Muddy Waters, keyboard men Lafayette Leake, Billy Emerson and Otis Spann, saxophonist Jarrett Gibson (on baritone) and drummers George Hunter and Al Duncan. All the cuts selected are of a serious nature and thank god there are no novelty tunes. All have previously appeared as singles and many have been out in LP form. For example; Red Lightning' 002 (Quarter To Twelve), Syndicate Chapter 004 (Thunderbird) and Chess 9033-60003 (Rockbottom - an anthology released in Canada). However the quality on "Confessin' The Blues" is quite superior in relation to the above LP listings.

Also included in this collection are instrumentals, Crazy Legs, Rock Bottom and The Toddle and vocal numbers It Ain't Right, I Got To Find My Baby, One More Chance With You, Temperature, I Got To Go, Crazy Mixed-Up World, Confessin' The Blues, Up The Line and Mean Old World. Backing throughout is exceptional and the collection offers an enjoyable and varied sampler of the late Little Walter's previously issued Chess material. - D.L.

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## CEDAR WALTON

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A Night At Boomer's, Volume 1  
Muse 5010

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Recorded on location at a Greenwich Vil-

lage bistro on January 4, 1973, this album catches Cedar Walton with Sam Jones (bass), Louis Hayes (drums) and guest star Clifford Jordan (tenor sax) working together harmoniously and fluidly, like the old friends and musical associates that they are. Cedar and his comrades were into a 'back to bebop' vein at the time - the spirit, rather than the letter. And it sounds good.

Holy Land is a Walton tune that he has recorded previously with a sextet. He and Jordan take splendid solos on this version. The Guy's In Love With You is lightly but not politely swung by the trio and Cedar gives the melody an effective gospel tinge. There follows an 8 3/4 minute inspection of Bird's Cheryl where Clifford takes his early choruses without piano accompaniment and, perhaps unconsciously to simulate Bird's alto, works largely in the upper register, but as the solo unfolds it gets ever more personal; Jordan is a man who will always surprise you. This is adventurous group music, not just an off-the-top jam. Walton is another individualist who shuns the cliché and knows when he has said enough. Hayes conjures up a well-shaded solo after Cedar's statement.

All the tracks give the players ample space in which to unfold their ideas and the quality is maintained through Jordan's interesting The Highest Mountain, Down In Brazil and Sonny Rollins' St. Thomas right into the little set closer, Bleeker Street Theme. Playing time is of itself no virtue, but it is worth noting that there are 47 1/2 minutes of music in this set - which remains worthwhile and stimulating from beginning to end.

Walton and Jordan work in an area that respects a tradition but pays attention to the happenings of the day. They have for the last 20 years or so worked hard and long at expanding and developing their artistry. This LP is a reference point for all of us to dig just how far they have come since we first heard them in the 1950s. The styles are recognizably there still, but these musicians have matured to a stage where influences have faded and we hear them as the true individuals they are.

This music is already more than two years old as I write but it speaks of our times and informs those who are prepared to listen that art need not be tortured or distorted. Some of the genius values are surviving despite the madness that is a hallmark of our age. - M.G.

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## BILL WATROUS

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'Bone Straight Ahead  
Famous Door HL-101

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The album title is wholly accurate for trombonist Bill Watrous is a trombonist in the great tradition who has obviously listened to stylists before J.J. Johnson. On this unpretentious set he has the benefit of tenor saxophonist Al Cohn's presence on the first side and trumpeter Danny Stiles is along throughout. The three hornmen are backed by an admirable

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rhythm section of Hank Jones (piano), Milt Hinton (bass) and Steve Gadd (drums).

You get the flavour of Bill's ripe work on the long and slow Snafu where he plays a series of relaxed, well resolved choruses. In this kind of atmosphere Al Cohn communicates powerfully and Stiles has some warm comments to make on flugelhorn. Stiles is a player with an unusually firm command on his instrument and he pulls a few surprises here. Jones The Piano is as impeccable as ever and Brother Hinton wails a couple. The leisurely fours are led off by Stiles with suitable responses from Cohn and Watrous.

No prizes for guessing what changes Just Fiends is based on. The performance is prefaced by a lean Jones solo, then Watrous and Stiles play a clever counter line in unison. The trombonist proves his agility and range in this instance. Stiles sounds crisper and brisker on trumpet with his brassy tone and striking runs. Cohn, of course, gallops along, proving that he is a tenorman for all seasons. Hinton and Gadd also go through their paces, albeit briefly.

The Watrous blues Don't Tell Me What To Do is prefaced by a Jones piano solo. Stiles plays adventuresome stuff and some of his ideas are suitably paraphrased by Watrous. Each horn takes unaccompanied breaks in an unusual arrangement. The date is rounded out by a pair of jazz oldies, Blue Lou and Lester Leaps In (pity Cohn wasn't in on this). Lou suits both brass players and moves Stiles to produce his most consistent solo of the date. Predictably, Lester is the fastest tune of the date and everyone enjoys themselves here.

It is no wonder that producer Harry Lim mentions Bill Watrous in the same breath as the late Bill Harris for Watrous is continuing a very personal concept of the Harris tradition. He certainly impresses as a fine instrumentalist on this set. - M.G.

### JOHNNY WATSON

Hot Guitar  
 Black Diamond 4503

### PEE WEE CRAYTON

Running Wild  
 Black Diamond 4504

Frank Scott and John Harmer of J. and F. Southern Record Sales have adopted an economical and rational way of releasing top notch blues. They are presently involved in a series of blues EPs (33 1/3 RPM) which to date have featured some exceptional Tampa Red, Johnny Jones, Walter Horton, Dusty Brown, Tommy Brown, Louis Myers and Arbee Stidham material, besides the two artists presently under review. (Refer to Jim DeKoster's review in Living Blues No. 18, Autumn, 1974, p. 38). The EP concept permits the release of outstanding material without having to fill an LP with secondary cuts. It allows for selectivity.

Both "Hot Guitar" and "Running Wild"

feature superior West Coast Blues characterized by biting up front lead guitar with strong medium sized horn sections and rocking piano. Both are also varied in tempo adding much to a wider appreciation.

The Johnny "Guitar" Watson set features Eddie Jones' inspired vocals and lead guitar work. Included are Too Tired, Someone Cares For Me, I Got Eyes, Oh Baby, Don't Touch Me and The Eagle Is Back. The latter cut is exceptionally strong both lyrically and musically and is a good example of what modern electric West Coast blues is all about, or should be all about.

More is known about the Crayton material, thanks to Leadbitter and Slaven's "Blues Records 1943-1966". It again features strong lead guitar and an active horn section. Included on this set are two Vee Jay cuts recorded in Chicago in 1956 - A Frosty Night and The Telephone Is Ringing plus four Imperial cuts recorded in New Orleans in 1954 - Eyes Full Of Tears, You Know - Yeah, Runnin' Wild, and I Got News For You.

Material from both EP's is not readily available from other sources and is of superior blues quality. The sound quality for both is quite good considering the re-issue nature. They may be obtained for \$3.00 each plus 50¢ postage for one with 10¢ postage for each additional one ordered from J & F Southern Record Sales, 4501 Risinghill Road, Altadena, California 91001, U.S.A. Both are well worth the effort necessary to obtain them, especially for those who like the West Coast brand of blues. - D.L.

### BEN WEBSTER

Atmosphere For Lovers And Thieves  
 Black Lion BL-111

Almost without exception Ben Webster's European recordings made during the last eight years of his life have a smooth elegance and a romantic charm that bespeak an inner contentment. Though he experienced ups and downs on the Continent, Ben was fairly happy during those last years. He worked regularly and was always being asked to make records. His stature grew in the eyes of European audiences. His biggest sadness was to see the departure, one by one, of so many contemporaries - Rex, Hawk, Byas, Hodges etc.

This set is one of several Ben made for Alan Bates during 1965. On five tracks he is supported by the working rhythm section of Kenny Drew (piano), Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen (bass) and Alex Riel (drums). The backing on three numbers is supplied by the six-piece Arnelvd Meyer Band.

Webster sounds anything but aggressive as he floats through a delightful programme of standards, including some of his favourite tunes like Autumn Leaves, My Romance and What's New. In fact seven of the eight songs are of pre-1950 vintage with the exception of Johnny Mercer's Days Of Wine And Roses.

As Alun Morgan states in his liner, Autumn Leaves was one of Ben's finest performances for many years. It is at the sort of medium tempo in which Webster excelled, and with Drew laying down an inspiring accompaniment Ben really lets go. Easy To Love is another top-notch effort and you'll have to search hard to find a What's New of such beauty as this one. Albums of such calibre help us to recall the special magic that was Ben Webster, a tenor saxophonist who will never be replaced.

- M.G.

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## DICK WELLSTOOD

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Walkin' With Wellstood  
77 SEU 12/51

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Dick Wellstood has so completely assimilated the jazz piano tradition that, although his musical ideas are free of any indication of self-imposed style limitations and seem as fresh as tomorrow's dawn, a moldy revivalist like me can still keep right with him, digging every note. Dick's work is exceptionally well-organized and to-the-point (most of the eleven solos on this Lp cover only about three choruses, but after Wellstood has moved from gentle, out-of-tempo introduction through searing stride into forceful, medium-tempo wind-up, there seems to be nothing left to be said about the tune), showing that he knows just where he's going, whether on blues (Walkin' With Watney's), rag (American Beauty) or even a contemporary children's ditty (Rubber Duck).

Wellstood also possesses a technique capable of instantly, and apparently effortlessly realizing his conceptions. Take, for example, the unbelievable virtuoso level of the faster-than-light So In Love, where the flawlessly clean single-note left-hand line on the first chorus bridge goes by so rapidly that you'd think it was a tremolo, or the scorching Harlem licks on If Dreams Come True, and you'll realize that Wellstood is nothing less than a giant of the keyboard.

About half the numbers are medium-to-slow, balancing the program and adding a bluesy, earthy flavor to the proceedings. For these (Old Fashioned Love, Miss Otis Regrets, etc.), Dick gives you plenty of melody, but keeps you surprised with tasty choices of substitute harmonies, counter-melodies and inner voicings.

As a traditional jazz pianist, I find that after listening for a while to other ticklers, including many fine musicians whose work I greatly admire, I feel like sitting down at the 88 in my home and trying out a few things. But who wants to follow Wellstood, even in private? So I put this magnificent Lp on the turntable again...and again...

- T.W.

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## BIG JOE WILLIAMS

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Malvina My Sweet Woman  
Oldie Blues OL 2804

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Quite an interesting release. Side one is

a collection of material Big Joe participated in, back in the early 1950's, while side two is from a live club set recorded in 1973.

The ten cuts on side one were recorded on September 10, 1951, March 11, 1952, and April 5, 1952 by the Baul Recording Company of St. Louis. They are marred by poor recording and at times excessive surface noise. This is understandable, since they were dubbed for this LP from substandard acetates. This is really quite a shame, for there are some superior blues performances included here.

The backing is a variation of the following musicians. There is Big Joe on guitar, J.D. Short on either second guitar or washtub bass, Sam Fowler on harp, and Willie Ealey on piano. With Big Joe offering four vocals, one Lee Willmans offering two, Willie Ealey with two, and Sam Fowler also with two. As it turns out, the vocal parts (which by the way are all quite good), Fowler's exceptional harp work, and Big Joe's driving guitar are the only real audible elements of the various sets. The most outstanding cuts are Lee Willman's version of Sonny Boy's Early Morning Blues and the two versions of Shake A Little Boogie. The first of which is by Willie Ealey, with the second by Sam Fowler.

Side two offers nine cuts from a live solo set recorded on March 24, 1973 at the Zodiac Club in Amstelveen, Holland. On this side Joe never seems to get below excellent. It is hard driving blues all the way with Joe utilizing his own adaptation of the bottleneck technique quite extensively throughout. Included here are such blues standards as Black Rat Blues, Highway 61, and Rooster Blues. There is also a short take of Jimmy Davis' You Are My Sunshine. Who knows maybe it will get Big Joe a county sheriff's job down in Mississippi.

When considering this LP remember the poor quality of side one. Although the music is great, it requires the patience of an understanding collector to endure the shallow and noisy sound. On the other hand, the live side is characterized by both high quality and high energy blues, plus high quality sound reproduction. This will definitely be a welcome release for Big Joe's fans but if you are simply looking for an all around good set by Joe, look for his Delmark and Arhoolie material.

- D.L.

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## JOE LEE WILSON

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Livin' High Off Nickels And Dimes  
Oblivion 5

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If the big bands were still big business, Joe Lee Wilson would be a band singer to make the dancers stop in their tracks. Instead, he is looking for an audience in corner bars which book local jazz talent. Not the least of his problems in this situation is fitting in as just one musician in a group. His is the kind of voice that begs to be arranged for, that needs to rock in front of the swinging sections.

Instead, he has to compete with the obbligated tenorman Bob Ralston and side-steps the bombs of drummer Napoleon Revels.

Shunting down the bass and treble on your stereo takes the accompaniment out of the foreground, but also thins out Wilson's big baritone voice. Leaving them up gives some idea of Wilson's potential. It's You Or No One is the most satisfactory ballad, because Wilson sings it with only piano and bass behind him and then stands back while Ralston and pianist Ray McKinley solo. The faster tunes are tougher to control, and it is impossible to tell if Wilson's shouting is a stylistic or just an auditory device.

These six tracks were originally broadcast on Columbia University's WKCR-FM as part of the NY Musicians Jazz Festival. The record is available (at \$5.98) from Oblivion Records Inc., P.O. Box X, Roslyn Heights, N.Y. 11577, U.S.A.

- J.C.

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## LESTER YOUNG

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Prez In Europe  
Onyx 218

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Those who casually put down Lester Young's post-war recordings and particularly his work in the closing years of his life should listen well to this remarkable set taped on location at a Frankfurt club in 1956. Lester plays brilliantly, despite a makeshift rhythm section. In fact he is in blistering form and his long searching solo on Lester Leaps In must rank with his finest improvisations (pre or post-1940). As Dan Morganstern asks rhetorically, "Is this the music of a weak, faded, wasted man?"

On this priceless LP are to be found some of Young's favourite blowing lines - These Foolish Things, There'll Never Be Another You, Lullaby Of Birdland, Polka Dots And Moonbeams. There's a blues, too, of course - titled Lester's European Blues. And to finish off another wee take of Lester Leaps In - a delicious fragment.

Prez was a weaver of dreams - one of the great ballad players (hear the way, the masterly way, he refers to Two Sleepy People on These Foolish Things). He was the prophet who pointed the way for a whole generation of tenor players who struggled for years, in vain usually, to duplicate his unique sense of relaxation, his so soft tone, his economical lines, his perfect feel for time, swing.

How did Prez put it all together? Nobody ever really found out. It was a secret - locked in the ear, mind, hands, breathing of a man who came within a hair's breadth of being a genius. As an illustration of what Lester Young was all about I would be hard put to it to cite a better example than his flowing statement on There'll Never Be Another You (not taken frantically as on so many jazz versions, but spaced out, swung, almost secreted by Prez at a leisurely medium tempo, the sort he relished).

Funny but few people ever speak about the sensuality in Lester's playing -

they reserve that for Hodges and Webster - yet this aspect was an important ingredient of his musical appeal. There'll Never Be Another You is a pure love call, as sultry as anything the big vibrato brigade ever put down. Lester was always a very emotional player, never detached or uninvolved.

The Blues is another gem, styled as only Lester could conceive it. Morgenstern, whose notes are required reading for all, has a good phrase for Lester's art - "sophisticated simplicity". That's exactly what it was. Somehow he struck an impossibly delicate balance between sophistication and simplicity. He achieves it on this blues (playing nobody else's licks but his own).

I will agree that the recording balance is poor (what would you expect from an amateur tape recordist?) but the Young horn is where it should be - in the foreground. If you were given a nut-sized diamond in a brass setting would you quibble? Faced with Prez In Europe there is only one course of action necessary - take out your wallet and pay the man.

- M.G.

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## GEORGE BARNES

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Swing, Guitars  
Famous Door HL-100

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Nice to see George Barnes back on record. Nice to see Harry Lim heading his own label again. Barnes is a hard guitarist to classify. He came out of that Chicago scene of the 1930s but he obviously paid attention to such players as Christian and Grimes later on. If Barnes doesn't fit into any handy pigeonhole, he sure is worth listening to and this LP is a good showcase for him.

Backed by either Hank Jones or Dick Hyman (piano), Milt Hinton (bass) and Jo Jones (drums), Barnes works his winning way through a varied programme that ranges from a Django-inspired My One And Only Love to a heavy Struttin' With Some Barbecue (dig Hank Jones' updating of the old Louis classic). Barnes is a master of agility on the faster tracks but when things slow down he really lets the feeling pour out, as on Blue Again - a gem.

Actually there isn't a dud track in this set and in case you need to know before rushing out to buy the record, the other numbers are The Opener, Laughing At Life, My Honey's Loving Arms, Merchandise Mart Indians and Funk, Chicago Style.

Altogether an impressive launcher for Famous Door Records and an accomplished recital by an excellent mainstream guitarist.

- M.G.

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## LESZEK ZADLO

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Inner Silence  
PSJ Klub Plytowy Z-S-3XW-549

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To say that much European post-bop improvisation reflects the influence of

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Albert Mangelsdorff is like saying that the development of American transition-toward-free jazz has been heavily altered by Miles Davis' choice of direction - self-evident to those who listen. As Europe's premier trombonist, Mangelsdorff is obviously going to hold sway over others who share his instrument (fellow-German Ed Kroger, Stanislaw Cieslak from Poland, and American expatriate Butch Kelllem, heard here, come readily to mind) in the same degree that J.J. Johnson's influence all but inescapably pervades the thought of younger "modern" sliders Stateside. But apart from the chuckling chromatic romanticism of the horn itself, many younger Eurojazzmen seem to be emulating the Mangelsdorff small-group sound - a concept not unlike that of the mid-1960s Davis quintets, but richer, darker, and more intensely unified in its purpose.

Both ghosts are apparent here in Polish reedman Zadlo's first recording as leader. For these four titles (Vienna, February 1973) Zadlo has assembled a fully conversant ensemble in which each member listens closely to the others - Zadlo, Kelllem, electric pianist Peter Ponger, electric bassist Dick Sells, and drummer Gerhard Herrmann - all new names to me. Empathy is vital to this music, not only for its intended unity of expression, but because all the compositions wave around the two horns improvising through layers of texture and colour from the rhythm section. The material ranges from Eddie Harris' Freedom Jazz-Dance - the most easily grasped point of reference, but not one that benefits from comparison - to two originals by the saxophonist and his arrangement of a Polish folk melody.

Both horns build mainly through juxtaposition of short, chromatically sliding phrases, a method of solo form auspiciously more successful for Kelllem because his lines have an intrinsic drive the reeds lack. In Zadlo's solos I repeatedly find myself looking vainly for some spark of impetus, some point toward which his lines converge. And in spite of Herrmann's sympathetic poly-rhythms under the ensemble, I am struck by the percussionist's inability to kick in

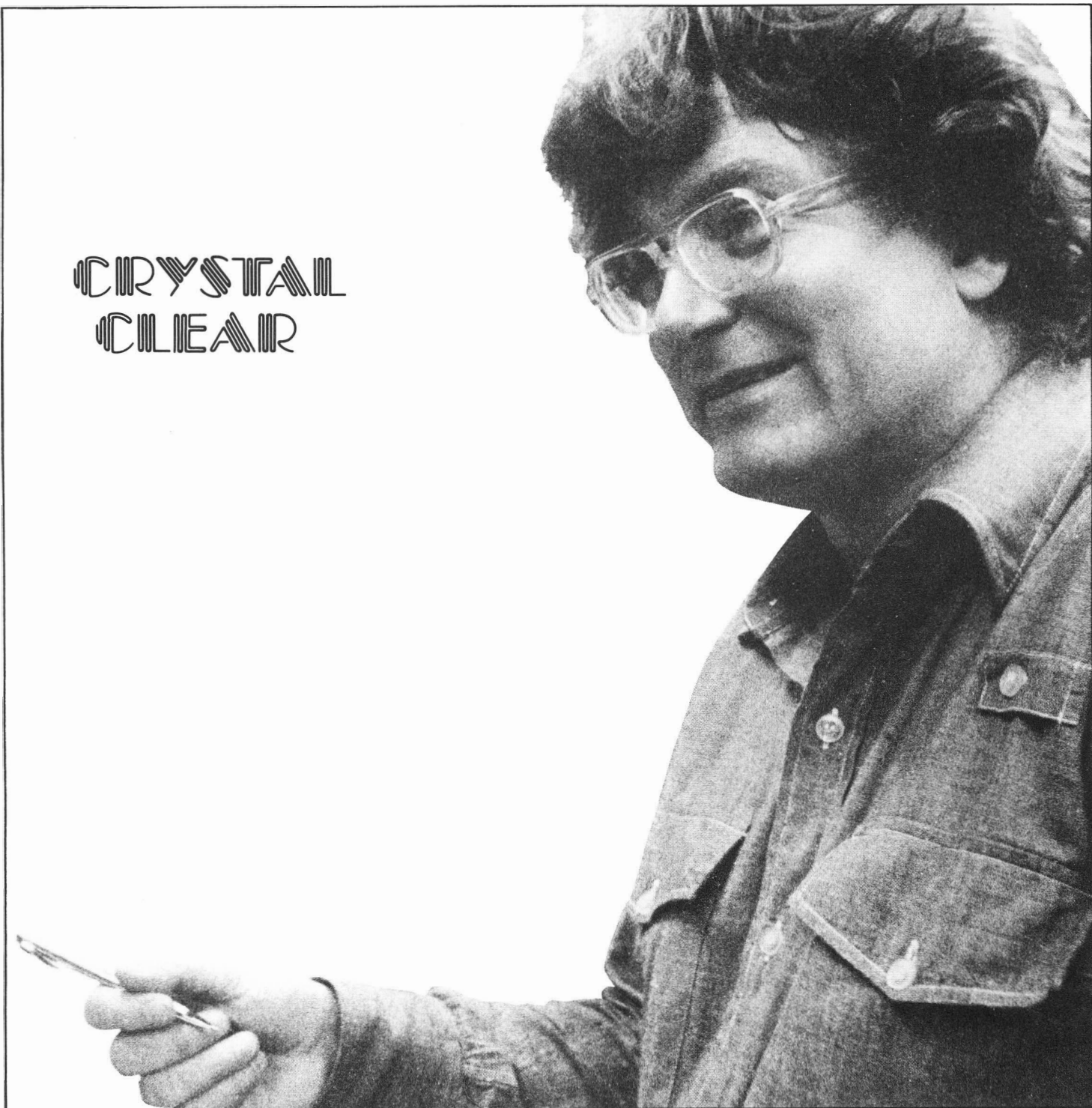
when Zadlo most needs him. The leader is a power saxophonist - particularly playing tenor more for energy than for substance - and too often finds himself creating levels of intensity that do not follow from the preceding structures or resolve into the subsequent lines. The most pertinent example here is the folk tune Oj Maluski Maluski, in whose setting he effectively inverts the structure of a composition like Ayler's Change Has Come. While "Change" moves from the folk-like melody outward by extrapolation, distillation, and selective distortion into very high energy levels, Zadlo begins "Maluski" in very abstracted peak terms and lets the power gradually spiral down into the base tune. Entropy in its full glory is a musical cul-de-sac - one out of which I hope Zadlo can find a way. By opening with a level of energy that even he (never mind the listener whose sensibilities have been well lulled by the preceding three-fourths of the album) is not prepared to cope with quite so immediately, the reedman brings himself into a problem of tension resolution of proportions that few improvisers could handle successfully. Of course, there are also the problems of reconciling "free" horn lines to the rigors of a hip but still very orthodox electric accompaniment. Again Zadlo is unprepared, and the lack of collective freedom diminishes the group's ability to sustain the power he wants. Kelllem functions all the more surely and sanely simply by accepting the limits of his own musical inclinations and not making of himself something he cannot be.

But Maluski is just one performance of four. Freedom Jazz-Dance is drab, rather fragmentary electric bebop. VIGM features some impressively inventive soprano that avoids the continuity problem Zadlo's tenor playing generates, and the title selection is a fascinatingly touching vignette for flute over textures. The album is well-produced. As for Leszek Zadlo - I expect when I next hear him that he will have either overcome his difficulties of solo form or become reconciled to living within them. I hope for the former; I fear the latter.

- B.T.

(Available from Jazz Forum Distribution Service, Box 671, A-1011, Vienna, Austria)

# CRYSTAL CLEAR



Nobody talks about Dick Wellstood as pertinently and interestingly as Dick Wellstood himself. Dick Wellstood really KNOWS Dick Wellstood and he is not afraid to picture him the way he is - Dick Wellstood is. I could well fill this whole issue with aphorisms by Richard McQueen about Richard McQueen - there are so many...at least for an unrestricted admirer like me. I dig Wellstoodiana on the piano and his prose is second only to his keyboard wizardry where this awe-stricken listener is concerned. I shall revert to this outstanding artist many times in the near future because Mr. Wellstood happens to be one of the most

creative jazzmen on the scene today and if one listens to what's going on NOW, one simply cannot leave him out. The following quotes - which I call "part 1" - are from articles in Sounds & Fury (by Dick McQueen), interviews graciously given to various journalists (by Dick McQueen) and letters addressed to the undersigned (by Dick McQueen). And then there are also quite a few sleeve notes to Wellstood albums...written by Dick McQueen. They happen to be the best liner notes to appear on Richard McQueen LPs since, as I said above, **NOBODY TALKS ABOUT DICK WELLSTOOD AS PERTINENTLY AND INTERESTINGLY AS DICK WELLSTOOD**

**HIMSELF.**

"No, I'm not bitter or disappointed in life, only very intelligent - a handicap! Less intelligent people can concentrate better on the task at hand and pour more energy into it. I have spent many years trying to become stupid."

"The whole business interests me. Jazz all the way from Joplin to, say, Chick Corea, Bill Evans or Cecil Taylor. Garner? Well, I own one Erroll Garner record and I think he's a genius. I don't listen much to him, you know, because it's absolute suicide to try and play like Erroll. It's like trying to play like Fubie Blake or Willie The Lion or Monk...some

of these people, they're so individual that it's just not on."

"I relayed your remarks about the 'beautiful Mrs. Wellstood' (of 1952) to Flo, my ex-wife. She was glad to hear the compliment. We got divorced in 1963. I re-married in 1967, to another lovely girl. When she gets old and cranky I'll trade her in for another young one. If I can afford it."

"During the fall of 1963 I worked at a little Manhattan night club called Bourbon Street. I felt very much at home there. It was MY night club, I felt, which was one reason I was amazed that it was even remotely successful. I am not successful, and so when word got out that I was working there most musicians said "Who?" and kept going next door to Jim & Andy's. Miles Davis, for instance, never paid us a visit. Neither did Nancy Wilson, Teddy Wilson, John S. Wilson, or Wilson Myers. But Monk and Don Elliott and Patti Bown and Louis Armstrong did, and that was nice. It's always nice when people are nice (When there are so many nice people who needs sons of bitches?). But we were remote, as noted above, and not too many people are remotely nice, so they left us alone and we left them alone and became only remotely successful."

"Jack Bradley - the manager of Bourbon Street - and I often differed about who was good and who wasn't and I frequently was sentenced to play shuffle rhythm while some aging jazz giant sang Hello Dolly and Jack applauded madly. But the bloodiest scenes were when Teddy Weatherford or someone came in (the names have been changed here because I'm chicken) and wanted to play the piano. I'd agree and retire to the corner with a drink. Then King Oliver would come in and want to play trumpet, but not with Teddy Weatherford. King always said that Jelly Roll and I were the only two piano players in New York and he'd be God-damned if he'd play with Teddy and why did we let a no-talent like that play anyway. So Jack would have to get rid of Teddy gracefully. Chances are Teddy would want to fight. It was lovely. Of course, it might be Freddie Keppard who came in, and he'd want Nat Jaffe on piano rather than me, and then I'd want to fight. We're all the same."

"Still at Bourbon Street: it got worse and worse. I became rehearsal pianist for amateurs. The end came one night. Ahmed (Abdul-Malik, the bass player) and I had four clarinetists sitting in. That's right, FOUR clarinetists. They sat in a semi-circle smiling happily at us. They knew they had us. I turned to them with a shudder and suggested C-Jam Blues. 'I can only play in B-flat,' said the first. 'I can only play in F,' said the second, and glared at the first. 'Please don't play anything fast', said the third. 'How about Hello My Honey, Hello My Baby, Hello My Ragtime Gal?' suggested the fourth. I fell upon them and smote them."

"Atlanta Blues: A tune I first heard in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1947. I don't know what it's about."

"Fucallia: is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Proculus of Albengue,

who in 281 A.D. enjoyed one hundred Sarmatian virgins in two weeks. I have been playing piano in bars for twenty-six years, and on this number I sound like a piano player who has been playing piano in bars for twenty-six years."

"Handful Of Keys: it used to be a magic shout piece for me. Willie Gant frequently played it in the Hollywood Cafe where I used to go in 1946 to hear pianists like Art Tatum, Marlowe Morris, Billy Taylor, Gimpy Irvis and others. I would occasionally play too, and I remember one night an astonished voice exclaiming: 'That's a white boy playin'!' God bless you, Sir, wherever you are."

I still have Dick's first records - the ones with Bob Wilber and his solos such as Raggedy Anne (1946) or If You Knew, Lewd Waters (1949) etc. - and even today I get some real pleasure out of them. However, compared to his Riverside album (with Tommy Benford) of 1954, the immense strides ahead made by the pianist, are obvious. There's so much improvement conception-, music- and execution-wise that the older records sound like the work of a pupil of the later Wellstood. But what to say of his latest albums if not that the gap and progress between THEM and the 1954 album is still immeasurably greater than the difference pointed out between the records of 1946/49 and the LP of 1954! If you are a real piano addict and want the best, you should get all of Dick's albums: "From Ragtime On" (Chiaroscuro 109), a solo album which gives an apercu of Wellstood's very wide scope stylistically and emotionally. "Dick Wellstood Alone" (Jazzology JCE-73) is another solo album, even a bit clearer recorded (giving more presence to the piano) and showing Dick more as the "stride, Blues, ragtime-influenced player" some of his admirers would like him to EXCLUSIVELY express himself. Personally I enjoy both albums to a T. Same goes for his latest one, "Walkin' With Wellstood" (77SEU 12/51) made for Doug Dobell which some consider his greatest so far. I wouldn't make a fool out of myself and contradict them...this is another absolute MUST. And I doubt that there was ever a pianist (at least among those who got on record) who caught up with Donald Lambert's very special style of stride piano as Dick shows in So In Love and the fast part of Russian Lullaby. Compare it with the four masterpieces (on "Harlem Stride Pianists", RCA, Black & White 741.118/119) by Lambert and discover how close Dick Wellstood gets to it.

"Dick Wellstood and his Famous Orchestra Featuring Kenny Davern (Chiaroscuro CR 129) is a great album by the two gentlemen mentioned - and no one else! Dick's idea and he seemed to be proud of it when he mentioned the sleeve title to me in January 1974 - during one rather exciting week in Zurich, between stops in Durban, Hamburg and London. The two artists have frequently played together in the last few years and the total empathy in their music shows it. Fast As A Bastard (one of Richard McQueen's favourite expressions) is really Duke

Ellington's Jubilee Stomp - and it goes as fast as a bastard. Once In Awhile is the Billy Butler number recorded by Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and nct the ballad by Edwards and Green bearing the same title (and which Louis confined to wax in November 1937 with a reduced line-up from the regular Luis Russell orchestra which used to accompany him in those years). Liza is the lovely composition by Eddie Condon (recorded twice under its composer's name) and not the famous Gershwin-Liza. There's another solo interpretation of So In Love and it is as wonderful as the version on "77". Kenny Davern's playing in admirable throughout.

There is another album by Dick Wellstood on Seeds 3. This time the two compatriots are backed by Gene Ramey (on six titles) and Franklin Skeete (on one) and Al McManus (drums) on all 7 tracks. I'd recommend this unhesitatingly for Dick's great playing and the fine rhythm section. This album - more than any other - shows that Dick has listened intently to "modern" pianists as well and how very well he has got the message. One hasn't heard the complete Wellstood if one hasn't caught up with his playing on this particular album. If I have reservations about recommending the LP without reservations it's because of Mr. Davern's rather bizarre playing. Some critic suggested that Kenny might have been stoned or sick on the date and that might well be so. However, my guess is that le prestigieux saxo-soprano wanted to give us HIS conception of "free playing". Just for fun. Well, fun HE may have had but since I'm just an old-fashioned fuddy-duddy who wants his music over good chord-structure and according to and respecting certain rules, I find the noise (not on all the tracks but on some... which, to me, rules out the sickness and/or sloppy-drunkenness) just a bit hard to take. Everybody should listen to it, though and decide whether he or she can take it or not.

Of course, Dick Wellstood has got on record with countless bands under various leaders such as Sidney Bechet, Bob Wilber, Roy Eldridge, Wild Bill Davison, Johnny Letman, Jack Teagarden, Leroy Parkins, Panama Francis, Gene Krupa etc. etc. Hope you hear him on all of them because Mr. Wellstood is also a very, very good band pianist.

Yes, our man is on his way UP and there's no telling who and what will or would stop him. He feels confident and, so far, has mastered every situation coming his way. Except one. There is something still bugging him. A happening where even the never-to-be perturbed Wellstood could not find an explanation. After a concert, in 1973, an enthusiastic member of the audience, rushed up, jumped on the stage, grabbed Dick's hand and screamed: "Yeah, Mary Lou!" This left even the always quick-minded Mr. Richard McQueen Wellstood speechless and bewildered. He still scratches his head, wondering....

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JOHNNY SIMMEN

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# JAZZ LITERATURE

## COLTRANE

a biography by C.O. Simpkins, M.D.  
Herndon House, New York, 1975 \$ 8.95

This book is the second study of John Coltrane to appear in 1975 and obviously invites comparison with the earlier work, "Chasin' The Trane" by J.C. Thomas (reviewed in Coda, September 1975, pp. 33-34). While Thomas focused most intently on Trane's personal life and filled in details which, for all their frequent obscurity and relative irrelevance, were fascinating elements in achieving a definitive gestalt impression of the man, Simpkins' attempts to balance his work by lavishing rather more attention on Trane's career and music, as well as presenting similar personal details. The two books necessarily overlap but go over the same material in different ways, and while Thomas may present more personal detail, Simpkins' attention to the man's musical ideas seems to present a more satisfactorily rounded portrait of Coltrane. Nevertheless precise details of Coltrane's career pattern are still rather vague and no careful analysis of his musical legacy is presented. For example, there is still no mention of the profoundly interesting airchecks surviving from Coltrane's work with Dizzy Gillespie in 1951; no mention of whether or not Coltrane is featured on his earliest recordings with Dizzy's big band, with Earl Bostic, or with Johnny Hodges (I have heard most of these records and have found no solos); and in fact no effort whatsoever to even list Coltrane's known recordings, let alone document them in discographical detail. Readers interested in precise documentation of Coltrane's musical career and legacy will have to look elsewhere, and happily there is at least one manuscript in preparation on Coltrane which promises to do just this. Perhaps when it appears, if taken together with Simpkins' and Thomas' efforts, a full discussion of the man and his music will be available at long last, even though in three separate places.

What Simpkins succeeds in doing is evoking a portrait of Coltrane and his music which, despite its impressionistic qualities, seems not only valid but vital. However it is difficult to determine how much of the quality of this portrait is due to Simpkins and how much is due to extensive quotes he uses, which occasionally involve the reprinting of entire articles, interviews, and reviews on Coltrane and his music. Since many of these articles etc. are difficult to acquire elsewhere, their reappearance here is certainly helpful, but in places they almost lend an aura of providing an anthology rather than a series of relevant quotes. Simpkins also

has a stylistic tendency to lapse into rather amateurish "concrete poetry"; apparently his descriptive powers in prose form occasionally desert him when he gets too close to certain concepts. This technique might be a valid form of self-expression, but such self-indulgence is of questionable taste even in an impressionistic biography. In addition, Simpkins, who is black, seems compelled to insert occasional polemics of racial indignation and black pride, which unquestionably have immediate relevancy but may distort the picture somewhat: Simpkins seems to stress this without pointing out the significance of Coltrane's overwhelming transcendence into universal spiritual expressionism.

Herndon House is an enigmatic publisher. At this writing I understand that, while the book is available in New York City bookstores, it is difficult to obtain elsewhere, and efforts by dealers, distributors, and libraries to obtain copies have proven futile. Although they have put out a handsome product, most of the photos are of poor quality, and there are numerous typos and mistakes that a little careful editing would easily have corrected. Other errors are presumably Simpkins' own.

Nevertheless this book is unquestionably an essential addition to the library of anyone interested in Coltrane, not only for the collection of articles and quotes, but for the many stories and insights Simpkins provides as the fruits of his original research and obvious love for the musical and spiritual legacy which that beautiful human being John Coltrane has given us. - Vladimir Simosko

## COLTRANE

by C.O. Simpkins  
M. D. Herndon House Publishers (549  
Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027),  
1975; 287 pp. \$8.95

## CHASIN' THE TRANE

Chasin' The Trane: The Music and Mystique of John Coltrane  
by J.C. Thomas  
Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York,  
252 pp. \$7.95

After reading these two biographies of John Coltrane, the saxophonist of overwhelming improvisational genius who died in 1967 at age 40, I began to wonder if a definitive work on his life and music can be written by one individual. The two works at hand make for interesting perusal but have more appeal as contrasts in that they actually are let-downs for the careful and analytical reader. Neither book resembles the other, not that it is expected



that they would, but sometimes one gets the feeling that after reading these two books about the same person one knows less about that person than before the books were begun. I state this to bring attention to the serious discrepancies between the two books concerning details each author seemed to write about with authority. Immediately you wish to know who are the anonymously interviewed sources and want furthermore to know if stories, legends and rumours of the kind that surround figures like Coltrane were thoroughly investigated. Why is it that in too many scattered instances we get the same person doing one thing according to one author and something else according to the other when the same experience is involved?

Scholars and fans alike should be making close readings of the innovators of Jazz if not the other forms of Black music. J.C. Thomas' "Chasin' the Trane: The Music and Mystique of John Coltrane" and C. O. Simpkins' "Coltrane: A Biography" are by themselves valiant contributions attempted that will support the growing body of literature about Jazz. A third view of Coltrane is being prepared by Bill Cole, author of "Miles Davis: A Musical Biography". Already there's been some mud-slinging between factions in the corners of each Coltrane biographer: most of it is racial in nature. An interviewer of Simpkins on a New York Black television program called his book "the only legitimate biography," because Simpkins is an Afro-American and Thomas, as a descendant of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, it is felt cannot effectively write about Black music or its practitioners. Another reason for the tension caused by these two books is that Simpkins' book, which was to be published by Emerson Hall Publishers, a small Black house, was further delayed two months from its projected March, 1975 release while Doubleday put Thomas' out in April. The point of "legitimacy" becomes trite with the kinds of problems the reader will encounter when the reader will have no means of verifying fact from fiction. Each approach to Coltrane is certainly not like the other. Thomas is a writer by trade with one out-of-print novel to his credit. He was also a Stan Kenton drummer in the sixties and

has the advantage of having met Coltrane and of being a long-time friend of Franklin Bower, one of two boyhood chums Coltrane came to Philadelphia with after graduating from high school in High Point, North Carolina. Simpkins, who turned twenty a month after Coltrane's death, has a deep love of his music and happens to be a physician. He has gone on record as having not had the chance to hear Coltrane in live performance.

White biographers of Afro-American artists ruffle feathers because Blacks feel that their insights into the social and psychological experiences are limited by their being outside of that experience. And there is an understandable resentment that whites continually find interested publishers for studies of the Afro-American experience that Blacks themselves have been rejected for. They add to the large number of whites doing biographies of Black musicians, notably Stanley Dance for Ellington and lately Earl Hines, William Bartlett Haas for William Grant Still, Chris Albertson for Bessie Smith and Tom Stoddard on Pops Foster. Of course, quite a few musicians have written or supervised the writing of their autobiographies, like Willie "the Lion" Smith, Mingus, Hawes, and Babs Gonzales, but only Cole, Carmen Moore and A.B. Spellman stand out as Black authors of biographies of Black musicians since the forties. What Afro-Americans will have to do is take Blacks as seriously as they take white writers of Black culture. When the latter fails, what Blacks will have to do is what Simpkins did, publish the book himself. Fortunately for his enterprise the book is in demand.

What both books lack is the depth of musical analysis I am anticipating Cole will do with his project. His book on Davis is a landmark despite two racist reviews in the same issue of *Down Beat* (March 13, 1975) which attacked petty errors and showed annoyance at Cole's decidedly Afro-American diction and his insistence upon demanding a Black perspective on Miles Davis; these remarks had no real cultural analytical merit. But any Black writing about the Black experience, particularly music, which has been the domain of white writers, will have to expect this kind of jealous and defensive reaction. In "Miles Davis" Cole discussed his subject as an individual, then as a stylist, using several solos he himself transcribed to illustrate what has been characteristic of Davis in nuance and rhythm since 1949. His only drawback was in failing to interview the admittedly elusive trumpeter. Nevertheless we hope for the same kind of expertise in his Coltrane project.

With Thomas and Simpkins the latter was handicapped by age in being legally unable to enter a jazz club during most of Coltrane's career. Perhaps this is cause for alarm but even Einstein never met Gluck before writing his biography. What is important is that a biographer have some feeling for the subject and his/her times, and in respective fashions Thomas and Simpkins a bit better do. Both hold in high regard Coltrane's work and what

he stood for in principle. They tried to digest what published information existed and interviewed members of Coltrane's family and musical associates. Thomas' book includes a few comments by young people who loved his music from middle America; these were taken from letters Thomas solicited in newspapers for memorabilia. Thomas' book does not impress me with getting to the "music and mystique" of Coltrane, something that Simpkins' rather romantic and sentimental writing and redundant phrases seems to accomplish a shade better. Simpkins also did not spare expletives as Thomas did; "Chasin' the Trane" might find itself popular with juvenile readers for this reason, yet the question arises about the hip language Simpkins occasionally gives Coltrane. Neither satisfactorily tackles the matter of "mystique". When mystique is ascribed to anyone something of their personality and their purpose and goals in life lingers on after death. While alive they typify an indescribable but quintessential level of search and achievement, their work becomes its own aesthetic. When they die their spiritual essence often pervades more than the idiom in which they worked. Both Thomas and Simpkins convey some grasp of Coltrane's "mystical" personality as he lived but Thomas does draw a picture of him that is larger than life, an easy pitfall when some try to describe such a powerful innovator. However, both could have added to the description of Coltrane the mystic by following the recorded development of Naima and My Favorite Things as each version reflects turbulence, rhythmic consciousness and melodic extensions in the life and concerns of the saxophonist. Part of the mystique is in such music and a writer must be careful to convey descriptions of music's plasticity without coming off as pretentious. Then, the mystique surrounding John Coltrane moves into his level as Sri Rama Ohnedaruth; on this level significant points are never raised: for example, what of statements by some musicians that Coltrane had to die because of the energy and stamina expended during his playing? Why did Jazz seem to be in atrophy between 1967 and 1970? What of Coltrane affected Alice Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders as keepers of the flame and isn't Alice Coltrane's string music a direct residual of this? What of Elvin Jones and his Grossman-Liebman tenorists who tried to speak the Coltrane language? What of McCoy Tyner's struggles since the late sixties and the spark behind his music in the seventies? Of Shepp's African bent? And finally, how does the Santana-McLaughlin version of A Love Supreme relate to this? Perhaps a treatise on these questions would have been excessive but no serious biography of John Coltrane can afford to omit discussion of the influences the man left behind if he is truly to be considered a "mystic".

Looking again at the books, Thomas' is "literary" while Simpkins on the surface appears the more scholarly; their approaches have a uniqueness that caves in under comparative scrutiny. Thomas' narrative cites few sources while Simp-

kins used numerous footnotes and was handcuffed by some. The discrepancies and errors in the books are annoying and it might be nit-licking to call attention to them. But biography is supposed to be a form of scholarship and future researchers and writers might be better prepared.

For openers Thomas does not mention the C-melody saxophone in his informative discussion of the history of saxophones but he does mention it later. According to interviews with Sanders himself he was never asked to join the Coltrane group as Thomas says; Trane simply told him where they were playing next. Thomas especially could have woven into his narrative Elvin Jones' challenge that Rashied Ali's "Eastern drumming" was no more "eastern" than New York, for nowhere does he mention Ali's predilection for this as it affected the group's music. Simpkins attempts to describe this but actually bungles it before he started by apparently not knowing the story behind the two recorded masters of "Ascension" where Jones' drumming is typically straightforward on the first (which was issued for a while) and rhythmically buoyant and less definite in beat on the second, prefiguring the kind of airy percussive style and rhythmic texture Coltrane would find attractive in Ali later in 1965. Amiri Baraka even pointed this out in his *Down Beat* column, "Apple Cores", in 1966, and stated that this second version was, as many feel, superior. If Simpkins were really following Coltrane's career how could he have missed this? Obviously he didn't contact Bob Thiele who produced all of Coltrane's Impulse releases.

Then, those discrepancies. Simpkins states that Coltrane left the Ornstein music school in Philadelphia right after entering it and studied only at Granoff's studios; but Thomas is more precise on this in pointing out that Coltrane studied at Ornstein in the forties and started Granoff in 1951, and he was able to interview Coltrane's teachers at both schools. Simpkins says Coltrane began using drugs in the late forties and turned to alcohol during attempts to withdraw; Thomas states that Coltrane became addicted after leaving Earl Bostic and before joining Johnny Hodges in 1953, drinking heavily from 1946 usually to combat severe toothaches. To this it can be said that Coltrane may have been a user long before his addiction. Simpkins claims that Trane was stranded in Los Angeles and that Dolphy paid his fare back to Philadelphia in 1952; Thomas paraphrases Trane's own quote of knowing Dolphy since 1954 days with Hodges, a detail echoed by Tepperman and Simosko in their book on Dolphy. Thomas states that in early spring, 1957, Coltrane stopped smoking, drinking and taking drugs and gives an account of his isolation in his mother's house in Philadelphia for nearly a week, kicking his habit. This was part of his "spiritual awakening" mentioned in his notes for "A Love Supreme", yet Coltrane was believed by Ray Copeland to be nodding during the summer taping of *Well, You Needn't* for "Monk's Music"; Copeland is anonymously quoted in Thomas' text. What is reliable?



To indicate how different people see the human body and the saxophone Thomas mentions Bostic as saying Coltrane had fingers longer than the average sax player; Simpkins stated Coltrane had the "long fingers of a born saxophonist." Now, watch this. Neither agrees with the year of Coltrane's first job. Thomas claims Brower, Coltrane and James Kinzer left High Point on June 11, 1943 and Simpkins insists that all left on January 11, 1944 on the 10:30 pm train for Philadelphia; an investigation of this proves Thomas to be correct. Thomas says Calvin Massey, the late trumpeter-composer-arranger from Philadelphia, first heard Coltrane while walking down a side street in Philadelphia and Coltrane was rehearsing with the Heath brothers' band in a garage; Simpkins claims Massey was walking down Broad Street in the same city and followed sounds to a ballroom where Joe Webb's band was playing. Thomas claims Cleanhead Vinson wanted Coltrane so bad for his group that he offered to buy him a tenor sax; but Simpkins takes a first-person statement from a draft he fails to annotate in which Trane claims he bought his first tenor when going with Vinson. Coltrane is then quoted in an interview in Simpkins' book that he bought a soprano in 1960, not 1959 with Eddie Jefferson and James Moody who drove him to the Selmar factory as Thomas insists.

The Simpkins book, probably because it was self-published, suffers from poor editing, misspellings and a careless manuscript. Simpkins does not know the geography of Philadelphia, gets a few record dates for Columbia confused with Prestige's catalog, has questionably long digressions on Charlie Parker and Sun Ra, calls Metronome a British jazz magazine, confuses the Frank Kofsky interview with Coltrane as a 1962 event but later says it occurred in 1966, its actual date. This entire interview, by the way, which can be read in Kofsky's "Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music", was reprinted, and Kofsky is known as one who tries to steer comments into a Marxist frame of reference. Simpkins also didn't realize that Living Space (1966) featured Alice Coltrane and son Oran dubbed into the track in 1973 (see the notes to "Infinity"). It seems that Simpkins limited his interviewed subjects to Blacks, the number of whites listed in his acknowledgements can be counted on one hand and do include Zita Carno, whose famous Jazz Review discussion of Coltrane's style he had the insight to reproduce in his appendix, Steve Kuhn, the first pianist with Coltrane's quartet and Joe Termini, co-owner of the Five Spot and the Jazz Gallery. Bob Thiele is not mentioned; neither is Father Norman O'Connor who gave the introduction to Coltrane's 1963 performance at Newport; Pepper Adams, a sideman with Coltrane on more than one occasion in the fifties; or any of the people who knew Coltrane and either recorded him or interviewed him in Europe.

Simpkins did use invaluable quotes from Melody Maker, which is a British music newspaper. But he used this and Down Beat without investigating Jazz Jour-

nal, Jazz Monthly. Coda, Jazz, Change and several others. Thomas likewise, though he did refer to mention of Coltrane in American publications. A bibliography of John Coltrane on the level of Cole's for Davis is needed. All of Simpkins' discography is within his text and there are huge gaps; Thomas listed his separately and it is extensive, covering all of Coltrane's American releases as leader and sideman on Capitol, Prestige, Savoy, Columbia, Impulse and a few minor labels. Serious discographers would prefer "Coltrane Time" listed under its original "Hard Driving Jazz" title as Cecil Taylor's date. By 1973 Columbia had issued old Miles Davis tracks and pirated issues on the Ozone and Session labels taken from 1962 and 1965 broadcasts from Birdland and The Half Note were available in some East Coast shops and are still available through some mail-order houses. The Swedish concerts issued in Europe as a six-volume set, and the Paris concert of 1965 issued in Japan were also available by mail. None of these recordings are even alluded to by either author. Yet, as thorough as Thomas' listing is he apparently overlooked a date Coltrane did with the Gay Crosse band in 1952; Simpkins mentioned this one.

Simpkins' treatment of the 1964 through 1966 period of the Coltrane group's development is sympathetic in attempting to capture the spirit of Coltrane's belief in his musical mission against the reaction of his audience. But no serious biography should compell a reader to backtrack on the writer's sources and explain the misinformation encountered. These books are worth reading, but not closely.

- Ron Welburn

## RAGTIME RARITIES

selected and with an introduction by  
Trebtor Jay Tichnenor  
Dover Publications \$6.95

Even a long-standing and omnivorous collector of ragtime sheet music is unlikely to have unearthed more than a handful of the 63 gems collected with faultless taste and reproduced (with covers) in this major and essential folio. Introduced with an entertaining, fact-filled essay that focuses the incredible variety of styles represented by the tunes into a coherent perspective of the turn-of-the-century publishing scene, the book is a model of quality.

Readers of "They All Played Ragtime", still the definitive ragtime history, will recognize several composers whose works were described therein but have hitherto been unavailable commercially, including Mike Bernard, (whose The Stinging Bee is reprinted here), Blind Boone (both his rag medleys), and Thomas E. Broady (all three compositions). Treb's main thrust, however, is in presenting, usually for the first time since original issue, totally-forgotten masterpieces, utilizing the entire ragtime spectrum from lightly syncopated cake-walks to straight-ahead stompers, making a bal-

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anced, fun-to-play program that keeps you right at the keyboard; you'll see what I mean as you discover for yourself the unjustly-neglected merits of solos like Sweet Pickles by Theron C. Bennett, Jinx Rag by Lucian Porter Gibson and The Queen Rag by Floyd Willis, to name just a few.

Although Treb does not attempt to cover Harlem stride or novelty piano, and avoids duplicating the now-widely available Joplin, Scott and Lamb material, he still offers a broad repertoire that any professional ragtimer would be proud to claim, with such top-drawer applause-getters as H.H. McSkimming's intricate Felix Rag, E. Philip Severin's driving Jungle Time and Robert J. O'Brien's raggedy The Rag Pickers Rag. Parlor pianists and ragtime neophytes can purchase with confidence, however, as there is plenty of good stuff here that can be mastered relatively easily, especially the cakewalks - Alabama Dream by George D. Bernard, Impecunious Davis by Kerry Mills, "Doc" Brown's Cake Walk by Charles L. Johnson, and several others.

I suppose that would-be ticklers should first acquire the famous classics before investing in the obscurities. This is a wonderful volume, however - a fantastic bargain that belongs in the library of anyone claiming to be a ragtime pianist. Besides, now that these marvelous works are again in general distribution, it is safe to predict that a number of them will accede to their deserved position among those "famous classics". Unqualifiedly recommended.

- Tex Wyndham

# LEROY COOPER



Sitting in a Chinese restaurant on New York's Eighth Avenue, a handful of Ray Charles bandmen were discussing the merits of baritone saxophonists. One of the trombonists looked over at Leroy Cooper and indicated his approval. "Now that Carney's gone, really it's between Cooper and 'Poopsie' (Charlie Fowlkes). And when Cooper plays, he really sits on those notes."

The rotund Texan with the stylish sideburns smiled modestly and went on with his shrimp chow mein. After 18 years in and out of the Ray Charles organisation, huffing and puffing in the baritone chair, he has got used to the com-

pliments that come his way. In the army where, "instead of a rifle, I had a baritone sitting by my bunk", he had to march four or five miles to the railway station carrying his horn to play whenever a contingent was going overseas. Not surprisingly, the instrument began to feel "like a toothpick" to him, and he has been playing it with comparable agility ever since.

"Strength helps because it's a big ball to field," he admitted. "To really do it properly, to fill that horn, I believe you've got to be of some size, although there are exceptions to all rules. Some little guys are terrific."

Cooper qualifies in the size depart-

ment, and he also qualifies in the field of human relations. Since 1969, he has doubled as bandleader for Charles and is one of the few liked "straw-bosses" in the field, a tribute to his philosophical approach to situations. If he has any complaints, it doesn't show. "You can really get what you want, musically speaking, with this band," he said.

In common with many of the noted musicians who are constantly in and out of the Ray Charles fold, he derives compensation from the music itself when times are tough. "There's no other artist out there can really get down with the blues like this man. Some nights - oh, I'll be depressed, being away from home and so forth - and he might go into a blues and I catch myself screaming. You feel it and it gets to you. James Clay sits next to me in the tenor saxophone chair and he always says, 'Man, this cat can play the blues, can't he?' Everybody can't play the blues; it's a different thing. You've got to really get on to it and feel it. I mean you have your hip 'Uptown' blues and so forth that academic-wise is very hip - that's very good for the classroom. But I'm talking about coming from the heart, really feeling and getting into somebody. And during times of domestic turmoil, it's necessary to know that somebody else has been through these things and you're not left alone. It does a lot for you."

Leroy Cooper was born in Dallas, Texas, and won his spurs on the road with the Tulsa, Oklahoma-based Ernie Fields band, in the Army and in Dallas nightclubs. In college his fellow students included saxophonists Leo Wright and James Clay, and in the Fields band, trombonist Benny Powell and trumpeter Walter Miller. The band played music written by J.J. Johnson, and former sidemen included Yusef Lateef, Julius Watkins and Miles Davis. Cooper made the switch from tenor to baritone in that band, helped by the lead alto man, Harold "Geezil" Minerve, now with the Ellington Orchestra. After two years, Cooper joined the army where his comrades included Tommy Flanagan and Pepper Adams.

As a youngster, Cooper led his own trio in the church under the name of "Little Leroy and his Golden Saxophone", and it was there that his realisation grew concerning the extra-musical advantages of being in the spotlight. "We were only playing church tunes, but it knocked me out because it made me popular back then. I was always overweight and to be able to do something that people would accept and everything, it knocked me out. My first girl-friends came through music and everything, so wow, I really dug that!"

Valerie Wilmer: That seems to be one of the reasons a lot of people got into music....

**Leroy Cooper:** It could be because seemingly the musicians had everything wrapped up.

**V.W.:** I've heard people say that that was like a fallacy.

**L.C.:** Sure, it is. You keep dabbling with music, you mess around and fall in love with it. It's been my wife for quite



some time. That's the reason there really wasn't space for, I imagine, other things in my life. But "I can see clearly now" - I have a place for my music and my lady, and I feel very good about it. I have no weeds in my garden, nothing but flowers!

**V.W.:** Some people actually use the road as a refuge, don't they? What is it they're trying to get away from?

**L.C.:** A lot of times they're unhappy with their married life. They're happy to get out and be free. Then a lot of people go back to that old thing about musicians being so popular with the ladies and so forth, and this gives them a chance to really be big people again. Which is childish, but this is where some people are coming from. And when guys get a certain age they always like to be proving something because, let's face it, time is running out for him so he's really got to prove to himself and everybody else that he's still just as great as he was when he was 19 or something. That middle-aged thing is comical, when they can't face reality.

But I think my road thing, eventually it's going to come to an end because I'm a home-body, really. I dig the same set, that thing of doing the same thing every day and so forth. I'm just into that.

**V.W.:** Do you think that trying to prove something and so on is more common to musicians or do you think all men are the same way?

**L.C.:** I believe all men feel like that. I guess that brings on that old man-young girl thing. I mean I listen to guys talk and they say, "I had me a girl 19 years old and she told me I was just as great as any young guy." Well, boy, he's very happy to hear that, but he's a fool. How can he compete with a guy that age? But, long as he hears that stuff, it's music to

his ears. It boosts his ego.

**V.W.:** The music scene is a kind of unnatural situation in some ways with the number of women that are around, isn't it?

**L.C.:** Yes, sure.

**V.W.:** But some people are only too happy to get off the road, aren't they?

**L.C.:** Really. Well, I guess you have to search until you find the type lady that you would really like to be with. That's what makes it so hard for some guys. Like, at this point I only dig relationships. That one-night stand thing is a drag because you don't really know a person and you can't get into a thing. Just that physical part of a relationship is not complete. It keeps me unhappy because I have to have that completeness, although everybody doesn't need this same thing.

**V.W.:** Do you think this is why some people come off the road, because of a woman?

**L.C.:** Sure - if they would admit it! Me, I've found what I've been looking for for all these years. I used to always try to fight situations with variety. If I was getting too close to a certain person, I would try to look elsewhere and try to really be running, but I always know that if you keep jumping from flower to flower, eventually you're going to grab one that the nectar's sweeter and you're going to stay. And even me it happened to, and I don't want to turn it loose.

**V.W.:** Musicians, it seems to me, often express almost a hatred for the women that they feel are going to stop them doing what they want to do.

**L.C.:** That's always the outside. The guy that's involved, he will let the lady take the blame for it, but she wasn't that powerful. He had eyes to do whatever she said, anyway!

**V.W.:** I've often wondered whether it

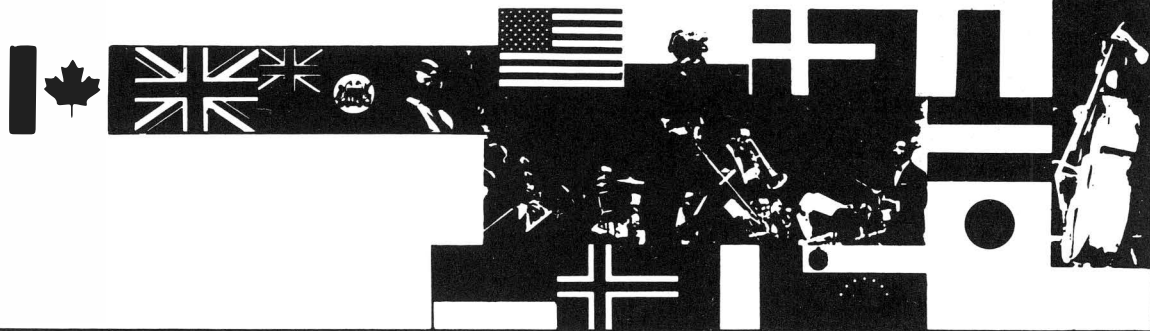
really is possible to make this music and live in a happy home situation - to be really dynamic in the music and lead a normal life. Do you think that's possible?

**L.C.:** I've never experienced it, but I certainly would like to try. Looks like there should be a lot of happiness. But it's a funny thing, people are never satisfied. Guys that haven't made it in town always wonder what's out on the road. They say, "Man, I bet you guys really have a good time," "Wow, you meet a lot of people, don't you?" And then on the other hand, we be saying, "Oh, man, I'd I'd love to be home, man where I could just be with the family and enjoy myself." And then a lot of people when they make that home scene, they get restless and they have to get back out there. I've heard some guys say they'll be off the road and they catch themselves going to the airport, watching the airplanes. But I believe that if you get satisfied and run into what you're looking for, that will take care of all those things.

I heard (drummer) Jo Jones talking to (trombonist Henry) Coker at the airport one time. He said, "Man, I sure would like to go back to Kansas City, just for a week." He said, "Man, I've got my lady there makes the best pork chops, biscuits, gravy and so forth." Now this is on his mind. He would like to go all the way back there for a meal of his choice, then he's cool. It sounds simple and it sounds like a lie and everything, but deep down it really happens. I have thought differently and on occasions I have been happy to go back on the road and so forth, but the two people involved - that's what makes the difference.

**INTERVIEW & PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY VALERIE WILMER**

# around the world



## TORONTO

Undoubtedly the Toronto jazz highlight of January was the week-long CJRT benefit at Basin Street, but following close on its heels was a series of concerts by the Art Ensemble of Chicago, who did one gig out at York University and came downtown for three more hastily-booked concerts at Toronto Workshop Productions. These proved that it would be both a great pleasure and an invaluable musical education to be able to hear the Art Ensemble every day...Roscoe Mitchell was back in town a month later to play with Musica Elettronica Viva (Richard Teitelbaum, Frederick Rzewski, Garrett List) at Walter Hall, University of Toronto, sharing the bill with Salvatore Martirano and Steve Reich. Teitelbaum also joined John Cage in a concert at York University on February 26...What could have been the jazz highlight of February came and went unobtrusively at the Mother Necessity Jazz Workshop on February 9 and 10. In front of the scanty audiences that showed up, Kenny Wheeler recorded an album for the C.B.C. Wheeler last appeared in Toronto as part of Anthony Braxton's quartet and such good company was sorely missed this time around. Wheeler had written some very pretty tunes, and is a prodigious improviser on trumpet and flugelhorn, but the band was nowhere. Art Ellefson on tenor blew fluid bebop scales for solos, the pianist and the bassist soloed eagerly, but the gig was all paid for, the audience was optional and the main musical goal was to record a take without fluffs for the record. This went on endlessly both nights until, the last thing on Tuesday, Wheeler stood up, blew a fiery whirlwind of a solo out of his flugelhorn, and immediately sat down, looking thoroughly ashamed to have shown up his fellow musicians and to be taking part in such an endeavour. With different accompanists this would not have been a problem and it hurts to think how good this session might have been.

The Mother Necessity Jazz Workshop is an entity one wishes success. It presents some of Toronto's best jazz players in a benevolent atmosphere, to good (although so far, rather sparse) audiences. The obvious love that has gone into its creation - and the lack of a liquor licence - contributes to a sort of church basement-folk-club atmosphere that, compared with the shouting drunks and gossiping dinner parties of other jazz

clubs, does not serve the music at all badly. Appearing there recently have been Mike Malone, Sam Noto, Terry King, Ed Bickert, Howie Silverman, Herbie Spanier, George McFetridge and Ted Moses in a double piano sextet, Rick Stepton, Bruce Cassidy, the Shelley Berger Septet, Alvin Pall, Bernie Senensky, and Kithara...Buddy Tate began a two-week stint at Basin Street on the same Monday that his old accompanist Sadik Hakim began a week's stay at George's Spaghetti House. Dick Wellstood also visited Basin Street early in March...The Boss Brass, under Rob McConnell's direction, played to full houses for two weeks at Basin Street. The high-priced aggregation of studio musicians also recorded an album at Eastern Sound, their first truly representative example of their music. McConnell is still looking for a suitable home for his tape, produced under the auspices of the C.B.C...Blues singer Carol Leigh sang with the Climax Jazz Band at D.J.'s February 23 to 28. The CJB will be playing in Vancouver at the Vancouver Hot Jazz Society (36 E. Broadway) May 27, en route to the Sacramento Jazz Festival, which is happening May 28 to 31. They will also play in Coronation Park, Oakville June 5 and 6... At A Space, Dollar Brand gave three solo concerts February 21 and 22, and Anthony Braxton played with Richard Teitelbaum and Frederick Rzewski March 6 and 7. The CCMC Music Gallery, 30 St. Patrick Street (368-5975) has been hosting classes of school children, holding workshops in instrument-building and dance improvisation, and having open music sessions most weekday afternoons. Besides the regular CCMC concerts, there will be other concerts April 3, 17, and May 1, by guest artists to be announced.

At presstime final details were still being worked out for the two week jazz package heading for Europe this summer. It definitely leaves Toronto July 4 and will take in the Montreux Festival from July 5-10. From there the tour heads for Nice and one week of that festival. Travelling with the package and appearing at both festivals will be the all-star group assembled by Jim Galloway which features Cat Anderson, Buddy Tate and Jay McShann. Dan Matri and Paul Rimstead complete the group. Full information, including the cost, should be available by the time you read this. You can obtain brochures at the Jazz and Blues Record Centre or by phoning Brotherton's Travel Agency at 225-1151.

Jazz will be a part of the Festival concert series at Stratford, Ontario. On July 5 Oscar Peterson will open the Monday evening series, followed by Cleo Laine and John Dankworth, July 12, Chuck Mangione on July 19, and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band on July 26.

Calgary...the city that gave us Wilf Carter was host to Louisiana Red and Peg Leg Sam on February 14 and 15. They played at the Parachute Center for Cultural Affairs, which has also presented new music concerts by Leo Smith, Anthony Braxton, Marshalore and others, including local musicians Eugene Chadbourne, Peter Moller, Randy Hutton, Clive Robertson, George Lyons and Joe Sindendonk. March saw performances by three members of the Toronto-based Canadian Creative Music Collective: Larry Dubin, Bill Smith and Michael Snow.

- David Lee

## THE SCENE

**ALBERT'S HALL, THE BRUNSWICK**  
481 Bloor Street West  
Monday-Wednesday - Kid Bastien  
Thursday-Saturday - Jim Abercrombie  
**BASIN STREET - 180 Queen St. W.**  
April 5 - 17 - Olive Brown  
**BOURBON STREET - 180 Queen St. W.**  
March 29 - April 10 - Bobby Hackett, Rob McConnell, Carol Britto, Dave Young, Howie Reay.  
April 12 - 24 - Frank Rosolino, Ed Bickert, Don Thompson, Terry Clarke  
April 28 - May 8 - Don Menza, Bernie Senensky, Michel Donato, Marty Morell  
**CHEZ MOI - 30 Hayden Street**  
Silverleaf Jazzmen - Saturday afternoons  
**CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE**  
519 Church Street  
Silverleaf Jazzmen - Friday nights  
**D.J.'s BAR - Hydro Building - University & College**  
Climax Jazz Band - six nights a week  
**EXECUTIVE RESTAURANT**  
254 Eglinton Avenue East  
Saturdays 2 - 6 p.m. John Dela Trio  
**EL MOCAMBO - 464 Spadina Avenue**  
April 5 - 10 - Willie Dixon  
April 12 - 17 - Downchild Blues Band  
**COLONIAL TAVERN - 201 Yonge St.**  
April 19 - 24 - Dizzy Gillespie  
April 26-May 1 - James Cotton  
**GEORGE'S SPAGHETTI HOUSE**  
290 Dundas Street East  
April 5-10 - Moe Koffman  
12-17 - Bernie Senensky  
19-24 - Brian Browne

April 26 - May 1 - Moe Koffman

May 3-8 - Alvin Pall

10-15 - Ian McDougall

17-22 - Guido Basso

24-29 - Moe Koffman

INN ON THE PARK - Leslie & Eglinton

Saturday matinee

MALLONEY'S - 85 Grenville Street

Saturday afternoons - Climax Jazz Band

MOTHER NECESSITY JAZZ WORKSHOP

14 Queen Street East

April 6-7 - China

8-10 - Gary Williamson

15-17 - Ted Moses

20-21 - John Swan

22-24 - Mike Malone

27, 28 - Marty Morell/Gary Morgan

29 - May 1 - Dave McMurdo

THE MUSIC GALLERY - 30 St. Patrick St.

phone 368-5975 - concerts every Tuesday,

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CCMC plus others to be announced.

Saturday afternoons 3-6 p.m. - Broomer,

Smith, Dubin, Coles.

Thursday & Monday night open sessions -

bring an instrument.

A SPACE - 85 St. Nicholas St.

April 10 (9 p.m.) and April 11 (3 p.m.)

OLIVER LAKE and JOSEPH BOWIE

April 24 (9 p.m.) and April 25 (3 p.m.)

KARL BERGER and DAVE HOLLAND

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## ITALY

In January Music Inn Club presented a high level programme. Vibes player Enzo Randisi appeared with Antonello Vannucchi on piano; Giorgio Rosciglione on bass and Gege Munari on drums. Right now, Randisi is the only vibist of note in Italy and he produces a beautiful, highly expressive sound. Lack of rehearsal time did not permit Randisi to present original pieces but he gave us the chance to listen to some of the great classics of modern jazz.

One of the highlights of the month was the appearance of the Lee Konitz Quartet. During his four nights at the club he gave his best, as he has done for 25 years. His programme revived, in his own manner, many of the classic tunes of jazz history - After You've Gone, Cherokee, Stella By Starlight, The Song Is You, Yesterdays and many others. Lee Konitz is one of the most moving musicians I have heard. He plays music that is true to himself even if he will never become a "Star". I think it's time Konitz be given the recognition he so richly deserves. After so long a career in jazz it would be natural to assume that Mr. Konitz should be given some praise for all his achievements. His accompanists were very good: bassist Peter Ind (fantastic) and drummer Al Levitt were with Lee many years ago, at the time of the fabulous live recording at Storyville in Boston and their reunion was quite happy; English guitarist Dave Cliff was also quite good; his playing reminded me of Billy Bauer.

Scheduled, for one night only, was the Archie Shepp Quintet, but unfortunately they missed the airplane and were replaced by Tony Scott and the Marcello

Rosa Quintet. Scott played baritone sax that night and he was just beautiful; the same with Rosa, always inspired. The rhythm section was Enrico Pieranunzi, piano; Alessio Urso, on bass; and Pepito Pignatelli on drums. The quintet played without a fixed program and the result was high level music, very warm and very swinging.

The Chet Baker Quintet, including Jacques Peltzer on flute, Amedeo Tommasi or Harold Danko on piano, Giovanni Tommaso on bass and Bruno Biriaco on drums, played four nights. Baker is playing better than before. Day by day he becomes more confident with his trumpet, after so long away from the scene.

## RECORD NEWS:

Recent additions to HORO's catalogue are Archie Shepp "Jazz A Confronto vol. 27", with Charles Greenlee, Dave Burrill, David Williams and Beaver Harris (HLL 101-27); Paris' Quartet "Jazz A Confronto vol. 28", a group formed by Francois Janneau, Michel Gallier, J. F. Jenny Clarke and Aldo Romano (HLL 101-28); Archie Shepp "Mariamar", with Charles Greenlee, Cicci Santucci, Irio De Paula, Alessio Urso and Alfonso Vieira (HZ 001). To be released later are these newly recorded albums: Roy Haynes, "Jazz A Confronto vol. 29" (HORO 101-29); Louis Agudo featuring Alfonso Vieira, "Percussion Shadows" (HORO HSN 752); Gerardo Jacoucci piano solo "Jazz A Confronto vol. 30" (HLL 101-30); Roberto Della Grotta Quintet (HLL 101-31); JAC Quartet featuring Lee Konitz, Dave Cliff, Peter Ind and Al Levitt (HLL 101-32).

Lino Patruno, the animator and guitarist of the traditional jazz style, has two new records on the Carosello label; the first featured Buddy Freeman, Wingy Manone and Guido Manusardi, while the second has as a guest star trumpeter Jimmy McPartland... Fresh EMI Italy items include "Sombossa", the first recording as a leader by the Brazilian percussionist Ivanir "Mandrake" Do Nascimento, with his Roman-based group called Mandrake Son (3C064-18104); and "Brown Rice", the latest effort by Don Cherry's Organic Music, including Frank Lowe, Ricky Cherry, Charlie Haden, Moky Cherry, Billy Higgins and three percussionists (3C064-18107). Cherry has also signed with this label for three other albums!... the new Perigeo's Group album has been issued by RCA Italy; it is called "La Valle Dei Templi" (TPLI 1175)... new releases from Black Saint Records are "Sight Song" by Muhai Richard Abrams featuring Malachi Favors (BSR 0003); "Capricorn Rising" by Don Pullen featuring Sam Rivers and including Alex Blake and Bobby Battle (BSR 0004); "The Flam" by Frank Lowe with Leo Smith, Joseph Bowie, Alex Blake and Charles Bobo Shaw (BSR 0005)... King Records, a new jazz label produced by Tony Cosenza, has issued 4 LPs which were recorded about a year and a half ago: Mario Schiano "On The Waiting List" including Giancarlo Schiaffini, Domenico Guaccero, and many others (NLP 110); Marcello Rosa featuring Tony Scott "Friendship" (NLP 111);

Spirale Group "Spirale", including Gaetano Delfini, Giancarlo Maurino, Corrado Nofri, Beppe Caporello and Gianpaolo Ascolese (NLP 112); Tommaso Vittorini Big Band "Placenta" with Massimo Urbani, Tony Formichella and others (NLP 113).  
- Mario Luzzi

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## MUNICH

After successfully operating for ten years in a medium sized (ca, 120 people) club the domicile moved to a new location in January (Leopoldstr. 19 in Schwabing). The new place holds roughly double the amount of people now, has good acoustical conditions and is well equipped in every respect. It was inaugurated for three packed weeks by the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, followed by tenorist Sal Nistico who was backed by Viennese pianist Fritz Pauer, Jimmy Woods on bass and Joe Nay, drums. Currently playing is the quartet of vibraphonist David Friedman from New York, with pianist Bob Degen, Swiss bass player Isla Eckinger and South African drummer Makaya Ntshoko. Announced for the near future are the Louis Hayes quintet with Woody Shaw, Junior Cook, Ron Matthews, Walter Booker, the Attila Zoller trio with Frank Luther on bass and Joe Chambers drums, maybe the Elvin Jones Quartet.

- Matthias Winckelmann

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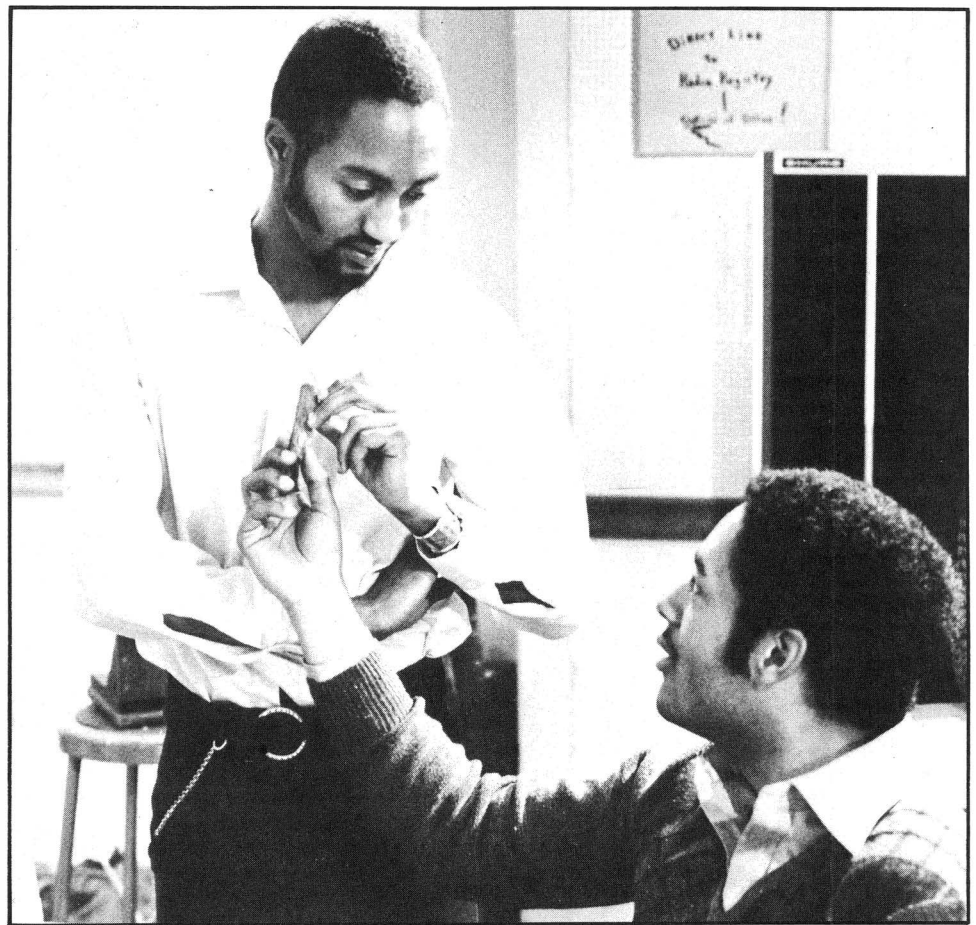
## DENMARK

Mickey Baker played and recorded in Denmark in July... Other guests during the summer months were Roland Kirk and his group which visited Montmartre and played with Dexter Gordon. Count Basie played a concert in Copenhagen and after the concert some of his musicians entered the bandstand at Montmartre and jammed with, among others, Danish tenorist Bent Jaedig and Idrees Sulieman, American trumpet player (who sounds just as good on flugelhorn) - for several years a resident of Copenhagen.

Ella Fitzgerald and Tommy Flanagan's trio followed Basie and another expatriate, drummer Ed Thigpen, could be heard with his group Action-Reaction... Dollar Brand, Bea Benjamin and Johnny Dyani did a concert in Tivoli and gigged in Montmartre. Other Montmartre guests were Sadao Watanabe and his quartet from Japan and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band. Jazzhus Tagskaegget in Aarhus also presented Jones and Lewis and later arranged a jazz band ball with Lionel Hampton (12 pieces, among them Richard Williams and Rene McLean) and two tenor saxophonists, Buddy Tate (with Tete Montoliu) and Benny Waters, and the Danish Fessor's Big City Band... Under the leadership of Erik Wiedemann, an archive of Danish jazz history has been established. Records, books, magazines, photos etc. will be collected to cover the development of Danish jazz.

In October the Heath Brothers, Jimmy, Percy and Al, played with pianist Stanley Cowell... Professor Longhair,

alias Roy Byrd, visited Denmark. A short trip to Copenhagen gave me the chance to enjoy the trumpet playing of Harry "Sweets" Edison. Among the guests at Montmartre was Fitz Gore, American tenorist and writer, with an LP on his own label (for information write Fitz Gore, c/o C. Braasch, 53 Bonn, Argelanderstr. 149, W. Germany)...Jazzhus Tagskaegget celebrated its 8th anniversary. Among the many, many musicians playing the club during the festival were Dick Hyman and the New York Jazz Repertory Company, Earl Hines, Benny Carter, Harry Edison, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Richard Boone, Bent Jaedig...The busy SteepleChase company continued its activities and Danish tenor saxophonist Ole Kuhl released an LP on his own Abel Records. Title of the record is "Nattampere". Red Rodney toured the country once more with the Danish Jazz Army. Earlier, in April 1975, this combination recorded together and the results can now be heard on an album on Storyville (SLP 262)...Warne Marsh, that marvelous tenor improviser, came to Denmark as the third guest of Jazz Exchange. Marsh played with local musicians and later joined forces with Lee Konitz, Dave Cliff, Peter Ind and Al Levitt. To me, this was the musical event of the year...more about it later...I have been asked to put the addresses of the two leading jazz places in this column, so here they are: Cafe Montmartre, Store Regnegade 19, DK 1110 Copenhagen K; Jazzhus Tagskaegget, Klostergade 34, DK 8000 Aarhus C. - Roland Baggenaes



For years Braxton had envisioned his music in a large orchestra form, and here was the time. Six pieces of music that will create a new dimension for big bands, yet one more step on into fuller realisation. The music paid homage, for a great deal of the time, to the thoughts of Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk, but still was the distinctive colours of Braxton. One piece will be loved by the Boy Scouts of America, a truly traditional piece in fine marching Band image. A fine recording that is due to become available this spring. Check out the Black Dragon Orchestra, it's their year in the I Ching. The Orchestra under the leadership of Braxton's wind instruments were Warren Smith, Philip Wilson and Barry Altschul percussion, David Holland cello and bass, Frederick Rzewski and Muhal Richard Abrams piano, Richard Teitelbaum synthesizer, Roscoe Mitchell, Seldon Powell, Ronald Bridgewater and Bruce Johnson reeds, Paul Jeffers, Garrett List, George Lewis and Earl McIntyre trombones, Kenny Wheeler, Leo Smith, Cecil Bridgewater and Jon Faddis trumpets and Jonathan Dorn tuba...Doc Cheatham and Sammy Price are playing incredible duets together at the Crawdad-dy Room of the Roosevelt Hotel and Red Richards is playing fine solo piano in the intermissions at Condons. Friday lunch-times they serve a fine Shrimp Creole with a glass of red wine, and the music is thrown in for Free, not a common lunch-time occurrence in the Apple.

Karl Berger's Creative Music Studio is participating this summer in the Nar-

opa Institute of Boulder's summer program. The emphasis of the music program will be on direct communication with leading artists; comparative historical and systematic studies of Eastern and Western traditions in creative music; detailed approach towards basic musical understanding and experimental collaborations with the faculty and students of the Expressive Arts Program (Dance, Theatre and Poetics). The summer program runs from June 5 to August 20, divided into two five week sessions. For a catalog providing course information, schedules, fees and application forms, call (303) 444-0202 or write Naropa Institute, 1441 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado 80302... Stan Kenton's band will be busy this summer with five week long college clinics at Drury College, Springfield, Missouri (June 20-25); York University, Toronto (July 11-16); Towson State College, Baltimore (July 25-30); California State University, Sacramento (August 8-13); Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa (August 15-20)... Sheet music collectors and ragtime pianists may order five ragtime piano solos composed by Canadian David R. Lee from Dun-Val Music Publishers, 4 Dundana Ave., Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 4E6. Of medium difficulty and in the Tin Pan Alley ragtime tradition, they are available separately for one dollar each, and titled Salad Dressing, Pumpkin Pie (the two best and most original of the five), Scotty Dog Rag, Pussy Cat Rag and Tough Bananas... Coda record reviewer Tex Wyndham may be heard on his own solo LP, Fat Cat's Jazz FCJ168 "Tex

## ODDS & -----

Showcase Jazz, a concert agency of students at Michigan State University presented the formidable talents of Roscoe Mitchell and Anthony Braxton in a special concert February 29. This organisation is in the forefront of jazz resurgence in their area and would like to hear from interested people. Write to: Showcase Jazz, Union Activities Board/Student Entertainment, Union Building, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824 U.S.A.

Jazz Interactions continues its presentation of top line bands. Herbie Mann's group appeared February 29 and Clark Terry's Big Bad Band was slated for a March 13 appearance - both at the Riverboat Restaurant. Jazz activity in Denver was highlighted during a week-long Mardi Gras celebration with the Queen City Jazz Band prominently displayed. The band has a new recording scheduled for release in April. It contains an impressive list of classic jazz tunes. Previous releases are also available - write HHZ Productions, P.O. Box 1273, Littleton, Colorado 80120 for a complete catalogue... Chicago now has a Blues Line. Phone 248-0572 for up to the minute information on the Windy City's blues action.

Anthony Braxton went into the studios again, for his third recording on the Arista label. This time however it was to do with a dream becoming a reality.

Wyndham - He's A Rag Picker", containing six ragtime piano solos and eight piano-with-vocal rag songs, mostly recorded live at the Manassas Jazz Festival. Available postpaid at \$6.98 from Fat Cat's Jazz Records, P.O. Box 458, Manassas, Virginia, U.S.A. 22110... The Mississippi Sound Jazz Band, a seven-piece combo playing a smooth mainstream-Dixieish style, renders nine standards (ranging from Closer Walk With Thee to How High The Moon) on its new LP available at \$5.95 postpaid (to U.S. residents) from Mississippi Sound Inc., P.O. Box 1039, Biloxi, Ms. 39533... Jazz Giants T Shirts Inc., Radio City Station, P.O. Box 864, New York, N.Y. has issued some new shirts; the first shows Billie Holiday and the second features Bird, Pres and Lady Day. They cost \$5.95 each and come in the usual sizes and are printed blue on white... Arista has released a number of new issues in their Freedom series. These include a repackaging of Cecil Taylor's Montmartre recordings (1901) - of which only the first volume has ever been issued in North America; The Human Arts Ensemble record of "Under The Sun" (1022) which was previously issued on the band's own label; Marion Brown's collaboration with Elliott Schwartz has been repackaged with a duet performance with Leo Smith that was only issued previously in Japan. The Brown/Schwartz collaboration was issued privately and has been reviewed in Coda. These two records are on Arista 1904... Spitball Records announces the release of Joe Diorio-Wally Cirillo; Guitar/Soloduo/Piano (SB-3). In this new offering Diorio and Cirillo continue their unique duo excursions on Here's That Rainy Day, and Free Piece (Sunset), also there are two solo tracks from guitarist Diorio, Nature Boy and My Foolish Heart (overdubbed), and a new piece from pianist Cirillo, Finito, plus his rendition of Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most. This recording can be obtained from Spitball Records, Inc., P.O. Box 680371, Gratigny Branch, Miami, Florida 33168 for \$5.00 plus 50¢ postage and handling in the U.S.A. and \$1.50 Canada... Crescendo Publishing Co. of Boston (who previously issued the wonderful Dicky Wells Autobiography) has announced "A Jazz Retrospect" (selected essays 1955-1975) by Max Harrison. These are drawn from previously published magazine and newspaper articles by the eminent British jazz critic. The book is expected to be available in December 1976.

## SMALL ADS

This section is for individuals and organizations to advertise non-display items. Cost is 15¢ per word (\$3.00 minimum), payment to be made when copy submitted.

LLOYD Garber's New-Music Improvisation Book (Guitar Energy) now available \$23.00. Also enquire about new recording. Write Lloyd Garber, Box 7020, Station A, Toronto, Canada, M5W 1X7.

# ONARI

Onari Productions is a musicians' cooperative organization founded with the attitude of finding employment for creative performers. At present the musicians include Anthony Braxton, Don Pullen, David Holland, Leo Smith and Roscoe Mitchell. It will also attempt to locate other performers who play creative improvised music. If you have access in your community for these players to perform in concert, clubs or workshop situations, please contact Onari Productions, 191 Howland Avenue, Toronto M5R 3B7, Ontario, Canada.

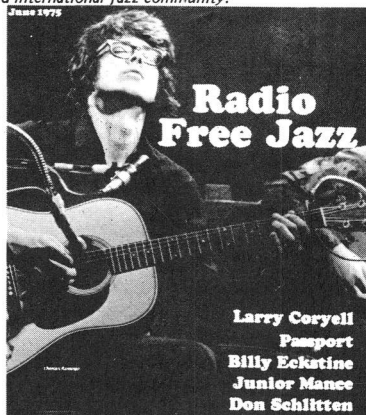
LIVING BLUES, America's first blues magazine, published quarterly since 1970. Contemporary and historical coverage, from Robert Johnson to T-Bone Walker. Photos, reviews, news, in-depth interviews, etc. One issue 75¢; four for \$3.00 from Living Blues, P.O. Box 11303, Chicago, Illinois 60611, U.S.A.

WANTED JOHN COLTRANE tapes of unissued concerts and/or sessions. Will swap or buy. Lists available. Dan Audain, 1360 N. Sandburg Terrace, Apt. 2711-C, Chicago, Ill. 60610 U.S.A.

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RARE out-of-print Jazz LP's sold by auction. Free lists Leon Leavitt, 824 1/4 No. Las Palmas, Los Angeles, Ca. 90038 U.S.A.

BIG BAND Remotes, V-Discs, Old Radio Shows on Reels less than \$1.00 per hour, Cassettes \$1.95. Catalog \$1.25 available from Early Radio Tapes Ltd., Box 9117, Postal Station E, Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4K2 Canada.

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CODA Publications is attempting to build a film library with the intention of expanding its activities in this media for use in universities, libraries, schools, etc. If any reader has access to jazz or blues films that could be purchased for this purpose please contact Bill Smith at CODA.

JAZZ Imports - Japanese and European records by American and foreign musicians not released here. Send your wants and for free catalogue. Dan Serro, 165 William St., NYC, N.Y. 10028, U.S.A.

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## BLIND JOHN DAVIS

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The Riverboat, Toronto  
January 27, 1976

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After having played the weekend at a suburban coffee house, Shier's, in the north end of Toronto, John Davis opened his week at the Riverboat with a near-to-full house. Of course the crowd began to dwindle towards the end of the evening. For both sets he let fly with strong, interesting and accurate piano work. His playing was characterized by an often heavy and steady left hand with an active right hand picking out varied and intricate trills. He was forever throwing in time changes to further alter and personalize standard themes.

On this particular evening John Davis reinforced the notion that he is more than a straight boogie woogie bluesman. His repertoire was expansive enough to include straight blues, boogie woogie, house stomping jump tunes, ballads and near tin pan alley ditties. On the blues side were standards like Everyday I Have The Blues, St. James Infirmary, C.C. Rider, How Long Blues, South Bound Train and We Got 'to Move. In the jump and boogie woogie vein were Kansas City, Cow Cow Blues, Pinetop's Boogie Woogie, Rocket Ship Boogie plus many untitled instrumental themes. On the commercial side John Davis included - Summertime, St. Louis Blues, Chatanooga Choo Choo etc. To round things off he included Harlem Can't Be Heaven and I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate.

There is no doubt about it, John Davis is a true professional; that is, a very stimulating and entertaining professional. During each set he alternated between slow and uptempo numbers. Towards the end of the second set he began calling for requests and when the requests were slow in coming he was quick to bounce in with a boogie or ease into a slow blues. The atmosphere was of a past piano era. The basic influences and feelings of the Chicago boogie woogie school of Ammons, Lewis, Yancey etc. were obvious in some of the uptempo numbers while on some of the slow blues the shadows of a relaxed prewar Leroy Carr style were in evidence. All in all it was a very satisfying mix of solo piano with the emphasis on old time blues and boogie woogie. John Davis is an artist of high stature and certainly well worth a consideration.

- Doug Langille

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## LOUISIANA RED

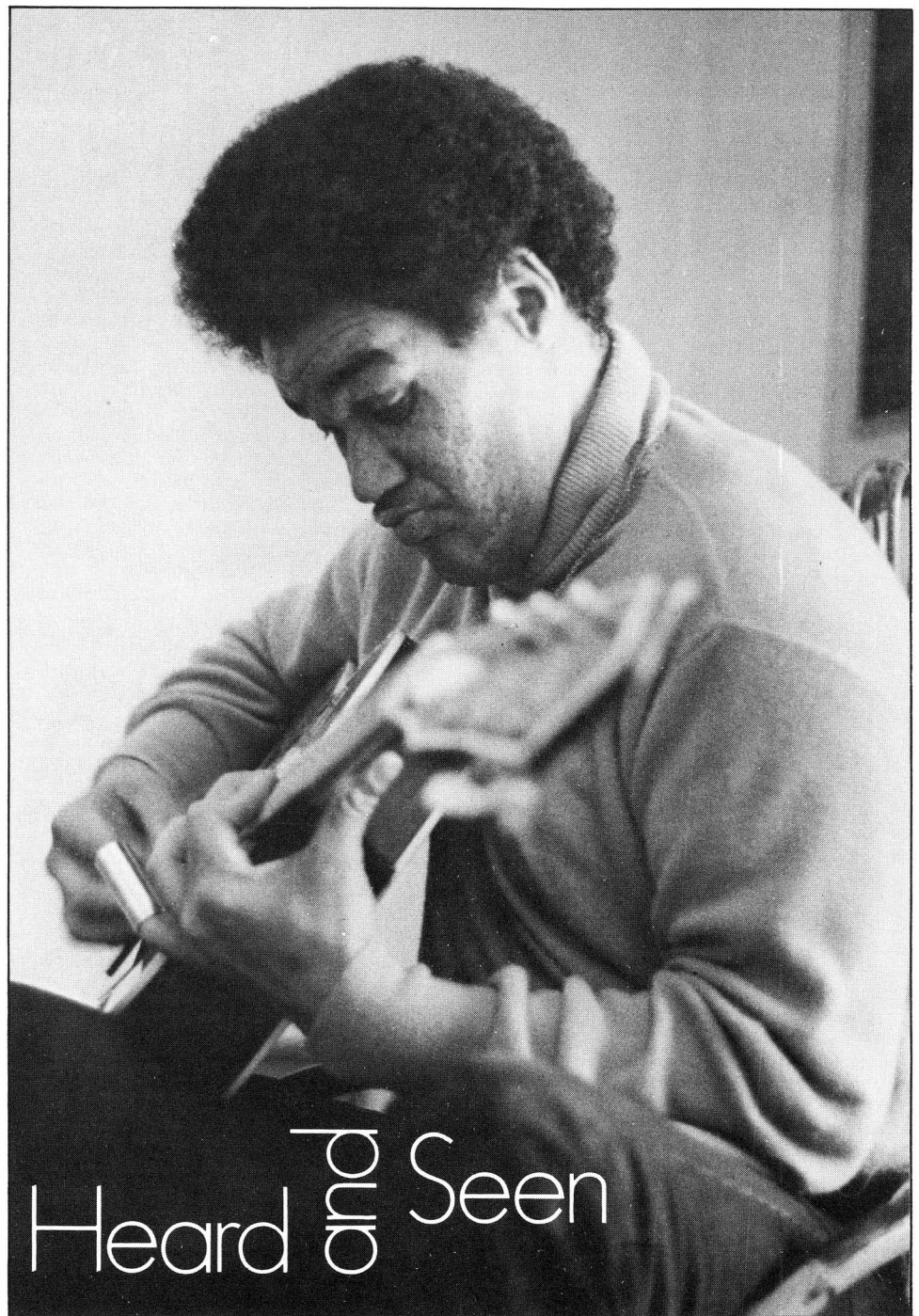
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with Sugar Blue and Peg Leg Sam

The Riverboat, Toronto  
January 14, 1976

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An impressive evening of funky gut bucket blues was heard the evening of January 14 at Toronto's oldest operational coffee house, The Riverboat. It was the opening of this downhome trio's five night stay in Toronto. Both Red and Sugar Blue had finally made it back to town after being let



go by the El Mocambo several months earlier. It seems that Red and Sugar Blue lacked the El Mocambo management's criteria for a good band; that is, a wall of amplifiers and rock back-up musicians. So, after only one night, they were dismissed prematurely. At the Riverboat Red played his old converted six string Harmony Sovereign through a small pocket sized amp with both Sugar Blue and Sam playing country style harp directly through the club's PA system.

The evening was divided into two lengthy sets. Peg Leg Sam opened both sets with a mix of tall tales, toasts, and harmonica accompanied blues vocals. His medicine show years were obvious through his humorous raps with the audience. His singing and harp playing fell

short of his recorded appearances on Trix and recently on Blue Labor. His asthma, induced by the rapid transition from the seasonally moderate climate of Atlanta, Georgia to the damp cold climate of Southern Ontario, was causing him much grief. However, he managed to solo through several instrumentals and vocal pieces like Greasy Greens, plus a heavy sampling of toasts and narratives. In the first set he was joined by Red who encouraged him through a bottleneck accompanied take of Poor Boy, a song dealing with Joshua and his attraction to Jericho and a harp heavy - Going Train Blues with Red taking the vocal. The latter three cuts were from Sam's new Blue Labor LP which features Red on guitar and on the occasional vocal. On the sec-



ond set Sam was dominated by a local folksy guitar hero who, besides imposing himself on Sam's good nature, proceeded to mess up the set.

For the most part Louisiana was joined by harpman Sugar Blue. Blue is a highly talented harp player who mixes traditional influences like Sonny Boy, Big Walter, and Little Walter with a wide range of jazz horn blowers including Roland Kirk and Illinois Jacquet into a very busy individualistic style. Sugar Blue does not rely on power, he simply plays and bends a wider, more intricate range of notes than most blues harmonica players. He is also a very serious accompanist. He works extremely well with Red, watching his every move, filling around, blending in behind and interacting with Red's vocal and guitar work. Sugar Blue is some dude to hear solo. He took one lead vocal in a shuffling thing about doping, Let's All Do It.

Red played and sang with an intensity that puts one in mind of Robert Pete Williams, the late Fred McDowell, or one of Muddy Waters' inspired moments. Red takes his music seriously. When not on stage he is fooling with his guitar in the dressing rooms between sets. His performance reflects a sincere emotive involvement and honesty. Many of his songs dealt with his tragedy-ridden past. Others, either original or written in collaboration with Blue Labor producer, Kent Cooper, painted violent and surrealistic portraits of experience. Red also included many old blues standards like Sweet Black Angel, It Hurts Me Too, and I'm A King Bee. However, the best were the originals like Too Poor To Die, Death Of Ealase, Cold White Sheets, New Jersey Women, Dead Stray Dog, and When My Mother Was Living.

Red mixed the tempo up and played in a variety of derivative and original styles. At times he played in a Texas country style similar to that of Hopkins or Fulson. His own adaptation of the single string slide seemed to dominate. Within this latter framework he let his Muddy Waters, Elmore James, Robert Nighthawk and Earl Hooker roots be known. He took their approaches, gave the audience a taste then worked them into his own style. He is one hell of a hard working guitarist and certainly nobody's copy. Towards the end of the second set, Red let a local harp blower by the name of Harmonica Hines sit in and jam. They worked through two instrumentals, the first being a slide/harp version of Little Walter's My Babe and the second, a slow laid back closer. Hines is quite an accomplished harp player, leaning heavily towards an urban cross between Cary Bell and Big Walter.

Upon returning to catch the trio for their last set on the last night, I found them playing as strong as ever. By this time Peg Leg Sam had acclimatized himself to Toronto's weather and was blowing as strong as on his recordings. Sam can be caught to good advantage on Medicine Show Man (Trix 3302) and on a newly released Blue Labor LP with Red backing him on guitar and taking one vocal. Rec's

own Blue Labor LP - "Sweet Blood Call" was about the best cowhome blues LP to come out in 1975 and is well worth a listen.

- Doug Langille

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## DAVID MURRAY

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Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, N.Y.

Solo concerts are becoming somewhat popular now that many improvisational players have discovered that this particular setting lends itself to innumerable possibilities in terms of the architectural design of the music, possibilities which have previously been only partially explored in group playing. For there are undoubtedly certain laws - governing properties of the music that have more to do with "the situation" the performer is placed in than anything else - that make themselves known when one is confronted with solo playing. The profoundness of the silences, the definitiveness of pitch recognition and the organizational concepts tend to reach a higher level of visibility than in group playing; this places solo playing at the pinnacle of formalized conceptions as opposed to the merely naturalized flow that group playing tends to emphasize.

Tenor saxophonist/composer David Murray presented four compositions for solo saxophone at Sarah Lawrence College that further defined the potentialities inherent in the dynamic expressiveness of the new music. Murray was able to widen the parameters of the music: pitch, intensity, duration and timbre were exploited to provide the listener with a variety of moods and tone/colors, and his methods never lacked assuredness.

I was particularly impressed with his reading of Shout Song, the second selec-

tion of the evening. I would imagine it's become a sort of favorite of those who have been following Murray's music of late. Murray gave a heartfelt rendition of this attractive thematic motif (undoubtedly inspired by the Church (which was centered in the tonal patterns of the piece, yet the music moved freely in and out of atonality - segments in which the harmonic and note values had little or no relation to the theme - giving the improvisation in these areas a suspended and isolated quality (this technique would be further developed in the piece Roscoe).

Murray's solo work can hardly be compared with anyone else's, although, if pressed for directives, Hawkins or Rollins come to mind. Murray's overall advantage on the saxophone has to do with his range and his exquisitely beautiful tonal sense in the upper register of his horn. He achieves these breathtaking sinus (pure) tones on the top of his horn with such ease, assurance and depth of feeling that one is simply left sentimentally restored while listening.

After intermission Murray went through two pieces and then the fabulous Roscoe. This tune was constructed on an easily recognizable motif (A) that recalled the marching bands of old in places like New Orleans and Baton Rouge; it then moved into its rotational sequence (B) of abstract tone and clusters that seemed to settle deeper into the nature of the piece; finally, with a margin of exactly the right amount of resonant silence, he moved back to main theme. The improvisation for this piece was structured on the middle section of the work (one might think in terms of an ABA structure) and moved quickly into an exploitation of aleatoric properties of sound and color - a horizontal projection of the progression of the notes. Again, his use of the space and



random elements of the music (which nevertheless appeared as integral aspects of this particular construction) was masterful.

The concert concluded with Murray's theme so to speak, the bitter/sweet national anthemish *Flowers For Albert* (in homage to Albert Ayler) - a fitting close to an immensely informative evening of contemporary music. - Roger Riggins

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## JOSEPH JARMAN

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A Space, Toronto  
January 23, 1976

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Joseph Jarman's solo concert at A Space was in danger of being overshadowed by the brief stay in Toronto of the Art Ensemble of Chicago. After all, when the whole Ensemble has given a concert on Wednesday, and will be giving another three on Saturday and Sunday, who is going to come out on Friday (in the middle of a snowstorm, no less) to a solo concert by an Ensemble member? As it happened, many people did and the affair was a success in all ways. In fact, for me it was the greatest delight of this concert season at A Space.

Jarman alone made music that was no less vital than the Art Ensemble's, and no less beautiful, and which communicated warmth and a level of intimacy that is difficult for a group of any size to achieve. Those who came expecting "solo saxophone" were confronted with a variety of horns plus vibes, marimba and other percussion. Seeing his instruments clustered around Jarman, one thought of a "one-man band" and anticipated a con-

cert as interesting for its acrobatics as for its music but this solo concept - a number of instruments centered around one man - is part of a young and growing tradition that is best understood in terms of its resulting sounds. The musician orchestrates himself through the instruments and in the hands of a master like Jarman the music comes out as a whole. Leo Smith said in Coda a few months ago, "I consider every instrument I play, and those that I may, to be one gigantic instrument. Whatever is being heard... is just one aspect of that entire gigantic instrument." To bring this off a musician requires complete confidence in his command of his instruments, so that he has no fear of entering new areas of sounds that may open up in performance.

One's feelings about the viability of this concept became rather tentative as the evening opened with *Life Motion*, a duet between bass and soprano sax, when Jarman had trouble coaxing notes out of his still-cold bass saxophone. But with *First Daughter*, a vibraphone/marimba piece, the solo concert came together. Jarman was in full control of the music and immediately the concert became a gripping and beautiful event.

Shimmering brazen gong tones introduced *Ballad To Forever* - the title describes it best. A solo flute piece with the feeling of joy and open spaces, a song to that "one gigantic instrument" to which all sounds belong. Rhythms emerge and harmonies appear between the melody and its own harmonics, between the flute tone and the sound of the keys, the sounds of the player's breath, the sound of his voice, humming in unison. Similarly the poetry of *Black Paladins* became music

as Jarman proclaimed the poem's arrogant, apocalyptic vision, shouted it, mocked it, recited it and finally played it on bass clarinet where the dark, formal tone of the instrument was the ideal medium for the piece's feeling of hope and anger.

The second set started with *Fore-sight*, a fast and amazing alto piece, and *Homage To The Sun Drummers*, a propulsive drum solo punctuated by the sounds of gongs and cymbals. For me the highlight of the concert was *Quiet Star*, a duet between tenor saxophone and vibraphone. Playing the horn with his right hand and the vibes with his left, Jarman stated the melody in unison on the two instruments, then used vibes as a gentle accompaniment to his plaintive, searching tenor. There was a short vibraphone solo, and intervals of silence sustained by the strength of the mood the music had established.

For the finale we had a singalong, Jarman leading and accompanying himself on his buzzing and screwed-up auto-harp: "I know the way/ To the liberation/ Of the masses/ Of the world/ I know the sound/ ...I see the light/ ...I feel the love/ ...I know the way..." Difficult as it is to get a Toronto audience to sing anything, especially in the midst of a winter that has left us all in a near-catatonic state, Jarman belted the tune out with such enthusiasm and good feelings that eventually all were forced to join in. The effect was outrageous but, just as it ended, the swaggering chant attained the power of a hymn as if, in compelling us to sing out our wildest dreams, Joseph for one moment brought them almost within our grasp. - David Lee



# CODA PUBLICATIONS

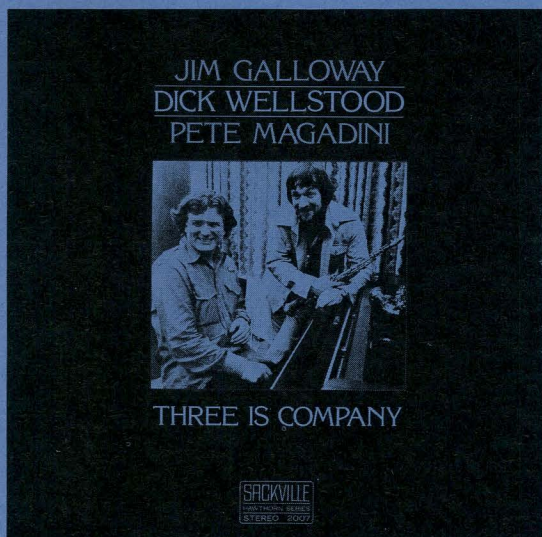
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## THREE IS COMPANY - SACKVILLE 2007

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DICK WELLSTOOD - piano  
PETE MAGADINI - drums

Minor Drag, Lulu's Back In Town, Broken Windmill, Sunday Morning, Blues Alley Bump, After You've Gone, Buddy Bolden's Blues, I'd Climb The Highest Mountain, Let's Get Away From It All, Everything I've Got

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