

Coda

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the sound of jazz

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JULIUS HEMPHILL

INTERVIEWS BY BILL SMITH AND DAVID LEE

PART ONE

My personal association with Julius Hemphill began in the spring of 1977, when we brought Julius to Toronto to perform *Roi Boye And The Gotham Minstrels* at A Space. In that short stay here we recorded his audio-drama (Sackville 3014/15). His music, for me, has a special relevance because it is based in a part of the jazz tradition that has always appealed to my senses. The blues tradition. The saxophone, an instrument that has to be considered a prime mover in the course of this music's history, can be singled out, quite selectively, in a very logical order, from the blues of Bechet and Hodges, through Charlie Parker to Ornette Coleman and seems in retrospect to arrive quite logically at a number of players in this present period. Most specifically, at Julius Hemphill.

Julius was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, a midwestern area of the United States, that has a certain tradition based in the blues, and although Julius did not come to his music by a historical learning process, the attitudes and sounds of his performance, due to the situation of locale, still continues this very powerful form.

The following interview, which deals with his formative years prior to his coming to New York City, has been edited to create a certain continuity.

In the first part of our conversation we talked about how the individual players of earlier times, the 30s and 40s, had served a sort of apprenticeship, learned their system of music from the big bands, and later, as the opportunity arose created the small group system with soloists.

J.H.: Of course generally with the rise in popularity of the small groups the big band situation was somewhat circumvented. One of the things that musicians did, was almost never deal with big bands again once they had gotten established in a small group format. Part of the demise of the big bands had to do with the economics. Economics hasn't gotten simpler, it's gotten progressively more complicated. So the impact these people made in the small group context in which they played, plus a progressively more dense economic picture, I think accounted for people not paying too much attention to these people. The pace setters were not about big bands so much as they were about the style — and if it was about Charlie Parker, no matter the contribution of the people that were playing with him, it was about Charlie Parker. He could have been playing with any number of people and it didn't really change the shape of anything he was playing.

Now — more generally speaking, players come from whatever vicarious means are operating to influence them. Information is passed along. In big bands you are able to absorb style, and tone, level of musicianship, the whole thing. You are able to absorb that, because you are there with all those people bringing their experiences to bear in a given situation. Get that done, and you are left with a certain form of communication right there, an eyeball to eyeball type communication. When that is not operative, you have to learn from what there is available to learn from, so if you live in certain parts of the country you are able to get to know and study and play with different people, but if you don't happen to live in a prime location, one of the big cities or something then you are very much left to what your environment

has to offer. And increasingly that is probably media-oriented, and that is probably records, because information is passed out in recordings. The other thing to some extent is probably school.

B.S.: The popular jazz academic media will make you believe that if you are from Texas, the only thing you could have possibly done is play with the Texas State Lab Band.

J.H.: I don't really accept that by way of conversation, but I never really thought of that, because it wasn't open to me when I was there....

What was open to Julius was really the experience and learning from playing. Although he spent some time in the situation of the High School band etc., it was mostly contact with performance that allowed him to develop his music. His first professional activities began in the early sixties with rhythm and blues bands such as the Independent Boogie Agency, which included Joe Simon and Cornell Dupree. Later he was to play with Ike Turner and even make a commercial recording with Kool & The Gang. One of his earliest teachers was John Carter.

J.H.: In my particular school in Fort Worth, when I came along in the early '50s there was nothing happening in an organized way except John Carter. He taught junior high school. It was his first assignment out of college. I gave him trouble, I wasn't a serious music student. I just happened to have had a few clarinet lessons, so I was able to get in the band.

I was able to pick up a lot from him, also from Red Connors. Red Connors was a whole different thing. He was teaching people stuff. He wasn't all that old, but he had a lot of experience, he was just gifted, he could just play.

I played in a band with him once, for a couple of nights just before he died. That was quite something. I wish I had been able to do that for longer. But even for that brief time it was quite inspiring.

The first instrument I was ever around was the saxophone — I think it belonged to Ornette — that was the first time I had ever seen one. It was in a case. That was the closest I'd ever been to it.

After this, I was into athletics and stuff. I think I had a clarinet, and it was in the case for a long time, and I don't know quite how I got interested in it. But I learned to play the saxophone, that was kind of interesting. But it was mostly about sports.

Where I lived, I was surrounded by taverns, pool rooms, in a two block stretch. It was called "the hot end". Everybody came down there to get off. So it was pretty lively, but there was no music there, except recorded music.

So in high school I started fooling around with this baritone, and about this time Pacific Jazz released these Gerry Mulligan Quartet sides, without a piano.

I read the music magazines — *Metronome*, *Downbeat*, and *Esquire* too had a lot about music. I saw in this book that you could order the charts from this quartet, so I ordered them and formed this band, a high school quartet. They let me take this baritone sax home, it was a drag getting it home but it was really incredible to play. We appeared on a few programs in school, and once I played *My Funny Valentine* at some kind of Masonic meeting. Even then people would say, "Yes, you just need to get those changes together." I didn't even know what they were talking about, and nobody could explain to me what "changes"

were. They would just give me this cryptic advice, "You gotta get those changes together."

There was this guy just recently telling me that. He just got out of prison — he'd been in prison ten years, he used to be a good piano player. When I was playing in Dallas, I was playing *All The Things You Are* — I haven't played *All The Things You Are* in about fifteen years — and this cat said to me, "You'd be pretty good if you could just get those changes." He was giving me all this advice. I felt sorry for him.

So with this quartet, I had a lot of fun playing baritone. After football season I'd play in the band, because they took trips and that was kind of a groove. I hated marching, but they did all that during the football season. I got in the concert band. It was a pretty decent band, except for the usual preoccupation the band leader had with the clarinet. Otherwise, it was all right.

After that, I went to California to go to school. I was going to be a doctor, but I found out that I wasn't really prepared academically, because I had just sort of hung out in school. I was cool, I just didn't have enough math or chemistry. I went to Berkeley. I took a couple of music classes, some in Greek civilization, but it was a trip, as I had never been to an integrated school and it was kind of weird.

So I was there for a minute. I got this new saxophone, and I started playing more in California.

If you listen to some of Charlie Parker's work, he doesn't sound much different from some kinds of swing alto players in some respects.

What I'm getting to is that it wasn't about playing blues and stuff at that point in California. People were tired of the blues — "...another blues band..." — it was about being cool, being hip. I liked Lee Konitz. I liked the sound. So for me it wasn't about blues. People there were telling me that I just hadn't been listening discriminatingly. I really hadn't, you know. I had just latched onto this cool sound thing because it was different. I wasn't into the blues, I thought it was tired. "You've got to listen to that again and see where this impetus is coming from." I started listening and some of what they were saying was quite true. I gradually got into studying music.

I didn't really think you could learn to play music. I thought it would just happen. My mother played the piano, and she didn't even have a piano. The only time I ever saw her play was when she went to church. She'd sit down and open the thing up and play the piano. I learned about scales and stuff, but I didn't see how that made music. It didn't make any sense. Because the people who were playing music, I never heard them playing any scales. I never was around anybody who practised. I thought it was just like singing — that it just happened. It was quite hard for me, emotionally, to believe that those scales were what music was based on, they are a part of it, but I didn't see the connection.

I changed schools. I went to the school John Carter had come from in Missouri, Lincoln, and there were a lot of interesting people there at the time. Dave Baker was there, in his pink pants and charcoal jacket. He'd just come out of Stan Kenton's band, and Lincoln wasn't ready for him at all. Very staid kind of situation there. He was a brilliant cat, and he was doing all kinds of compositions and stuff so they couldn't browbeat him into anything. Also

he could play the shit out of the trombone! So he was a good influence. He organized a band, and I took some theory from him. Still I hadn't done all that much playing. Intermittently I'd get suspended from school and then I'd go out and play in some band.

I didn't have any kind of study habits or anything. I wasn't prepared for school in the serious way that they took it. You can't cut class, you have to go. They weren't really covering that much ground and it was mostly common sense, unless there was some body of facts you had to digest. So I just took them to task on the idea of going to class, and I did learn a great deal. One of the times I went back Oliver Nelson was there, as a student, I think he attended for a semester. That was about '57, '56.

Lincoln is where I got the opportunity to play. That is where I did the most practising. I lost all my money the day I got there by shooting craps, so I didn't have anything to do but practise! But it kind of paid off.

I really sincerely did not believe that you could learn to play music. Now I know that you can learn to play music, you can learn things. But music is really like magic, to me. I got that from my mother. She didn't have a piano. She didn't have a friend who had a piano. She just walked up and played it, every Sunday, and never mentioned it. She tried to get me to take lessons at one point, but I had my hands full as it was, just in that environment. In "the hot end", piano lessons, are you kidding me? I had my hands full. I didn't give that any more serious thought, I just accepted it. Because playing *Home Sweet Home* in this clarinet book seemed far removed from music. That was a genuine position I had to take. I know better now....

Earlier in the conversation Julius and I had talked about the other high school phenomenon of becoming a professional athlete....

J.H.: The most famous, I suppose, was Jackie Robinson, and he hadn't been in the big leagues all that long. At that point it was no widespread thing. Basketball, for example, was largely white. I just discarded that in favour of music. Although I didn't know how I was going to fit into it. There were other places I could have gone, but it didn't really occur to me. I wasn't all that much of a school person, as you might have gathered. At this point I was only 19 years old.

In 1964 Julius Hemphill became a member of the United States Army....

J.H.: This is where Lincoln starts getting its revenge. It was one of those land grant schools. A land grant college is subsidized by the government in return for housing a reserve officer's training program. They had to send all the eligible males — if the women's movement is lucky they'll be able to participate in that silly shit — all the males have to be in it unless they were 4-F or something.

They called me for inductions in Texas, so I went back to Dallas. So they asked me in the course of the questions whether I'd ever been arrested and I told them yes, because once I got stoned and had a wreck, I hit a parked car and just fell out, after one of those Boogie Children Blues Boys Bands, a battle of the bands situation where all the proceeds went into buying whiskey, reds and ale — I was trying to navigate home and didn't make it.

They couldn't find any written records of my arrest, because I didn't realize that once you'd paid the fine, it wasn't like you'd been



arrested. So they put me on this standby basis. They couldn't understand this discrepancy, my saying yes and there being no record of it. They kept messing with me for nine months. I couldn't leave town, there was nothing to do. One day a friend of mine and I went to the park and we were stoned and I saw this recruiter driving around, I flagged him down and joined the army, he managed to get me in.

I figured I'd become an officer, because they made a lot of money. I didn't know anything about the army, and they weren't doing anything in particular at this point, there was no great war on. All the cats I had talked to had been in the special services and had toured Europe in bands, so I figured I could probably get into that. I didn't even try to get into the band, but they put me in there anyway, I guess because of my schooling and information on my file, and it was a trip.

For a while I had them going on this idea that I was going to be an officer and so I got all kinds of passes — I was a squad leader — I even went home during basic training, which is considered dirty pool. I lived about two hundred miles away. But I was the one who gave out the passes — "Okay, you six guys and me, we all have passes." It was kind of fun. But I couldn't sustain it. After I got out of that I got into the serious band routine, which was really a drag.

Cloe Smith: You had to do marches and all that kind of stuff?

J.H.: Well, I was lucky in that regard, because this particular band was at Fort Hood, Texas, and it was the home of this armoured division so the band rode around on these jeeps. They'd line up in band formation and we'd just sit up on the back of them. That was kind of cool, we didn't do very much marching, but the monotony was amazing.

B.S.: Did you get to leave America?

J.H.: Only when we went to the Mojave Desert (in California). We went out there for about forty days. We had this huge war game out there, about a hundred thousand people. It was a trip, the band didn't really do anything but gamble. Some friends and I took a little valise full of wine, scotch, reefers — we took that to the desert, so for about two weeks we were cool, we didn't do anything.

The most interesting thing I did in the army was participate in a music festival in Corpus Christi. They had these bands up from Mexico and they had some incredible big bands, the brass playing was out! Also the instrumentation was interesting, they had maybe seven or eight trumpet players playing high, just whistling. They were playing all kinds of things. Big brass. One of the most interesting things.

The army was very much like school. If you wanted to do something, they wouldn't give you time off to do it. They would rather try to make you do some kind of really empty bullshit. No kidding, one time we didn't have anything to do, so this cat said, "Okay, I want you to go down to the parking lot and I want you to pick up all the rocks" — this is a gravel parking lot — "I want you to pick up all the rocks that won't pass through the teeth of a rake." Now, this parking lot is almost a hundred yards square — like a football field, and the whole thing is rocks of every description, two-thirds of them would not pass through the teeth of a rake. But we spent the whole day throwing these rocks off the hill. Everybody just broke up, we were having such a big time throwing these rocks. Everybody wanted a copy of this

order, because they said it came from headquarters. But they wouldn't give us a copy.

Once they made me and a bass player cut this grass. The band was located right next to headquarters, which is also the main road to the post and all of the VIPs and visitors and everybody passed right by there. So we went to the paint shed and got the power mower out. The sky had been overcast, and suddenly this terrific downpour started. It was raining *rain*. So we said perfect, perfect, here we go, poetic justice. So we stood outside there in this driving rain with this power mower cutting the grass, and this general passed by. You see, ordinarily you're not supposed to get wet. If you're out in the field and you're in some kind of formation, it's cool. But you're not supposed to get wet doing nothing like that. Military property. So he called down there, and this sergeant ran out yelling, "STOP! STOP!" I mean a general can create a shock wave in the army that you wouldn't believe. There's no comparable civilian power.

But we wouldn't stop, you see. The sergeant practically begged us. He had been very hard-nosed about us cutting this grass — "You guys think you're slick, right?" So we said, "Oh, we want to cut this, we don't mind... it's cool, it's kind of fun, man." And you couldn't see twenty feet, our clothes were plastered to us. The only thing you could hear was the rain and this power mower, I'm sure you could hear that mower for blocks. He *carried* the mower back to the paint shed. He said, "No man, no, you don't have to cut any more, no, that's it, no, come on man, I don't want you cats out in the rain." We knew we were going to be seen, because we were right there next to headquarters, and somebody was bound to come out of there.

Then this Vietnam thing came up, the way they started introducing that, to me anyway, being in the army, was they started sending these green beret types around giving people pep talks. They were still saying that it was in an advisory capacity that troops were there. "Yes man, it's a great life, you go over to Bangkok, you get a little time off, get all the ass you want, wow, it's just great, you feel like you're a *man*, you're part of something. I know 31 ways to kill a man without any weapon."

But you know, I didn't pay the army any attention. I thought I might get into something interesting. I could get my degree, and they do make more money. But I hadn't realized the harassment aspect of it, so it didn't take long for my credibility as a candidate for officer's school to wear thin, and that's the way I went from sugar to shit. Musically not much happened.

After spending three years in the army Hemphill moved to St. Louis and participated in some of the earlier beginnings of the music that was to eventually become the Black Artists Group (BAG) with Oliver Lake. In the same period Julius and Phillip Wilson ventured to Chicago where they met and played with Roscoe Mitchell and Joseph Jarman.

J.H.: They (Mitchell and Jarman) were getting an organization together, and were talking about what you had to do to get into it and so forth. I had just gotten out of the army, so I didn't want to get into any of that. But I did manage to play with them, and that was different. I think it was the first time since high school that I had played with anybody who was consciously abandoning the formal structure. Most of the other players were into extended

harmony, but they never dealt with the structure — the framework. So that was very interesting. I'd gotten pretty proficient by this time. When I was in the Army I used to play in Austin, I'd go down there on weekends. I had gotten pretty good at playing changes and stuff, but I was still searching, because I had all this experience and all this information, but somehow I couldn't quite bring it to bear. Then I started rethinking some of that group thing and we got together in St. Louis and formed a group. The difference between then and when I was in high school was that in high school I couldn't really back up what I was talking about, or any kind of particular posture I had, because I was just doing it out of intuition. I had a pretty strong feeling that — it's like bebop, it's about the whole thing, not about just this or that, about diminished chords and things. However by this time I knew what I was talking about. By then it didn't make any difference what anybody thought, because I could play what they were talking about. The difference was that I had learned all of *that* to get back almost to where I had started out. "Oh that's a nice instrument, I think I'll play some music." So you pick the damn thing up and you blow it, and there's a lot of learning about operating the thing that you don't think about, but that's what really happens.

PART TWO

This interview took place on March 2, 1978, in Toronto. On the previous evening, Julius Hemphill and Oliver Lake had recorded a series of saxophone duets; and the night before that, The World Saxophone Quartet (Hemphill, Lake, Hamiet Bluiett and David Murray) had performed at York University.

DAVID LEE: I enjoyed the whole performance of the Saxophone Quartet, but sometimes it felt as if everyone was just blowing — and the music seemed to lose meaning. As if people weren't listening or something, it was just four very violent horn players, just blowing. Do you feel that that happens?

JULIUS HEMPHILL: Violent horn players? Well, make that "vigorous". As we were speaking about before, sometimes the sympathetic response doesn't necessarily have to enter into it. Now, as to how interesting those moments might be depends more on individual preference. Some of the times you thought things were interesting, other people might not have thought so.

Sometimes it's not even about a particular cohesiveness. Sometimes it's autonomous. From my perspective, I hope that we cover a serious spectrum of levels of intensity, whether they might be delicate or whether they might be, as you said, vigorous. Again as we were talking about earlier, the collective thing requires ideally a good bit of association, I mean in playing.

But the whole thing is not necessarily caught up in purely musical considerations, purely musical aspects — a great example: we were in Amsterdam, and you know the sunrise and sunset thing is weird in the spring there. At ten o'clock p.m. it's just beginning to get dark. So we'd be up, and before we realized it night had already begun. By the time it clearly got dark it might be ten-thirty. So anyway, we were experiencing a bit of jet lag, we hadn't stopped moving since we got there, and we heard this rooster crowing at dawn. So Bluiett

had his flute, and he started playing what the rooster was doing. So at another time, during a performance, we used that incident, the sound of it — I'm not saying that somebody couldn't pick that up simply as a musical phrase and do something with it as such — it was a much more specific reference when Bluiett used that phrase because even though I understood the notes, I knew more on other levels what he was talking about. It wasn't just a melody, you could get that externally. But I had a whole internal group of associations and understandings. Aside from merely *playing* together over a period of time, there is also a richer experience in that.

As I was saying about the big free ensembles, improvised ensembles as opposed to a strict big band-type arrangement. Okay, you can come up and play the arrangement, it just requires that you play a certain thing in concert with the other people there. But when you have more of a mental framework than a notated one to deal with, then associations like what we were talking about at lunch, or how the reception at this hotel was, or whether the rooms are any good, whether the food was any good, how delightful some lady might be, warm, friendly or whatever, all those kinds of things are more readily usable in a way. Ideas, conversations, we have access to the use of that material more readily than we would have if every chart was laid out, with "x" amount of room for solos, where this is underscored with a specific harmonic foundation. We don't really have to transcend those kinds of arbitrary situations in order to communicate through sound about conversation - colours - love - hatred whatever. We're able to use those experiences if we care to, we're able to use those almost immediately. And when they're group experiences it's a more intense thing.

But all this is in regard to the liberties we might take in improvisation. That's a large part of our perceptions but it isn't a priority consideration. Now so far we haven't really done a large piece of notated music in such a way that a person would know that it was a single thing. We've played some material that comprises a kind of suite but we've used the written aspects more like conventional arrangements, even to the point of playing one section, stopping — usually there's applause — then playing the next section, stopping — so that from the outside it seems like we've played these three or four pieces. But we haven't played a piece yet of that duration, of purely notated music. But at one point or another, when somebody feels the urge to put together a piece like that, then we'll do that.

Sometimes we use purely improvised pieces. There's one way to do that that probably allows for a certain kind of clarity, which is what you were suggesting, I think in your comment about there being no particular thread. It's possible to do a purely improvised piece, but prefacing it with some agreement, in terms of sequence of events or something of that nature. Using words, I mean, saying, "Okay, we'll do this." Which almost gives you a chart. Then sometimes we'll say, "Okay, the second piece we do will be improvised," without any particular description or anything, and when it's time to do the second piece, we start playing. Well sometimes that works extraordinarily well, and sometimes it doesn't work so well, if you make evaluations of things. Particularly with the ability to listen back to things now (indicates cassette recorder), you're constantly surprised, some things you thought worked well

were ho-hum, and something that didn't feel like it was working so well, when you listen back to it, it's very interesting.

David: You feel that's a chance worth taking, in improvised music?

Julius: Oh, I don't see that as a chance at all. Because the only standard or rule of thumb as far as I'm concerned is to come away with the feeling that I did the best I could do. Which sometimes involves shutting out distractions, from physical to spiritual, emotional distractions, somebody knocked the music over, the PA system went out or whatever, so I don't look on it as taking a chance. I have confidence in my ability to improvise — I do that most of the time, so it isn't really like taking a chance. The only chance is that initially it would be fantastic if we all had that inspiration that had symmetry, so that when we bop, when we hit, everybody was tuned in to the same kind of vibes, so bam, you start right out working, from the front, and that is interesting, that's really a good feeling. This is really an organic type of situation, so what in the strict context might be irregular isn't necessarily irregular in this kind of organic approach we have.

You can do anything better sometimes than you can other times, in a more inspired manner. So sometimes it's competent, and then sometimes it's exhilarating. And in our kind of thing it's kind of hard to program exhilaration. "Okay, we'll be exhilarating this time."

David: Least of all can you do it in composed music, at least when composition consists of, for example, notated music that you play every night....

Julius: Well, that can be exhilarating too because sometimes the endeavour is like putting together this patchwork quilt. Sometimes you can make it flow in such a way that even though you've played that same part many times, that can be exhilarating too because all of these precise, in human terms, precise inputs, all of them come together in a really flowing way. That's nice too. That's exhilarating. And it's easier to understand immediately than a large collective situation that feels that way but you can't hear the whole thing all at once, not really. You may hear all the parts but you can't get the entity. But with an orchestrated, notated piece, everyone knows what the other parts are so you can anticipate how it's going to be and see if in fact it lives up to your anticipations. "Oh well, my entrance was good this time! I didn't come in too softly or I didn't come in out of character...." Things work better sometimes, whether they're written or whether they aren't.

David: Have you and Oliver Lake been playing together long?

Julius: We've played together since about 1967. We played in this rhythm & blues quintet. The leader sang and played guitar, plus electric bass and drums. Oliver and I were the horns. We did that for a long time, maybe a couple of years. In BAG (the Black Artists' Group) we played together pretty often, and we were doing this R&B thing three or four nights a week, so we played a whole lot together. The thing about this band was that we weren't really that much confined to playing R&B-type music. I guess it was mostly blues-oriented, but we playing some ballads and stuff. The leader, James Bonner, was quite sympathetic and enthusiastic about playing different things. He wasn't all that schooled in harmonic things and so forth, but if he felt comfortable playing it, he'd play anything — in doing his number of course,

because he had his following. We played in small clubs, small in name anyway, and we played for dancing a lot, although we had a mixed audience. If they knew we were going to play somewhere some people would just come to listen to the things that Lake and I would do, and what the other people would do too. Because we weren't really confined to playing in any particular vein. The tune that James would play might be a James Brown piece or something like that, but we had licence, we could play. It was a really warm little friendly band, with some nice guys.

So Oliver and I have played lots of times, many hours....

David: You both have very vocal approaches to your horns, it sounds like to me. Did you consciously acquire that very vocal way of playing, the alto in particular?

Julius: As far as I'm concerned voices are the most rich instrument, and the variations in voice reproductions are seemingly infinite. And maybe I've done that, I can't speak for Oliver particularly because I don't know, he would have to answer that. But I played a lot with singers of one description or another, Joe Turner, lots of different singers. Joe Simon. A lot of singers. And I was probably influenced by that.

One kind of approach was used with the tenor saxophone. The tenor was used in one kind of way, it's kind of hard to put into words, and the alto saxophone was used in another kind of way. It seems to have a character such that it could become an extension of the singer — particularly blues singers. It has something to do with the timbre of the instrument. And I'm sure I'm influenced by some of these people. I remember especially doing these things with Joe Turner. He can get to grooving, just doing his regular numbers. And other singers, people who have what I might say a wider range of nuance than him, because he had his particular style and it was pretty consistent. The quality of the voice, the sound of his voice, that was pretty consistent. Whereas other people, I know this guy I used to play in this blues band with in Fort Worth, named Robert Gaston. He would make up these pieces right on the spot, just announce the key and count off the tempo, and you knew it was going to be a blues, so the basic harmonic thing was given. And he would sing these kinds of asymmetrical lines. He would acknowledge the harmony and form, but as far as the length of the phrases and stuff like that, that would depend on the number of syllables in the words, and the numbers of words in a phrase and stuff, and he had a different kind of sound, he would sound a few different ways, he would go into this tenor business, and then he had what used to be called a whiskey-type voice, a husky-type voice, and it would be very interesting playing with him as far as inner sound. At the time I was learning this stuff, and I didn't really think about it. Now you're asking me about it, so I'm saying well, that might account for it. Then, I don't know.... Johnny Hodges! He was a plastic man! — again, it's an alto. But I don't know, I never really thought about that too much.

David: A lot of your music sounds very bluesy, too. On "Dogon A.D." and that other side on Arista, *The Hard Blues*, the band sounds to me like a big blues guitar, there's a lot of space in the music, and it's got those kinds of lines to it. And Abdul Wadud is someone who to me plays

like a blues guitarist. Have you ever thought about that aspect of that band?

Julius: Well obviously *The Hard Blues* is a blues. And the cello is utilized in a way that suggests a guitar, in that piece particularly, and in the Dogon it plays a somewhat ostinato figure in the composition itself, in the improvised portions I think it continues to use one of the figures, but that use of the cello wasn't particularly imagined as having a guitar character. But I think its function is definitely that of a stringed instrument, some of the times like a bass, and some of the time like a stringed instrument, with the particular characteristics of a stringed instrument..... Single notes for the most part, as opposed to chordal stuff, Abdul does employ some chordal techniques. But from my point of view I appreciate the similarities between the guitar, particularly acoustic guitar, and a cello. It seems to be between

that and the bass. I am really in love with the cello.

In the Dogon, I was trying to achieve this kind of a natural, non-urban sound, with a dance feel. The idea was based on this tribe, the Dogon, in Mali, in The Upper Volta. I was reading an article once in this magazine published by U.C.L.A., called *African Art*. In this article it was reported that the Dogon had made a decision to feature some of their sacred dance rituals as a tourist attraction in order to beef up their economy. I thought it was interesting how they made the decision to do that, actually gave it long thought. I'm sure they gave that genuine consideration, probably it wasn't such a glib move as it would be in some other society. It occurred to me about exposing their dance so to speak, a part of their ritual. So I thought that I would try to capture what I thought represented the sound of the Dogon, and address that sound to a context that would

have a dance impulse associated with it — this is all totally subjective! — but this was how that came about. The instrumentation I thought did that pretty well for the kinds of instruments. So it made me realize that it didn't have to do with the instruments particularly, but achieving it had to do with the sensibilities behind it.

Also as far as it being a blues kind of thing, the alto part to me is something like - well, it's voice-influenced, say. I don't know that I was thinking of the voice aspect of it so much as the guitar, how the guitar is capable of getting this really vocal type of sound too, with the nuance and stuff, you know. That's possible on the saxophone, on any instrument, well any reed instrument. Brass instruments with mutes and things really are able to produce that kind of inflection. But you're able to manipulate the air better I think with a reed. And better still



photograph of Julius Hemphill, Joanne Robinson and Abdul Wadud by Jacki Ochs

with a string.

The other thing, *The Hard Blues*, is precisely out of my experience. There's a bridge that does some other stuff, but the basic, the outer edges of it are straight-up blues, basic blues.

David: Do African motifs mean a lot to you? They surface in your music from time to time, overtly. Like the Dogon, and elsewhere....

Julius: Does the Dogon sound African to you?

David: No, it sounds, like you say, non-urban, and the sound reminded me of a country blues guitar kind of sound.

Julius: Well, a country blues guitar is a very African entity, you see.

David: I was thinking of it as a distinctly American entity.

Julius: Uh huh. It *is* an American entity also, but you have to realize that American entities have their roots in a somewhat arbitrary situation — because America's not that old! So the same ways that Italians or French people brought, cuisine, say, and their music tradition or whatever, the African people brought theirs too. The whole vocal thing that we're talking about is an African phenomenon — that's the key to the whole thing. It's difficult for me to respond musically without introducing some of my African perceptions into it....

All the vocal applications that you made reference to in a saxophone's sound have to do with America for sure. But they come out of this kind of non-urban sensibility, which removes it a step and brings it to the juncture where the influences of Africans when they were introduced into the slave markets and whatnot, and their musical sensibilities, customs and so forth, where they weren't eradicated, the whole sound comes from that. It's not French music, it doesn't proceed from that kind of folk sensibility, it's African. The music in the Caribbean, and South America, is what emerged where there has been a cross-pollination so to speak between maybe Indian and African, Spanish and African. And then Spanish, you take that back to the Moors....!

David: ...and it takes you back to Africa again anyway....

Julius: Right! So that's in part where the sound comes from. Some of it is simply the properties of the instrument. Again, it's like, the sensibilities behind it.

David: Are you interested in using electronics at all in music?

Julius: I don't have much interest in electronics. I like the idea but personally I don't even like record players. For me, they're a pain in the ass. Intellectually I find electronic music interesting but for one thing I don't have access to electronic gear — I suppose I could gain access to it but I'm really not so much interested in doing so.

David: Have you been interested in classical music to any extent?

Julius: Yes, I find most music interesting, but classical is only one aspect of the whole music scene. I have studied a little bit of classical music. But it seems that classical music, rooted as it is, or has been, in Western society allows for an ongoing pursuit of change and of the reworking of basic harmonic materials. As for the theoretical aspects of music, to me you have this rather basic foundation to proceed from. And if you understand the workings — there's more than one set of workings, actually — but if you have some basis of beginning to understand what the traffic will allow in the harmonic practice, then you can proceed from

there using taste or preference or declaration, whatever, you can just proceed from there so I don't listen to a whole lot of music. I *have*; I don't now particularly. I listen to a lot of live music, so I don't really have much need of recorded music.

I don't like to be... to keep up with things, like items; cassettes and this, and that. I just feel that there's this thing that I know something about, this set of experiences or this set of phenomena that I can set in motion in certain ways, that I can activate. And I find that stimulating.

David: How did the Arista records come about? Had you been in New York very long when you made that deal?

Julius: Yes, I had been there about a year, I think. I had released the Dogon when I lived in St. Louis. Some people were aware of that and they were interested in it. They were interested in developing a whole catalogue of heretofore less widely-known stuff, along with the work of people who were established, like Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp. So they got in touch with me. I was able to swing some kind of deal with them. But they seem to have mixed purposes in that series. I've been out of town and I don't know what their policy is right now. But it wasn't such a fantastic deal, it was mostly a matter of expediency, and I must say I'm not particularly excited about the way that whole series has been handled, it seems quite haphazard.

I haven't been doing much in New York lately. I think I've been in New York four weeks since September, and not all at the same time. I've been working out on the west coast, California, Oregon; Washington D.C.; did a little tour of Holland, back to Philadelphia, back to Washington, Ann Arbor Michigan, and Oliver and I played in New York last Sunday, we played a matinee at Axis in SoHo. And that was the first time I played in New York since November. So I haven't pursued a lot of New York activity, because I was trying to get some momentum from making appearances in other places. A lot of places I haven't performed before, and there's some response to the recordings I've made. I wanted to help that whole thing gain momentum, and I've seen that public appearances are the things that do that. Recordings do that when there's airplay involved, but there are not enough stations that present our material, or material of that nature. So we strike out for various parts of the globe.

David: You find that at this point you can get gigs that can keep you circulating and playing your own music, consistently?

Julius: Well for quite some time that's all I've played. Since 1970 at least, I think 99% of the time I've just been playing my own stuff.

David: Did you know Anthony Braxton before you did that session with him on Arista? (Arista 4032 - "New York Fall 1974" - features a four-saxophone piece with Braxton, Hemphill, Oliver Lake and Hamiet Bluiett).

Julius: Oh yeah, I've known Braxton for fifteen years. He's from Chicago, which is only five or six hours from St. Louis by auto — I've done it in less than four hours. We used to do a lot of exchange programs between BAG in St. Louis and the AACM in Chicago. So I knew Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, Malachi Favors, Lester Bowie, Muhal Richard Abrams, all those people who have been associated with the AACM for a few years, I've known for quite a while.

David: Do you have ideas for further configur-

ations, such as large groups?

Julius: Yes, I'm very interested in doing something with a large ensemble. I haven't done much of that since the Black Artists Group in St. Louis. The problem is I'm interested in doing several things, and end up sometimes not getting to do that and doing something else that is equally interesting.

David: It sounds like BAG was really a creative period. Like there was a lot of music happening there at that time.

Julius: Music, and theatre too. It was very, very useful to me. Prior to that I had been exclusively in some kind of traditional, usual context. Bands, clubs, that kind of thing. And I didn't find that all that exciting. Just at moments would it be interesting or fulfilling. Then rather suddenly I had an opportunity to exchange ideas and work with people in other areas, theatre and dance. And we had no restrictions on what our musical endeavours might be like. So it was lovely, I loved it. I can't say enough about it. I hadn't been involved in anything remotely like that prior to that, so it was a really rewarding experience.

The group was operating full strength from about 1968 to 1971, then a lot of people moved and so on. I got to meet painters - I may have met them anyway, but not in such a sustained way as I was able to because of the existence of the group and the establishment of a single location where there were "no holds barred" so speak, just open to doing things.

David: So you found that you had common interests with them, despite the fact that you were working in different disciplines.

Julius: Yes, common interests and particularly all of them were way up into music. It seems that music might be a common denominator amongst people in different disciplines because many of them use music in some kind of way. I know personally a couple of painters who play music while they work. Music seems to be a common ground.

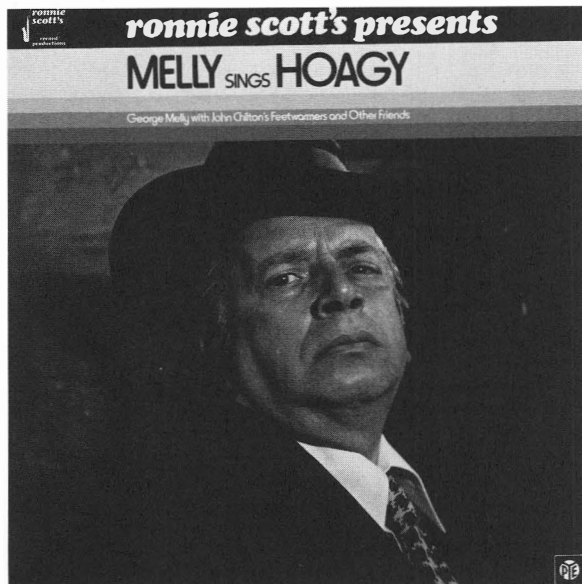
David: Who is the Roi Boye persona that you've used in *Roi Boye And The Gotham Minstrels*, and elsewhere?

Julius: The name came from my college days when a couple of my friends would call me Roy because I gave my name as Roy one time to a lady in the infirmary. I went in there to visit a friend and I went through the wrong door, I went through the back and it's a very small little place. This one matronly nurse was there, so she was about to reprimand me and said, "What is your name?!" I said, "Oh, hello, my name is Roy. And you?" And another time we shared a house, about four of us, and there was a movie on television, "Tobacco Road". One of the characters in it was called "Dude Boy". And he was a pretty free-spirited type, funky guy, so they started calling me that — Roy Boy. So it's just a kind of a nickname.

As far as utilizing it in this piece, I wanted to get a more interesting presentation together for a soloist. I sure didn't want it to be like Music Minus One. So I tried to come up with an imaginative vehicle to address this solo performer question. Like you'll have one or two ideas, and once you start exploring them you come up with others.

Bill Smith would like to thank Patricia Brown for transcribing his original tape.

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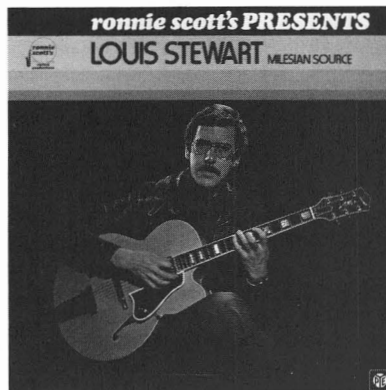
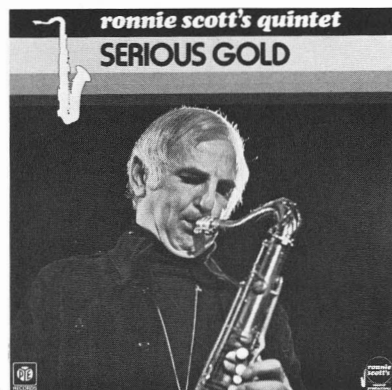


MELLY SINGS HOAGY

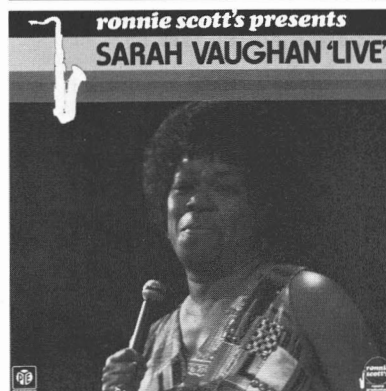
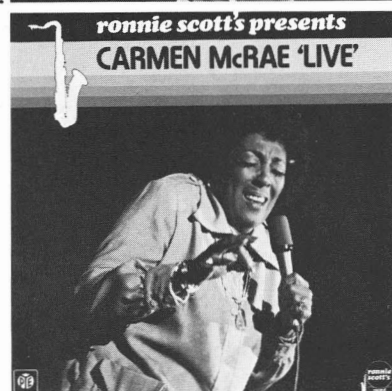
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BLUES NEWS

BY DOUG LANGILLE

There are no two ways about it — the best way to hear the blues is in a live performance. Preferably in the mellow, or contrastingly charged atmosphere of a bar or lounge. The experience is especially rich when the magic of audience/artist communication and interaction is at a maximum level. The adrenalin certainly tends to rush in the tight, smoky confines of a dimly lit bar with an excited crowd reacting to a loud, pulsating blues band. Lukewarm, skim milk American beer can even taste good in such environs and certain otherwise obvious technical flaws and faults in the performance can easily be overlooked in the electric atmosphere of the shared experience.

The bar is the place to catch the blues. In the large concert halls, vastness and distance between artist(s) and audience can erode the aesthetic high of presence. Blues concerts and/or festivals are the next best thing to a bar room performance, and further down the line we have the most accessible blues medium, recordings. Again, live bar and even concert/festival performances *can* provide the best basis for a blues recording. However, if poorly produced and recorded it can be a second rate experience for the listener and an embarrassment for the artist. A great deal of care must go into the recording of a live performance if the full range of the music is to be audible and appreciated by the record listener.

This brings us to a grouping of "live" blues LPs. First, a consideration of an ambitious Chicago blues series produced by Marcelle Morgantini for her French MCM label. In 1975 and 1976 Morgantini flew to Chicago and set up field recording operations in Ma Bea's and The Checkerboard. To date nine LPs have been released from these sessions with others coming later from a 1977 field trip. The first five were issued in late 1976: Jimmy Dawkins — "I Want To Know", MCM 900.290; Willie James Lyons and Willie Kent — "Ghetto", MCM 900.291; Bobby King — "Chaser", MCM 900.292; The Aces and Guests, MCM 900.293; and Jimmy Johnson and Luther Johnson Jr. — "Ma Bea's Rock", MCM 900.294. The remaining four LPs were released in late 1977 and include Jimmy Dawkins — "Come Back Baby", MCM 900.295; Eddie Clearwater — "Black Night", MCM 900.296; Big Voice Odom — "Going To California", MCM 900.297; and Magic Slim — "Born Under A Bad Sign", MCM 900.298.

Collectively the series deserves to be praised, although essentially it falls short of its goal of projecting a ghetto blues bar atmosphere. The sessions were (according to eyewitness reports) recorded in the bars during the slower, off-hours. The audience was supposedly dominated by the neo-Chicago blues establishment, musicians waiting their turn to record, and the reserved hopefuls. Not the typical extroverted evening blues crowd that places such great demands on the musicians. Generally the recording technique left crowd response, patter etc. out, and the final mixdown often subdues the solid bass work of such bassists as Sylvester Boines and Dave Myers. Vocals, lead guitar and drums are typically in the foreground of what is often a thin and flat sound.

The program is dominated by many over-recorded blues standards and numbers that several of the representative artists have performed on previous LPs. For example *Rock Me Baby* appears five times in this nine-LP

series! In addition, the program is characterized by long cuts and a noticeable leaning to the more uptempo contemporary funk beat. While this might be appropriate to a bar room setting or an at-home dance party, it might be somewhat monotonous to the more critical, laid-back living room blues voyeur. To add to the monotony for the stay-at-home listener, the series is generally limited to the realities of a working blues bar ensemble. That is, the instrumentation centres around lead and rhythm guitars, bass and drums. There is only one cut in the whole series on which a harp is heard (Louis Myers — *Off The Wall* — 900.293).

But all in all there is an ample supply of good music to be heard, and at times the rawness and energy generated does encourage a presence. Also many of the artists in this series have been under- or not previously recorded.

In addition there is a definite positive feature that is characteristic of over half the series. That positive feature is the presence of Jimmy Dawkins. As well as two LPs of his own (900.290 and 900.295), he makes significant contributions to those by Voice Odom (900.297), Clearwater (900.296), and the Jimmy Johnson sides of the Johnson and Johnson shared LP (900.294). Dawkins brings life to the sessions in which he participates. In his lead role he demonstrates that he is a continually evolving and consistently progressive guitarist. He is certainly not predictable, and even between his 1975 and 1976 sessions progressive changes are evident in his playing. On his own two LPs his vocal work is characterized by an aggressive assertiveness and the impact of his lyrics is dramatized by the unrelenting intensity of his guitar work. The man is an under-appreciated giant and deserves a hell of a lot more recognition. He is joined to good advantage by his regular working band of the time — second guitarist Jimmy Johnson, bassist Sylvester Boines and drummer Tyrone Smith, plus guitarist Richard Kirch on 900.295.

Turning to the other LPs with Dawkins as sideman, the Jimmy Johnson/Luther Johnson LP (900.294) is a record well worth checking out. Jimmy Johnson's highly individualistic blues voice and precise guitar work do justice to the infrequently recorded songs *So Many Roads* and *Crosscut Saw* plus the King standard *It's My Own Fault*. For added listening pleasure, Voice Odom sneaks in for a rendition of *Feel So Bad*. Luther Johnson draws from Elmore James, Magic Sam and from his own hard-hitting approach to funk and blues. There is a lot of action on Luther's cuts with much spirited guitar interaction between Luther and Willie Kent — the sparks really fly between these two.

Although Eddie Clearwater (900.296) is an adequate lead guitarist in the modern Chicago vein, he relies to good advantage on Dawkins and often through his encouragement exhorts heavy-duty emotive guitar out of Dawkins. A good set with the particular cut to watch being the long *Black Night*.

Finally there is the Voice Odom set (900.297). Unfortunately this is not as exciting as the two preceding LPs, with Dawkins again the saviour of the set. Voice, sounding like a neighbourhood showbiz Bobby Bland/B.B. King hybrid, moans and drags through excessively long originals and variants of *Rock Me Baby*,

The Thrill Is Gone and *Stormy Monday*. However, Voice does come to life and expose his true potential on Dawkins' *All For Business*. On this cut he seems to have a purpose.

The Willie James Lyons/Willie Kent set (900.291) features Kent on bass and vocals with guitarists Lyons, Big Guitar Red and Luther Johnson Jr. (on two cuts), and drummer Tyrone Smith (again). The music has a loose, tough ghetto bar rawness to it with the bulk of the titles being original or seldom-recorded songs. The program starts out with a tense *Little Red Rooster* and finishes with a rocking *You Don't Love Me*. The Bobby King set (900.292) is generally a good one. King handles lead guitar and vocals and is backed by a tight, functional trio. As leader he generates a "live" feeling throughout. However, on a too-long *Old Folks Boogie*, where he is joined by vocalist Muddy Waters Jr., this "live" excitement degenerates to a forgettable low. Cuts of particular interest are *Reconsider Baby* and *My Babe*. The latter is performed in an atypical and sensitive jazz guitar style. Quite refreshing.

In conclusion, it is strongly recommended that potential listeners consider LPs in this series. Several of them are well on the positive side of enjoyment and Marcelle Morgantini should be encouraged to continue her crusade. Evidently a trip to Chicago in late 1977 resulted in "live" sessions by Jimmy Johnson, Fred Below (with Eddie Taylor), Wayne Bennett, Willie James Lyons and Big Mojo Elem. There's good potential in that lot. For more information contact Marcelle Morgantini, MCM Records, "Les Bruyeres", 64290 Jar. - France.

In addition to the MCM series, here are two "live" LPs. The first is a British (bootleg?) set of material that is claimed to have been recorded at Pepper's Lounge in Chicago during the early 1960s. "Live At Pepper's Lounge, Chicago" (Rarities No. 28) is characterized by a muffled sound with very little evidence of an audience. The LP purports to include bands led by Little Walter, Eddie Taylor, Big Moose Walker, Earl Hooker and Voice Odom. The question here lies with the Little Walter sides. This is not the Little Walter of the original "Juke" quality. In fact, the vocal and harp work in question sounds like Louis Myers singing and playing through his harp mike.

The material is split 7/3 instrumental/vocal. A definite high spot is *Rocker* with Little Walter(?) and the Aces. This cut really demonstrates how the Aces can cook, if hungry. The clear guitar wizardry (WA WA et al) of Earl Hooker on the instrumental, *These Ole Cotton Picking Blues* is also to be appreciated. Backing for Hooker on this and three other cuts (of which Odom sings on two) is from a tight and hard working ensemble made up of Paul Askeff (sec. guitar), Geno Skaggs (bass), Mac Simmons (harp) and Roosevelt Shaw (drums). Odom's vocals sound quite distant and again, like he too is singing through a harp mike. However, the backing on these vocal sides is quite satisfying, especially Hooker and Askeff's lead/fill interplay. If interested contact Coda or Rarities Records, 30 Baker Street, London WIN 2DS, England.

The second LP is the Johnny Turner/Zaven Jambazian-led "Blues With A Feeling" (Testament T-2227). This set is essentially an expansion of the Johnny Turner EP on Jake Leg

BESSIE

by Chris Albertson 253 pp.
Stein and Day (hardcover and paperback)

OF MINNIE THE MOOCHER....

Of Minnie The Mocher & Me

by Cab Calloway

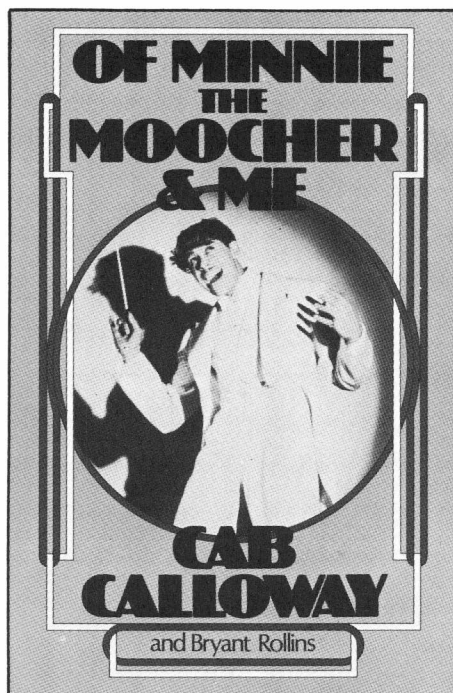
Published by Thomas Crowell

The lives and ideas of famous people continue to fascinate us. The biography is an established vehicle for writers to sift through fact and fiction in an attempt to arrive at a responsible assessment of the person's career. Public figures, whether they be statesmen, soldiers or artists, usually keep diaries, write letters and leave behind a large stockpile of usable material for the biographer.

In the case of Bessie Smith most of the usual sources do not exist. Press coverage of Black entertainers was limited in the 1920s and a performer of Bessie's generation was rarely given to written commentaries about their thoughts, ideas and ideals. Considering the paucity of material, Chris Albertson has done a remarkable job in assembling a fairly detailed account of the rise and fall of "The Empress of the Blues". The contributions of Ruby Walker, Maude Smith and Jack Gee Jr. give this book much of its body. The extensive dialogues are a direct result of the many interviews given by these close relatives of Bessie.

Albertson's writing style is fluid and he manages to tell us the story of Bessie's career while giving us more than a superficial impression of her personality and attitudes. Bessie Smith, the human being, comes alive just as surely as she does in the movie "St. Louis Blues". In many ways that role parallels her personality in real life. Like any good biographer, Chris Albertson sets the stage with his astute (and often painful) observations and commentaries of the times. His writing encompasses the social as well as the musical issues of Bessie Smith's life. The failure of earlier generations of writers to grasp the social realities of the jazz world in America is reflected in the paucity of information available of a personal (= human) nature of most pioneers of this art form.

Cab's autobiography is a little different. When you tell your own story you can choose what you want your readers to know. And through the years it has been apparent that the personality of Cab Calloway the entertainer has obscured other aspects of his career. His story is an engaging one — and reflects the strength and determination of his character is achieving so many goals. No autobiography balances the books, so to speak, but Calloway is not hesitant to reveal actions and events in his life which might be viewed with disfavour by society at large. It is very much a *personal* account of his life rather than simply being a show-business overview. He is perceptive and aware of the handicaps facing the black entertainer in America and he doesn't pull his punches. He also acknowledges the qualities of the musicians in his bands — speaking with pride about such players as Chu Berry, Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Hinton and Benny Payne. The reminiscences of his wife and children are particularly revealing — helping to put into perspective the complex



character of Cab Calloway and the inherent difficulties faced by all families whose breadwinner is often an absentee star.

Cab Calloway's story is part of the American Dream. He rose from poverty to a wealth he didn't know how to control. Unlike others he has survived long enough to be able to live in comfort and tell others of his experiences.

— John Norris

THE PLEASURES OF JAZZ

by Leonard Feather

Horizon Press, N.Y., 1976 \$7.95 hardcover

This book is a collection of superficial, mainly short, introductory-style pieces on musicians spanning the spectrum from well-known (Brubeck, Gillespie, Hancock, Hubbard, Herman) to unknown (Reb Spikes, Romano Mussolini). It is the musical mainstream which is best represented here; those performers who have continued the linear progression of jazz while never making any waves or being any kind of musical revolutionary: Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis, Red Norvo, Buddy DeFranco, Shelly Manne. Obviously this is where Feather's musical tastes lie; unfortunately these tastes have remained the same for at least two or three decades, as a result there is absolutely no mention of any of the far-reaching developments and changes which the music has undergone in the last ten years.

The tone of the book is apparently directed towards musical initiates or cretins; there is no musical analysis, nor is there any creative attempt to explore the music at all; instead we are regaled with a series of personality portraits which are simplistic instead of informative. There is nothing in this book which one couldn't ascertain on their own by merely listening to the music itself. The book reads like a collection of slightly glorified liner notes. And the prose style itself is highly pedestrian,

nowhere having the language dazzle of a Balliett, which is interesting even when the music discussed is not.

Feather's view of the music outside of the mainstream is either condescending or outrageously out-of-touch. In addition, his "Overview" of jazz over the past forty years is laughable in its exaggeration of the importance of certain "schools" of music while ignoring others, and his tirade against the "Woodstock generation" (especially since he conveniently forgets about the "hippy" movement in the jazz audiences of the 1940's and 50's, with its radical stance in terms of language, dress, politics, drugs, and sex). As if jazz still needed a spokesman in order to give it justification and legitimization!

I can't see this book being of anything more than passing interest to anyone already knowledgeable enough to be reading this magazine.

— Art Lange

SELECTIONS From The GUTTER

Selections From The Gutter: Portraits from *The Jazz Record*

Edited by Art Hodes and Chadwick Hansen

University of California Press, Berkeley, Ca.

1977

\$12.50

If Art Hodes wanted to quit his career as a boss "two fisted" piano player and all-round Music Man — which I hope he'll never do — he could get a job as a writer. Art's infrequent pieces on the music he knows inside and out are little gems that glitter in a morass of jazz writing that is mostly second-hand and third-rate. What Art isn't given enough credit for, however, is his contribution as a jazz historian, recording with foresight the lives and tribulations of some of the greats in the business while they were still alive and generally well.

His impressions, recorded hot off the griddle as it were, appeared in *The Jazz Record*, a magazine for fans put out by Hodes and author-printer Dale Curran in the early 'forties when Hodes was a six-day-a-week jazz disc jockey for New York's public radio station WNYC, "keeping jazz alive" in the war years with his own private collection of records — and no pay. The magazine didn't pay either — but it was a labor of love. From its very first issue, in February 1943, jazz lovers flocked to help *The Jazz Record*. John Hammond contributed the first article ("Duke Ellington Deserting Jazz?"). Charles Edward Smith, Robert Goffin and others followed. Sergeant (Al or George) Avakian was staff record critic; Sergeant Otto Hess provided many of the photographs that made the magazine's covers instant collectors' items.

But the magazine's greatest feat was getting the musicians to talk about themselves for the record. Being a fellow musician, Art had a big hand in this. But credit too goes to Curran (who worked for three out of the magazine's four-year life span), who could type as fast as the musicians talked, producing an important body of oral history before that technique was run to the ground by one-dimensional researchers with tape recorders for brains ("We didn't have a tape recorder," says Art. "Our style was to invite a musician to the JR office; sit

him down with a taste, and then get him to talk.”).

Some of those classic pieces from *The Jazz Record* have been collected in this long overdue volume, edited by “professor” Art Hodes and Chadwick Hansen, professor of English at the University of Illinois and obviously a discerning jazz fan. Not since “Jazzmen” by Frederick Ramsey and Charles E. Smith (soon to be re-issued) and Rex Stewart’s recollections in “Jazz Masters of the ‘30’s” has there been such a first-hand glimpse of musicians and their music. Some examples:

Cow Cow Davenport chatting (for the first and only time in print) about Boogie Woogie (literally “devil’s music”), the blues and about himself. Though a true original, Cow Cow at the end of his piece is left “wandering around, trying to get some work.”

Big Bill Broonzy talks about the blues, Mezz Mezzrow describes the Panassie sessions; Zutty Singleton recalls Bessie Smith (as do, in other ways, Carl Van Vechten and Hodes); Roy Carew discusses Scott Joplin (three decades before the Joplin fad) and Kaiser Marshall paints a colorful picture of New York at the time of Louis Armstrong’s arrival (and gives the true story of *Knockin’ A Jug*).

New Orleans is richly covered by the likes of John A. Provenzano, Louis Armstrong, Pops Foster, Baby Dodds, Eddie Edwards (of the ODJB), George Lewis, Jim Robinson, Johnny Wittwer, Lewis Eaton and others in individual pieces. Omer Simeon talks about Jelly Roll Morton’s craze for “special effects”; Dave Nelson (King Oliver’s nephew) recalls the King’s last band, in which he played most of Oliver’s solos, while Freddie Moore gives a vivid glimpse of King Oliver’s last tour (when Oliver called a rehearsal, he would walk in with the music on his arm and a gun in his hand) and has never said anything in print since (why doesn’t someone interview him?).

Other aspects of the jazz scene are covered from the musicians’ standpoint by George Wetling, Earl Wiley, Danny Alvin, Pete Daily, Floyd Bean, Doc Evans, Henry Goodwin, Harry Dial and Jack Bland, a touching appeal from Bunk Johnson just before he died, and a short piece by Gene Sedric on trouping with Fats Waller (with whom he made some 300 records). And of course there’s Art’s own literary contributions (pieces on big bands, jam sessions, 52nd Street, taxi dance halls, unions, radio, etc.) which are as evocative as his piano playing, bringing it all together “from the gutter”, where jazz and its musicians in those times were relegated.

One other thing *The Jazz Record* exemplified: brevity. None of the pieces exceeds two pages, most of them run into a few paragraphs, but they tell more with feeling than reams of rambling copy turned out by most jazz writers (or any other writers for that matter).

Like the three-minute tracks they used to record, Hodes and his contributors told their story, then cut out. So taking a cue from *JR*, I’ll keep this brief: with scores of “exploitation” jazz books coming off the presses this one stands out a mile. Grab it. — *Al Van Starrex*

MOVIN’ ON DOWN DE LINE

Movin’ On Down De Line
by Babs Gonzales
Expubience Publishing Corporation

Since the late 1940s Babs Gonzales has practiced his own special kind of independence. It has resulted in him being less famous than he should be, it has resulted in him being frozen out of the fruits of his talents in a material sense but it has not destroyed his integrity, his sense of humour or his ability to live the life of an artist.

“*Movin’ On Down De Line*” is his second book. Like the first, “*I Paid My Dues*,” it is a highly personalised viewpoint of life, his experiences and his impressions of people both within and outside of the jazz community. Unlike the first (which was a pocket-sized paperback) this book is in magazine format, is typed rather than typeset and contains more than 150 pages of double-spaced writing as well as a photographic portfolio.

The first section is a recap of his career with amusing, outrageous and distressing accounts of incidents with other musicians, fans, club owners and others in the business. It takes little imagination to read between the lines when Babs fails to mention the “heavies”. Section two is described as “Ghetto Poetry” and serves as an interlude before a resumption of stories relating to the fabulous life of Babs Gonzales on The Street. He explains the hustle in many different cities whereby he got sales moving on his first book so it’s entirely possible that Babs may show up one day with copies of “*Movin’ On Down De Line*” for sale. It seems that most of this book was written by around 1970 but it wasn’t published until 1975 and

now, as this is being written it is already half way to 1978.

“*Movin’ On Down De Line*” may not be a learned dissertation on the state of jazz but it is immensely readably and tells some down home truths about the frustrations of making it in the jazz life when you don’t control any of the outlets. It is also a revealing reminder of the sense of community between jazz people (especially those who play the music) which guarantees some measure of protection for the travelling minstrel no matter whether he is in the U.S. or elsewhere. This sense of community has helped keep the music strong.

Babs Gonzales is one of the true individuals of the music. The only problem is he failed to mention the price of his book. But there’s an address: c/o Robert Brown, 29 Rose Terrace, Newark, New Jersey 07108. We hope that it’s still good. If not keep your eyes and ears open for when Babs Gonzales hits your town — he’s a citizen of the universe.

— *John Norris*

IMPROVISING

Improvising: Sixteen Jazz Musicians and their Art
by Whitney Balliett
Oxford University Press \$12.75

An unusually plain title for this latest collection of Balliett writings, but in overall calibre it is probably the most beguiling so far compiled in

Think Da Capo First Name in Jazz Books

JAZZ MASTERS OF NEW ORLEANS

Martin Williams

“There’s no end to the goodies in this book . . . You come away from this reading feeling grateful.”

— Art Hodes, *Downbeat*

Martin Williams brings the old New Orleans to life with his accounts of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and legendary jazzmen Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton, Joe “King” Oliver, Sidney Bechet, Louis Armstrong, Zutty Singleton, Kid Ory, Bunk Johnson and Red Allen. 304 pp., 8 pp. illus., cloth \$19.50.

THE SOUND OF SURPRISE

Whitney Balliett

“Whitney Balliett is the poet laureate of jazz.”

arnold jay smith

This first collection by *The New Yorker*’s jazz critic touches on every aspect of jazz, from the traditional to the *avant-garde*. 250 pp., cloth \$13.95.

SO THIS IS JAZZ

Henry O. Osgood

Originally published over fifty years ago, *So This is Jazz* gives a picture of what jazz was like to its first fans, and discusses the lives and work of its earliest giants. 266 pp., 11 illus., cloth \$14.95.

BLUES AND THE POETIC SPIRIT

Paul Garon

British jazz writer Paul Garon looks at blues as poetry, suggesting that its sources of inspiration are deep, powerful and hidden. The book contains analyses of lyrics, a vast amount of information, and dozens of photos. 178 pp., approx. 50 illus., cloth \$15.00.

Da Capo Paperbacks coming this Fall:

Treat It Gentle: An Autobiography by Sidney Bechet, \$5.95

Music on My Mind: Memoirs of an American Pianist by Willie the Lion Smith, \$6.95

The Jazz Life by Nat Hentoff, \$5.95

DA CAPO PRESS, INC.

227 West 17th Street,
New York, N.Y. 10011

book form.

Balliett is famous for his verbalisations of the sound textures of the music but, in the long run, I think he will be best remembered for the in-depth profiles of individual musicians. Sixteen of them are represented here and they show that Balliett's formula is often repeated. In most cases they are a clever juxtaposition of narrative, description, interview and historic perspective. He usually spends some time in the company of his subjects — whether it's in their home (Red Allen, Pee Wee Russell, Red Norvo, Jim Hall, Bob Wilber), travelling around town (Earl Hines, Mary Lou Williams, Jess Stacy, Buddy Rich, Stephane Grappelli) or just with straight interviews (Modern Jazz Quartet). The chapters on King Oliver and Sid Catlett are the only exceptions to this system.

Balliett's ability to bring into focus the human characteristics of his subjects gives his essays a depth of focus often missing from the jazz profile. The reader begins to understand the feelings and foibles of the men as human beings as well as their abilities and idiosyncrasies as musicians.

Despite their being published previously (some in earlier Balliett book collections) it is fitting that such diverse musical characters are profiled together, in a book where the subject musicians fail totally in their efforts at explaining just how the art of improvisation is carried out!

— John Norris

AS SERIOUS AS YOUR LIFE

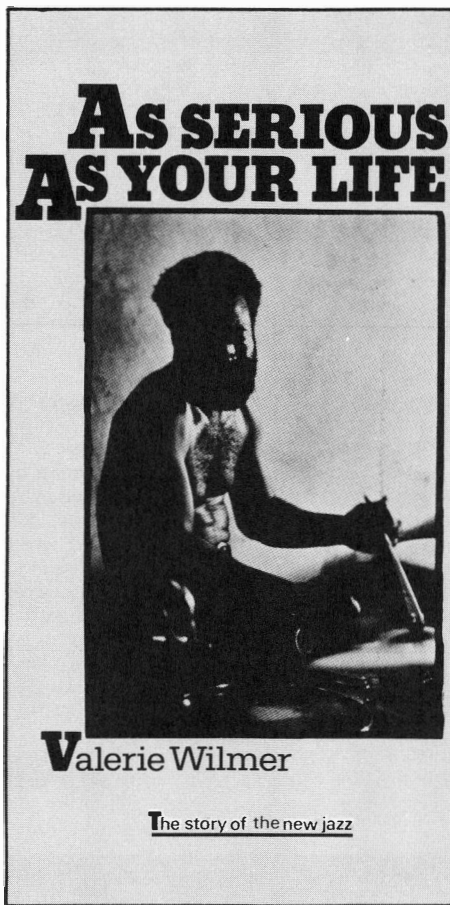
As Serious As Your Life

by Valerie Wilmer

Quartet Books, London/Melbourne/New York,
1977 6.50 pounds

There are several ways of writing about music; Gunther Schuller's "Early Jazz" put forth a technical and analytical study with notational layouts to pull together Schuller's premise; LeRoi Jones' "Blues People" was a study dealing with the socio-economical-political realities of Black people and music; and Valerie Wilmer's "As Serious As Your Life" falls more closely along the line of music philosophy within the edifice of Africanamerican culture in the U.S.A.

"As Serious As Your Life" shows strongly that America is a dual and divided culture. For one to understand why a book like this is needed, one need only experience the taste of fire in actuality; Wilmer spent over fifteen years working to understand Black culture in America as expressed through Black Music, making numerous trips back and forth from England to the U.S., photographing, interviewing, and taking notes. This recent result of her labors is a book which I find to be a very powerful and proud Black book, for it sings the praise song of the procreators of the new music and of their direct descendants. "As Serious As Your Life" is not only about "name" musicians but, as a refreshing difference, it also offers extensive interviews with younger musicians and reflects the new attitude in the ever-changing Black Music culture. Wilmer writes in her introduction: "Overall it is the dedication of the musicians that is the reason for this book. It endeavours to introduce the new musicians, to describe who they are and where they come from. It also explains why some of them are forced to compromise and why, in spite of the fact that it is hard to earn any kind of living



from the new music, so many of them refuse to do so."

Wilmer's new book is interwoven with such quotes from the master musicians as this one from Cecil Taylor: "First, this is a materialistic society and no one ever asked you to be involved with spiritual values. If you are, you have to accept the responsibility of that, and if you're a Black man, this is complicated in many, many different ways. This also means that it is more difficult, finally, for a man like Paul Chambers to live, because unless he has like an awareness which doesn't necessarily arrive in a place like Detroit, chances are that the greater the contribution you make, you're not even remembered except by people that are old enough or have happened to be on the scene."

"As Serious As Your Life" is a book highly rich in feeling and one which brings to light the brilliant essence one encounters in the ever-evolving consciousness in creative music. The book is particularly important because it is one of the only books in print which deals exclusively with the new music and its historical context. (LeRoi Jones, in "Black Music", also dealt with the new music, but he concentrated on the New York scene; whereas Wilmer deals with the entire spectrum and all of the players of this new Black Music). An additional asset for students and researchers in the music is the section at the end of the book which includes biographical sketches of many of the musicians playing the music today.

One can hear creative music (Black Music) in the arena of art music throughout the world, and it has shown for over a century now to be a vital, living form. As stated so aptly by McCoy Tyner: "...music's not a plaything. It's as serious as your life."

— Leo Smith

MICROGROOVE

Duke Ellington on Microgroove 1923-1942.

Clarence Williams on Microgroove.

compiled by Dick M. Bakker

Micrography

The problems facing collectors of "classic jazz" on microgroove are compounded every year. Every reissue multiplies the problems facing anyone trying to obtain all of the records by that particular artist. Booklets such as these are invaluable aids to the collector. They clearly list current and previous reissues of each title and unravel most of the nagging questions facing the buyer as he studies the titles of yet another record in the display bin of his favourite store.

Both Ellington and Williams recorded many tunes more than once so listings such as this are doubly useful. Whether one wants or needs all or most of the records by a particular artist is another question but obviously reference books such as this are invaluable.

The Ellington book has been available for well over a year so is already outdated to some extent while the Williams booklet complements the recent Tom Lord bio-discography of the pianist. Like most Storyville publications it is woefully inadequate in its coverage of LP reissues and its publication motivated Bakker to compile this listing.

We have to be grateful for the patience, attention to detail and sheer thoroughness of such dedicated researchers as Dick Bakker.

— John Norris

JAZZ SOLOGRAPHIES

Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry, Charlie Christian/ Robert Normann/ Oscar Aleman, Henry Bridges/ Robert Carroll/ Herschel Evans/ Johnny Russell.

Compiled by Jan Evensmo.

A personal variant of discography has been conceived by Jan Evensmo. Basically it is a personal discography of a musician with the addition of his solo contributions and Evensmo's *personal opinions* of the musical worth of these solos.

The Coleman Hawkins book only takes us to 1942 but it is apparent that Evensmo considers Hawkins to have reached his zenith in the late 1930s with the perfection of his rhapsodic style. Both this book and the Chu Berry are useful reference books of major artists. You can quickly check on their solo contributions on every recording.

The permutations of the various Charlie Christian sessions with Benny Goodman are clearly outlined — which makes it easier to understand the sources of the various LP issues on Columbia and Jazz Archives. Robert Normann is a Norwegian guitarist whom Evensmo is enthusiastic about while Oscar Aleman is an Argentinian guitarist whose European recordings of the late 1930s are listed here.

Four other tenor saxophonists of merit are featured in the remaining book. Of these only Herschel Evans' reputation has outlasted his active career but it is nice to find someone willing to devote time and space to the contributions of Bridges, Carroll, Evans and Russell.

Layout, type and printing is superior to most discographies.

— John Norris

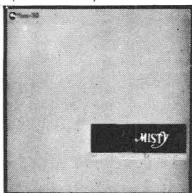
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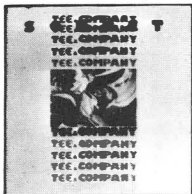
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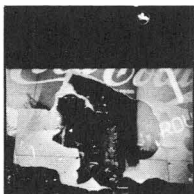
TBM-2530
"MISTY"
TSUYOSHI YAMAMOTO TRIO
"BEST ENGINEERING AWARD" of
Jazz Disk Award, 1974 (No.1)
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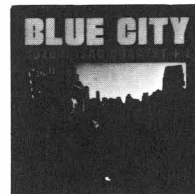
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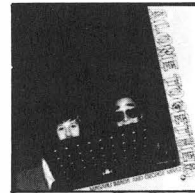
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JAZZ OF JAPAN

BY MASASHI KATAGIRI

Just think, about 1,600 jazz albums were released in Japan last year! This was more than twice the U.S. figure and included many LP's made by U.S. musicians in New York or Tokyo but never released in the States, as well as reissues by the dozen (last month's output alone included eight newly listed items by John Coltrane) and about 170 by Japanese artists, recorded by 11 major and 3 minor record company. It is not so difficult to understand that Japan has been established already as the world's second most active center of jazz (and, on a mass pop/rock/jazz level, the world's second largest music market).



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RECORD REVIEWS RECORD REVIEWS..

ARTHUR BLYTHE

The Grip
India Navigation 1029

Arthur Blythe originally began attracting attention in his native California where he performed with composer/pianist Horace Tapscott. Since he moved to New York, the saxophonist has been working with Chico Hamilton and his own group. He is a strongly imaginative musician who fuses lyricism and energy into a singing yet surprisingly intense style.

"The Grip" captures Blythe and his sextet at The Brook in New York City on February 26, 1977. The saxophonist likes to explore many different colors and textures. He employs the unusual instrumentation of alto saxophone, trumpet, cello, tuba, drums and miscellaneous percussion to create a fresh sound. (Blythe points out in his album notes that these six instruments encompass the entire history of jazz from the past to present). Bob Stewart's tuba is prominently featured. It replaces the more conventional bass, but also functions as another horn, giving the band a bigger, brighter sound.

All the musicians play well, especially Blythe, who plays impassioned solos which beautifully fit the mood of each composition. His energetic and soaring phrases on *The Grip* and his timbral variations on *Lower Nile* are very impressive. Yet, it is his unaccompanied solo *My Son Ra* which finds Blythe at his finest. The saxophonist uses a short riff as his reference point, returning to it frequently throughout the piece. The result is a reflective, impassioned, and eloquent statement which well displays the large talent of Arthur Blythe.

— Clifford Jay Safane

ANTHONY BRAXTON

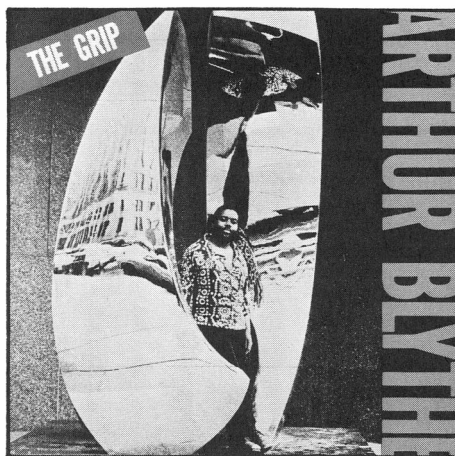
The Montreux/Berlin Concerts
Arista AL 5002

RICHARD TEITELBAUM

Time Zones
Arista-Freedom AL 1037

Lately it has seemed possible that Anthony Braxton was spreading himself a bit thin, judging at least from his recordings. Closer examination, however (and more recently, hearing his latest quartet in concert), reveals this to be a problem of marketing rather than of musicianship. Of the records I'm thinking of, the duets with Muhal Richard Abrams suffer merely from the fact that this particular duo combination is not all that interesting. The other record, "In The Tradition, Volume 2" shows that the session that produced the terrific "In The Tradition" was really as uneven as Braxton claimed it to be in his liner notes to that unique record. It is encouraging that "In The Tradition" was successful enough to prompt SteepleChase/Inner City to release the session's out-takes, but musically Volume 2 is not very good at all.

Anyway, these latest releases thrust aside all reservations. "The Montreux/Berlin Concerts" is possibly overall the best record Anthony



Braxton has ever made. Half of this two-record set comprises three sides and is, I think, the best quartet music — David Holland (bass) and Barry Altschul (drums) with either Kenny Wheeler on trumpet or George Lewis on trombone — that he has ever revealed on record. The music swings in the sense of maintaining a beautiful rhythmic mastery and momentum. All the horn players are at their best, Wheeler the ideal complement to Braxton's reeds, Lewis the ideal contrast.

Superb as this music is, the music on side four is in its own way as powerful an entity; that's why I designated it as half the record. It is a Braxton composition performed by the composer and George Lewis accompanied by The Berlin New Music Group — "conducted by Herr Hummel" — this is the only information the liner gives as to the personnel of The Berlin New Music Group. I found the harpist's work especially fine — it is the only instrument featured in prominence second only to Braxton and Lewis themselves. Especially when the ensemble provides such a marvelous backdrop of shifting textures and moods around the two American soloists, I find the omission of the players' names and instruments frustrating. Again, the only fault one can find in this landmark recording is in its packaging, not in the music.

For reasons of convenience — for example, both records were issued at about the same time, and by the same company — I'm including a record issued under Richard Teitelbaum's name into an "Anthony Braxton" record review. Perhaps this is unfair to Teitelbaum... but "Time Zones" consists of two improvised duets. As such, both members of the duo deserve equal billing, unless perhaps one member is relegated to a supportive role, is deliberately self-effacing in his work or is musically nondescript; Braxton is none of these. His alto dominates *Crossing*. *Behemoth Dreams* evokes an image of some great beast — Teitelbaum's synthesizer is its body, mass, movement and form, Braxton is its voice. There aren't very many synthesizer players who use the instrument as thoroughly as Richard Teitelbaum. On repeated hearings his landscape of hisses, wails, textures, and barely-audible drones becomes an essential part of the listener's experience. The past few years has produced a lot of synthesizer players, even good ones, but there are few whose work is as satisfying or original as Teitelbaum's.

"Montreux/Berlin" and "Time Zones" are

two fine records, very different from each other, whose music is exceptionally successful.

— David Lee

BERGER/HOLLAND

Karl Berger/David Holland
All Kinds of Time
Sackville 3010

Recent years have seen a proliferation of solo and duet performances, some more successful, some less; this recording clearly belongs in the "more" category. Berger wrote all the music on this album; his compositions focus the two players' energies and lead to unusually concise, pithy statements. There is evidence of planning and forethought here, but the album is structured to take maximum advantage of the spontaneous interplay between the two. The result is an effective balance of prearrangement and moment's inspiration.

Holland is becoming to New Music recordings what Paul Chambers was to the recordings of the late fifties; ubiquitous, versatile, always capable, often (as here) contributing materially to a session's success. The distance bass playing has moved in the intervening twenty years can be measured by the role Holland plays in directing the flow of the music; he also adapts smoothly to the differing demands of these stylistically varied works. Incidentally, I had always thought of Berger as a vibraphonist, but here he shows himself to be similarly adept on acoustic piano, on which he gets a rather chunky sound.

Simplicity is a Latin-inflected composition for piano and bass which opens into a medium swing in Berger's rather free solo. The theme returns to introduce a bass solo (which Berger backs with sparse clusters), and both players use fragments of it as unifying elements in their solos. A subliminal reappearance of the theme brings on a pointillistic coda, during which Holland gets out his bow. Berger changes a chord to make the theme end in a minor tonality.

Perfect Love is a jazz waltz with almost gospel overtones. Berger opens on piano (over arco bass) and later switches to vibes; his short solos mix blues licks and metrically free lines. *Fragments* is more coherent than its name would imply. Berger starts out with the pentatonic gourd sounds of a balaphon. Holland enters with sparse, short sounds which gradually fill out into a walking line. Berger, on vibes now, introduces an Ornette Coleman-like line, and a Coleman-ish modal ride develops. Later piano and bass duet, now one, now the other prominent. Finally Berger, back on vibes repeats the melody, ending almost abruptly with three thirds from the theme.

Beginning begins with the solemn clangor of bell-tone octaves from the vibes over a droning arco bass. In its pentatonic modality (the piano's black keys), its gonglike sonority, and a general Asian flavor, it reminded me of some of the work of the classical composer Alan Hovhaness. There is considerable overbubbling on this piece, with nicely nasal arco bass, blues-inflected piano and vibes, and some cello-register bowing. The medley of *Now Is, D'Accord, All Kinds Of Time, We Are* is a long excursion



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2005 Teddy Wilson In Tokyo (issued in Japan as Philips RJ-5001).
Teddy Wilson (piano)

I Get A Kick Out Of You, Sweet Lorraine, Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (And Dream Your Troubles Away), My Ideal, On The Sunny Side Of The Street, Body And Soul, I Cried For You, Smoke Gets In Your Eyes, I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Write Myself A Letter, Summertime, Runnin' Wild, She's Funny That Way, I've Got The World On A String, I Surrender Dear.

2006 The Roscoe Mitchell Solo Saxophone Concerts
Roscoe Mitchell (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass saxophones)

Nonaah, Tutankamen, Enlorfe, Jibbana, Eeltwo (Part One), Eeltwo (Part Two), Oobina (Little Big Horn), Ttum, Nonaah.

2007 Galloway/Wellstood/Magadini: Three Is Company
Phil Galloway (soprano saxophone, clarinet), 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 Blues, I'd Climb The Highest Mountain, Let's Get Away From It All, Everything I've Got.

2008 Nimmons 'N' Nine Plus Six: The Atlantic Suite
Phil Nimmons (composer/arranger/conductor/clarinet) with his 15-piece orchestra featuring Herbie Spanier, Andy Krehm, Keith Jollimore, Dave Field and Art Ellefson.

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2009 Roscoe Mitchell Quartet
Roscoe Mitchell (Bb soprano, tenor and alto saxophones), George Lewis (trombone), Muhal Richard Abrams (piano), Spencer Barefield (guitar).

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2010 Oliver Lake/Joseph Bowie
Oliver Lake (alto and soprano saxophones, flute), Joseph Bowie (trombone).

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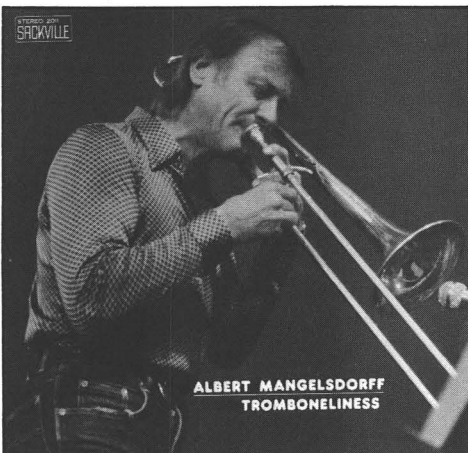
2011 Albert Mangelsdorff: Tromboneliness (issued in Europe as MPS 68.129)
Albert Mangelsdorff (solo trombone)

Do Your Own Thing, Tromboneliness, Creole Love Call, Bonn, Questions To Come, Mark Suetterlyn's Boogie, Fur Peter, Brief Inventions.

2012 Ralph Sutton (previously released in Switzerland on 88 Up Right)
Ralph Sutton (solo piano)

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THE ROSCOE MITCHELL SOLO SAXOPHONE CONCERTS

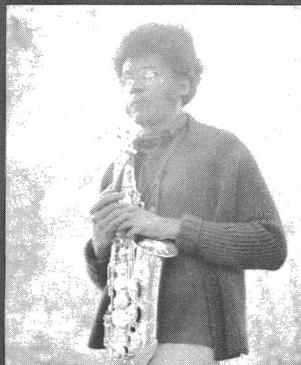


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Dollar Brand (piano)

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3007 Anthony Braxton: Trio And Duet

Anthony Braxton (reeds), Leo Smith (brass), Richard Teitelbaum (synthesizer).

HM - 421, HM(RTS), 47.

Anthony Braxton (alto saxophone), David Holland (bass).

The Song Is You, Embraceable You, You Go To My Head.

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Don Pullen (piano)

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Dollar Brand (piano)

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3010 Karl Berger/David Holland: All Kinds Of Time

Karl Berger (vibraphone, piano, balafon), David Holland (bass).

Simplicity, Perfect Love, Fragments, The Beginning, Now Is, D'Accord, All Kinds Of Time, We Are.

3011 Jay McShann/Buddy Tate: Crazy Legs And Friday Strut

Jay McShann (piano), Buddy Tate (tenor saxophone).

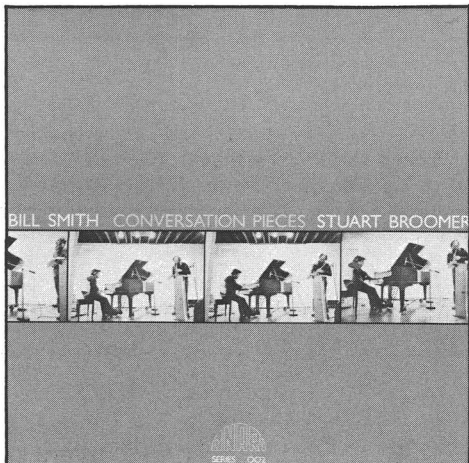
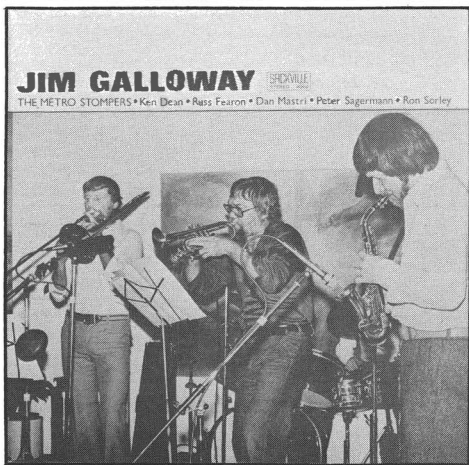
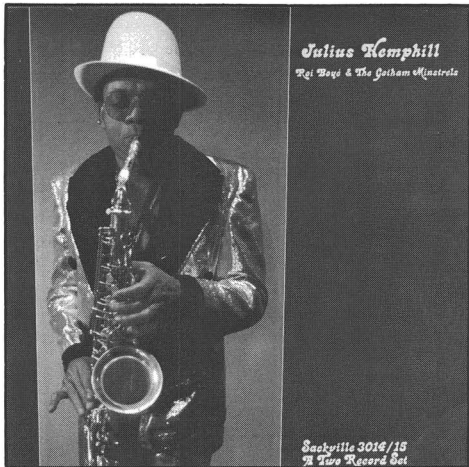
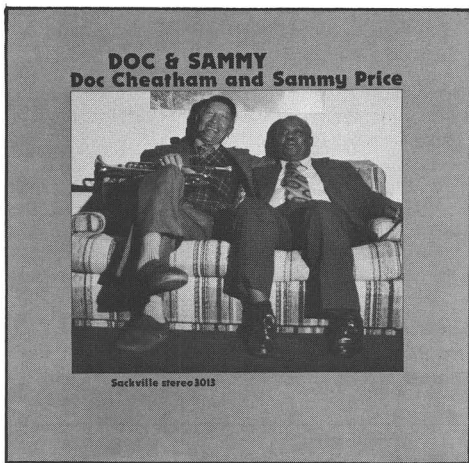
My Melancholy Baby, Say It Isn't So, Shakey George, It Must Be True, Ellington Medley (I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good, In A Sentimental Mood, Sophisticated Lady), Crazy Legs And Friday Strut, If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight, Rock A Bye Basie.

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through the four compositions via inventive interplay too intricate to chart.

An excellent recording of the sort the major companies won't touch, and an example of the valuable contribution independent labels such as Sackville can make. — *David Wild*

JOHN CARTER

Echoes From Rudolph's Ibedon IAS 1000

John Carter, clarinet, soprano saxophone; Stanley Carter, bass; William Jeffrey, drums; Chris Carter, percussion; Melba Joyce, vocal.

Side One: *Echoes From Rudolph's, To A Fallen Poppy.*

Side Two: *Angles, Amin, The Last Sunday.*

John Carter nourishes a muse which is a pure distillation of years of unfettered commitment to a musical ideal. From the very first notes on this album Carter manifests his commitment to the clarinet as a modernist instrument that in the hands of a master can speak in as many dialects of music's universal tongue as the more documented schizoprenic voices of the saxophone family. Carter's clarinet lines are gnarled and sinewy in a strong sense, yet what is transmitted is more than mere power. The natural warmth of the wooden instrument radiates throughout his playing.

In *Angles*, a solo piece, Carter's tone and texture resonate unimpeded but his convoluted line almost cries out for intervening response. This is supplied by William Jeffrey, a drummer of throbbing and shimmering pulsations, and particularly by the bass playing of Stanley Carter, John's son and the biggest surprise of this album. Inherited talents being conceded, young Carter also has learned well the means of interaction developed by his father and Bobby Bradford; a more sharply-focused, terse counterpoint than the free-spirited activity of the prototype Coleman/Cherry quartet. Stanley's playing is raw and blustering at up tempos, with a predilection for loping, ascending double-stops, but when he is listening his playing moves into the fine open spaces that today's liberated bass player can inhabit.

John Carter's playing on pieces like *Echoes From Rudolph's* and *Amin* is more vociferous at least in its textural openness than it was with the Bradford quartets, a curious reversal of the typical pattern of mellowing expression with age. He has completely stepped into his own milieu beyond the post-Parker inclinations of his earlier work on alto and tenor. *Amin* is performed on soprano sax and here Carter's distinctiveness comes into light. I can really hear no one but John Carter in his playing but still the most immediate reflection of his unique persona is heard when he plays clarinet.

To A Fallen Poppy unveils the voice of one Melba Joyce, another rather compelling debut. On this primarily composed piece Ms. Joyce measures her voice with low thrush-like tones that modulate stealthily through Carter's spectral clarinet backdrops. Young Carter's full, sepia tone escorts her from a step behind, a delicate echoing performance. Ms. Joyce is reminiscent here of such haunting vocalists as Jeanne Lee and Sheila Jordan.

The album closes ominously with *The Last Sunday* revealing another face of expression from Carter's clarinet in a searing palette of

intense hues. The piece has a chilling impact and appears to me to be more revealing than Carter might suggest in his liner notes in which he inscribes simply "...the happiness and sadness of that day can be felt..."— the last of his Sunday concerts at Rudolph's Fine Arts Center in Los Angeles. The experience of his two years of Sunday concerts was a presumably positive, productive time and yet this acutely heartfelt and severe performance evokes images and feelings of not a "beautiful" blackness but an anguished, trembling existential blackness. John Carter, an intelligent, experienced and sensitive black man seems to be speaking his mind on more than just a Sunday afternoon at Rudolph's. — *Kevin Lynch*

ORNETTE COLEMAN

Coleman Classics 1 Improvising Artists 37.38.52

Don Cherry, tpt; Coleman, as; Paul Bley, pno; Charlie Haden, bs; Billy Higgins, dms. Los Angeles, 1958

For a record as close to momentous as this one, "Coleman Classics 1" is pretty well disguised. It is not just the artwork on the cover, which is a lot less attractive than a plain white sleeve. More to the point is the information that it offers, which apart from the personnel, is usually wrong. Notwithstanding the liner note, Side A consists of a Coleman original (14:46) and a ballad (4:35); Side B has another original (14:13) and a free improvisation by Coleman, Cherry and Bley which is credited to Coleman (1:53). The Coleman tunes may or may not be *When Will The Blues Leave, Crossroads* and *Ramblin'*, as stated, but the ballad is definitely not *How Deep Is The Ocean*.

The time and date are given simply as "Los Angeles 1958", a date which deserves some elaboration. These tracks were made at the Hillcrest Club in west L.A., where the quintet played for over a month in between the two recording sessions which were later released as "Tomorrow is the Question" (Contemporary). Pianist Paul Bley, also listed as producer, was apparently responsible for setting up the tape recorder on the stand. Above and beyond the mere addition to the sparse recorded work of Coleman, the recording documents a particularly interesting moment in his development. It marks, for one thing, one of the few occasions when Coleman and members of his coterie could try out their music in public. The L.A. jazz establishment had been unreceptive and even hostile to them for years. The Hillcrest date was a breakthrough. It was also the baptism of Charlie Haden, who has said that he discovered his style during this very gig.

The music presented here is uneven both in recording quality and in performing skill. B2 is the kind of free form that was quickly removed from the repertoire; its succession of a cappella statements by Coleman, Cherry and Bley is probably the most formless and least interesting of musical formats. On this and on B1, Bley's piano is woefully under-recorded, so much so that on B1 his humming actually drowns out his solo. B1 does, however, give a taste of the startling ensembles of Cherry and Coleman. A2 is a conventional ballad, alarmingly so, with a good solo by Bley and a beautiful one by Cherry, who reveals a tone that is almost lush.

And then there is A1, which by itself would

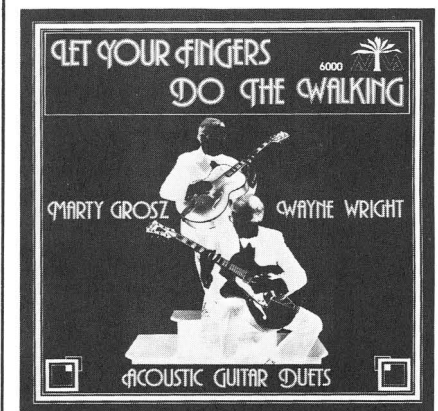
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"Let Your Fingers Do The Walking"

Marty Grosz and Wayne Wright - Acoustic Guitar Duets

Cross Your Heart, Chick A La Swing, Slightly Under The Weather, A Porter's Love Song, Street Of Dreams, Let Your Fingers Do The Walking, Danzon, Stage Fright, I Believe In Miracles, Pack Up Your Trunk, Just Squeeze Me, Skylark, By The River St. Marie, Lament In 'E', Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives To Me.

Recorded in New York City, Feb. 1977.

Each \$7.98 postpaid from Coda Publications, Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4X8 Canada.

justify this release. It is full of good things, including a long solo by Haden which moves Coleman to make a running commentary. ("A-haa," he says at one point. "Takin' care of business, Charlie.") Haden's solo is followed by a long counterpoint passage in which Coleman and Cherry shadow one another so deftly that they seem to be driven by one mind instead of two. More than anything, this track is stamped with the shape of things to come.

— Jack Chambers

SONNY CLARK

The Sonny Clark Memorial Album — Original 1954 Recordings
Xanadu 121

One of the most stunning re-releases of recent years has been the Serge Chaloff Quartet's recording on Capitol, not only because of the effervescently inventive Chaloff but also because of the inevitably right comping and imaginative soloing of pianist Sonny Clark. That imagination is also strongly evident on this Xanadu recording, made at a party in Oslo on January 15, 1954.

Each side starts with Clark beginning to sharpen his improvising awareness. He seems completely at ease with no sense of rush in his playing, none of the wrong kind of tension that might be present in a studio or a public performance, for Clark slides into these improvisations in leisurely fashion. The opener on Side 1 starts as a bopish blues with some witty interpolations of other themes. But though there is an easiness about the atmosphere, Clark shows no sloppy attitude; there is an inherent sense of form in this solo. At the same time he tries out all kinds of moods and types of piano solo, alternating between rapid single finger runs and block chords. He also changes the form easily, from blues format to 32-bar frame.

The opener to Side 2 is entirely different, starting almost tentatively, as if the pianist is searching out a theme to explore. He quickly passes through various suggestions and finally fixes on *Over The Rainbow*, which becomes a clever but sincerely deep bow in the direction of Tatum. It is essentially the work of a young musician just sensing his own abilities, playing brash and exuberant piano. His final cadenza runs into flashy extravagance but without ruining the splendid statements which have preceded it.

That thoughtful feeling-out of a theme can also be heard in Clark's combination of *Body And Soul* and *Jeepers Creepers*. The first tune, after an exploratory plunge, is stated briefly before Clark launches into a blistering *Jeepers Creepers*.

Free of normal restraints Clark tries a variety of things. Besides those I have already mentioned, he indulges in some very fast tempos: *All God's Chillun Got Rhythm* (though the effect in the first chorus is strange — played in a fast rhythm which almost suspends its own sense of time, the whole piece then flying off into a complex dazzle of fingering) and *Move* (some blurred notes here but it is still an energetic and invigorating performance).

All these are solo piano pieces. Each side of the album ends with Clark joined by Bobby White on drums and Simon Brehm on bass. Both of these tracks are longer than the solo piano tracks but they also show the same incredible sense of building a solo, shaping to a

development in supreme but unpredictable ways. Clark obviously feels free to tailor the pieces to his own needs. This is particularly true of his version of *After You've Gone* which I found as exhilarating as a Charlie Parker performance. It sustains an intensely bopish mood at exactly the right medium tempo. Clark runs through many phrases which sound as if he is going to fall into cliché but somehow he nearly always manoeuvres his ideas into new areas, developing and extending to avoid the obvious.

As only to be expected, the recording is somewhat muddy but it is surprising just how much of Clark's crispness and freshness is captured. The album is a marvelous example of music played by a young pianist bursting with ideas, relaxed, daring by being unafraid to commit himself to extending themes in a very personal way, careless in his unconcern about a few minor lapses, but careful to give full scope to his unerring sense of shape in his solos, making everything energetically alive. — Peter Stevens

JOHN COLTRANE

First Meditations (for quartet)
ABC Impulse 9027-9332

Love/Compassion/Joy/Consequences/Serenity

Coltrane, ts; McCoy Tyner, p; Jimmy Garrison, b; Elvin Jones, d.

Here is another transitional recording, held back for some unexplained reason by Impulse (David Wild's liner notes suggest perhaps it was "forgotten in the welter of excellent music recorded that summer" — 1965). "First Meditations" is of historical importance principally because it is the quartet version of the originally released "Meditations", which included Pharoah Sanders and Rashied Ali and was recorded a month or so after this one. This may also be the last recording by the quartet before Coltrane began regularly adding others; by 1966 the quartet no longer existed, as both Tyner and Jones had left.

Not to claim too much for it, the album nevertheless does show Coltrane in some of his first efforts at true musical meditation — the title of this suite is quite carefully chosen, I think, for in the sense that a meditation attempts to stop time in search of eternity, this music is indeed meditative. Even "A Love Supreme", similarly conceived as a suite motivated by religious feeling, is not really a meditation because the music does move forward through time, despite occasional mantra-like repetition, as of the title. On "First Meditations" one begins to feel linear time dissolving as the movement changes from forwardness to intensification or clarification. It was because of this gradual divorce from regular human time, probably, that I had difficulty following Coltrane into his later period, have never felt comfortable with it. It is music which requires an effort of response, a concentration of attention, perhaps too intense for us creatures who spend most of our time awaiting normal pleasure and fulfillments — because it bids us sit still and await the center to reveal itself.

The music of this period has often been called obsessive, in a faintly pejorative sense — as though Coltrane were playing in a helpless trance and had given up his will. As far as this album is concerned, and probably others of this

final period, it may be more useful to think of it as an act of religious discipline, consciously wrought.

Certainly in the Coltrane hagiography, "First Meditations" requires an emphasis. — Joel Ray

AL COHN

True Blue
Xanadu 136

Lady Bird; How Deep Is The Ocean; True Blue.

Al Cohn, Dexter Gordon (ten), Blue Mitchell, Sam Noto (tp), Barry Harris (p), Sam Jones (b), Louis Hayes (dr). Recorded N.Y., Oct. 22, 1976.

Al Cohn's America
Xanadu 138

America The Beautiful/Night And Day/My Shining Hour/Bright/Skylark/Woody 'N' You/Comin' In Home.

Al Cohn (ten), Barry Harris (p), Sam Jones (b), Leroy Williams (dr).
Recorded New York, December 6, 1976.

Al Cohn has raised the least commotion of any jazz tenorman in the last twenty years. Unlike some of his contemporaries, whose names make headlines even when their horns are silent, Cohn has remained quietly in the background, his saxophone playing muted by the time-consuming demands of his career as composer/arranger for TV specials and Broadway musicals. That is, until a few years ago. In the summer of 1975, he recorded a quartet album for Xanadu ("Play It Now") which revealed him to the world as the jazzman of consequence his loyal supporters had always known him to be. And now, with the release of these encore sessions, that fact is doubly confirmed.

On the "True Blue" set, Cohn is flanked by Dexter Gordon, a fellow Lestorian whose dramatic and charismatic appeal contrasts markedly with his counterpart's image of retiring self-effacement. It is at once both curious and marvelous how two such different musical personalities could have evolved from a common inspirational source. The story of Dexter's development over the years needs no further recounting here, nor do the many reasons for his continuing popularity. However, it is important to note that there is an observable difference in his playing when he is matched with a musician like Cohn. He employs greater restraint than usual and, perhaps mindful of the jarring impropriety it would impose, puts a harness on his customary Coltrane-like flourishes. Instead, he pursues a mainstream path which is only slightly askew to Cohn's. The keening edge to his sound, though, however appropriate to hard bop it may be, suffers a jolt in this context, for the all-enveloping embrace of Cohn's timbre seems that much warmer.

Mitchell and Noto are both excellent. Although equal beneficiaries of the Navarro/Brown legacy, each has his own special attributes, and the presence of neither should be construed as superfluous. By way of comparison, Mitchell has the more brilliant, penetrating sound, whereas Noto, despite his maturity a comparative newcomer on the recording scene, displays an almost cornet-like roundness in his sonority. Together, they make an attractive pair — somewhat like an updated

version of Tommy Ladnier and Joe Smith. The rhythm section, first united in Cannonball Adderley's 1960 quintet, is as perfectly synchronized as the Ritz brothers (how many of you remember this classic trio?). Their communal promptings are right to the point; however, I would have preferred Harris to have made more prominent use of his right hand during his solos. As it is, they are logically constructed bebop exercises, but hardly up to his customary level.

On the quartet album, we get an even better glimpse of Cohn's current persona. His choice of tunes, as on the "Play It Now" set, shows imagination, humor, and respect for tradition. *America The Beautiful* is not only a brainstorm of a selection, it is a commendable jazz performance as well; the three standards, none of which receive much current play, are all good blowing tunes which elicit viable statements from all concerned; *Comin' In Home*, based on a snippet of a phrase from Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody, was originally written for the 1940 Earl Hines band by Franz Jackson; *Woody 'N' You* is, of course, the famous Gillespie number from the early bop days; and *Bright*, a spontaneously conceived original of AI's based on the changes of *Exactly Like You*, finds the composer/improviser at his most deliberate and self-assertive. It is not so much the repertoire, though, that commends this album as it is what the tenorman does to it.

Cohn's playing these days, for those who haven't heard him lately, is very different from what it used to be. Thirty years ago, he was the least formidable of the Brothers. The slightly delayed, lag-along phrasing of Lester Young became, in Cohn's hands, an exaggeration almost antithetical to swing. He played so far behind the beat that, in the absence of a firm and resolute rhythm section, the tempo would invariably slow down. No doubt his frequent and fruitful partnerships with Zoot Sims over the ensuing years helped in this area, for his subsequent playing has demonstrated an increasing attraction towards the center of the beat. He is now swinging with the best of them.

His tone is a cantorial wail, leaping across centuries to unite all men who have ever felt pain; but it is also a cry of jubilation, a celebration of the joy of life known only to those who have suffered adversity. As in the case of Zoot Sims, there is a prevailing optimism in Cohn's playing which has its roots in earlier styles of jazz, and this makes for a pleasant reminder of "good times a-comin'", especially in light of the arrogant negativism suffusing so much of jazz today.

— Jack Sohmer

**Silver Blue
Xanadu 137**

While Dexter Gordon's work for SteepleChase/Inner City is consistently excellent, his recordings for Columbia are less satisfactory and diminishing in quality as they progress. In this golden age of Gordon revival, however, little approaches the quality of his playing on the first side of this album.

Much of the reason for Gordon's success here is Al Cohn, who is undergoing a resurgence of his own. These two tenor saxophonists complement each other nicely. Both are mature musicians who have artistic and commercial success and therefore feel no need — at least on this outing — to succumb to the temptations of the crossover market or any other fad; Cohn's

light tone is the perfect foil for Gordon's heavy one and vice versa; and Lester Young is much in evidence in their approaches to the improvised line as well as to harmonic and rhythmic possibilities. Each man obviously respects the other's playing, and they inspire each other selflessly.

The highlight of this album is a long unaccompanied duet by Cohn and Gordon on Ferde Grofe's *On The Trail*. Cohn recorded similarly with partner Zoot Sims in 1960 with success, but I believe this is Gordon's first venture into that demanding arena. It goes without saying that in order to play without accompaniment one must have mastery of one's technique as well as a supply of ideas devoid of cliché. Such is the case with both saxophonists as they play over eight minutes of great unaccompanied jazz. I am certain that this performance will have attained a considerable reputation by the time this review appears in print.

Denzil Best's *Allen's Alley* has Gordon and Cohn backed by Barry Harris, Sam Jones and Louis Hayes. This is of course pure up-tempo bop, and it contrasts wonderfully with the mellowness of *On The Trail*. The third and last tune, *Silver Blue*, is a nineteen-minute jam consuming all of the second side. Trumpeters Sam Noto and Blue Mitchell are added to the front line with no great benefit.

Don Schlitten must be commended for pairing Cohn and Gordon and for providing a handsome context in which to exhibit their great skills. This album is even better than its predecessor, "True Blue". — Benjamin Franklin V

MILES DAVIS/TADD DAMERON

**Miles Davis/Tadd Dameron Quintet
In Paris
Columbia 34804**

This recording from the Festival International de Jazz in Paris in 1949 is significant for two reasons. First, it presents some of Miles Davis' best playing and second, it is released by Columbia records.

The material issued here for the first time features James Moody playing a consistently engaging tenor in a boppish-Prez vein, Tadd Dameron soloing briefly but well (notably on *Embraceable You*), and Kenny Clarke providing solid support and inspiration throughout. But as well as they play, Miles far outdistances them. As annotator Henri Renaud correctly states, Miles had recorded with his nonet for Capitol two weeks before the Paris engagement, so within that context one expects to hear a cool if inspired trumpeter. What he provides is the hottest and most forceful playing of his career, at least as documented on records. He limits himself largely to the middle register, but seldom has anyone done so much with so few notes as he does here; emotion and intellect are perfectly matched with technique and material to produce improvised music of the first order. He falters only in his occasional flights into the upper register, as he has always done, but such deficiencies detract little from his inspired playing. The tunes are standard bop fare: *Riff Tide (Lady Be Good)*, *Good Bait*, *Wah Hoo (Perdido)*, *Allen's Alley*, *Ornithology* and *All The Things You Are*, in addition to *Don't Blame Me* and *Embraceable You*.

This album is important for another and largely extra-musical reason that bodes well, hopefully, for other such ephemeral music as

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this. Columbia has released and is promoting its "Contemporary Masters Series" of which this record is a part. Until now such music could only be offered to the public by very small and often bootleg concerns that would pay no royalties; it did not enhance the larger companies' bottom line, or so they thought. (*Coda* served as a forum for debate on this topic a few years ago). If Columbia's new series sells as well as the quality of the music suggests it might, it and other behemoths might see fit to continue issuing hitherto lost music by our great improvisors in a manner doing justice to the musicians involved, the listeners, and the companies' coffers.

Davis and friends here create such great music that it could conceivably lead to a renewed interest in bop and — hope of hopes — might inspire the nonpareil Miles to return to creating music commensurate with his genius.

— Benjamin Franklin V

JON FADDIS

Youngblood
Pablo 2310-765

Here 'Tis/ Gershwin Prelude Number 2/ Round Midnight/ Be Bop (Dizzy's Fingers)/ Samba De Orpheus (Carnival).

Faddis, tpt; Kenny Barron, p; George Mraz, b; Mickey Roker, d.

There is no one, I believe, who can squeeze a note as sweetly as Jon Faddis. And squeeze it into the most singing shape. Only one tiny stylistic excellence among an abundance of others on this record. After hearing Faddis under the burden of carrying the high end of the Jones-Lewis Band, then after seeing his name over and over on the most pedestrian funk albums, I began to wonder whether he would flash and burn out early. Thanks to Norman Granz for grabbing him for a couple of albums which give him the freedom and opportunity to play. Even with two uneven cuts this is one of the best trumpet albums in a long time.

It's well known that Faddis is Dizzy's protege, and you can hear those infusions of Dizzyana everywhere on this LP. Sometimes inappropriately, as with the post call at the end of *Round Midnight*. But Faddis is not a copy. The most impressive thing about the album is that Faddis has harnessed his energies and technique to the expression of intense feeling; for a man in his mid-twenties he plays here with great maturity. Probably Barron and Mraz and Roker are partly responsible; certainly their own playing is consistently fine, with Barron especially sensitive to Faddis and pungent in his own solos.

The two faster pieces, *Be Bop* and *Samba*, are the least successful, not because Faddis plays badly — though on the former he can't seem to decide on a direction — but because on the slower pieces he plays so superbly, both open and muted. Benny Green says in the notes that Faddis' version of *Round Midnight* is probably the best trumpet version ever recorded, and spends much time praising the equally meditative *Prelude*. I agree, they are both wonderful. For me, though, *Here 'Tis* shows every facet of his talent best. His time is hair's-breadth fine, his intonation perfectly assured, and his stability in the favored upper register rocklike. And the ideas flow.

This is great trumpet music. — Joel Ray

DEXTER GORDON

Sophisticated Giant
Columbia 34989

Dexter Gordon, tenor saxophone, soprano on *How Insensitive*; Frank Wess, flute, alto sax, piccolo; Bobby Hutcherson, vibraphone; Woody Shaw, Benny Bailey, trumpet & flugelhorn; Wayne Andre, Slide Hampton, trombones; Howard Johnson, tuba & baritone sax; George Cables, piano; Rufus Reid, bass; Victor Lewis, drums. Arrangements by Slide Hampton.

"Perfect" is not a word to be bandied about. For one thing, in many peoples' minds the word implies a certain lack of warmth, a featureless quality so that "perfect", used to compliment a work of art, can in fact have the reverse effect.

However, the music on this record is as close to perfection as any I've heard recently, and nowhere does it lack warmth or individuality. In fact the band assembled for this record expresses as singular a personality in its ensemble sound as Dexter Gordon himself does in his tenor playing. Aside from the excellence of its players, credit for this must go to the arranger on this session, Slide Hampton. The supple beauty of this music is every bit as much his creation as it is Dexter's.

Trying to single out individual players for praise is hard, too, because the playing is superb and everyone seems to have moments when he contributes a special quality to the group sound. So it can only boil down to personal favourites, which in my case are Dexter himself, Frank Wess and Rufus Reid. Their combination of flute, bowed bass and tenor on *Laura* is the centre of the tune's mood. The same is true when they each take brief solos (Wess on alto) in the ensemble passage that opens *You're Blase*. Dexter begins *How Insensitive* on soprano accompanied only by the rhythm section, and then is joined for some lovely counterpoint by Wess' flute.

But then again, this is a very special band and if you really want to know how good the music is, you have to hear the record, because everyone is good on it. The perfect complement to Dexter Gordon's superb tenor playing, a relaxed and powerful sound.

— David Lee

Bebop Revisited Vol. 1
Xanadu 120

This important reissue contains material from three different groups, featuring sixteen vintage bebop performances from 1947-48. The first group is the Dexter Gordon Quintet which recorded for Dial Records on June 5, 1947. The two pieces, *Mischievous Lady* and *Lullaby In Rhythm*, are given in two takes each. Melba Liston's trombone is the second horn in the ensembles, and she is given some rare solo space, but the performances are chiefly of interest for the hard-blowing, strongly swinging tenor of Dexter Gordon. These are among the performances which established Dexter as one of the very best and most influential of bop tenor men in the late 1940's, and have been reissued before.

The second group was an Earl Coleman date for Dial with backing from Fats Navarro, Don Lanphere, and Max Roach among the personnel

of the sextet. Coleman's four vocals have definite nostalgia value and some tasteful musical moments, making one wonder why he wasn't more successful as a singer in that era; but it is the two instrumental takes of *Move* that give Navarro's superb trumpet and Lanphere's Prez-like tenor their opportunities to let go, that make the date truly memorable. These tracks are first rate items, especially Take 2.

The third group featured is a Chubby Jackson Sextet recorded in Sweden at two sessions from the winter of 1947-48 that featured Conte Candoli on trumpet, Frank Socolow on tenor sax, Terry Gibbs on vibes, Lou Levy on piano, Jackson's bass and Deniz Best on drums. Their six contributions are good examples of what the clique of musicians associated with the white bop big bands of that era were doing in small group contexts.

The LP is an interesting anthology and well worth a place in the collection of anyone interested in the bop of the late 1940's.

— Vladimir Simosko

GROSZ/WRIGHT

Marty Grosz/Wayne Wright
Let Your Fingers Do The Walking
Aviva 6000

Cross Your Heart, Chicken A La Swing, Slightly Under The Weather, A Porter's Love Song, Street Of Dreams, Let Your Fingers Do The Walking, Danzon, Stage Fright, I Believe In Miracles, Pack Up Your Trunk, Just Squeeze Me, Skylark, By The River St. Marie, Lament in "E", Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives To Me.

The entire band here consists of two acoustic guitars welded by a couple of contemporary masters of the fretboard, superbly recorded with excellent stereo separation. Style and repertoire for these magnificently conceived, tight, economical, consistently stimulating and swinging charts are generally drawn from the pre-Charlie Christian years, when the unamplified guitar was the only jazz guitar; the music, however, is as fresh as the proverbial daisy.

Grosz and Wright not only work together virtually as one man, but they also cram an amazing variety of effects into their interpretations. *Squeeze*, for example, wends its tasty, foot-tapping way, in just three choruses, through rolling shuffle rhythm, sailing Wright lines over Grosz's chunky walking full-chorded four-beat, and a carefully-crafted arranged bridge before the closing bars. Their contrasting approaches (Wright - single notes, both in solo and as a sort of string-bass line when Grosz leads; Grosz - full-bodied, chugging chords) make for an exceptionally felicitous blend that keeps the 15 tracks from succumbing to monotony or repetition.

For further change of pace, the program covers cooking, medium-tempo standards; slow, shimmering ballads; a few original compositions; and four complex duets (*Chicken, Danzon, Stage, Lament*) resurrected from the old days designed to showcase the virtuoso skills of their composers — guitarists like Carl Kress, Dick McDonough and Carmen Mastren. And for lagniappe, Grosz tosses in a pair of easy-going, good-natured, Wallerish vocals (*Porter's, Miracles*).

If you're not a guitar freak, Dan Morgenstern's liner notes are most helpful in pointing out choice spots to listen for, generally making

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Recorded in London, April 16, 1977.

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— *Tex Wyndham*

CHARLIE HADEN

Closeness

A&M Horizon SP-710

Charlie Haden, bass; Keith Jarrett, piano (track 1); Ornette Coleman, alto saxophone (track 2); Alice Coltrane, harp (track 3); Paul Motian, percussion (track 4).

Ellen David; O.C.; For Turiya; For A Free Portugal.

While other bassists extended the Mingus-Lafaro approaches to the instrument, sometimes developing their velocity at the expense of their conceptions, Charlie Haden extended the Wilbur Ware approach, emphasizing the value of one well-chosen half or quarter note over a dozen frenetically-articulated sixteenth or thirty-second notes. Unlike Ware, a former drummer who explored the percussive qualities of his instrument, Haden developed an unhurried melodicism which asserted the deep, ringing sonority of the bass. In emphasizing his instrument's timbre he explored terrains that many of his fleetier colleagues disregarded: triple stops, Indian drones, harmonics bowed near the bridge and strings plucked under it.

"Closeness", Haden's first recording as a leader in nearly a decade, celebrates his long alliances with Keith Jarrett, Ornette Coleman, Alice Coltrane and Paul Motian. In recording with each of them in a duet format, Haden tailors each composition to the playing style of his partner, but uses the increased responsibility the duet imposes on him as an accompanist to impel his partners to extend themselves in ways a less intimate format would prohibit.

On the lyrical *Ellen David*, Haden's slowly unfolding counter-melodic line guides Jarrett's improvisation down a less discursive path than it would normally take. Abandoning his tendency to ramble from gospel runs to tone clusters to ethereal passages without regard for the overall continuity of his improvisation, Jarrett creates a sensuous, romantic solo that stands as one of his most cohesive improvisations to date.

Ornette Coleman, on the other hand, plays more flexibly on *O.C.* than he has on many of his previous recordings. Haden toys with the tempo, cutting and syncopating its familiar, springing groove so that Coleman has to incorporate the rhythmic shifts into his improvisation. Although Coleman plays with more restraint than he did a decade ago, his lines, no longer cluttered with personal clichés, are cleaner, longer and still gorgeously asymmetrical. Haden's fluidly-shifting backup encourages the asymmetry as it fills the space a conventional walking line would render barren. Before restating the theme, Coleman and Haden feed each other phrases and tempi in the album's finest moment of interplay.

For Turiya, a vehicle for Alice Coltrane's astral mode of playing, suffers from overextension. Haden's long, ruminative solo establishes the desired mood of cosmic tranquility. Ms. Coltrane furthers the mood through the first half of her solo, then lapses into a meandering display of celestially swirling harp *glissandi* that weakens the transcendent mood of the piece through its blissful overstatement.

For A Free Portugal is a programmatic

statement of Haden's socio-political concerns. Haden opens the piece with a mournful melody statement, then Motian, playing a variety of percussion instruments as well as traps, accompanies a pre-recorded tape of wooden flutes, anthems and gunfire. Haden joins him in accompanying the tape, then plays a speechlike bass solo. After a final sequence of gunfire, Haden restates the theme, made more convincing in its grief by the exquisitely conceived and executed exposition supporting its original statement.

Throughout the album, Haden exercises his leadership in ways comparable in subtlety to his approach to the string bass. While placing his partners in the mode most comfortable for them, Haden, by playing his individualistic bass lines, compels them to reveal facets of their playing that often remain submerged when they perform with larger groups. His uncompromising conception encompasses the spectrum of musical expression, from romanticism to earthiness, from cosmic harmony to social protest, that his partners in "Closeness" represent. Haden belongs, in some measure, to all these worlds. All of them, in a greater measure, belong to him as well.

— *Vernon Frazer*

The Golden Number

A&M Horizon SP-727

This is Charlie Haden's second album in the Horizon series. Like that reviewed above, it consists of duets between Haden on bass and four of his musical friends: Don Cherry, Archie Shepp, the late Hampton Hawes and, again, Ornette Coleman (this time on trumpet!). To me, this record has a little more energy and a lot more facets than the first; Ornette's trumpet is hauntingly pretty — in fact it's interesting to compare his feature with Don Cherry's, from whom he has obviously learned a lot. There is a pleasant, good-natured and bluesy *Turnaround* from Haden and Hawes; the loose, elastic energy of Archie Shepp enlivens *Shepp's Way*; and although Haden seems determined to play the same chords in the same brooding fashion in his every solo, he does it so well and with such good players as partners that on the whole this record comes off rather well, in fact it's somewhat better than "Closeness".

— *David Lee*

BILLY HART

Enchance

Horizon (A&M) SP-725

(Billy Hart, drums; Oliver Lake, soprano & alto sax, flute; Dewey Redman, tenor sax; Eddie Henderson, trumpet & flugelhorn; Hannibal Marvin Peterson, trumpet; Don Pullen, piano; Dave Holland, Buster Williams, bass; Michael Carvin, percussion.)

Side one: *Diff Customs; Shadow Dance; Layla-Joy; Corner Culture.*

Side two: *Rahsaan Is Beautiful; Pharoah; Hymn For The Old Year.*

In attempting to look in at the music on "Enchance", one finds oneself looking out at the fertile landscape of contemporary jazz and seeing a dizzying array of talent and personal styles; ex-Hancock sidemen juxtaposed with avant-gardists Oliver Lake and Dewey Redman and players who straddle stylistic fences like

Don Pullen and Marvin Peterson. The categorizing is suggested only for the sake of destroying it. The contrasting approaches are there but within any given piece each player complements with his flexibility and yet stimulates with his individuality. Maybe it took a purveyor of rhythm, the most essential element of jazz, to draw up such a conglomeration of musicians and maintain the unifying factor without necessarily a dominating stylistic or formal skein.

An example of these sustaining contrasts is contained within *Diff Customs* in which Buster Williams' careening bass propels a deep-gut swing, a groove from which the players alternately move to bristly interjections of scurrying phrases that fashion a crazy-quilt of raucous jokes and stepped-on punchlines. The lyrical side is represented by Hart's *Layla-Joy* on which Eddie Henderson takes the gossamer, almost too-pretty melody and injects just the heat and fiber it needs in a superb flugelhorn solo which flows with creative juices — quick bell bursts and warm smears, charging and flipping quadruplet figures that taunt and then acquiesce to the changes. This solo is transcribed deservedly in Horizon's typically comprehensive liner notes.

Dewey Redman's *Corner Culture* is a short ode to the frenetic, colorful nature of the urban rap-and-run street scene with jabbering horns and hustling bass and drums.

Other individual highlights are provided by Hart, whom I have not heard in a free context before, responding beautifully on *Pharoah* with Sunny Murray-like stomps and rumbles but with a fine sense for the soloists' surges and pauses; in the written sections his lopsided drum line cocks the listener's ear on just the angle to hear the "flow" of this rather disjunct piece, with Pullen dropping broad splotches and characteristically footloose flurries of notes throughout. Redman's solo shows him emerging from his post-Ornette style as an original and well-sustained extemporist. Only Hannibal falters on this tune, maintaining the intensity but coming up empty-handed for ideas — such are the pitfalls of the improviser wandering through free terrain.

Lake's *Hymn Of The Old Year* closes the album. The horns sigh the reflective melody while Holland, Pullen and Hart press forward with the anticipating energy of the present and of the immediate future which is the reality of music and life, a notion well-stated by Lake while he simultaneously commemorates the past.

"Enchance" demonstrates the bond that seals this assorted band of musicians within the continuing jazz tradition. After this date they will most likely go their own ways, but with the knowledge that their roads to diverse musical destinations stretch far and wide — and yet remain parallel. — Kevin Lynch

JULIUS HEMPHILL

Dogon A.D.
Arista AL 1028

As the New Music continues to evolve into its own idiom within the Jazz spectrum, Julius Hemphill has emerged as one of its major refiners, reshapers and revitalizers. He has synthesized his roots in the southwest blues tradition with the influence of the first generation of New Musicians, most notably the early members of the AACM, to create a conjurer's music

whose texture-rich compositions and gritty, wailing improvisations shape dense, grainy soundscapes of feeling across a broad emotional terrain. Although Hemphill is not an innovator in the sense of forming a new musical idiom or grafting a radical improvisational or compositional style onto an existing idiom, he has furthered the development of the New Music idiom by extending concepts originally explored in the late fifties and early sixties. His continued exploration of sound texture is implicit in his choice of instrumentation, most notably in his use of the cello to perform a wider range of melodic and rhythmic functions than it has in the past. He has refined collective improvisation to a point where it expresses more subtle but no less intense nuances of feeling than the confused exuberance it frequently communicated in its earlier use.

"Dogon A.D.", Hemphill's latest Arista/Free-dom release, comes from the 1972 recording session that produced *The Hard Blues* side of "Coon Bid'ness" (AL 1012). Originally released on Hemphill's Mbari label, the personnel (with the exception of Hamiet Bluiett, who does not appear on the album) is the same as on *The Hard Blues*: Hemphill, alto saxophone and flute; Baikida E.J. Carroll, trumpet; Abdul Wadud, cello; and Phillip Wilson, drums.

Dogon A.D., the title piece, opens with a cello ostinato played over Wilson's sparse back-beat. Over the fixed rhythm, Hemphill and Carroll weave an incantatory theme, haunting in its austerity, earthy despite its abstractness. The intentional sparseness of the piece stems, in part, from the absence of the string bass, an instrument Hemphill has not yet employed in his recorded work. Wadud plays his ostinato figure in a higher register than a bass, but a lower register than a keyboard, filling a range between the two while leaving empty the space that more conventional instrumentation would fill.

On *Rites*, the musicians' anticipation of one another's melodic lines creates a canonic collective improvisation. The airy, softly-springing melody of *The Painter* serves as a vehicle for Hemphill's flute, which, spurred by Wilson's pattering brushes, evolves through a fluttering rubato section to a chantlike climax. In the collectively improvised passages that punctuate Hemphill's long solo, Wadud and Carroll play artful countermelodic lines. A solo by Carroll would have strengthened the piece; his lyrical interjections demonstrate his incisive understanding of the composition.

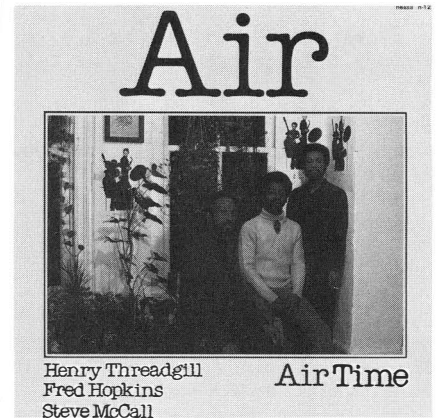
Despite its uneven moments, "Dogon A.D." is a substantial contribution to the body of Hemphill's recorded work. Its moments of inconsistency stem from the risks an adventurous spirit like Hemphill must take to create a music of exaltation. Hemphill reaches his goal more often than not, and never misses by much. The title piece alone is worth the price of the album.

— Vernon Frazer

Roi Boye and the Gotham Minstrels
Sackville 3014/15

An alto sax and flute paint an aural setting of a grey-shadowed, melancholy place somewhere in New York City. The two voices gradually become forms in themselves and finally imagined characters who emerge into the sunlight of a fresh morning amidst canting sparrows. Slowly as their senses awaken, they begin to react to the taunting stimuli and unexpected forces of

NESSA RECORDS



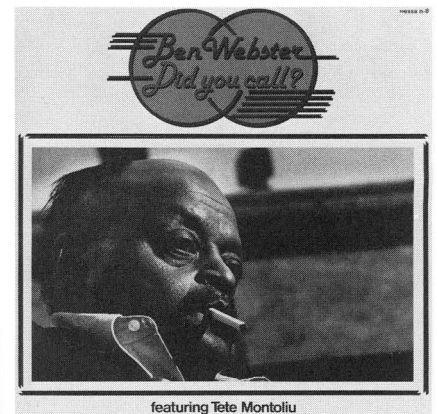
AIR

Nessa n-12 "Air Time"

Henry Threadgill (reeds, percussion); Fred Hopkins (bass); Steve McCall (percussion).

I'll Be Right Here Waiting... No. 2, G.v.E., Subtraction, Keep Right On Playing Thru The Mirror Over The Water.

Recorded November 17 & 18, 1977.



BEN WEBSTER

Nessa n-8 "Did You Call"

Ben Webster (tenor saxophone); Tete Montoliu (piano); Eric Peter (bass); Peer Wyboris (drums).

Sweet Georgia Brown, Don't Blame Me, Did You Call?, Barcelona Show, Ben's Blues, The Man I Love, My Nephew Bent, How Long Has This Been Going On?

Recorded November 28, 1972.

ROSCOE MITCHELL

Nessa n-9/10 "Nonaah"

Roscoe Mitchell (alto saxophone) - solo and in duet/ trio/ quartet configurations with Anthony Braxton, Muhal Richard Abrams, George Lewis, Henry Threadgill, Wallace McMillan, Joseph Jarman and Malachi Favors.

Each \$7.98 postpaid (n-9/10, a 2-record set, is \$12.98 postpaid) from Coda Publications, Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4X8 Canada.

the bustling world around them.

Such is the nature of *Roi Boye And The Gotham Minstrels* to evoke moving images as quickly as it strikes us as pure music, this is an "audiodrama" with Julius Hemphill the composer/author circumscripably as a cast of eight million or so. Hemphill previously has made his greatest recorded impressions in gut-wrenching blues-based improvisations like the powerful "Dogon A.D." Since those early recordings he has evolved dramatically to a conceptual self-positioning that dons many disguises. Hemphill has been involved with theatrical presentations concurrent with his musical ones, and in *Roi Boye* we find the closest thing yet to a synthesis of his two primary medias. Performed entirely by Hemphill himself, it employs multi-tracking of his alto, soprano and flute throughout its 90-minute duration. Although most of the three-part passages are basically improvisational, the dubbing naturally gives Hemphill the advantage of knowing well the lines of his "co-players" and the result is a more calculated and refined orchestration of the harmonies and interflow of linear "occurrences" allowing Hemphill to direct *Boye* with a much tighter control than if he used other players improvising together. Such extensive use of dubbing may raise questions of its relationship to the tradition of improvised music but if the results are as satisfying as these, the age of dubbing, judiciously used, may be upon us.

This technique applied here is fascinating in several ways. From one viewpoint, one hears a fine player improvising with two others of himself. The means of phrasing and attack echo themselves as they exist in slightly separate places: the short and long lines unfurl and skitter off each other in a contrapuntal arabesque that is a homogenized yet colorful call and response of one sensibility reacting to the stimulus of its own depths, multivariably one Julius Hemphill.

From another viewpoint and probably the real accomplishment of all this is the creation of a descriptively involved "audiodrama" (Hemphill's term). The music moves in fluid yet story-like sequences, even becoming particular "events" at times. In his liner notes, Hemphill states the hope of developing a script or text to accompany the music throughout but that remains to be realized in the future. There are interspersed moments of soliloquy and at the end an extended dialogue but the music here is sufficiently its own text. For Hemphill, how we hear his music is also how we hear words, that is: "orchestrated language that proceeds from the rhythmic impulses of the spoken word and does not obey the dictates of meter nor of melody except for the expressive inflections associated with speech in generally colloquial situations". Speech-like phrasing by now is nothing new in fine jazz soloing but such clearly-focused, extensive use of it within a semi-dramatic context as here becomes the well-placed stroke of genius that brings *Roi Boye* to life. Particularly vivid examples of this are the alto on side two and the soprano on side three. The tell-tale phrases interspersed through eighth-note linkages emphatically pronounce a variety of hard and soft sounds, the opening (vowels) and closing (consonants) textures of words, the special merging colors of diphthongs. These are the sounds of the most richly musical and phonetically resonant qualities of the many languages that flow through the streets of New York. Contrasting tempos of delivery reflect the nature of say, Italian vs.

Black American dialects. But never does this become pedantic linguistic imitation; Hemphill's musical acumen sustains a melodic sense even more so than on his earlier recordings. The point to be made here is that the beauties of words and those of melody and rhythm share more characteristic contours than one might think.

As the "characters" multiply, the events become musical metaphors for all of the cause and effect relationships which affect the daily destinies of eight million people. Hemphill with fine dramatic skill and sense of placement conjures the paranoid reactions, unintentional path-crossings, a few moments of brotherly harmony and even the surprising collaborations of mismatched types caught up in common endeavours pursued to often contradictory ends.

Such is the mad turmoil of that city. This is accomplished by Hemphill's aforementioned directorial control over this drama of communication and confusion, and a well-varied pacing of the instrumental segments.

It is not my purpose to interpret this music in a literary sense but rather to illustrate that Hemphill's musical and dramatic concepts are inseparable in this unique work of programmatic, improvisational music. Each of us is free to hear what he will in this music even as its composer seems to suggest particulars. What Hemphill truly affirms here though is that music, as words or as melody, is so much more than mere words.

— Kevin Lynch

Blue Boye Mbari MPC 1000X

In an introductory essay on Julius Hemphill by Roger Riggins, which appeared in the September 1976 issue of *Coda*, the talented reedist and composer stated: "I don't find the solo context all that interesting. I'm more interested in the input from other sources in the music, particularly rhythmic and orchestral ideas. So at this point I guess I really like textural things, and the utilization of voices other than myself."

Hemphill has ingeniously solved this problem of solo expression versus ensemble through his use of previously taped accompaniment. Originally used in his live presentations of *Roi Boye And The Gotham Minstrels*, on record the overdubbing is less theatrical, more musical. Without the dramatic tension created by an opposition of live and taped material, the music is forced to stand on its own, and succeeds here through the variety of compositional excellence Hemphill displays.

In his short liner notes he says: "Blue Boye is dimensional solo music postured from the expressive blues idiom and it represents, to me, an extended foray into the various avenues of style and, in a sense of contour and fabric, of instrumentation." The various overdubbed lines here are both a textural and thematic compositional necessity, intricate as a Bach fugue; lines having a lean athleticism, often sounding like a polyphonic web of spun steel. In addition to his remarkable instrumental technique and a talent for inventing continuous melody throughout his solos, Hemphill makes extensive explorative use of recurring thematic material, in the manner of the younger Sonny Rollins or, more recently, Roscoe Mitchell.

Countryside begins this set with a hushed, gentle, pastoral mood, flute leading the way into a formal, though open, situation; the various lines of counterpoint turning back in on

themselves naturally, effortlessly. *Hotend* utilizes the same interplay of motives in a slightly harsher timbral setting, with flute dropping out it becomes a duet for soprano and alto, each exploring the opposite end of the instrument's tonal register. *OK Rubberband* is a sprightly uptempo theme. Here the horns occasionally fall into a background unison riff a la Basie, while one of the alto lines is projected to center stage for a short solo. Also included is some insistent and swinging "hambone-style" percussion. *Antecedent* is an attempt to create an emotional piece without actual use of notes, Hemphill merely breathing, growling, and groaning through a flute for eight minutes. The result is expressionistic, only partly successful. *KC Live* takes its name from a blues melody again not far from Basie, though it is Bird whose influence is strongly reflected here, in the solo alto's attack and melodic contour. *CME* is a lovely spiritual, with occasional chordal reinforcement from overdubbed horns, though basically performed solo on soprano, with all the intensity and passion a Bechet or Pee Wee Russell might muster. *Dirty Row* begins with an involved and busy flurry of notes reminiscent of Stockhausen's *Zeitmasse For Five Woodwinds*, and continues with a fluttering, skittering interaction between soprano and alto. *Homeboy Tootin' At The Dog Star* closes the set with a funky blues, flute and voice punctuations a la Roland Kirk.

Through the utilization of excellent and varied improvisational and notational techniques, Hemphill has created a timeless and consistently graceful statement of his current musical position.

— Art Lange

REISSUES

MILES DAVIS: TUNE UP (Prestige 24077) is the seventh repackaging of Miles' definitive mid-1950s sessions. Most significant is the reappearance of *Walkin'* and *Blue 'N' Boogie* with marvelous tenor saxophone from Lucky Thompson and explosive piano from Horace Silver. Silver is also the pianist on *Four, Old Devil Moon, Solar, You Don't Know What Love Is, Love Me Or Leave Me, I'll Remember April*, and take 2 of *But Not For Me*. Thelonious Monk is the pianist on the second takes of *Bags Groove* and *The Man I Love* while John Lewis is heard on *When Lights Are Low* and *Tune Up*. The jigsaw puzzle is now all but complete and only the "Changes" session with Ray Bryant remains to be repackaged. Sound quality is superb — just like the original yellow label issues.

RED GARLAND: REDISCOVERED MASTERS (Prestige 24078) collates three sessions which were never released before. Sides one and two are with Paul Chambers, Art Taylor and Ray Barretto's congas. The trio selections on side three (with Doug Watkins and Specs Wright) come from the Swingville date with Coleman Hawkins in 1959. Side four is a quintet with Richard Williams, Oliver Nelson, Peck Morrison and Charlie Persip. It is appropriate, now that Garland has returned to music, that these performances should surface. The graceful flow of the pianist's lines are not easily forgotten and the adroit way he integrates his lines with locked chords makes his playing instantly recognisable. None of his old Prestige LPs are in print at this writing so this issue is particularly welcome.

GENE AMMONS: GENTLE JUG (Prestige

24079) repackages two long disappeared Moodsville releases — "Nice and Cool" (18) and "Soulful Mood" (28). It's strictly a ballad set with Ammons rhapsodizing some standards. The melodies are delightful and Ammons' sensuous treatment avoids bland sentimentality. The two rhythm sections are inconspicuous with Richard Wyands, Doug Watkins and J.C. Heard on hand for the first session and the slightly more aggressive Patti Brown, George Duvivier and Ed Shaughnessy working the second date.

THELONIOUS MONK: AT THE FIVE SPOT (Milestone 47043) packages together "Thelonious in Action" and "Misterioso", the last remaining of Monk's Riverside sessions to appear on Milestone with the exception of "Monk plays Ellington" and "The Unique" (both trio sessions). These Five Spot sessions with Johnny Griffin on tenor were never considered "top-drawer" Monk when originally issued and sold poorly. Time has adjusted most people's judgement and today's listeners will find these to be stimulating examples of Monk's music by his working quartet of the time. *Light Blue, Coming On The Hudson and Blues Five Spot* were all "first recordings" and this alone makes the set important. The quartet is completed by Ahmed Abdul Malik and Roy Haynes who give Monk's musical angularity the right shadings.

JACKIE McLEAN: CONTOUR (Prestige 24076) and **DONALD BYRD: YOUNG BYRD** (Milestone 47044) are refurbished mementos of a past jazz era. These sessions typify the hard blowing straightahead jazz of the middle Fifties before it finally reduced itself to a formula. Trumpeter Donald Byrd was a consistent performer who lacked the graceful lyricism of Art Farmer, the intense perfection of Clifford Brown or the majesty of Miles Davis. Nonetheless he was an enjoyable musician and he is featured on both of these reissues. The Jackie McLean dates were made in 1956 and appeared originally as "Lights Out" (7035/8263/7757) and "4, 5 and 6" (7048/8279). Marginally better is the earlier session with Elmo Hope on piano, Doug Watkins (bass) and Art Taylor (drums). Mal Waldron is the pianist on the second disc with Hank Mobley added on *Confirmation*. The repertoire on the first session (all originals) stands up better than the mixed bag of standards, jazz classics and originals. Neither of the original Riverside LPs were under Byrd's name (Pepper Adams: "10 to 4 at the Five Spot" and Gigi Gryce: "and the Jazz Lab") but were undoubtedly bands which often functioned under his leadership. The 5 Spot session is a warm, loose blowing collection of characteristically fine improvising by the Detroit All Stars — Bobby Timmons, Doug Watkins and Elvin Jones are the rhythm section — and both the hornmen are in excellent shape. The session with Gryce provides a nice contrast. The music is much tighter, with Gryce's arrangements giving shape and continuity. The solos are part of the complete structure — cohesion and order are important aspects of this band. Gryce's wistful solos have the understated elegance of a Benny Carter and the lyric qualities of the material are emphasized. The Byrd-Gryce Jazz Lab unit worked under the shadow of the Brown-Roach organisation but on the basis of this recording at least, deserves its resuscitation in this form.

RANDY WESTON: ZULU (Milestone 47045) reissues some of the pianist's first recordings. *What Is This Thing Called Love* and *In The Still Of The Night* are duets with bassist Sam

Gill from Weston's debut LP of Cole Porter songs. Next up are four solos (*Little Girl Blue, Lover, Softness, We'll Be Together Again*) from September 1956 and these are followed by the 1955 trio session with Gill and Art Blakey which produced *Again, Zulu, Pam's Waltz, Solemn Meditation, If You Could See Me Now* and *Sweet Sue*. All of these titles with the exception of the Cole Porter duets were on Riverside 227. The second disc of this package is the quartet session of March 1956 with Cecil Payne, Ahmed Abdul Malik and Wilbert Hogan. Weston is one of the great stylistic innovators of our music and these first recordings emphasise and confirm the depth of his conception. All the harmonic/rhythmic originality is already there and his sense of melodic reconstruction is the height of imagination.

BILL EVANS: THE SECOND TRIO (Milestone 47046) is a reissue of "Moonbeams" (Riverside 428) and "How My Heart Sings" (Riverside 473). The tunes have been put back into the sequence of recording — thus giving a balance between the ballads and brighter tunes. It must be said, though, that this particular Evans trio (Chuck Israels, Paul Motian) was always laid-back and never achieved the incredible interaction and flow of the Scott LaFaro unit. Time has treated this music well and it still sounds good. Evans' touch and his always interesting voicings give colour and brightness to some very nice tunes. It's a most worthwhile reissue which is packaged with loving care. The mastering and pressings of all these Milestone/Prestige LPs are superb.

ERROLL GARNER: PARIS IMPRESSIONS (Columbia JC29) was the finale to Garner's eight years of recording for Columbia. All but four titles were made at one session and the pianist's trio of Eddie Calhoun and Kelly Martin made the music. Garner plays harpsichord on four titles — not one of the most glorious ideas. This is a straight repackaging of characteristically ebullient music by Erroll Garner.

BUCK CLAYTON: Jams Count Basie and Bennie Goodman (Columbia JC2L 614) is the American release of the two record set which was reissued in Europe more than a year ago as part of CBS's "Golden Days of Jazz" series. This is marvelous music — as fresh today as when it was first recorded. The strengths of the musicians, both as soloists and in ensemble, is amply demonstrated in every selection. There is a timeless maturity to this music, an indefinable cohesion which transcends style and taste. This kind of playing personifies the art of jazz music. Among the featured soloists are Joe Newman, Ruby Braff, Urbie Green, Trummy Young, Julian Dash, Coleman Hawkins, Buddy Tate, Woody Herman, Sir Charles Thompson, Billy Kyle and Jimmy Jones. The repertoire is familiar enough but these versions of *Christopher Columbus, Don't Be That Way, Undecided, Rock-A-Bye Bessie, Jumpin' At The Woodside, Blue And Sentimental* and *Broadway* are among the best.

GERRY MULLIGAN: THE ARRANGER (Columbia PC 34803) finally makes available three unissued selections (*All The Things You Are, Mullenium, Motel*) by Mulligan's Concert Jazz Band. They were recorded in April 1957 and feature extensive solo work by the leader, Lee Konitz, Zoot Sims and Bob Brookmeyer. *Thruway*, a companion piece, appeared on a sampler LP — "Who's Who in the Swinging Sixties". These predate the earliest of the Verve sessions by three years and the music is much too good to have languished in the vaults for all this time.

Filling out this release are examples of Mulligan's arranging skills with Gene Krupa (*How High The Moon, Disc Jockey Jump*) and Elliot Lawrence (*Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea, Elevation*).

ART BLAKEY: MIRAGE (Savoy 1112) and **KENNY CLARKE: Meets The Detroit Jazzmen** (Savoy 1111) are representative, but hardly sensational examples of the music known as "hard bop". The Blakey session, from 1957, was on Elektra originally and was then reissued on Savoy 12171. Bill Hardman, Jackie McLean, Sam Dockery and Spanky DeBrest are the sidemen. There's much more shading (subtly) in the music offered by the young men from Detroit who were just beginning to make their mark in New York. Pepper Adams, Tommy Flanagan and Paul Chambers are joined by master drummer Kenny Clarke. The arrangements, choice of material and solo sequence show how much care went into the planning of the session. What looks on the surface to be a casual blowing affair turns out to be a well thought out, well put together LP.

CHARLES MINGUS: JAZZ WORKSHOP (Savoy 1113) gives further insight into the provocative bassist/composer's musical thought. The four selections performed by Mingus' own group in 1954 point towards the harmonic/expressive delights to come in the richly textured Columbia sessions now available as "Better Git It In Your Soul" (CG 30628). The delicate balance between composition and performance is exemplified here but the overall textural color of the music is determined by the legitimate tonality of John La Porta's clarinet and alto sax, the purity of Teo Macero's tenor and George Barrow's baritone. Mingus' later records are more expressive due to the creative contributions of the sidemen. The balance of the album, recorded in 1955, is a session led by pianist Wally Cirillo in which Mingus is the bassist and Teo Macero is the sole horn. Cirillo's compositions lack the depth of conception shown by Mingus and the music is much less interesting.

DEXTER GORDON/WARDELL GRAY: THE HUNT (Savoy 2222) is a wonderful reminder of the kind of jam sessions which used to proliferate in after-hours clubs everywhere. There are some heavy players here so the release of the music on disc is justified. The four tunes each occupy one side. *Disorder At The Border*, and *The Hunt* were on Savoy 12012, *Cherokee* was on Regent 6049 and *Byas-A-Drink* was on Savoy 9020. Missing portions have been restored and the sound is much improved in this transitional music. Sonny Criss, Howard McGhee, Trummy Young and a rhythm section of Hampton Hawes, Barney Kessel, Harry Babson or Red Callender and Ken Kennedy or Connie Kay are the musicians who join forces with Gordon and Gray. There's a rich display of solo work from musicians who were obviously touched by the magic of Bird and Diz. But they were already evolving their own methods and the music contains a comfortable mixture of both bop and earlier devices. These two records are an all too rare glimpse of the music as it really happened in the 1940s without any of the time restrictions and tensions of a studio session.

AL HAIG: MEETS THE MASTER SAXES Volume One (Spotlite SPJ 139) were all made for Sittin' In With and only now are appearing on LP (except for take 2 of *Stoned* which was on Mainstream 56025). The three selections with Coleman Hawkins (*Sophisticated Lady, Riffside*,

Stuffy) are issued for the first time anywhere. Al Haig is the connecting link as he appears on "all selections and the texture of the music shifts with the differing attitudes of the hornmen. It shows how it was possible for musicians from different backgrounds and attitudes to play well together. Most dated are the selections with vocalist Buddy Stewart (*Shawn, Hot Halavah, Bopelground*) and most welcome are the contributions of two major tenor saxophonists who never received sufficient recognition or exposure. *Light Gray, Stoned* (two takes), *Matter And Mind* and *The Toup* feature Wardell Gray with Haig, Clyde Lombardi and Tiny Kahn. Gray's fluid lines and wonderful sound are particularly well showcased here without

the interference of other horns. John Hardee is even less well known but on the evidence of his recordings in the 1940s it is clear that his retirement from music deprived us of a major voice. *Cobblestones, Prelude To A Kiss, Bop-pin' In B Flat* and *Man With A Horn* capture the expressive maturity of his lines and the warm-toned texture of his tenor. Once again the rhythm team is Haig, Lombardi and Kahn. This is a very important reissue. — *John Norris*

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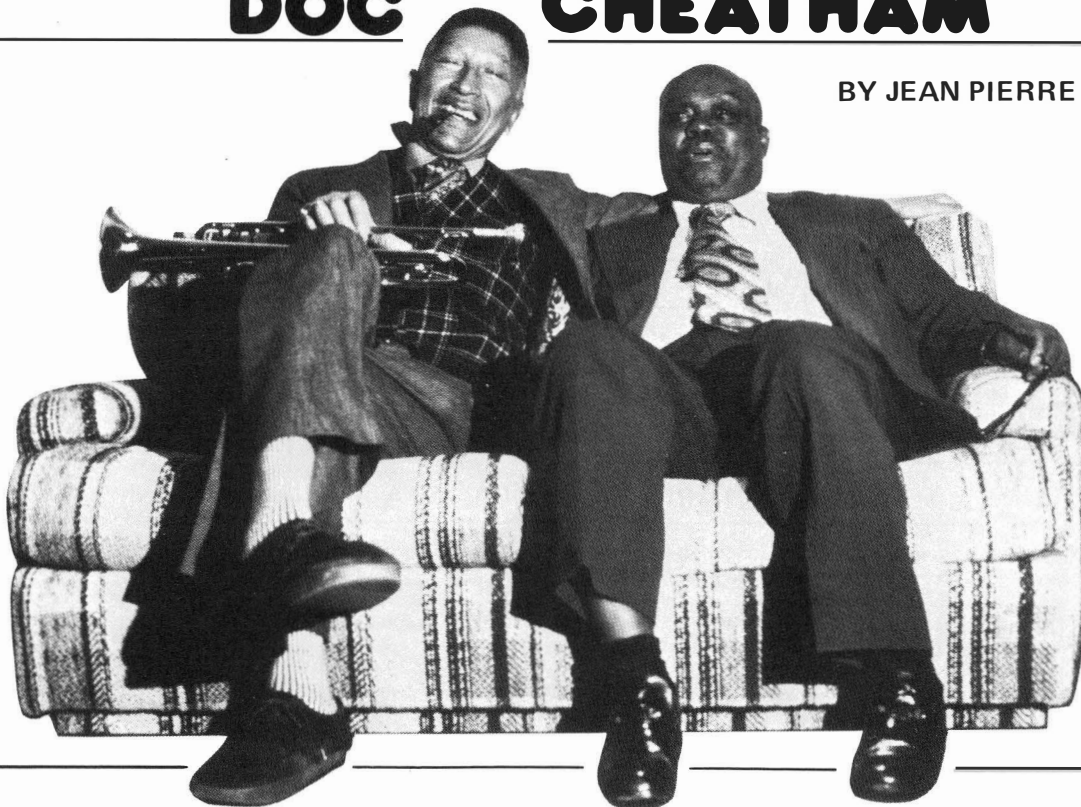
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DOC CHEATHAM

BY JEAN PIERRE BATTESTINI



I was born June 13th, 1905, in Nashville. The deacon of the local church started to organize a juvenile band, so they gave us some instruments (mostly used ones). The kids selected the instruments they liked, but I guess the teacher had his own ideas. I had chosen the drums, but the teacher said, "You'll play cornet," that's how it started. We played very easy music, church hymns and marches. I was about four-teen years old.

There was no music to listen to; we had phonograph records and Johnny Dunn was the first jazz trumpet I heard, he had a hit record with *Bugle Call Rag*, I think. It impressed me very much because I didn't know anything about jazz at that time.

I played for Bessie Smith when I was still in school. When I was a kid I used to play at the Bijou Theater with the pit band. I didn't get paid but I got experience. I used to play for all the shows that came through Nashville in the Bijou Theater, and Bessie came very often. Most of the time she had a piano player and sometimes she had a piano player, a drummer and a cornet player like Joe Smith. They would come in the morning and rehearse with the band; most of their things were blues. She didn't have any music. We would get her numbers down and at night we'd play them and by the end of the week we would be doing very good. She didn't make any suggestions, we just knew what to do. Blues singers in those days weren't too popular among everyone, anyway. Blues singers were for, you'd say, the lower classes on down. Bessie was a very finely built woman, very attractive. When I knew Bessie, she wasn't as heavy as she was in later years. She always danced, or at least did a little something; she never used a megaphone, she had a powerful voice, although the theater's acoustics were good, it was big too. That was the only time I played for her. At the Bijou Theater I

played for Mamie Smith, too....

My first important jazz band was Marion Hardy's; he had a pretty good band with Johnny Williams (Mary Lou Williams' ex-husband), who played sax, and Charlie Turner (bass). It was a T.O.B.A. show; the star of the show was a dancer, a kid; his name was Sunshine Sammy. His father put together the show. When they came through Nashville, I joined the band playing saxophone. The show had a few chorus girls; they used to play a couple of band tunes and they played for the girls to sing and dance. We didn't last too long, because we didn't get any money. And to put it in a nutshell, the band broke up in Chicago; that's how I got to Chicago.

In Chicago I joined Albert Wynn's Creole Jazz Band on saxophone and cornet, at the Dreamland. The trumpet player was Silas White. I switched to trumpet later on. We recorded with Ma Rainey. Chicago was crowded with bands and musicians. I made it my business to meet Joe Oliver, Freddie Keppard, Louis Armstrong.... I heard King Oliver playing at his club. He would play maybe things like *Call Of The Freaks* and *King Porter Stomp*. Freddie Keppard was a very proud man and a very loud trumpet player. One night he played so loud that he blew his mute all the way across the night club; I heard about that, I don't think he could compare with Joe Oliver who was a little more musical.

Louis Armstrong was in Erskine Tate's band at the Vendome Theater, a picture house. They had one act, a baritone singer, charts for the band to play along with the pictures and between the pictures the show would come in. I was in the audience just to hear the music. I can remember a special, beautiful overture that Louis was featured on playing and singing. I never could meet Louis, there were so many

people around him but I played with Louis Armstrong once and for him twice because he was out or he felt like a rest. I had to do the same things he did, not as well but the same things. Erskine Tate's brother was on trumpet, Jimmy Bertrand (drums), Frank Ethridge (banjo) and maybe Teddy Weatherford at the piano. The second time I played for Louis was at Loewes' Theater in New York, in the early fifties.

In Chicago Louis was like a king. When he came out East the public didn't accept him right away. He had a pretty rough time there for a while. The public liked bands as a whole, not individually; with Fletcher Henderson it was the same thing. It took a long time for the people to recognize Coleman Hawkins. So Louis couldn't stay in Luis Russell's band; as soon as he started to travel with his smaller band he was paid attention to by the public.

I stayed in Chicago approximately one year; Jerry Blake and I were pals and we were sent two tickets to Philadelphia; so we joined the famous Bobby Lee's Cotton Pickers and worked at The Cinderella Inn (or Seagirt Inn - see Stanley Dance's "The World of Jazz", p. 313), a road house in New Jersey for the season. When the season closed he didn't have anything, so we went on to play with Wilbur de Paris.

After a year in New Jersey, we went back to New York. I joined Chick Webb's band - Freddy Jenkins and Johnny Hodges were in that band. As he wasn't doing too much, I joined Sam Wooding.

With Sam Wooding I came to Europe. Tommy Ladnier was in that band; he was versatile - he could play anything and would play anything. That is one thing I learned from Tommy, he never refused, he never spoke against playing anything. Well, maybe waltzes! He would play in the middle range of the trumpet, he

could play high but he didn't care for high notes. He was famous for playing very nice introductions. I tell you I learned these things from Tommy. He practised a lot and I think he was a fast reader. He read all Sam Wooding's book and we had a lot of hard music in that band.

Coming back from Europe, I joined Marion Hardy's band but I didn't particularly like it, because he didn't give me anything to do. That's why I joined McKinney's Cotton Pickers as soon as I could. That was a good band. Cuba Austin was one of the greatest drummers I've ever heard, an all-around natural born musician. I don't think he knew anything about theory; he just knew what to do all the time. Cuba was a quiet musician, he liked to play solos though, and play with hats on stage and make the people laugh. When I joined McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Joe Smith was already in the band, and I played with him on some gigs in New York. I liked the beautiful arrangements Don Redman wrote for McKinney's Cotton Pickers. I like his theme song, *The Chant Of The Weed*, one of my favourites too was *So Beats My Heart For You; You're Driving Me Crazy*. When Don passed a new arrangement out, he wouldn't explain anything and he'd give the tempo and we'd play it and most of the time, as we were good readers, there was no problem and he'd let it go. Most arrangers owe something to him. Benny Carter's got something from Don. Don was an original type of writer, I don't think he got anything from anyone. I think that Don Redman and Benny Carter were two of the greatest writers that we have had.

The only recording session I made with the band was *Do You Believe In Love At First Sight* and *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*, both arranged by Benny Carter. I played the first chorus on both; then Rex Stewart plays on *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*.

After that the band broke up. Benny Carter and I left and came back to New York, where I worked with Benny Carter's band. The musicians were great and the arrangements weren't tricky, they were beautiful; everybody wanted to play with Benny. I think he was a little too far ahead of his time. We played the Savoy. I was lead trumpet and Irvin Randolph used to play all the solos.

Then I joined Cab Calloway's band and stayed with him until 1939. Cab was very original, he very seldom played what the other bands used to play, he didn't care for that. Ben Webster was featured as much as Chu Berry, in fact he had all his solos that's the reason why he never played *Blue And Sentimental*. Walter Thomas used to do most of the arrangements (see interview with Cozy Cole, p. 4, Bulletin du Hot Club de France, No. 241, Oct. 1974) but Harry White, Eddie Barefield and Benny Carter did some too. Benny arranged *Hot Toddy*, *Sweet Rhythm* and maybe *Lonesome Nights*.

Before joining Benny Carter's band, I rehearsed with Fletcher Henderson's band; he was to play the Savoy. I had known him since I had played with McKinney's Cotton Pickers in Detroit. All that I can remember are that the arrangements were old ones and Lincoln Mills was one of the trumpet players.

Then I played in different bands, Teddy Wilson's; with Joe Watts in Connecticut.... Then I was with Eddie Heywood's small band, before he got that hit song *Begin The Beguine* (1944). Jack Parker was on drums, Lem Davis (saxophone), John Simmons (bass), and Vic

Dickenson (trombone) and that was it.

Then I went over to playing with Latin bands: Perez Prado... Machito, who was Mario Bauza's brother-in-law (he plays alto saxophone now and is one of the best lead altos I've ever heard). I knew Mario as he had played with Cab. Latin music was very difficult for me at first, it took me quite a few years to learn to play with those Latin bands. I was with them four years. At the same time I had a studio and was teaching trumpet. One day there was a Buck And Bubbles recording session, and Budd Johnson had written something that they were having trouble playing so they sent for me and I played the introduction. As I don't keep records, I gave it away this year to Red Balaban; he's a Buck And Bubbles collector. The tunes were *Turn Back The Clock*, and *Send Me Back My Overcoat* on the other side of the 78.

Although I played some jazz with a Latin rhythm with Ricardo Ray (that was a great band), there came a time when I felt I'd better get back to jazz. I was never given an opportunity to solo — as I was a lead trumpet player — until I joined Wilbur de Paris. He was the first band leader who really gave me an opportunity to play. I knew him and I liked his music. I knew Sidney de Paris and when he'd take his vacations I would play in his place at Jimmy Ryan's. That was a show band and I think they did record most everything. We could play for dancing but most of his arrangements were for show. Wilbur did all of that. Sidney was a very great trumpeter; I don't think anybody can play like Sidney today; very original and he could play the blues. Sidney never talked too much about musicians but I know he was very fond of Bobby Hackett. Omer Simeon was one of the world's greatest clarinet players. I enjoyed *Clarinet Marmalade*, *Shreveport Shuffle*, and *Rampart Street*. He was a natural born clarinet player, a terrific musician.

Some nights at Jimmy Ryan's business wasn't too good. That's when Wilbur used to compose. He did a little each night, and we had nothing written down so it was difficult at times to remember exactly what he wanted done on one tune until he'd get what he liked. Then he would change it again. Sonny White was a great pianist but he never had anything to say as far as the arrangements were concerned.

Sonny White could play anything; one day I took him to West Virginia because Benny Goodman wanted to hear him play. He played so much piano that Benny stopped playing just to listen to him. He hasn't got the fame he deserves.

I went to Africa with Wilbur's band for two or three weeks when Sidney was taking a vacation. Off and on, I played a couple of years with Wilbur de Paris' band in the sixties. Among the records we made I like are "Something Old Something New" and "In The Twenties" where Sidney plays *Sugar Blues* and *That's A Plenty*.

I worked in Latin bands up until 1967. I played with Benny Goodman's sextet a year or so. He had Al Hall on bass, and he liked Hank Jones but he couldn't keep Hank Jones; he was too busy for radio. Bernie Layton was his piano player. So there was bass, piano, drums and myself and a guitar player.

And then, working here and there, it leads up to today. Thus I recently gigged with Claude Hopkins. I never played with his big band but I did play with him back in the twenties in Atlantic City. It was at that time, too, that I saw Josephine Baker; she was a chorus girl in some show.

I recently have done a lot of recording: my double album for Jezebel, an LP for McCarthy, one with Maxine Sullivan for Black and Blue, the newest one for Sackville, and I made an album called "Jam Session" for Buck Clayton where I soloed a lot.

My favourite singers are Ethel Waters, Billie Holiday and Dinah Washington. I was always partial to Dinah Washington. I worked for her at the Apollo. I worked at the Apollo with Teddy Hill, with Cab Calloway and once with Reuben Phillips in a show band, ten years ago. It was very hard to play at the Apollo Theater first, on account of the bad acoustics, and then because there was no room for you to sit and relax between shows, and there were five or six shows a day. The audiences were very good; they loved all the shows. Dinah Washington did not dance but she sang, blues and ballads. All have been recorded; I like her *What A Difference A Day Makes*.

My favourite musicians:

(tenor saxophone) Coleman Hawkins was the father of them all, Ben Webster (*Cotton Tail*), Don Byas, Illinois Jacquet, Lester Young (a stylist).

(trombone) Way back the first one I've heard: Wilbur de Paris, years ago, he was a very good trombone player. Claude Jones, Big Green, Jimmy Harrison; when I was with Bobby Lee's Cotton Pickers in Philadelphia he was in Fletcher Henderson's band together with Coleman Hawkins, Kaiser Marshall, Russell Smith. That band played more for dancing than for shows. I remember *King Porter Stomp*, *Shreveport Stomp*, *Henderson Stomp*. Vic Dickenson is in a class by himself he knows so much, a great man, and Trummy Young.

(drums) We start from Chick Webb, Kaiser Marshall, Rufus Jones, he played a long time with Duke... Jo Jones, J.C. Heard.

(bass) Al Hall, Arvell Shaw.

(piano) Earl Hines is the greatest stylist; he's very versatile. Erroll Garner, Teddy Wilson, Red Richards.

(clarinet) Eddie Barefield is a very good clarinet player though he plays more saxophone now; Barney Bigard.

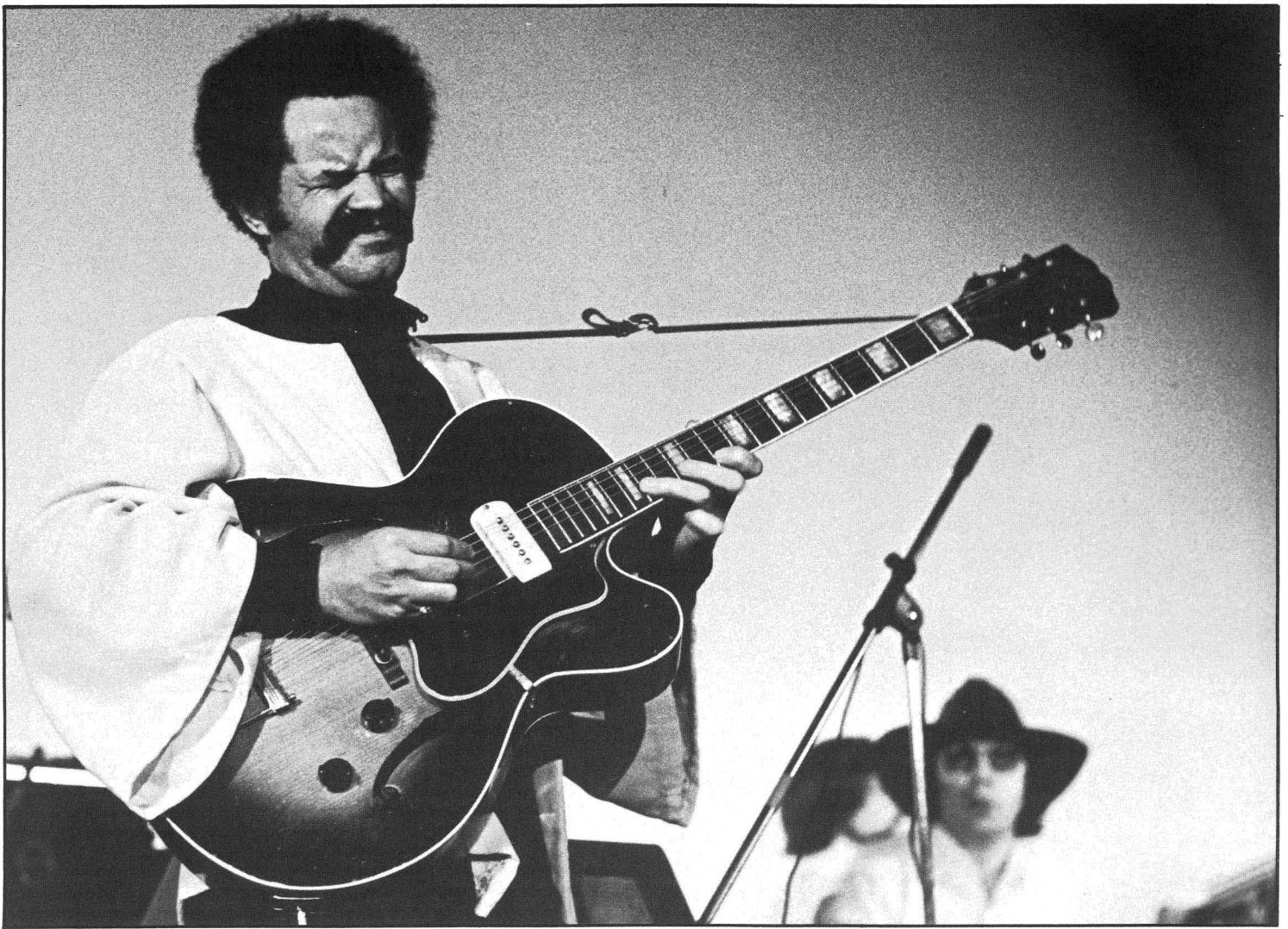
(trumpet) Naturally I like Harold Baker; Johnny Dunn, Joe Smith playing *Bugle Call Rag*, *The Bugle Blues*, and in particular *If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight*. Sidney de Paris, Buck Clayton — everything he did, and in particular what he did way back with Basie, those blues and Kansas City types of things.

At home I have a lot of 78s of Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and some tapes taken off the radio: *W.C. Handy*, *Old Man Moses*, *Long Gone*, *St. Louis Blues*, *Yellow Dog Blues*. I have no room for all the things he did. The first time I saw Louis Armstrong was in Chicago in 1926; all through the years I never got a chance to talk with him. It was very difficult to see him. I made several attempts at theaters where he'd play to go up to see him. There were too many people, too much! So I decided to stay away, that's the only thing I could do.

Playing a trumpet is always a risk — some players take it, some don't. Charlie Shavers took every risk in the book, that is why he was so great.

Bill Coleman is a great player. As good or better than anyone you will ever hear.

The little tin mute was used back in the twenties by Armstrong, King Oliver, Freddie Keppard just as I use it today. I'm just answering as well as I can remember; it's been a long time!



AROUND THE WORLD AROUND THE..

CANADA

TORONTO — This issue of *Coda* represents a giant milestone in that it is our 20th year of publication. No mean feat for a magazine dedicated to the art of improvised music. We feel very proud that we have managed to exist without pandering in any way to popular taste, and we would like to thank all the writers, photographers, workers and musicians who have constantly encouraged us in our projects. Most of all though we would like to thank the thousands of readers, who over this twenty-year span have had the insight to recognise the importance of *Coda* as a major voice in this wonderful music. Not everyone has agreed with our ideas of how the music has changed and evolved, but of course we never tried to please people, just simply put out as much information as was possible. *Coda* is still not able to support itself financially and relies a great deal on the sale of records through the mail and minimal advertising, but will continue over the next twenty years to promote and investigate as many facets of this music as our time will allow. Thank you all.

With this issue also comes a sadness, a friend and great percussionist, Larry Dubin, died of a

blood disease on Tuesday, April 25th. In recent years he has been the principal percussionist in the new music circles of Toronto, his energy and dedication to our music was responsible in multitudes of ways, for the directions it has taken. He was the great strength of the CCMC for many years, and performed on many occasions with myself, Stuart Broomer, Maury Coles, The Artists' Jazz Band, and many others. All of us will find his passing a great loss. *Coda* would like to dedicate this, its 20th anniversary issue, to his memory.

As mentioned in the last issue, the Horseshoe Tavern added jazz music to its diversified program. First was Sun Ra, and what more to write of his orchestra, it was just superb. He has been in this music for so long he has become an institution, one that I myself am quite happy to belong to. Carla Bley followed, with a band that had changed somewhat since the concert some months earlier. The most important change was George Lewis on trombone and Phillip Wilson, drums. Unfortunately only a small audience came to hear her music, resulting in a financial loss for the club. Cecil Taylor, because of this insecurity, was cancelled. Last in was the Anthony Braxton Quartet, with Ray Anderson, yet another amazing trombonist, Brian Smith on bass, and the un-

believable percussion of Thurman Barker. Braxton has produced yet one more superb band. The only upcoming jazz booked for the Horseshoe is a Steve Kuhn quartet with Miroslav Vitous and Bobby Moses. This takes place on June 7th and 8th.... Sonny Greenwich made TWO public appearances in less than one month. Really a treat considering that we have not heard him play for several years. The first performance was a concert at the Colonial Tavern on a Sunday afternoon, which was recorded by Jazz Radio Canada for a broadcast, probably in the late fall. Although his music was based in a similar concept to before, the performance of it by his new band was really quite different. With Don Thompson, his most constant companion, on piano, Gene Perla on bass and Claude Ranger on drums the music was more open rhythmically and the rhythm section's power elevated the music to a new plane. Some of the performance at the concert was ragged but by the middle of the second gig, a week-long gig at Yellowfingers, the band had come to terms with each other, making some of the most powerful music I have heard by Canadian players in some time. There were lots of rumours about a new record, perhaps when he returns later in May.

I had heard a great deal of complimentary

dialogue about the American saxophonist John Zorn, and all of it turned out to be true. He played a duet concert with Eugene Chadbourne at The Music Gallery. The music was very organized, and the two of them have a very strong rapport with each other. Chadbourne was a great surprise, I had not heard his music for nearly two years, and what was once just a concept has now turned into a very positive reality. You should try to hear these two players.... Maury Coles and myself were fortunate enough to play a concert in Montreal at the same time Archie Shepp was appearing there. His quartet was really fine (check the Montreal and Ann Arbor columns for more about him). David Lee is on his way to Europe for the Moers Festival, and will also be in England. His reports will appear in the next issue. Enjoy your summer.... — *Bill Smith*

TORONTO — Ray Bryant gave a stunning solo piano recital at a private party May 1. His repertoire covered most of the material on his recent Pablo albums but the variations within the performance made for a fascinating evening.... William F. Cooke Television Programs has been taping a second series of Peter Appleyard Presents programs for viewing this fall. Last year's programs are being re-run this summer and Toronto viewers will finally be able to see the programs (most of which were pre-empted last winter).... George Melly and John Chilton's Feetwarmers will be at DJ's Tavern for the week of June 19-24.... Jay McShann, Claude Williams and Paul Gunther will also be in town at that time for appearances at the Mariposa Festival (June 23-25). The trio will then be making a one-night appearance in Ottawa (26) and then will work six nights in Montreal at The Rising Sun.... The Toronto Jazz Society is a new organisation with a lot of ideas. More information can be obtained by calling them at 862-8530.

Jimmy (Trump) Davidson was one of the pioneers of the Canadian jazz scene. He died May 2 in Sudbury. Relatively inactive in recent years due to a heart condition, he still managed to contribute droll vocals on occasion when sitting in with various bands. He led one of Canada's most popular big bands during the Swing Era and his trumpet playing sparked a most successful dixieland band for more than two decades. His legacy is two LPs recorded for Art Snider on Chateau and Sound Canada (which may well be issued again).

Clarinetist Louis Cottrell died in New Orleans early in April. He was one of the masters of New Orleans clarinet and had contributed greatly to the popularity of the music during the last twenty years. His long-deleted Riverside trio LP is a fitting legacy. — *John Norris*

MONTREAL — The mass media has probably made most *Coda* readers aware of the sharp political tensions prevalent in Quebec with the rise of Quebecois nationalism and trade union militancy. The music scene has not remained unaffected by events. On March 28, more than 300 musicians, singers, technicians, roadies et al met at Plateau Hall (Montreal) to found the Syndicat de la Musique du Quebec (SMQ), a musicians union affiliated with the Quebec-based CSN trade union central. The formation of the SMQ marked a historic event and could challenge traditional entrepreneurial exploitation and anglophone domination of the Quebec music scene.

Since 1905 Quebec musicians have been represented by the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), a union which acted more as an appendage to the American music industry than a defender of the interests of Quebecois musicians, according to Pierre Consineau. Effectively this meant the promotion of the most commercially lucrative and privileged forms of music, without any action to improve the rights, employment and working conditions of most Quebec musicians. It was for these reasons the SMQ wanted to present an alternative to the AFM.

The response of the AFM was all to predictably: "This is war!" announced Gordon A. Marsh. The AFM has engineered a campaign, along with the multi-national record companies, to smash the AFM. Capitol Records has already given official support to the AFM. Several musicians and groups (i.e. Conventum, l'Engoulement, Beau Dommage), who participated in the formation of the SMQ, have had their contracts with RadioCanada, l'Outremont, etc. cancelled. The SMQ does not simply represent a threat to the AFM's Quebec operation, it also signifies an alternative to old line trade unionism. Given the traditional plight of North American musicians and growing economic hardships these days, the AFM has reason to fear the political implications of the SMQ challenge.

The consequences for jazz and blues in Montreal are difficult to assess at this point. The future will certainly depend upon the extent to which (1) local jazz/blues musicians participate in or remain exterior to the SMQ, (2) club and radio station owners collaborate with the AFM attempts to blacklist SMQ members, and (3) CSN, and possibly Parti Quebecois government, support of the SMQ. For more information the SMQ can be contacted at 1001 rue St. Denis, Montreal, P.Q. 286-2283.

In the past few months, The Rising Sun has continued to host some excellent performances. In mid-March Sun Ra's Humanitarian Myth-Science Arkestra and its Kosmic Consciousness descended from outer space to carve space sculptures. Decked out in silver pyramid hats, percussionists Luqman Ali, A. Takatune, Eddie Thomas, and Michael Anderson started off the spectacle with polytonal, African rhythms. After a period of primal throbbing, the diverse array of the Arkestral winds joined in with Marshall Allen on alto sax, flute and oboe, John Gilmore on tenor sax, clarinet and percussion, Michel Ray on trumpet, Danny Thompson on baritone sax, Elo Omo on bass clarinet and flute, James Jackson on bassoon and percussion, and Vincent Chancey on French horn. This troupe was followed by vocalist/dancer June Tyson and dancer Cheryl Banks, sporting long, sweeping gowns and large plastic bubble head-dresses. Gradually the sound and dance built up to a rhythmic crescendo, at which point Sun Ra treated everyone to his ritualistic entrance in glowing velvet garments, adorned with glitter. After swaying back and forth across the stage, Ra pounced down on his piano to add yet another voice to the collective pulse.

On the following number Ra shifted to roaring thunder antics on his intergalactic organ, and then surprised all by reaching back to the Fletcher Henderson days to play standards like *King Porter Stomp*. The contrast was quite something with Ra rolling over the piano in true boogie woogie style and the rest of the group supplying humorous arkestration.

Other highlights included Ray, Allen and Gilmore, who performed some incredible improvised solos with tight alto shrills and squeals, extended racing trumpet runs and wailing bop lines on tenor. Each night the group ended their musical theatre with a processional march through the club, singing either "You Must Leave The Planet Before It Is Too Late" or "We Travel The Spaceways From Planet To Planet".

At the end of the month, vocalist Betty Carter, along with John Hicks (piano), Jerome Hunter (bass) and Clifford Barbra (drums). Carter is no mere singer of lyrics. In a very unique way, she uses her vocal chords as a musical instrument to produce searing bebop scat and sensual ballads. Often her presentation would take off with a shift into accelerated high gear, reaching an emotional precipice, then plummeting down to the lowest of octaves, and concluding slightly under pitch and behind the beat. It all added up to a combination of controlled glissando caresses and dynamic jolts, delivered with contorted body gestures. Her up-beat version of *My Favourite Things* must be heard to be believed.

The Stephen Barry Blues Band, a long-standing local group, did a week at the beginning of April. The band, which consisted of Andrew Cowen and Jon Reissner (guitars), Ken Pearson (piano), Gordon Adamson (drums) and Stephen Barry (bass) played some very honest, classic Chicago blues. Their music, characterised by solid drive, expressive solos and Barry's macabre commentary, mixed well with beer and other additives.

At the end of the month Archie Shepp arrived, along with Zigfried Kestler (piano), Clifford Jarvis (drums) and Herman Wright (bass). Shepp flew right through the traditions of jazz, playing old ballads and bebop on tenor, and Afro-Asian modalities on soprano. However, he went well beyond the traditional, freeing its structures with juicy gut-bucket passion. His sound continually straddled the realms of poetic humour and primal wails. Cascading lines became avalanches. Soothing, romantic configurations often roared.

It must be said, however, that many of Shepp's mellow thematic contours and accompanying harmonic juxtapositions were long-winded. This was primarily due to the organised nature of the band. Group members were rarely allowed to mix with Shepp in a totally free and improvised manner. Their statements occurred in standard succession and were limited in duration. This was a pity because Kessler/Jarvis' solos and duets were very impressive when they surfaced. Kestler's musical recipe combined a charged Monk overdrive and full-bodied Tyner resonances. And once ignited, he drove Jarvis into some superb, albeit highly structured, trill constructs. Unfortunately, Wright was completely unfamiliar with this musical landscape. During the last evening of the week, local tenorist/flutist Sayyd joined the band to provide improvised exchanges with Shepp.

Upcoming dates at The Rising Sun include John Hammond (June 6-11), Horace Silver (June 13-18), Esther Phillips (June 20-25), Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson and Jay McShann (June 27-July 2). The club has also organised the Festijazz at Place des Arts: July 21 - Willie Dixon, John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters; July 22 - Dexter Gordon, Hubert Laws, Sarah Vaughn; July 23 - Paul Horn, Grover Washington, B.B. King. More information can be obtained from The Rising Sun, 286 ouest Ste-

Catherine, Montreal, 861-0657.

- In April I had an opportunity to visit the new El Casino club (316 ouest Ste-Catherine) four doors up from The Rising Sun. The room was quite spacious with good acoustics. The jazz program was oriented towards the commercially accessible college crowd. During the month the club featured Stanley Turrentine and Freddie Hubbard. The latter, along with tenorist Hadley Caliman, occasionally blew some good hard bop. For the most part, the music avoided creative explorations. Upcoming dates at the club include Buddy Rich (June 1-3), and possibly Steve Kuhn/Miroslav Vitous (June 5-6) and Yusef Lateef (June 30-July 2).

In 1951 Paul Bley and Keith White founded the Montreal Jazz Workshop which provided a setting for the jazz milieu to exchange ideas and techniques, and to express them musically in regular concerts. The Workshop eventually went into limbo with the departure of its two founders and the closing of most of the city's clubs. This year Keith White returned, in association with Ralph Whims, to rejuvenate the Workshop. They booked the Musee des Beaux Arts in April for an evening of jazz. Len Dobbin provided hours of publicity on his program, playing many of White's sessions with such notables as Charlie Parker and Pepper Adams. An almost capacity crowd filled the Maxwell Cummings auditorium to hear the Andre White and Keith White groups. The music consisted largely of re-arrangements of jazz standards and included excellent performances by bassist Dennis James, Michel Gauthier (guitar) and Henri Boudin (tenor and alto sax).

Len Dobbin recently celebrated the third anniversary of his Sunday evening jazz show, Len, Montreal's jazz "oracle", continues in his pedagogical role, organising programs on giants like Hawkins, Young and Parker. As well, Len does an exceptional job reviewing the recordings of those booked at the city's clubs and halls. Unfortunately, he totally discards most avant-garde music, which can be heard on Gilles Archambault's "Jazz et Blues" (Radio Canada), Monday to Friday 10:30-11:00 pm and Saturday 11:00 - 12:00 midnight. Oh, public media is so generous when it comes to half-hour blocks....
— Peter Danson

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — At first glance it seemed a strange programming combination — Barry Harris, late-fifties patriarch of an influential generation of Detroit players, and Archie Shepp, outspoken radical voice of the mid-sixties "free-jazz" movement. But Harris' continued devotion to his chosen idiom (bop) and recent changes in Shepp's approach to the music made for an unexpectedly harmonious juxtaposition in two halves of an Eclipse-produced concert at the University of Michigan's Rackham Auditorium March 18.

Harris, who opened the concert, brought with him bassist Arthur Hubbard and drummer Leroy Williams. Harris' lines, his voicings, his touch all betray the powerful influence of the late Bud Powell. Even in his Tatumesque free introductions to several of the tunes, Harris reflected Tatum through Powell. But in Harris' hands bop is still a living language; his solos are not strings of cliches, but rather polished expressions of a viewpoint deeply rooted in bop.



Shepp was backed by drummer Clifford Jarvis, bassist Cameron Brown and pianist Art Mathews. Visually they made an oddly assorted group — Shepp in a suit, wide tie and square sunglasses a la Miles Davis 1964, Mathews in a suit and multicolored cloth ski-cap, Brown less formal (tee-shirt and jeans). The music occasionally shared the oddness, starting abruptly and moving at times almost jerkily. Like Pharaoh Sanders, Shepp plays on changes in a Coltrane-derived idiom, but his sound is quite different — hollow, hoarse, and edged with a drawling sarcasm. Mathews took several solos; he stayed more within the harmonic framework than Shepp, using chunky voicings and at times very dissonant scales. The set closed with Parker's *Confirmation*, gliding over most of the twists and turns of its complex head and floating free and hot over its changes. The crowd also brought them back for an encore, the 1954 Miles arrangement of *I'll Remember April*.

On April 6 Eclipse closed its winter season with Ella Fitzgerald and Roy Eldridge. The bill filled the large Hill Auditorium nearly to capacity, including not a few couples who by age and attire could be characterized as of the Nostalgia generation. Backing both performers was the trio of pianist Don Abney, a last-minute sub for the ailing Tommy Flanagan, with Fitzgerald regulars Keter Betts, bass, and Jimmy Smith, drums.

Eldridge's set, mostly unrehearsed, featured him equally as trumpeter and vocalist. Sadly, Roy's trumpet has begun to show the signs of age; the vibrato has become a little quavery and the high notes less secure. Still, there's too much fire remaining in his horn to consign him to a senior citizens' home. His vocals (on tunes like *St. James Infirmary*) shared his trumpet's smoothness and elegance without the occasional sense of strain. The set included Betts' *Echoes Of Madrid*, an exercise in mock Flamenco solo bass, and a long drum solo on *Undecided*.

It's probably impossible any more to review an Ella Fitzgerald performance. She has been singing professionally for over forty years, and the identifying characteristics — the swoops, the scat singing — have become as stylized as the trills and turns of a roco dance suite. This set was I think several cuts above her normal performances, for two reasons. First, the audience was unusually warm and responsive, with no hint of any generational gap. Secondly, this was only Abney's second concert with Ella; Flanagan, who had reportedly suffered a heart attack, had been with her since 1966. Having to cope with a pianist unfamiliar with the charts (and Abney got completely lost at least once) I think forced Ella to work harder, to be more conscious of what she was about, leading to a stronger performance. Beyond that, what can one say about a singer who is virtually a legend?

I have similar problems in reviewing the last of Eclipse's Bright Moments concerts, on April 14, but for totally different reasons. For in this concert by Joseph Jarman and Leo Smith the music became almost subordinate to a form of spontaneous theatre, or perhaps more accurately, instant ritual. The duet was actually a trio; Jarman (saxes, flutes and percussion) and Smith (trumpet, flugelhorn, flutes and percussion) were joined throughout by dancer Eve Jorjorian, whose presence was at least as important as theirs in shaping the performance. I enjoyed these two sets more than I did my last encounter with Jarman (as part of the Art Ensemble, last fall), but paradoxically there seemed to be much less music. It's perhaps a comment on the rootless aridity of the twentieth century that audiences can respond to such allusive posturings — Jarman's stiff puppet turns, the goalless marches about the stage, Ms. Jorjorian's sexual/sexless gyrations — as if they had a deeper meaning, even as here where such significance is not readily apparent.

When the music did move beyond its role as a clangorous, percussive accompaniment to the ritual, it was surprisingly strong. This was especially true of Jarman's noodling on tenor sax at the opening of the second set (while Smith moved about inside a large silken mitten), which became a powerful exercise in raucous, vocal screaming. Still, the ritual creation dominated the music like a stage show does its pit orchestra, making the whole less interesting than I had expected.

A few weeks later we went down to the Pub (in the Ann Arbor Inn) and found bassist Ron Brooks still firmly ensconced with his trio. They've been there for nearly two years, a long time for a steady jazz gig. In the Pub (Wednesday through Saturday) Ron is joined by pianist Kevin O'Connell (a University of Michigan architecture student by day) and drummer Jeff Comstock. Although Ron sings on occasion, this remains very much a jazz trio. On the night we were there the music ranged from Wayne Shorter's *Beauty And The Beast* (rock-ish) and Coreia's *Captain Marvel* to such things as *Seven Steps To Heaven* (Miles) and Randy Weston's *Little Niles*. O'Connell is playing with a synthesizer lately, although he still is most interesting on his acoustic and electric pianos.

On Sundays in the hotel's Sandalwood Lounge, the addition of saxophonist Pete Kahn and percussionist Dave Kother recreates Ron's Mixed Bag. Occasionally the Bag alternates with a 13-piece group (saxes, trumpets, trombones and rhythm) co-led by Brooks and arranger Dave Kozell.

Although the day-gig kept us within the city limits, there was a lot happening outside Ann Arbor. The Showcase Jazz people in East Lansing became surprisingly active late in the semester, with the Anthony Braxton quartet (Ray Anderson, trombone; Brian Smith, bass; Thurman Barker, drums), and Oliver Lake with Michael Gregory Jackson. At presstime McCoy Tyner was a possibility for May 12 and 13. The Paradise Theater series in Detroit's Orchestra Hall closed with Yusef Lateef on April 16, but a fundraiser for perennial candidate Zoltan Ferency with Griot Galaxy and Marcus Belgrave's 15-piece New Detroit Jazz Ensemble was held there April 28. Peggy Lee joined Count Basie for five days (April 25-30) in Detroit, evidently a first. Pat Metheny's guitar was heard from on April 7 at the University of Michigan's Dearborn campus. And singer Betty Carter, who opened at Detroit's Dummy George's on May 3, will be back on July 21, as half of an Eclipse Jazz concert in Ann Arbor with no-relation Ron Carter's quartet, to add extra spice to the annual Art Fair. — *David Wild*

NEW YORK — The Whitney Museum presented the Cecil Taylor Unit (Taylor, piano; Jimmy Lyons, alto saxophone; Raphe Malik, trumpet; Ramsey Amin, violin; Sirone, bass; Ron Shannon Jackson, percussion) on April 20 as part of their Composers' Showcase Series. The group exhibited an exciting collective power and inventiveness as well as strong, provocative solos by the individual members. The ensemble provided an interesting contrast to Taylor's solo performances, creating extra lines and power to an already multi-dimensional and supercharged music. The inclusion of a bassist and percussionist provided new colors and increased rhythmic urgency. Textures also shifted more frequently — and unexpectedly — as different instrumental combinations kept appearing and disappearing. The result was a tremendously complex, but emotionally moving sound sculpture molded by the genius of Cecil Taylor.

The Public Theatre's recent jazz presentations have included The Art Ensemble of Chicago from March 8 - 11 and Sam Rivers' Quartet (Rivers, saxophones, flute and piano; Joe Daley, tuba; Dave Holland, bass and cello; Barry Altschul, percussion) from March 30 through April 1. Rivers played with tremendous authority, his reed and flute work sounding confident and expressive. He spun out a hypnotic, stream-of-consciousness type of music which flowed nonstop from beginning to end. Idea upon idea poured out of Rivers' various horns as he and the rhythm section explored Latin, blues, straight-ahead, and free modes of expression. It was a mesmerizing performance whose energy could be felt even after the music had ended.

Anthony Davis played a solo concert at Axis in SoHo on March 26. He explored various sonorities both inside the piano as well as on the keyboard, creating a restrained and controlled music which had a strong sense of clarity and direction. Ragtime, atonal clusters, and triadic harmony were molded together into a seamless style. *An Anthem For The Generation That Died*, for example, employed some effective diatonic (dominant-tonic) cadences to create a mournful, prayer-like mood.

Studio Rivbea's Early Spring Concert Series included a performance by the George Lewis Ensemble (George Lewis, trombone and tuba; Douglas Ewart and J.D. Parran, reeds and flutes; Richard Teitelbaum, synthesizer) on Ap-

ril 28. Lewis is an exciting musician who has helped expand the trombone's range of expression. His Ensemble performed three interesting works of which the first — *Three Moods* — was absolutely exquisite. Teitelbaum's synthesizer created a smooth rolling ostinato that used electronic sounds sensitively instead of as a gimmick. Over this lush carpet of sound, Lewis' trombone sang out declamatory, speech-like modal lines. His full, round tone had the warmth of a French horn, creating a peaceful and tranquil mood. Parran and Ewart embellished the trombonist's statements with some sensitive flute work, and then engaged in their own exciting duet in *Mood Number 2*.

Roscoe Mitchell played a brilliant solo concert at Axis in SoHo on March 5. While many musicians fall into a textural monotony when performing by themselves, Mitchell successfully avoided this pitfall by using an incredible array of sounds — including multiphonics, microtones, and overblowing — as well as silence to explore a wide variety of moods and compositional situations. He also used timbral shading and dynamic changes as a means of altering tension levels. His soft playing was particularly impressive, approaching the delicacy and fragility of a Japanese painting.

Briefs: Tenor saxophonist Frank Lowe (with trombonist Joseph Bowie and guitarist Eugene Chadbourne) played at Piano Magic on April 28. His performance demonstrated a respect for the past and anticipation of the future, incorporating both original compositions and fresh versions of jazz standards. Lowe's abstract version of Tadd Dameron's *Lady Bird*, for example, used short clipped phrases which fragmented the tune's lines and created a very jagged texture.... GRT Corporation is reissuing the famous Candid/Barnaby Jazz Series. The first six releases include Charles Mingus' "Presents Charles Mingus", Richard Williams' "New Horn In Town", Booker Little's "Out Front", and Steve Lacy's "The Straight Horn Of Steve Lacy". Future albums will feature Booker Ervin, Clark Terry, Abbey Lincoln and Jaki Byard.... Sal Mosca's "Music" is available from Interplay Records (P.O. Box 7000-115, Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277). The album features the pianist's strong, two-handed playing in a solo setting. (Witness the contrapuntal lines on *Iota-Go*)....Of possible interest to contemporary music listeners is David Behrman's album on Lovely Music Records, featuring instrumental improvisation with electronic music. Write the company at 473 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014 for further information about this and other recordings.... New from Chiaroscuro are David Eyges' "The Captain" and Bruce Ditmas' "Aeray Dust".... WKCR's afternoon jazz show has been renamed "Out To Lunch" and is now broadcast from 12 noon to 3 p.m. Sunday through Friday.... Jemeel Moondoc and Ensemble Muntu's new album "First Feeding" is available from the saxophonist c/o Piano Magic, 78 Reade St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10007 Chuck Flores' "Drum Flower" is a quintet session featuring some strong blowing on the title tune and *Return Of The Ogre*.

"Jazz Styles" by Mark C. Gridley has been published by Prentice-Hall, Inc. The book features an analysis of jazz (primarily from 1940 to the present) plus appendix material including a glossary, discography, supplementary reading, and a discussion of music's building blocks.... New releases from Muse Records include Sonny Stitt's "Blues for Duke" — a quartet session with Barry Harris, Sam Jones

and Billy Higgins playing tunes associated with Ellington — and David Schnitter's "Goliath" — a fine bop date by the young tenor saxophonist. The company has recently signed Pepper Adams and Jaki Byard and will also soon be releasing a duet date by Larry Young and Joe Chambers.

Improvising Artists has released Lester Bowie/Phillip Wilson's "Duet" — an exhilarating exploration of sounds and textures — and Marion Brown/Gunter Hampel's "Reeds 'N' Vibes" — a session of inventive solos and duets.

The 25th Newport Jazz Festival will be held in New York from June 23 through July 2. Concerts will be held at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, N.Y.U.'s Loeb Auditorium in addition to Waterloo Village, N.J. and Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Among the featured artists will be McCoy Tyner, Cecil Taylor, Dexter Gordon and Ornette Coleman.... Inner City will soon release records from the Black & Blue (France) and East Wind (Japan) catalogues, featuring such musicians as Earl Hines, Don Byas, Hank Jones and Andrew Hill. The company will also continue to make available the Steeple-Chase and Enja catalogues in addition to their own productions. Among Inner City's new albums are Cecil Taylor's "Air Above Mountains; Buildings Within" - a riveting solo recital on the Bosendorfer piano — Joe Lee Wilson's "Secrets From The Sun", Elmo Hope's "Last Sessions, Volume 2", and Eddie Jefferson's "The Main Man". — *Clifford Jay Safane*

WASHINGTON — TRUTH is heard in Washington! Max Roach brought his quartet (Billy Harper, tenor; Cecil Bridgewater, trumpet; and Calvin Hill, bass) to night-clubish Blues Alley for a week. Compositions such as Stanley Cowell's *Effi* in 6/8, Harper's *Call Of The Wild And Peaceful Heart* in 9/4, and Bridgewater's *Scott-Free* with sections in free-time, show that Max can play any rhythm(s) with the same force that has characterized his non-compromising career.

Rashied Ali, of course, is best known for his work with John Coltrane. On Washington's only jazz radio station, WPFW (89.3 FM) I asked Rashied about that experience. "Trane was looking for a freer way to play, he was really trying to get out of the metronome situation, out of the beat situation. I always say "Trane's music", but actually Trane was playing our music. Trane had said, "Hey man, I really dig what you cats are doing, so come on...." That's the way it really went down." As Coltrane brought the newer musicians such as Rashied Ali, Marion Brown and Pharoah Sanders to the forefront, Rashied now fills a similar role. His current band includes an exciting young tenor player, Lee Rozie; Oscar Brown, piano; and Nick DiGeronimo, bass; along with the better-known Byard Lancaster, whose driving alto did its part to raise the roof of D.C. Space. How does Rashied manage to lead this burning band and find time to realize Coltrane's idea of controlling the music through club (Ali's Alley) and record label (Survival) ownership? "It's all part of the music."

And the music continues at D.C. Space. Roscoe Mitchell encountered Oliver Lake and Paul Maddox there; Joseph Jarman and Don Moye presented *Sun Song*; David Murray and James Newton performed in duet; and Gunter Hampel brought his concept in, the Galaxie Dream Band, with Jeanne Lee, Mark Whitecage, and Perry Robinson. One of the positive trends at D.C. Space is the link-up of

local musicians with New Yorkers. Altoist Byron Morris, who also does a show on WPFW, explored several of Ornette Coleman's tunes among others with a band that included Hakim Jami, a strong, flexible bassist. Hakim also operates The Ladies' Fort in SoHo. Two young tenor players, Yahya and Carl Cromwell occasionally join forces, always to mutual benefit. Trumpeter Olu Dara made the five hour hop from New York to D.C. for a real exchange with them and local drummer Nasara Abadey. Drummer J.R. Mitchell, currently in Jaki Byard's band, and tenor player Gary Hammond recently came into town and added to the warmth of pianist/percussionist Ndikho Xaba's music.

In May were the Hamiet Bluiett Trio; the Ken McIntyre Quartet; local guitarist Nathen Page and his quartet (Nathen recently received a rave review from Stanley Crouch for his work with Jackie McLean); and the Charles Tyler Trio.

Upcoming dates are: June 2-3, Air; June 9-10, members of Birthright Paul Gresham, Nasara Abadey and hopefully, Joe Ford; 16-17, Jaki Byard Trio; and 22-24, Sam Rivers and Dave Holland, performing in duet.

Also in D.C. — local phenomenon and Coltrane scholar Andrew White has been performing again, at D.C. Space and Harold's Rogue and Jar. Another announcer on WPFW is guitarist Bill Harris whose comfortable club, Pigfoot, is still going strong. Guitarist Mantuilla Nyomo, heard in New York with Andrew Cyrille and Charles Bobo Shaw, is now living in D.C. and has appeared at Harold's a couple of times. The Left Bank Jazz Society is active again in D.C. In Baltimore, Left Bank presents music every Sunday afternoon at the Famous Ballroom.

There's more happening in D.C. than you'll ever read on the front page of your newspaper. And it's the TRUTH. — *Ken Steiner*

DENMARK

In 1977 the two best-known Danish jazz spots, the new Montmartre in Copenhagen and Tag-skaegget in Aarhus celebrated their first and tenth year of operation, respectively. Montmartre's birthday surprise was the teaming of the two tenorsaxophonists Stan Getz and Dexter Gordon. Around its birthday Tag-skaegget presented an extended program with names like Mercer Ellington, Stan Getz and a 38-hour jam session with a host of Danish and American musicians, among them Thad Jones who has been in charge of The Danish Radio Big Band for a six month period.

SteepleChase recorded Stan Getz live at the Montmartre during the first of the three visits Getz made to Denmark last year. Other new offerings by SteepleChase include albums with guitarist Doug Raney, Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen Trio and a duet album featuring Sheila Jordan and Norwegian bassist Arild Andersen.

A new Danish label, Jazzcraft, announces four albums to be released in early 1978. "The Underdog" features a quintet led by baritone/tenorsaxophonist Turk Mauro. "Prime Time" is a trio album with pianist Hugh Lawson, bassist Bob Cranshaw and drummer Ben Riley. The same trio is featured on Charlie Rouse's "Moment's Notice" and Rouse is also on Howard McGhee's "Jazz Brothers". McGhee and Rouse are supported by Barry Harris, Lisle Atkinson, Grady Tate and Jual Curtis. Jazzcraft can be

contacted c/o Lars Johansen, Rodtjornen 28, 2.th, DK 2791 Dragor, Denmark.

Arne Astrup, a Danish tenorsaxophonist, is working on a Stan Getz discography.

On March 27, the Ben Webster Foundation celebrated the late Webster at a party in Montmartre. Among the people who played were Thad Jones and English pianist Stan Tracey. The Ben Webster prize of 1978 was given to the young and very talented tenor-player Simon Spang-Hanssen who works with John Tchicai & Strange Brothers, a unit that can be heard on its debut album "Darktown Highlights" (Storyville SLP-1015). — *Roland Baggenaes*

NEW ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP

VANCOUVER — Potentially the most exciting group in the city is the newly formed New Orchestra Workshop, a group of local musicians who share similar views on the creation and advancement of creative improvised music. Individually, they are Paul Cram, reeds, Ralph Eppel, brass, L.S. Lansall-Ellis, bass, Paul Plimley, piano and Gregg Simpson, percussion. Recent performances at the University of British Columbia and the Classical Joint in Gastown has revealed the group's interest in exploring musical terrains currently being investigated by people like Cecil Taylor, Sam Rivers and Albert Mangelsdorff as well as many modern European composers. A loft located on West 2nd Avenue has recently been acquired that will serve as a rehearsal site as well as a possible location for future performances.

Under the auspices of the New Orchestra vibraphonist Karl Berger conducted a series of workshops and performed music for solo piano and vibes at The Western Front on April 2. Berger performed best on vibes, playing short compositions that displayed his beautiful, clear tone on that instrument. Unfortunately, because the pieces were short little in the way of sustained musical and emotional development took place. The highlight of the evening featured Berger conducting a big band comprised of all the musicians who took part in the workshops. — *John Orysik*

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ODDS &

In New York, Studio Rivbea's early spring festival extended through April 1 with performances by Kalaparusha, Amina Myers, Byard Lancaster, Jimmy Lyons, Don Pullen, Muhai Richard Abrams, George Lewis and Chico Freeman.... The George Coleman Octet shared the bill April 1 with Irene Reid and Company at the St. Charles Auditorium on 141st Street.... On the same night Byard Lancaster, John Betsch and Edward Crockett appeared at The Grinnell, 800 River-

side Drive.... John Betsch will be at Ali's Alley on July 6 with Kalaparusha and Hamiet Bluiett, Jimmy Lyons, who is a recipient of this year's Creative Artists' Public Service grant in music composition, was presented in concert May 6 at The Collective, 52 White Street.... Gunter Hampel's Galaxie Dream Band was at Environ April 8.... Billy Bang's Survival Quintet played a concert the same day at Piano Magic, 78 Reade Street.... The String Trio of New York (Billy Bang, John Lindberg, James Emery) gave a concert April 22 at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery.... WKCR is continuing its series of live concerts with Steve Tintweiss' Spacelight Band (May 2) and Jemeel Moondoc and Ensemble Muntu (May 9)... The Smith Street Society Jazz Band is resident Monday nights at The Red Blazer Too, 1576 Third Avenue. The San Francisco style Dixie band features Herb Gardner on trombone and leader Bruce McNichols... Drummer-composer Paul Motian with David Izenzon and Charles Brackeen appeared at the Public Theater April 21 and 22. They also performed at Environ May 1 and will tour Europe this summer.

The Creative Improvisors' Forum, Inc. (Box 101, New Haven, CT 06501) presented the Mario Pavone Duo/Trio (Mark Whitecage, Gunter Hampel) on April 8.... Cecil Taylor appeared at Dartmouth College on April 10.... Sandy's Jazz Revival in Beverly has reopened for the summer season and recent attractions have included Jack Maheu's Salt City Six, the Al Grey/Jimmy Forrest group with Don Patterson and Bobby Durham and Woody Shaw's band.... "Mr. C's" is a new club in Schenectady located at 302 Schenectady Street which operates with a weekend policy. Chet Baker opens the club May 12-14 and is followed by Charles Earland (19-21), Ron Carter (June 1-2), Yusef Lateef (9-11), Joe Morello (16-18) and Jack Wilkins/John Abercrombie (23-25). For information call (518) 482-4944 The Fusion Lounge, 4634 Salem Avenue, Dayton presents live jazz on weekends....

Arista Records has announced the inaugural releases on their new Arista/Novus label, which will be comprised entirely of newly recorded material, and will cover a wide scope of progressive music. The first five albums, to be released at the beginning of May, are Muhai Richard Abrams' "Lifea Blinec", Warren Bernhardt's "Solo Piano", "Open Air Suit" by the Air trio, "Lookin' For That Groove" by Baird Hersey and The Year Of The Ear, and Oliver Lake's "Life Dance of Is".

Steven Foster's "Photographs in response to the music of Steve Lacy" was on view in Chicago's Goodspeed Hall of the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago March 31 through April 22. Douglas Ewart, Henry Threadgill and musicians from the AACM performed at the opening... Chick Corea is forming a 13-piece band for a world tour.... Elvin Jones and the Jazz Machine left for a three-week tour of Japan on April 4.... Pat Flowers is now appearing at the Starboard Tack in Detroit.... Woody Herman's band is due in Livonia May 21 for a big-band concert.... Following its successful series of concerts the Allied Artists Association of Detroit has set up a planning conference in May to examine the possibilities of establishing a Detroit Jazz Center. Additional information is available through AAA at 15 East Kirby, Detroit (313) 871-3645.

The Paradise Valley (Arizona) Jazz Festival was held March 11 and 12 and featured such musicians as Dick Hyman, Milt Hinton, Herb



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 July 17 - 22 **ANDY KREHM**

Ellis, Joe Newman, Carl Fontana, Peanuts Hucko and Bob Wilber. The latter celebrated his fiftieth birthday at this event and was the recipient of an unusual present. Vocalist Pug Horton popped out of the huge birthday cake into his arms on stage....

Radio station WKCR in New York announced the results of its annual disc jockey poll of top records for 1977. George Lewis' solo trombone record on Sackville was voted the best new recording and Volume One of Columbia's "Lester Young Story" was honored as reissue of the year.... A group of Ben Webster's friends assembled on stage March 27 at Copenhagen's Cafe Montmartre to pay tribute to Ben Webster. Thad Jones and Stan Tracey were the special guests who performed with the house band of Niels Jorgen Steen. Also on hand were Richard Boone, Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, Kenny Drew and Clark Terry.... The fifth Jazz Marathon in Groningen, Holland took place May 12 through 14 with an all-star lineup... Bob Wilber and Dave McKenna toured England in April along with vocalist Pug Horton.... The Berlin Arts Prize 1978 is being shared by Peter Brotzmann, Han Bennink and Alexander von Schlippenbach.... The 12th Montreux International Jazz Festival takes place July 17-23 and features Ray Charles backed by Stuff, Clark Terry, Dave Newman, Hank Crawford, Billy Preston, Etta James and Esther Phillips (July 13), a Dizzy Gillespie all-star big band (July 11), McCoy Tyner and Bill Evans (July 12), a special Brazilian night July 14, and artists such as Bill Doggett, Bo Diddley, Joachim Kuhn, Michel Ripoché, Jan Akkerman, Philip Catherine and many others. Information is available from: Montreux International Festival, Case 97, CH-1820 Montreux, Switzerland.

Inner City has added Black and Blue records to its roster and the first releases were scheduled to appear in April. In the meantime they have released the Enja two-disc package of Eric Dolphy concert recordings from Berlin.... Salsoul Records released an album by Stephen James' "Luv You Madly Orchestra" in time for Ellington's birthday on April 29.... Birth 0026 "Transformation" is the latest release from Gunter Hampel.... Trombonist Britt Woodman is showcased on a new album recorded in Los Angeles with tenor saxophonist Bob Mann, Dan Micheli (piano), Jim Gannon (bass) and Will Bradley Jr. (drums). The album is on Falcon 100, a Scottish release.

Sweet Earth Records has released its Marion Brown solo saxophone record.... New releases on Galaxy (a Fantasy subsidiary) should include Red Garland's first U.S. release in a long time (a trio date - "Crossings" and a quintet session - "Red Alert"), a solo effort by Hank Jones and a Cal Tjader set.... CBS reports that Miles Davis has been back in the studio for the first time since 1975. Larry Coryell was among the back-up musicians.... Arhoolie continues its ethnic series with Volumes 6 through 10 of Tex-Mex Border Music (Folk Lyric 9011-9017) as well as a collection of Irish American music (Folk Lyric 9010) and an album by Flaco Jimenez (Arhoolie 3007).
 - compiled by John Norris

SMALL ADS

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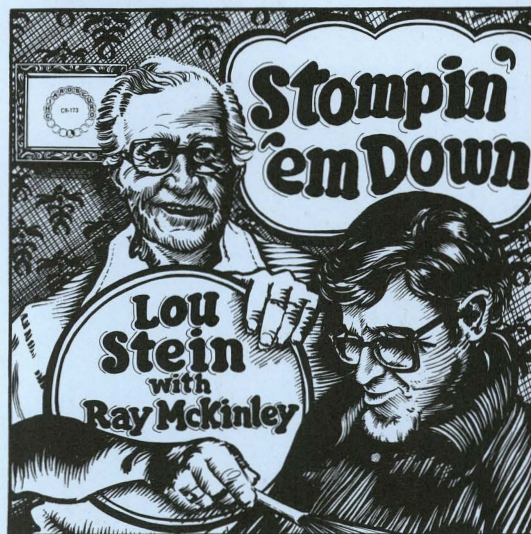
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PROGRAM SCHEDULE JUNE 9 - JULY 29

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

June 9/10 The Doug Parker Band from Vancouver; TBA (Montreal).

June 16/17 Nimmons 'n' Nine Plus Six from Toronto; The Jean Bendet Trio from Ottawa.

June 23/24 The Bob Hales Band from Vancouver; The Humber Stage Band from Toronto.

June 30/July 1 Special: The Canadian Stage Band Festival Finals. This Canada Day musical documentary special covers activities surrounding this annual event held this year at the Winnipeg Convention Centre Apr. 27-30/78. Music of the best of all classes of Canadian Stage Bands from across Canada will be featured along with commentary by partic-

ipating students, adjudicators (Phil Nimmons, Bob Hales, Tommy Banks, Phil McKellar, Bobby Herriott), clinicians (Jim Ranier, Hal Sherman, special guest Maynard Ferguson) and stage band organizers (Bob Richmond, Paul Miner, Gary Wadsworth). Hosts: Lee Major and Mary Nelson.

July 7/8 Nimmons 'N' 9 + 6 Band from Toronto; The Kat Hendriske Quartet from Vancouver.

July 14/15 Carmen MacRae: Live from Camp Fortune in Ottawa; The Ed Bickert Trio from the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

July 21/22 The Don Palmer Quartet featuring pianist Joe Sealy; a mini-documentary about the new jazz club in Halifax (Pepes) together with a Saturday afternoon workshop from the club; The Warren Chaisson (vibraharp) Trio. Host: Neil Copeland. **On CBC**

Stereo: John Norris commences his Jazz Heritage Series. This week: "The Sound of Surprise" - an introduction to the structure of jazz, spirituals, blues and songs.

July 28/29 Host Katie Malloch takes us on a tour of Montreal jazz clubs. Along with interviews with musicians and club owners, featured musical guests will be l'Orchestra Sympathique and the Charles Biddles-Nelson Symonds Duo. Also covered is a report on the Record Collectors Congress held in Montreal in April. **On CBC Stereo:** John Norris: "Ragtime" - How the form was used in jazz. Eubie Blake, Jelly Roll Morton, Monk & Ellington.

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