

Coda

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FREDDIE HUBBARD CHANGED HIS STYLE SO HE COULD BE REALLY HAPPY.



HE DID IT WITH "SUPER BLUE"

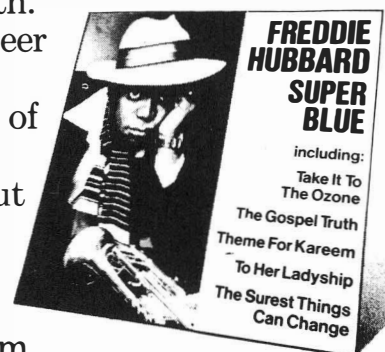
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Masaru Imada

M. Imada 46 years, is one of the many talented and passionate musicians playing in Japan which has become the second most active center of jazz in the world. During his long career he has been found performing in a wide variety of musical contexts. He is always absorbing new ideas and expanding the scope of his playing and composing. Imada's music swings and is based on solid musical background and a well-developed technique.

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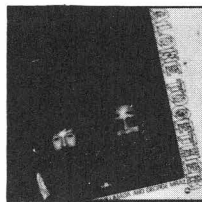
—Masashi Katagiri



Jazz From Japan! by Three Blind Mice



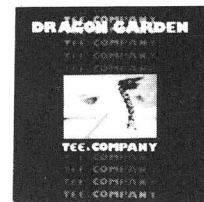
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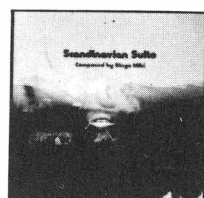
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HENRY RED ALLEN

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photograph of Henry Red Allen courtesy of Keith Stowell

HENRY RED ALLEN & HIS NEW ORCHESTRA

Volume 1

Henry "Red" Allen & His New York Orchestra
RCA FXM1 7060

It Should Be You (3 takes); *Biff'ly Blues* (2 takes); *Feeling Drowsy* (3 takes); *Swing Out* (3 takes); *Doggin' That Thing*; *Yo Yo*; *Make A Country Bird Fly Wild* (2 takes); *Funny Feathers Blues 1*.

On this and the following three albums, issued under Henry "Red" Allen's name (although, according to his own explanation, people started calling him "Red" only when he played with Fletcher Henderson a few years later), we get most of the best work done by Allen for RCA between 1929 and 1957. It is a deserved tribute to a great jazz-man, a fully dedicated artist and a creative musician who was never afraid of trying new things. As he told me in N.Y. in November 1956; "I'm doing the unexpected because that's what is in me and I have to bring it out — not because I want to impress people. It's an extremely spontaneous thing. I'm never experimenting." To those who knew Red Allen personally there was never any doubt that he told the truth.

Outside of a few things he did with Clarence Williams — and on which he was confined to the role of the anonymous sideman — these are Red's first records. And he came on the scene with a bang: "Look out, here I come!" he seems to say. The three tracks which open side 1 and which contain three takes of *It Should Be You* have such brilliant trumpet playing (Red, even then, had a marvelous control over his horn, and already at that early stage of his life — he was 21 — he was not afraid to play very daring ideas, necessitating a solid instrumental technique) that it is not surprising that this young musician established himself so fast. I bought take 3 in 1932 and thought I had come by a sensational record. I still feel the same way about it. This is very exuberant, in parts even wild playing, but the music never gets out of control. First-rate jazz trumpet playing any way you listen to it. Admirable!

There are people who claim that they don't give a damn about different takes and that the best master of a number should be used and the others could be destroyed without any damage to anyone. Who decides which is "the best master"? It's not always easy. On one take several soloists may play great stuff but another man goofs or an ensemble part is performed sloppily. On the next take someone who blew fine on Take 1 makes a few mistakes or his colleague misses a break.

Then there are those who feel that every take available must be issued in order to allow the "serious collector" to have an artists' whole recorded output. Of course, as is so often the case in life, the truth is to be found somewhere in the middle of these two contradicting opinions. If the musical differences are notable and most of the musicians perform well, then it is definitely important to have the different takes. And let me declare at once that in the case of these Red Allen records at hand, it is wonderful to have access to the music on two - and in a few instances three - takes. Red and his associates from the Luis Russell orchestra are real improvisers, i.e. right there in that studio, in

July 1929, they played different solos from one take to the next. It is even interesting to hear how *It Should Be You* took shape and got better and better from one take to another. I know what I'm talking about: from 1932 to 1955 I lived on Take 3 and, of course, knew every note by heart. In 1955 I heard Take 2 for the first time and was amazed and delighted with the NEW record I had got. I only heard Take 1 in 1973 and by then I knew every note of Take 2 (and was still listening to the differences between 2 and 3). Well, Take 1 is sort of a try-out track. For instance, in place of the knock-out break by Higginbotham between Red's second solo and the one by Albert Nicholas on takes 2 and 3, Take 1 has four breaks in the same place, Higgy - the sax trio (the only proof that Teddy Hill was in the studio when *It Should Be You* was recorded) - Red - Luis Russell. This strange and entirely ineffective idea was dropped in takes 2 and 3.

People have often tried to guess why this or that take was rejected and a new one was tackled. For example one could say that Take 1 was rejected because of a couple of wrong notes in Charlie Holmes' solo or on account of the unsatisfactory results obtained with the aforementioned break a tiroirs, but I got the story from Red Allen himself (in 1959 at my home): "I have always kept a copy of the third that we made and that came out and it is like it was intended to sound: very very good! Higgy's solo is even better on 2 than on 3 but, to tell you the truth, I wasn't thinking too much of what the others did. I was thinking of *my* playing and that's why there are several takes of quite a few of these numbers. I was young and ambitious and I wished the world to hear Henry Allen Jr. at what he could do BEST! You see, these records were not only made under my name but I also became the leader for those dates. I was responsible for everything. We often laughed about it: my leader was my pianist and I, his trumpet player, was his leader - if only for a few hours in a recording studio. Luis was not such a stickler for perfection as I was. That's why I think that from a musical point of view the Victors are better than the Okeh's. Luis was a quiet type of a leader and only rarely did he insist on repeat takes. Now you know why there are so many numbers of which different takes were made."

Yes, after Red told me, I knew and I could hear - before he explained it, I didn't - that *his* playing is always best on the definitive take. It can be heard on *It Should Be You*, *Biffly Blues* (a nickname of Henry Allen's at that time), *Feeling Drowsy*, *Swing Out* and the rest of them. Incidentally, on the night Red came to our home, we had also invited Joe Turner and three jazz fans. Joe, the friendly man he is - always wishing to make people happy and let them hear the best music - suggested we play a few Joe Turner records so that Red could hear how Joe Turner sounded. We had taken Red to the Africana Cafe after his concert with Kid Ory, to hear Joe Turner but Joe wanted to be sure that Red also knew how Joe Turner sounded on record. A nice idea. Red was sitting there, grinning with joy and congratulating Joe on every record I played. Joe was tireless that night: he always came up with a new idea of what we should hear and they were all Joe Turner records! And Red enjoyed all of them... until he said: "Turner, we have now heard your records and they sounded wonderful but now I wanna hear a few of mine, because Johnny seems to have a

few that I haven't got myself." There was no discussion after that. We played the second takes of certain of Red's Victors and that's why I'm able to tell the story I just told. By the way, Red's taking action the way he did is typical for him: he was an amiable, good-natured man but when he judged it necessary to take steps, he didn't hesitate one second to do so. Remember they called trumpet players "King" down in New Orleans. Only trumpet players, and most of the time the trumpeters were the leaders and in an ensemble it was again the trumpet which took the lead part. King Bolden, King Keppard, King Oliver. If I think of the musicians I have known there are a few trumpet players outstanding as men, always ready to take over leadership: Hot Lips Page, Rex Stewart, Red Allen, Cootie Williams, Lee Collins, Roy Eldridge. And what is told about Buddy Petit, Chris Kelly, Bunk Johnson, Punch Miller, Kid Howard and Shots Madison points in the same direction. Louis Armstrong? Are you kidding? Louis - a sideman? Yes, when he was still a young man but later on... impossible.

The Luis Russell orchestra provided Red with an ideal setting. The rhythm section with Pops Foster, Paul Barbarin and Will Johnson (a fine banjo/guitar player and the first member of this original Russell band to die. I will never forget how affected by Johnson's passing was Albert Nicholas when I told him, in 1955 in Paris, that I had just received the sad news) is really terrific - in the full meaning of the word! Foster is less prominently recorded than in most of the band's Okeh recordings which provides us with the opportunity to hear the whole rhythm section: each individual member is clearly audible and they are all "pulsating" the same way. Will Johnson was not from New Orleans, as some people thought, but from Lexington, Kentucky. He takes a very pleasant solo in *Biffly Blues* - almost identical on the two takes - which shows the high regard he had for Eddie Lang, at that time THE predominant influence on guitarists the world over. After premature death in 1933 - he was not yet thirty years old - his influence went on and on and even today the Eddie Lang spirit is prevalent in a number of guitarists: via Dick McDonough and Carl Kress (both deceased), such eminent musicians as George Van Eps, Allen Hanlon and Bucky Pizzarelli got and preserved the Eddie Lang message. Even the advent of Django, Charlie Christian and Wes Montgomery didn't make the Lang way of playing obsolete. Will Johnson, who was a great rhythm-man first and foremost, didn't take solos often on Russell records. However, there's another fine chorus by him on Jack Purvis' *What's The Use Of Crying Baby*. Incidentally, some of Eddie Lang's admirable solos and his duets with Lonnie Johnson were reissued on "Blue Guitars" Volumes I and II, English Parlophone PMC 7019 and PMC 7106 and are now on Swaggie 1229 and 1276. And of course, there are also his duets and quartets/quintets with Joe Venuti on CBS and RCA.

Luis Russell was, at the time these records were made, the band's sole arranger. His was a very personal writing style which captured the particularities of New Orleans jazz admirably. There is no difference in the spirit of such soloists as Red Allen and Higginbotham and the alternating ensembles written by Russell. If there is a way of writing arrangements in the New Orleans idiom, Luis Russell is the man who did it most successfully. He had already done some good things for Joe Oliver's Dixie Syncopators a few years earlier, but even since then had made formidable strides ahead. It was certainly no easy task to write charts in such a manner that the tension created by such high-voltage players as Red and Higgy could be kept up in an ensemble that followed. But Russell managed to do just that (*Swing Out, You Might Get Better But You'll Never Get Well*, *Patrol Wagon Blues*, *Feeling Drowsy*, *Sugar Hill Function*, *Everybody Shout* - see below).

Luis Russell had the reputation of being one of the very best band pianists in New York. His work in the section is exemplary - dig how the piano melts with the bass and banjo and often marks the off-beat very sharply and exactly with the timing of the band's great drummer, Paul Barbarin. As a soloist, Russell could play calm, easy-going solos of great melodic charm, as is heard on both takes of *Pleasin' Paul*. However, what always surprised me is the alarming rushing of the tempo on quite a few of his solos or bridges between other soloists. This is often so drastic that the rhythm section has no choice but to follow their leader because if they didn't, the whole performance would fall to pieces (*Deep Henderson* - King Oliver, *Dallas Blues* and *Thanks A Million* - Louis Armstrong, *How Do They Do It That Way*, Take 1, Volume II, just before Victoria Spivey starts singing). Of course, since I never had the honor to meet Luis Russell himself, I asked the musicians of his old band I ran into about the reason for these strange happenings.

Higginbotham and Albert Nicholas assured me (independently from each other) that this occurred only on a few records because the pianist was nervous and that Russell was, quite to the contrary, known for his strict tempo all over New York. On the other hand, Red remembered it like this: "Sometimes Luis would have some funny ideas regarding tempo. When his solo came up, he tried to change the tempo to his wish although, of course, at the start *he* had given the tempo that the band was sticking to!" I have never received, to this day, a fully plausible explanation to my question and Heaven knows I have been curious about this strange matter for about forty years or more.

Fats Pichon's ultra-rare sides which are included in this volume show his good, black vaudeville singing, typical for the time (1929). There must be people now who take offence at these kinds of lyrics and the delivery of them, condemning the whole thing as "Uncle Tom-ing" and "a disgrace to the black race". But let's remind those dissatisfied people that Walter Pichon didn't - couldn't - dream of the changes this world would undergo when he cut these sides almost fifty years ago. By the way, people interested in this illustrious musician's piano playing should try to get themselves a copy of Decca DL 8380, Walter "Fats" Pichon "At The Old Absinthe House", a truly lovely album. Red was in marvelous fettle on this date. His obbligato work is as sensitive and inspired as are his extended solos. And of course, I am delighted to receive some hitherto unknown Teddy Bunn solos. He is an artist of whose music there will never be enough for me.

I haven't mentioned the two takes of *Make A Country Bird Fly Wild*. Both are fine performances with Higginbotham, Red and Charlie Holmes outstanding. The wild goose cackling of the Four Wanderers strikes me as unfunny enervating as on the day in 1935 when I came across Take 2 but it sure leaves the musicians completely unperturbed. After the Four Unfortunate Wanderers' unhappy singing, Charlie



Holmes swings in his solo as if something truly wonderful had preceded him.

Volume 2
RCA FXM1 7090

Funny Feathers Blues (take 2); *How Do They Do It That Way* (2 takes); *Pleasin' Paul* (2 takes); *Blood Hound Blues*; *Dirty T.B. Blues*; *Moanin' The Blues*; *Telephoning The Blues*; *Snake Hip Dance*; *She's Drivin' Me Wild*; *Day-Breaking Blues*; *Heart-Breakin' Blues* (2 takes); *Leaving You Baby* (2 takes); *Longing For Home*.

The first three tracks are by the Russell orchestra (minus the second trumpeter as before) with Victoria Spivey. Tracks 4 and 5 have the band on its own while 6, 7, 8 and 9 are by Victoria Spivey with some Russell men, 10 and 11 have Wilton Crawley with some Russell musicians and the rest are by Victoria's sister Addie "Sweet Pea" Spivey with Allen, Holmes, Russell and Will Johnson. All were recorded in 1929.

"It was in 1929 in New York City when I met a quiet and very fine young man, Henry Red Allen, at the Victor studio. It was to be this day that Red and myself were to record *Funny Feathers* and *How Do They Do It That Way* for Victor. Actually this was the second time I recorded these titles. I cut them on Okeh

records with none other than "Pops" Louis Armstrong.... That's how I got to meet Red and how I got to record the tunes with him. It was a wonderful date. What splendid hot solos he took!" ("Red Allen - A Wonderful Fellow" by Victoria Spivey, *Record Research*, November 1965).

The Russell band was one of those organizations in which the leader AND some of his sidemen actively contributed to the band's library: Barbarin, Holmes, Allen and Higginbotham are quite often listed as composers of the excellent originals the orchestra was performing nightly at the Saratoga Club and which they recorded for the different labels they were temporarily associated with. Like Duke Ellington, the Russell band's strongest material was its original compositions.

If even at this early stage in his career Red showed himself to be a real personality, he was nevertheless deeply influenced by Louis Armstrong. There are numerous phrases, licks and riffs which stem from Louis. Sometimes Red executes them as Satchmo had played them, but at other times he plays them in a totally different way, dragging his notes behind the beat (and in doing so giving them a different accent and another meaning) and inserting between Armstrong phrases, melodic fragments or single low notes that border on the bizarre and which completely contrast with his usual Arm-

strong-styled playing. As we know, later on Red's style developed more and more in this direction but it deserves to be stressed that in embryo form these kinds of ideas can already be noted on Red's earliest records (*Biff'ly Blues*, in a few phrases on *You Might Get Better* and especially on *Roamin'*).

Allen also lagged behind the beat in his singing and this peculiarity plus the fact that his thick, throaty, breathless voice is entirely different from Louis' prevents many people from realizing how very much all his vocals are in the Armstrong vein (*Patrol Wagon Blues*, *Roamin'*, *If I Fell In Love With You* - the original 78 gives *If I Fell In Love With You* while this LP, on sleeve and label, changing from the conditional to the bare and simple *I Fell In Love With You*, gives the title an altogether different meaning - as we all know from experience!). Henry Allen had sometimes a tendency to get a bit declamatory on the trumpet as well as in his singing, and in these moments he used a rather wide vibrato. This occurred mostly on slow numbers. Some may call it oversentimental and some may go for it. It's all a matter of taste and individual reactions to music. To illustrate what I mean I suggest you play *Roamin'* where Red pushes sentiment too far and then put *Patrol Wagon Blues* on, where he performs with a poignant feeling from start to finish without pushing anything. For

(left to right): Eddie Bourne, J.C. Higginbotham, Clarence "Bennie" Moten, Henry "Red" Allen, Don Stovall, Bill Thompson. Photograph courtesy of Johnny Simmen.

me personally, *Patrol Wagon Blues* is a masterpiece while I find myself playing *Roamin'* far less frequently. But as I have said, it is all a matter of opinion. De gustibus non est disputandum. Very true.

The two sides by clarinetist Wilton Crawley contain some good music by Red and the rhythm section but Crawley's cat calls are hard to take.

If on *Telephoning The Blues* Red, using a mute in parts, is not as happy as usual, he helps make *Blood Hound* and *Moanin' The Blues* two of the most emotional records I ever heard. Victoria with her curiously shrill but attractive voice holds a special position among blues and vaudeville singers. On these sides, accompanied by six wild men (Teddy Hill's part is quasi-inaudible), Victoria is moanin' and groanin' and the more involved and emotional she gets, the more wonderful the cats are, collectively and in solo breaks, "sending her". *Dirty T.B. Blues* is in the same class. I don't know any record which quite captures this kind of feeling. Some have called it "very sensual" and probably they are right. I positively love that kind of music and that kind of feeling.

Victoria's sister Sweet Pea - whom I had never heard before - is a revelation. Close to Bessie Smith in style and voice, but she is a great singer, period. And is she well accompanied by Red and Charlie Holmes! Behind and answering the singer, they are both doing a wonderful job. Since I bought the album last spring I have never tired of listening to these six tracks by an admirable Lady of the Blues, Miss Addie "Sweet Pea" Spivey.

Charlie Holmes enjoys such enormous acclaim with many lovers of the older jazz styles that I sometimes wonder whether, deep down in their heart, they don't prefer him to Hodges - Charlie's life-long idol - because of his simpler lines and less subtle playing. And also - drôle de phénomène - because Charlie never became famous while Johnny Hodges made it to the top, became one of jazzdom's best-known soloists and of course made hundreds of records while Charlie Holmes is heard on a few dozen. It's a strange thing with our "romantically inclined" friends: they lament the lack of acclaim for real jazz but when a great jazz-man catches the public's fancy and becomes famous, they often turn their back on him or, at best, take him for granted. There is a very pronounced liking for the "underdog" in many jazz fans. It's definitely positive to foster unappreciated or little-known talent but it should never happen to the detriment of the all too few great jazz artists who are appreciated by people other than the jazz purists.

In Stanley Dance's superb book, "The World of Swing", the chapter on Charlie Holmes impresses me as particularly interesting. One gets more than just a glance at this fine artist and interesting human being. We met in 1965 and, deadly serious, he explained, "If I could start my life again, I'd probably be a mechanic. But if I had to be a musician, I'd concentrate on the baritone saxophone. Johnny Hodges and Harry Carney and I were boyhood chums in Boston and we stayed close all our life. Both are masters on their horns but while I could never hope to touch Johnny on the alto, I might have had that chance on the baritone because Harry, as great as he is, isn't the genius Johnny Hodges is. Furthermore, there's so much less competition on the baritone!"

Charlie plays very well on almost all of these records with a special mention for the three

takes of *Feeling Drowsy, It Should Be You 2* and *3, Sugar Hill Function* and both versions of *Make A Country Bird Fly Wild*. When Charlie Holmes plays soprano, he sounds like an alto player blowing soprano (with Johnny Hodges it was more or less the same). Charlie didn't come into the Russell orchestra from Louisiana, not even from elsewhere in the South but he fit in with this old Russell band hand-in-glove. On fast numbers he comes on like a New Orleans stomp man and his feeling for the blues is considerable and authentic. I was moved having the opportunity to converse with Charlie whom I had admired for so long. A kind, intelligent man but I could tell - without his saying so - that he felt that he hadn't received the breaks he was entitled to. The admiration of a few hundred jazz fans is simply not enough.

It is rather amusing that Teddy Hill, the least outstanding soloist in the band (and also the least "advanced" one), should have played such an active role later on in promoting bop when it began to raise its lovely head. It was a long way from Birmingham, Alabama and Frank Bunch's Fuzzy Wuzzies in 1927 to Luis Russell and then on to his own fine orchestra, and further on to his managing job at Henry Minton's Playhouse in Harlem! Teddy Hill didn't seem too happy on agitated numbers like *Swing Out*. He's much more at ease on *Funny Feathers* and his nicely constructed solo on *Everybody Shout* - on which he sounds a bit like Greely Walton.

The abovenamed gentleman happened to be Teddy Hill's successor with the Luis Russell orchestra. He was at his peak then and the wild abandon in the delivery of his solos, the very personal ideas he expressed and even the style itself which seemed to be his very own, made a terrific impression on jazz fans of the early thirties and it was no wonder that Greely Walton became a household name. His enthusiastic, driving solos, played with formidable dexterity - on *Ease On Down, Panama* and the two takes of *If I Fell In Love With You* as well as *You Rascal You* - are gems of their kind. On record, Greely has never again shown such a very high standard of playing as on the discs just mentioned. But it must be said that later in his life Greely Walton never came across a band that seemed to suit him as well as the old Luis Russell band. Greely was one of the great swing men on the tenor saxophone and in his case I remember that my friend the late Harry Pfister used to say, when people remarked, "X has only made two or three really good records, on all the others he's disappointing. Consequently, he's not a really great musician." - "If X were not a great musician, he would not have been able to play these few wonderful solos. An artist must be judged by his best work and not by an average of the total of his production. And not by the number of successful performances either. ONE exceptional solo is proof enough that the musician can accomplish exceptional things, i.e. play exceptional music." Greely Walton is another fine person to know. I had the pleasure of meeting him in 1965 and had a long conversation with him. He is not only a kind man but a mine of jazz information.

Albert Nicholas loved playing in the Russell orchestra and most of his countless stories were somehow concerned with some incident during his two long stints with them. All the key men in this early Russell orchestra enjoyed working together. In fact, some musicians who were

in the group for only a short time felt like outsiders, not entirely accepted by the nucleus of the group. It is, however, surprising how little of the Nicholas clarinet is heard on the band's records. Charlie Holmes gets about six or seven times more space. I didn't feel it would be right to ask Albert this question and so I do not know the reason for this inexplicable paucity of clarinet solos by Albert Nicholas, who fitted so wonderfully in the band.

The records under review contain some joyous and typically fluid solos by Nick on *It Should Be You, Swing Out, Make A Country Bird Fly Wild and Goin' To Town*. As Albert pointed out, the fine clarinet trios on *Feeling Drowsy* were led by him and, he added, some of the ideas in the arrangement for the clarinets were suggested to Russell by Albert.

"Blue!" shouts the "master of ceremonies" on Dewey Jackson's *Capitol Blues*, to announce William Thornton Blue, who had a glorious past in St. Louis, New Orleans and even France before he became a cornerstone of many New York-based bands. Best known for his fine work with Cab Calloway, Blue is heard on all four titles of the February 18, 1930 Allen/Russell date. A very competent, hot soloist who, although he could not be called a typical "New Orleans" clarinetist, had incorporated much of the masters of that style into his playing, and in a very intelligent way, I might add.

Volume 3

Henry "Red" Allen with Luis Russell
RCA FXM1 7192

Sugar Hill Function; You Might Get Better But You'll Never Get Well; Everybody Shout; Dancing Dave; Roamin'; Singing Pretty Songs (2 takes); Patrol Wagon Blues; If I Fell In Love With You (2 takes); You Rascal You; Goin' To Town; Say The Word; Freakish Blues.

On the first ten tracks we hear the same band as before except that William Blue replaces Albert Nicholas on the first four, Greely Walton definitely replaces Teddy Hill from the fifth track on and Otis Johnson is the second trumpeter on all ten. Red used to play first trumpet in those days. Later on, with other orchestras he switched to third chair, "leaving the difficult work to some better reader than I was and concentrating on the solos", as he told me in 1961 with a twinkle in his eye.

There are two temporary replacements for the session of July 15, 1930: Jimmy Archey for Higginbotham and Ernest "Bass" Hill - on tuba - for Pops Foster. Some musicians told me that Higgy was, "in jail for a few weeks at that time", but reasons for the imprisonment vary so much that I don't care to mention any of them. Bass Hill explained his own presence in these words: "Contrary to what many believe, Pops Foster did and could play brass as well as bass but Luis Russell didn't think he was good enough for recording and so they got me. I played with them often. Every time Pops wanted to do something else, he called me and when I was free I took the gig. I really liked everything about that band: the music they were playing, the guys themselves - all of them quite easy to get along with, although some of them could get very rough with each other if they didn't agree on something! - and I also liked the way Luis treated his men and the good wages he paid. He is one of the few leaders I know who didn't try to take advantage of

his musicians. He was a very straight guy and his musicians knew it."

James Henry Archey appears in all his glory on these records (*Singing Pretty Songs* and above all, *Patrol Wagon Blues*). On the latter he is so close to Higgy — in style, amazingly also in tone and even up to that majestic, poignant grandeur which Higginbotham was blessed with when he played a slow blues — that for years nobody doubted that Higgy was, as usual, the trombonist on this session. Jimmy, or James Archey as everybody called him in those days, was much in demand as a soloist around that period. A little later and through the '30s and the beginning of the '40s, he was still with many prominent big bands but other men took the solos. Archey was considered "still a good musician but where solo-playing went, too much of an old-timer to fit in with a modern Carter, or Mundy arrangement", as drummer Manzie Johnson told me (in 1961). Heaven knows what would have happened if Georg Brunis — who played the "This Is Jazz" broadcasts organized by Rudi Blesh — had not been such an ardent baseball fan. It seems that Brunis missed several of the broadcasts to go and see the games and Blesh was looking for a replacement... without finding one, until Pops Foster said, "There's a trombonist who lives in the same house as I do. His name is Jimmy Archey. I can bring him along." Blesh consented, Jimmy came along and the rest is in all the history books!

Jack Clarence Higginbotham was one of the great musicians of jazz. Recommended reading: page 146 of "Dictionnaire du Jazz (2nd edition)" by Hugues Panassie and Madeleine Gautier. In a few words, all the attributes and reasons why Higgy was such an exceptional musician are named. There is only one thing that I would like to rectify: Higginbotham told me that the tone he had (unique!) on his first records (King Oliver, Luis Russell) and the explosive style he performed in were developed from what he heard by trombone players in the South and that what came out in his playing was HIS style. He said that, strangely, Jimmy Harrison's style and tone didn't impress him so much until years after Harrison's death. Only then did he adopt many characteristics from Jimmy Harrison — by listening to such musicians as Claude Jones, Sandy Williams and Bennie Morton who had been influenced by Harrison from the first time they had heard him.

Wingy Carpenter, who had known, befriended and played with Higginbotham long before they came to New York, confirmed Higgy's story as being true — and in fact, Higginbotham's playing and tone did undergo some changes from his "Carter and Henderson periods" on. But Higgy could and would sometimes play almost completely in his former style when the occasion called for it: Red Allen's *Roll Along Prairie Moon* (1935), Mezz Mezzrow's *Blues In Disguise* and the other three titles waxed on that date (1937), *Let That Be A Lesson To You* and *I Double Dare You* with Louis Armstrong (1938) are only a few examples but among the most typical ones. And on one of his best latter-day sessions, "The Big Reunion" with Rex Stewart and The Fletcher Henderson All-Stars (1957), Higgy gets very, very close to the youthful J.C. of the Luis Russell/Red Allen days, particularly on *Casey Stew*.

As Panassie and Gautier point out, the Armstrong influence on Higginbotham was especially

pronounced and everlasting. In my opinion it can already be heard clearly in his very first period (on record — because his REAL early era is not preserved on record), the Russell/Allen times. I'm sorry but I can't help pitying the people who do not go overboard over J.C. Higginbotham's playing on these Russell sides. Each time I have the misfortune to be in the company of one of those "nothing-feeling guys" when these records are played, I wonder why so many people spend so many years around jazz, when they have absolutely no gift to dig it. I'm 100% with Keg Johnson who said (at my home in 1963) while listening to Higgy on Louis Armstrong's first *St. Louis Blues* and *It Should Be You*, take 3: "When Higgy plays like that, I wonder whether he is not the greatest jazz musician after Louis Armstrong!"

Higginbotham said of his own playing: "I play shout-'bone. That's all." Well, that sums it up of course, and one need not speak of his exciting triplets in slow tempo, the stirring-up trills he did in such a personal way, that shake that was so effective, the whip-ups that really whipped up tension, his big, broad sombre tone, his instrumental virtuosity, already fully developed when he was only a very young man, and his long, fluid, sweeping phrases, executed with an astonishing amount of control, his really terrifying attack and the drive in his playing which exceeded the inner driving forces in most — even great — musicians' playing.

Despite what a good friend had told me about Higgy's unwillingness to speak about jazz with fans, I approached him in 1956 and found him to be a very, very friendly, warm person, always willing to answer questions and to talk about jazz for hours. I had a good dozen long conversations with him in 1956, 1961, 1964 and 1965 and I can only say that he was an intelligent and witty person — except when he had been drinking too much. I don't say "when he was drinking" because Higgy always drank, but I underline "when he had been drinking too much":

Incidentally, it is difficult to tell whether his playing deteriorated more from his alcoholic excesses or from his absolute unwillingness to listen to any later styles of music. He disliked them all and avoided almost all "new" compositions because of their "bad chords". He thought that "after Teddy Wilson, there were no more pianists who could accompany a jazz player of my kind". Cliff Jackson was his favorite in the '50s and '60s and I saw him once go over to the piano after a particularly wonderful interpretation of *Runnin' Wild* (on which Higgy surprised EVERYBODY because he blew so great!), hugging and kissing Cliff and explaining that "he made me play so good. I felt young all over with that wonderful piano behind me." (Jimmy Ryan's, 1965).

In other words, great and life-long friends that they were, Henry Red Allen and J.C. Higginbotham had completely different outlooks on the music in vogue during the last two decades of their lives. Incidentally, as late as 1966, Red replied to the question "Who in your opinion is the greatest ever?" by saying, "I never think in terms of great players. I have different feelings for different players. Some guys can play an awful lot. And others play less but are friends of mine, which evens things up. But I must say that when he's in shape, a guy like J.C. Higginbotham is hard to beat. Higgy, in his form, is a most flexible player. He has everything: power, excitement, flexibility." (Melody Maker, February 26, 1966).

I wish to make it clear that in this respect, musicians are very different: some develop their style as the years go by, adapting themselves — in their own way — to what they hear (there is no question about those "artists" who completely change their playing when a new style comes along: these are 5th class guys who never express themselves but only follow one trend — and then another) and then there are those who — in a large sense — remain faithful to their basic style and who don't feel comfortable with the "new music". It is not the critics' business to praise one and condemn the other. It is just a fact that there are great musicians of both kinds. Red Allen belonged more or less to the first category while Higginbotham was much more in the second.

Otis Johnson is not heard as a soloist on any Russell/Allen recording although he always had a reputation as an able soloist (once Joe Marsala — I think it was in 1936 — had Otis Johnson play in his band at the Hickory House in New York because he thought so highly of his ability. This was an incredibly audacious thing at that time — a black, playing with whites, Heaven forbid!... and promptly, after a few nights, a certain number of detestable racists put an end to the association. Otis had to leave). Some of his rare recorded solos are on *Steak And Potatoes* and *Liza* by Willie Bryant (RCA) and *We Don't Know From Nothing* by Don Redman (Vocalion). Johnson was with Russell in 1929/1930 and 1932/33. While Bill Coleman, who played with Luis Russell before Otis Johnson, managed to play two short solos (*Feeling The Spirit* and *Broadway Rhythm*), Johnson got none. Luis Russell thought very highly of Red Allen and featured him as often as he could.

The last four tracks, from August 28, 1931, have a passably different personnel. Record reviewers and sleeve note writers are most discrete about the featured soloists (except the obvious ones) on this session and for a good reason: nobody told them. Since I clarified a lot of "obscure points" myself where the Russell band is concerned — William Blue for Albert Nicholas on the *You Might Get Better* date (Glyn Paque, 1937), Bass Hill and Archey on the *Patrol Wagon* session (Bass Hill, 1937), Will Johnson, vocalist on *You Might Get Better* (Albert Nicholas 1958, Red Allen 1959) — I may as well give the details on this date.

Let's talk about the beautiful *Freakish Blues*: Red Allen told me that the straight solo on trumpet is by Bobby Cheek (Red pronounced it "Cheeks" and Glyn Paque had also referred to "Cheeks" — and, just as Red Allen — spoke of Edgar Battles and Cozy Coles). Luis Russell, whose arranging idol was Duke Ellington, wrote this solo for Cheeks as he also wrote the one for Dicky Wells, and they are both very much in the Ellington vein of that time. The growl work is by Red Allen and the alto-man heard in solos is Henry "Moon" Jones (anyone who ever saw a picture of this round-faced man knows why his pals called him "Moon"). Knowing that Jones is the soloist on *Freakish Blues* and *Goin' To Town*, "critics" should be able to identify him with the Bingie Madison band when it recorded with King Oliver and, especially, Clarence Williams. But no, the specialists usually "attribute" the alto solos to the other alto man in the band! In later years, Moon Jones recorded a few times with Harry Dial, mostly on clarinet. He died about fifteen years ago and jazz lost another interesting musician who went, and still goes, unnoticed by "the critics".

All tracks are of interest and some are masterworks. Even the mostly "straight" *Say The Word* is saved by a fine muted Allen solo. Nobody should miss *Patrol Wagon Blues*, on which Red Allen surpassed himself and Luis Russell wrote the perfect orchestration. The key changes to introduce a new chorus are most effective. One of my favourites is *Dancing Dave*, a lovely melody by Paul Barbarin and Red Allen. Red's opening break is 100% in a Louis Armstrong groove except the very last phrase which Louis would never have played. Not the idea and not the way Red executes that idea. The two solos by Red, the first open, the second muted are inspired, especially the one with the mute. Usually Red didn't care much for any mutes. He said: "I want to BLOW my horn. Open. Clear. With a mute you can cheat. Make your playing sound better than it is. Playing the horn wide open you can't lie. Either you are a trumpet player or you are not."

You Might Get Better But You'll Never Get Well, a wonderful tune by Luis Russell and Louis Metcalf — who played with the band before Red Allen — is one of the bunch's greatest records. Higgy: "Man, that's one of the few records I remember! I never bought any. I make them and forget about them. But this is an exception: Luis told me to growl and I did but WITHOUT A MUTE! And it came out just fine!" Blue and Will Johnson (not completely in tune but what feeling!) in his vocal "don't use your jive on me 'cause I can tell you might get better but you'll never get well", the sax team and the wonderful rhythm section make this one of the band's really unforgettable works. Dickie suits the band very well. Besides his "Ellington-solo" in *Freakish Blues*, he

has wildly swinging flights on *Goin' To Town* and *You Rascal You*. Russell wrote, again particularly well, for three clarinets in *Everybody Shout*.

J.P. Daubresse in his sleeve notes reports the story — from Sinclair Traill's Jazz Journal interview with Red Allen — of how Red came to join the Russell band. John Chilton gives the same account in "Who's Who". In 1965 in New York Red told me that he was a member of Russell's orchestra when Loren Watson of RCA came along (in New York) and told them that he wanted to make some records for RCA under Red's name. Red told me: "My joining the band had nothing to do with making any records. I joined because they needed a trumpet player — Lee Collins, who had followed Metcalf, stayed only a short while. Russell wrote me a letter and I headed (for the second time) to New York. The record deal came up a few weeks after my arrival in New York.

Henry Allen Junior — that came because Red's father Henry was a famous trumpet player in Algiers and New Orleans. There is a Henry Allen Jr., Jr. in New York, Red's son who was also supposed to be a jazz trumpet player some day. His father taught him early and "for some time the kid made nice progress but then I realized that he might at best become a good trumpet player but not a great one. And you know what he became? A patrol wagon driver with the New York police force!"

Volume 4
Henry "Red" Allen with Lionel Hampton & His All Stars
RCA FXM1 7285

I'm On My Way From You; Haven't Named It

Yet; The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin' The Town (2 takes); *The Crawl; Buzz Me; Drink Hearty; Get The Mop; Count Me Out; Check Up; If It's Love You Want Baby That's Me; Let Me Miss You; Ride Red Ride; Love Is Just Around The Corner.*

This last album, in its own way, is just as rewarding musically as the three others. Very different, too. A great many things had happened in the meantime.

The album is comprised of the three sides plus one (two takes of *The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin' The Town*) that Red and Higgy made with Lionel Hampton in 1939, eight tracks by Red's own exciting group with Higgy and Don Stovall (1946) and two which Red cut in 1957 with Higgy, Coleman Hawkins and Buster Bailey.

I like the idea behind this compilation. Since the music is of a high standard throughout, it serves its purpose fully as a well-deserved tribute and memorial to the great talent of Henry "Red" Allen. The four LPs give an excellent — but not complete (there is not enough of the thirties) — insight into Red Allen's musical life.

As usual, Hampton had assembled a fine group. There is that joie de vivre coupled with real professionalism which distinguished all of Lionel's records made for RCA during those years (1937-1940). Some of these sides became true classics of jazz; none were less than excellent. Between the frame of Clyde Hart's expertly sketched ensemble passages are really inspired solo performances by Lionel, Red, Higgy and Charlie Christian. Earl Bostic takes only eight bars on *Haven't Named It Yet*. In all probability this was his first recording date.



Jimmy Archey



To my question whose voice was heard in answer to Lionel's vocal in *The Heebie Jeebies*, Higginbotham replied: "I don't remember. But it must have been Red. He just can't keep his mouth shut. If Hampton was singing, as you say he did, then Red must have done the mugging." However, since Red is heard playing behind the singing it could not be him, although the voice somewhat resembles Red's. But Red, who had the record, recalled immediately: "Rock, rock, I'm blowing my top", he sang, then said: "That was Earl Bostic." By the way, both versions are worth having because there are notable musical differences — as well in Red's lovely muted playing at the beginning of the record as in his accompaniment to the singing, Higgy's majestic solo and Lionel's numerous appearances. The differences in the words Hampton sings — with that smile in his voice that he also has on *One Sweet Letter From You, You're My Ideal* and which gave way in an unabashed chuckle on *The Sun Will Shine To-night* (all reissued in RCA's Black & White Series) — are very amusing. Hamp sure SWINGS these lyrics!

I'm On My Way From You features an extraordinary solo by Red Allen. One of his greatest of that period. He uses a wide range (dig those beautiful low notes) and his instrumental flexibility is entirely impressive. Another thing to marvel at is his velvety tone quality. Higgy has another inspired solo.

On both takes of *The Heebie Jeebies* the last chorus is played with a maximum of swing, with the horns riffing, Lionel all over his vibes and Sid Catlett laying down a solid afterbeat. An altogether glorious moment!

Charlie Christian's work may not be as obviously sensational as on most of his records but those who listen carefully will discover that in a more subdued mood than usual, his work on *The Heebie Jeebies* is au fond - as fabulous - as ever. His 24 bars on *Haven't Named It Yet* are sheer fireworks of arresting, highly musical ideas. If my distinguished readers dispose of a reasonable amount of imagination, they may try to fancy how it felt listening to this solo in 1939 — before we got accustomed to this kind of playing by being confronted with the countless Christian pupils whom we have heard in the 39 years that have elapsed since Charlie played his solo!

I beg to differ with the sleeve-notes writer's opinion that Red and his men, on the two 1946 dates, were "partagés entre l'envie de jouer 'Bop' et celle de suivre Louis Jordan et son Tympany Five sur le chemin du Rhythm and Blues." There is nothing of "Bop" in these eight sides. What we hear is some pretty frantic and hot-tempered playing, an extension of what has gone on in jazz before. Typical jazz of that time because jazz has always been - more or less - an expression of the period in which it was played. None of the musicians on the first date has even the slightest linking with bop and if Eddie "Mole" Bourne — the only change in the group was when he came in to replace Alvin "Mouse" Burroughs — is a somewhat nervous and agitated drummer, he is not a bop drummer for that matter. I wish to make clear that I don't have anything against bop; I listen about 50% of the time to "modern jazz" (not "free" but all other kinds of "modern jazz" that I can understand). In other words, I don't say that

Red and his musicians do not play bop because I'd prefer that they don't play bop. I say so because *they don't play bop*. I don't know either what these records have to do with "rhythm and blues". What is that? (How I abhor those classifications that don't mean anything).

The fact that Red Allen played on two numbers which Louis Jordan recorded for Decca only leaves two conclusions: (1) that he liked Louis Jordan (he did, he even bought quite a few of his records, as he told me himself) and (2) that Red hoped that recording the two tunes would bring him some loot — good sales of his records and consequently more record dates. I know it is frightening to some people to say such a thing: everybody has the right to make money (the more the better) except the "jazz artist" who should think of nothing but "his art" and starve to death while doing so.

Listening to these eight sides in a row on this album made it clear to me that Red had found a group of musicians who suited his musical tastes of that time to a T. He had moved on since the Luis Russell days — not to play "bop" or "rhythm & blues" but to express his brand of jazz, made in 1946. Although he had a great respect for tradition, Red Allen was no revivalist. For a while his friend Paul Barbarin played in this group — before Burroughs — but he and Red didn't agree on musical matters and Barbarin left. Listening to the kind of music Paul Barbarin played with his own band in New Orleans in subsequent years, it is easy to understand why the two men could not see eye to eye.

I wrote a little piece about Don Stovall when I heard he was dead, because I could not stand the idea that nobody seemed to remember him. Almost everything contained in that article (published in *Coda*, August 1971) stemmed from what Red Allen had told me about his former alto player. I may add that Stovall should be listened to as much for his obbligato to Red's vocals as when he's taking his always-exciting solos. There were a few greater alto-men than Stovall but he deserves his place of honour in jazz as a very fine, swinging musician who really played his own way.

Pianist Bill Thompson is, according to both Lee Collins and Red Allen, the same Bill Thompson heard with Lee on "A Night at the Victory Club", New Orleans NOR 7203 (on one side only, Don Ewell plays on the other side) and who is on these and other records with Red. I mention it because I would not have recognized him. To me it sounds like two different men (it still does) but of course Lee and Red's statements are more reliable than my ears. On these Allen sides under review, Thompson has only a few short solo spots, e.g. in *Check Up*, but it is his full and inspired accompaniment which reveals his fine talent. His part all through *Buzz Me, Drink Hearty* and *If It's Love You Want* is formidable. He complements and embellishes the soloists' ideas, and Allen's vocals in particular, in a most satisfying way.

"Bennie" (Clarence Lemont) Moten on bass and Alvin Burroughs — the great drummer who fired Earl Hines' 1938-40 orchestra in such a fantastic manner — are the backbone of the great rhythm section. I have the feeling that Moten and Thompson felt more comfortable with Burroughs than with Bourne. There is a complete "togetherness" between the three men in the former team which is not always there

in the one with Bourne. The latter is, by the way, far from being a bad drummer. In 1956 he was still working for Red at the Metropole in New York and I heard them for three nights. I still thought that Eddie was at times too busy (as was Jerry Potter later on) behind ensembles and especially soloists but that is, of course, a strictly personal opinion. Which was not shared by Red, who had a great liking for his drummer's style ("He knows my playing and constantly creates excitement").

These records — and *Love Is Just Around The Corner* from 1957 — demonstrate clearly how much Red had learned about dynamics. Within a short phrase he may develop from a mere whisper to a fortissimo outburst and back to a whisper. The flexibility of his playing is amazing. *Let Me Miss You* — a blues composed by Luis Russell and Red — has an Allen solo which proves my point. There is not one blues cliché to be heard: the entire solo consists of very original ideas and its execution, including the unexpected and flawlessly rendered low notes, is a piece of virtuosity and beauty. Red's solo on *If It's Love You Want* is equally impressive and poignant and his singing rivals Louis Jordan's. And while we're mentioning vocals, Red's choruses on *Buzz Me* are simply stunning. He's "gone" and the band with him! So many fine things are happening behind his singing that it takes great concentration to catch them all. Red blows wild and exciting horn on the three riff tunes that he and Stovall had concocted together and the same is true for *Get The Mop* (also sometimes called *Rag Mop*). The Allen-Stovall-composed numbers are *The Crawl*, *Count Me Out* and *Check Up* and if Red often creates fine phrases on the A-portions, he does some crazy things on the B-parts, especially on *Count Me Out*. I can see why there are people who raise their arms, crying "Have Mercy!" I felt the same way for years. I haven't forgotten my aversion to some of Red's eccentricities but now I have grown accustomed to them and dig most of it — in not too heavy doses.

Altogether, a bunch of wonderful sides by Red's superb group(s) which had such terrific success at some of the most famous night spots in the USA through the better part of the forties. The six men were "working HARD every night", as Red put it. "We were very successful and were held over for many months, even years, at the same club. It was fun to blow that fine music every night. We played a large amount of jazz — as I like it — but also did plenty of group-singing, sketches, even some dancing to keep the squares happy. Plenty sweat, plenty hard work. I never could see any blasé attitude with any musician and when I found I had one of this kind in my group, I fired him and hired a man who loved to play music and was not afraid to show it. Why not smile at the customers? After all, they decide whether you work or not." (Zurich, 1959). Red introduces most of these numbers with his famous cry of "Whop, whop!", "Wham, wham!" or "Mop, mop!". He didn't do this just to amuse the yokels but to set the tempo for the band by stomping his feet on the floor at the same time.

In 1957, when the last two tracks on this album were recorded, Red's use of dynamics (see above) was even more amazing than ten years earlier. For this reason, I regret that neither *I Cover The Waterfront*, *Sweet Lorraine* nor *I've Got The World On A String* from the same date (or just a bit later) are included because they show Red Allen's amazing develop-

ment in this direction, much better than *Love Is Just Around the Corner* or *Ride Red Ride* which are to be found on this album. Red's ballad playing became a thing of plain beauty as the years went by. The two tracks have good playing by Red, Hawkins and Everett Barksdale but this was one of those many dates (too many) when a few of the older musicians got together and too many drinks were taken. Some musicians did so because they were heavy drinkers, others "had a few" because they were happy to meet their old pals whom they met so rarely, and still others who played really overindulged because they were nervous and hoped to find the necessary relaxation by taking a few drinks. An uncalculable number of concerts and recording sessions were spoiled this way, from the late fifties to this day. I'm surprised how few jazz fans hear what happened. Most of the time they just conclude that "the musician is finished" and that's all there is to it as far as they're concerned. But as mentioned, it is a much more complex matter for those who really care and are not just "record collectors".

The rhythm section with the quasi-infallible Cozy Cole(s) and Bostonian Lloyd Trotman on bass is one of the strong points of the two interpretations at hand. Buster Bailey plays in a strange way — as he sometimes did — and I'm afraid that many jazz fans think that THIS is the typical Bailey. Fortunately this is not so: Buster was one of the most irregularly inspired musicians but when he felt right — and there are about 100 records on which he did — he was a great musician.

One of the most often-printed clichés in jazz literature is the following: Jazz trumpet playing developed from Buddy Bolden to King Oliver to Louis Armstrong to Red Allen to Roy Eldridge to Dizzy Gillespie to Miles Davis. One American critic — I don't remember which one, there are so many — brought it up and since then most everybody has accepted the hierarchy mentioned as gospel truth. Well, I could not comment on Buddy Bolden-King Oliver because I have never heard the first-named (and neither have the writers who insert this list in their writings) and I don't know enough about Dizzy-Miles to give an opinion of any value. However, I always found the inclusion of Red Allen strange, not to say downright wrong. As much as I admire him I never felt that he was an "influence" on a really big scale. Sure there were a few trumpet players who tried to copy him at one time or another: Harry James and Ziggy Elman with Bennie Goodman in the '30s, Rex Stewart on Duke's initial *In A Sentimental Mood*, Irving "Mouse" Randolph when he was sitting side by side with Red in Fletcher Henderson's orchestra in 1934. But Rex — as he told me himself — did it just because "I wanted to prove that I could emulate him, and that solo proves that I could. He had been offered Posey Jenkins' chair in Ellington's band but Red refused and I got the job. I always liked Red Allen's playing but I was never influenced by him". As for Randolph, he was another who almost made it his speciality to play like other trumpet players. Later, with Cab Calloway, he took pleasure in sounding like Doc Cheatham, much to the despair of those who are trying to find out who's who!

But why go further without getting the opinion of the very trumpet player who is said "to have got it from Red Allen"? The book: "The Jazz Makers", page 310. The writer: Nat Hentoff. The chapter: "Roy Eldridge":

Nat: Was Red Allen one of your influences?

Roy: I like Red but, oh God, no! When I first came to New York I used to wonder why people were saying he was playing such wonderful chords. But I wasn't the type of cat that would say a cat wasn't playing until I heard what he was doing and felt I understood. Red used to come and sit in with Teddy Hill, and I felt something was wrong. I didn't know exactly what it was until I went with Fletcher, and from the experience I got there, I knew he had often been playing the wrong chords".

I think that about settles that question. Despite this negative judgement, I wished to quote Roy because it once and for all puts the hierarchy matter in correct perspective.

Coleman Hawkins, when he was in Europe for the first time (1934-39), mentioned Red Allen frequently and seemed to like his playing very much. When Harry Pfister once asked him how he explained the radical changes in Red's playing in the years between Russell and Henderson, Hawk replied that Red had copied Louis Armstrong in the '20s and until about 1933 when he started listening to him (Hawk), and that he tried to play on trumpet some of the things that Hawk did on the saxophone. Hawkins referred Harry to both versions of *Queer Notions* (Fletcher Henderson) and we listened to the one available (Columbia) right there with Hawk. He added that he found Red's playing "even more interesting than before" but expressed doubts that "Red could go far with that style because a saxophone is a saxophone and a trumpet is a trumpet. The saxophone allows a lot of flexibility while the trumpet doesn't give you the same possibilities".

Recently I had put the five interpretations which Pee Wee Erwin recorded with Red — under the latter's name — for Vocalion in January 1935, on cassette for him. In a following letter Pee Wee wrote: "I liked everything Red played. He was a great musician. The five numbers I had the honor of making with him are from his Henderson period, perhaps his happiest musically and personally".

In 1959 Red Allen recorded two albums with Kid Ory and also came to Europe (for the first time) on tour. These two LPs (made for Verve) and the concerts made me realize that Red was an even more versatile and adaptable player than I had thought. I went to the Zurich concert with them and, in the taxi, Ory said: "That's the best trumpet-player I played with since the old days with King Oliver and Louis Armstrong. Red is one of the few who can still lead a New Orleans jazz ensemble. I know." Mr. Ory sure was the man to know (Red beamed with joy at Kid Ory's compliment since he had tremendous respect for him and considered it an honour to have been invited to make this tour with the great trombonist) and the records are lasting proof of what Ory said! I think that in 1959 Red played better lead than on any of the records he made with Jelly Roll Morton. Don't ask me how he could do it after all these years... he could and that's all that matters.

Henry "Red" Allen was a proud and impressive man. He was one of the great figures in jazz history. As long as there are people who listen to music with their hearts and with open minds, his reputation will stand.

(Editorial note: French RCA have now released a fifth and final volume containing the remaining titles from Red Allen's 1950s RCA recordings — **FXM1-7326**).

FRANK LOWE



CLIFFORD JAY SAFANE: I first became aware of your music in the early 1970's when you played a concert with Alice Coltrane's group at Syracuse University. Was this your first important job?

FRANK LOWE: Actually, my first major gig was a concert in Berkeley, California with Alice, Archie Shepp, Jimmy Garrison and Clifford Jarvis which came about through Ornette Coleman. At the time, I was living in Berkeley, and one night I went to sit in with Ornette and his group (Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden and Charles Moffett) at a place called Mandrakes. Ornette said that I should come to New York, which I did in March 1971. I then went to see Ornette and played for him again.

He said that I needed to work rather than study. Then about two weeks later, I received a call from Alice Coltrane who said that she wanted to hire me because of Ornette's recommendation.

I really enjoyed playing with Alice. I was encouraged to play as loose and original as possible, so I really got a chance to stretch out. Of course, I couldn't play bebop things in that context, but that was okay. The purpose of music is to blend. You do what is necessary to present the music as well as your own ego as much as possible.

C.S.: Where are you from originally?

F.L.: I was born in Memphis, Tennessee, where I also went to school. I was greatly influenced

by my high school music instructor, Tuff Green. He's produced a number of good musicians because he could bring out what you had in yourself. I respect this talent of his more and more as time passes. There was also a tenor player named Ben Branch from North Memphis who helped me.

At fifteen, I began working at Stax Records as a salesman just to be around music. I was also studying but not doing too much professional performing. I was playing alto and tenor saxophone as well as trumpet, since my junior high school teacher had put me on the brass instruments. But I soon became frustrated because I really wanted to just play sax. So I left his class and went into vocal music.

After graduating from high school, I went to college in Lawrence, Kansas. Herb Smith, an alto saxophone player now at Howard University, made me realize that I needed some serious study and discipline, so I went to San Francisco and enrolled in the Music Conservatory. It was there I met Rafael Donald Garrett in 1965. He told me about Muhal Richard Abrams and their original concept which included much of what's going on now. They were checking out many things to get different colors.

Rafael had a band named Circus that played so many colors with Oriental, Sun Ra, and bop sounds. They even induced the audience to participate. It was really happening and was my introduction to free music.

I took lessons with Rafael. Sometimes, we would go to the ocean and he would tell me to play some tones out to the sea. Other times, we played at his house, and when I became out of breath, he would tell me to concentrate on a point in the room.

At the same time, I was also taking sax lessons from Bert Wilson, so I was getting two completely different concepts. This really didn't cause any conflict in my playing as I tried to get what they each did best. Bert showed me changes and tunes, whereas Rafael showed me breathing techniques and fingerings.

C.S.: How do you view your own style of playing?

F.L.: Basically, I consider myself a Lester Young player out of the Roscoe Mitchell school. Lester is at the top of my influences although I'm not trying to recreate him, or anyone else for that matter. I try to get his fluidity along with Roscoe's use of space.

I'm trying to sing a song rather than showing my dexterity on the horn. This is what Lester was talking about, although today we're dealing with a different song in that we're looking at it from another perspective. A tune can take many forms besides the standard AABA type.

I'm getting a blend rather than concentrating on any one thing. I want to include as much as possible in my music. I cover many ideas, areas, and colors, but it's still one song. I use both graphic and European notation as well as completely spontaneous improvisation. Of course, every composition doesn't have to explore all colors; you can concentrate on one thing. But basically I like to express many things.

I believe in playing tomorrow's music while, at the same time, acknowledging the many contributions that past players such as Duke, Count, Trane, and Fats (Navarro) made. Bud Powell's harmonic perspective has been a great inspiration to me. In fact, I sometimes think of my saxophone as a piano keyboard, which is an

entirely different concept in terms of melody and chords. It really helps me get my lines to flow.

Knowing the music that came before gives me a scope and heritage — like Don Cherry and Leo Smith have — which I think is important. The more I explore and go into myself, the more I need to know what went on before me. How can I play music and my instrument and not be curious about what others have done? For this reason, I like to give historic references — especially to saxophonists like Lester, Albert Ayler, and Sonny Rollins — in my music. I feel that I can use some of these players' ideas to help convey my own personality and musical ideology.

Personality is so important in music because if you can't project it, your originality won't come out. I think that I'm developing an original sound and trying to play the music of tomorrow, but I sure as hell realize that I didn't come on this planet with it. I had to read many books and study the works of the great masters. I don't try to be humble, but if I don't know something, I check it out. I still go to sessions to see what others are doing. And of course, I practice a lot, because the instrument certainly won't play itself.

There are now separations in music. That's one of the hangups today. A person should be able to deal with the Johnny Carson Tonight Show band and then go to work at the Village Vanguard. You just have to keep an open mind. I want to be able to play everything and anything, being able to retain my own voice while still contributing to the overall context. Of course, I prefer to play my own music, but I'm open to any musical situation that expresses continuity. This can be a repetition of notes, a mental structure, or something else. The main thing is to constantly explore and grow.

C.S.: In October 1977, I heard you play with a large ensemble. What made you form such a group?

F.L.: The band was just another means of expression, emphasizing clarity and articulation rather than the orgiastic thing which I sometimes get into with a small group. The music wasn't a backdrop for my own solos, but rather drew on various duets, trios and quartets, and the entire ensemble to express everyone's musical personalities.

C.S.: I was especially impressed with your use of the clarinet, and various string instruments such as the violin, bass and guitar.

F.L.: I tried to get a fresh sound, using Miles' "Birth Of The Cool"-type textures, tone qualities, and the way one section moved to another as my starting point. From this, I feel that I created something contemporary with new colors and textures.

C.S.: What kind of playing situations are you involved in now?

F.L.: Presently, I'm involved in the Composers workshop which is under the guidance of Muhal, although the organization is really a cooperative. This opportunity is the realization of a goal of mine from the first time that Rafael made me aware of the A.A.C.M.'s workings. Right now, we're just getting started, and by late summer, we hope to begin an approximately 20-concert program at the Mid Manhattan Plaza where we're located. I'm also dealing with a quartet situation, and plan to go to Europe in May.

I read a few articles that said that the '70's are a period of reflection and waiting, and



that there's not much happening. To me, that's bullshit. There are so many competent musicians around that a person would have to be a hermit to make a statement like that. We're in the post Art Ensemble (of Chicago) stage. People are sitting on the Ensemble just like they did with Trane.

The people today are fantastic in their technique and knowledge. Individuals like Lester Bowie, Leo Smith, Roscoe Mitchell, Muhal, Joseph Bowie, Phillip Wilson, Bobo Shaw, Butch Morris and many others are making important musical statements. I enjoy being in their company and making my own contribution. We're in the midst of a blossoming, hip period. You just have to listen.

— December 1977 and March 1978

A FRANK LOWE DISCOGRAPHY

As leader:

Duo Exchange (w. Rashied Ali)
Survival Records 101

Black Beings
ESP 3013

Fresh
Arista Freedom 1015

The Flam
Black Saint 0005

The Other Side
Palm

Tricks of the Trade
Marge 02

Dr. Too-Much
Kharm 02

Positions 3-6-9 (w. Kalaparusha & Jerome
Kharm 03/04 Cooper)

Don't Punt Out
Emanem (to be released)

As sideman:
ALICE COLTRANE
World Galaxy
Impulse 9218

DON CHERRY
Relativity Suite
JCOA 1006

DON CHERRY
Brown Rice
A&M SP-717

INTERVIEW BY CLIFFORD JAY SAFANE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACKI OCHS

ALBERT NICHOLAS

Luis Russell's Okeh records, and the sides that the band cut under the name of its trumpet-solo star Henry "Red" Allen, for Victor in the years 1929-31, really used to "send" our group of young jazz enthusiasts in Zurich (and where I'm concerned, they still do). Those Russell/Allen classics represented the cream of the crop to the members of the "Rhythm Club" from 1933 until the outbreak of the war. No real session could be a success without at least a few of these great records being played. We knew every note on them — right to the cough at the end of *Song Of The Swanee!*

The band's clarinet player was rated highly, especially for his two choruses on the blues *Saratoga Shout* — the first twelve bars performed in the low register, with the notes lazily tumbling out of the instrument (with perfect timing!), then with the start of the second chorus, a veritable explosion in the upper register, whipping up tension to a terrific climax! And the excited band beautifully backing up its clarinet soloist. An unforgettable impression of jazz at its most meaningful! Today, over forty years later, that solo is just as exciting as it was then. Yes, the best in jazz is real art that never dates. And Albert Nicholas was one of jazzdom's great creative artists, in the true sense of the word.

The Riverside Cafe, Paris, 1955: Already in the hallway we heard those limpid, sweeping phrases and seconds later there he was: Albert "Nick" Nicholas! Excellently supported by Jean-Claude Pelletier on piano and drummer Gerard "Dave" Pochonnet. Nick was standing by the piano, outside of a few excursions to a table here and a table there, pointing the clarinet at someone he knew — and the music kept flowing. Effortless. Relaxed. Albert never gave an impression of pushing himself. Music-making was a most natural thing to him. The ideas kept coming and his formidable technique enabled him to execute them flawlessly. You could truly RELAX under the spell of his music.

Bill Coleman introduced us and my wife Liza and I were immediately conquered by the charm and distinguished manners which were so typical of "Nick".

There were about fifteen customers present during the apertif-hour at the small "Riverside", but Nick played with the same enthusiasm he would have deployed for a crowd of 1500. And the audience fully appreciated him. The happiest listener was Benny Waters, a superb reed-man in his own right. He kept "sending" Nick and his stimulating shouts of encouragement and approval melted with the music and contributed to create a fantastic atmosphere of good feeling and "let's stay in that groove all night long!"

During the intermission Nick answered a few questions that had been burning within me for a long time. To my delight I found that his memory was excellent and that he had an exceptional talent for telling an endless stream of colorful anecdotes.

Before starting a new set he had explained that it so often happened in jazz that tunes composed by sidemen or lesser-known musicians got credited to and copyrighted by leaders. He announced his next three numbers as *Tio's Tune* (he then played *Mood Indigo*), *Otto's*



Tune (Sophisticated Lady) and Fuller's Tune (Rosetta) — just to prove his point. I don't know for sure whether Albert was right in all three cases, but that's not the important side of the matter now anyway.

From most of the pictures I had seen of Albert, I concluded that he was of about medium height. A few even gave the impression that he might be rather tall. Charlie Holmes looked like the "shorty" in that old Russell group! To our surprise Albert was in reality a very small man — and when I met Charlie Holmes in 1965, he was just about the same size as Nick! A strange optic error over the years, but never a musical one: big or small in stature, Albert Nicholas was ALWAYS one of the giants on the clarinet.

For years discographers have mentioned Freddie "Posey" Jenkins as the sole trumpeter on the six sides waxed for Bluebird in August 1935 (three appeared under Bernard Addison's name, three under Freddie Jenkins'). However, a second trumpet-player is audible now and then (short snatches of phrases here and there but, more important, the concluding riffing on some sides is done by two trumpets and Albert on clarinet). In August 1939 Joe Turner, the pianist on all six sides, told me that the other trumpet man was "an Arab or something like that, a friend of Nicholas', who brought the guy along so that he could make a few dollars, and Adrian (Rollini, who was in charge of the date) had no objections".

In 1955 and '57, Albert himself confirmed Joe Turner's story and added the following details: "I met and played with this fellow in Alexandria in 1928 and we got along fine. When after a few months I left for the United States, I told him: 'If you ever get to New York, come and see me'. One says such things without thinking that they would ever happen. But one afternoon seven years later, there was a knock at the door and there was that trumpet player from Alexandria! He had come over working as a musician in a ship's orchestra. But the crazy cat hadn't returned to his ship when it went back to Egypt! No notice, no money, no job... just, 'look Albert, here I am, I thought I'd come here since you so kindly invited me'.

"Well, that was that and I told my wife: 'The guy moves in. He's our visitor for a couple of days.' We had a few drinks, did a lot of reminiscing and spent quite a nice first day. However, two weeks later the cat was still there, and after six weeks there was not even any mention of his ever leaving again! It looked as if the fellow would stay with the Nicholas family for the rest of his l-o-n-g life.... I was working steadily with John Kirby at the time, and my buddy from Egypt often came to the gig with me to hear us play. Otherwise, he slept a lot and was happy and content (this guy would still smile his smile if you told him you were going to cut his head off), eating plenty of good food, smoking lots of my cigarettes with labels, and a few without labels, and if you offered him a drink he was not one to refuse!

"Really I liked him, he was a nice guy and wouldn't hurt a fly. But he was only a fair trumpet player (could not 'get off' really), had no work permit and as time went by I started worrying. There was this recording session with Bernard and the others and I told Rollini about my 'guest in the nest'. He agreed to use him on the date but since the guy was not allowed to work in the USA, Adrian arranged that he didn't get paid the same way as the rest of the guys

and that his name was not registered on the work sheet. That's the reason, I think, that he was never listed as having been present. Some of the guys on the date gave him a dollar or two out of their own pocket and I laid a (last!) ten-dollar bill on him and made it clear that our ways had to part. As we left the studio we shook hands and he walked away... smiling! I have never heard from or about him since."

"2nd trumpet, allegedly an Egyptian" in Rust was put in because I told Brian what I had learned from Joe Turner and Nick about the subject. There isn't, therefore, a second source. Brian's was mine.

A few of the artists Nick most admired: Louis Armstrong first and foremost: Nick used to mention Louis' records of *I've Got A Heartful Of Rhythm* (on which he takes an excellent solo for 24 bars, separated by an 8-bar bridge performed by his good friend, Charlie Holmes) and *Alexander's Ragtime Band* (where he is heard in a few inspired phrases behind Satch's vocal) and he was rightfully proud of them. At the same time, he wished it to be generally known that it was not he, but Bingie Madison who played the off-pitch solo on Louis' Decca recording of *Struttin' With Some Barbecue!* Albert was always quick to point out that he considered Madison an excellent musician, and that this solo was just, as he said, "an unfortunate happening."

Lorenzo Tio Jr., Jimmy Noone, Barney Bigard and Omer Simeon were the clarinet-players he mentioned most often as being closest to his heart. However, I also heard him praise Artie Shaw, Irving Fazola, Don Murray, Gene Sedic and Terry Blake. There may have been occasional misunderstandings of a personal nature between Sidney Bechet and Nick, but this never prevented Albert from speaking with highest respect of Sidney's playing. In fact, he considered him no less than a "natural-born genius".

A while ago I wrote a piece for "Le Point Du Jazz" in which I insisted that Jelly Roll Morton was not the bragging eccentric that most jazz critics wanted to see him as. Along with Omer Simeon, Happy Caldwell, Hayes Alvis and Red Allen, Nick was one of the many artists who often insisted that Jelly Roll not only could but in fact, DID prove most of the many bold statements he made. As for some of the pianist/composer/arranger's declarations, Albert once said, "If you, or anyone else including myself, was hailed as a top artist for some time and all of a sudden, found that everything you had done was being called "corny" or of no worth, there is no doubt that you, me, or anybody would feel deeply hurt. In order to put things in a correct perspective, we all would try to tell the world about what we had done! And maybe, just as Jelly did, we might go out a bit too far.... that's understandable. Jelly was a great artist who, as he felt himself becoming more and more forgotten, wanted to remind the world of his achievements".

Yes, Nick was a very intelligent human being, and one who was not afraid to speak his mind. More than once I saw him step out and defend a friend or fellow-artist, not caring whether his opinion was popular or not (does anyone remember the "Albert Nicholas versus Rudi Blesh" case of 1947, when Nick came to the defence of the pianists Pete Johnson and Pat Flowers? Mr. Blesh felt that the latter "didn't play jazz"(!). This made Albert lose his temper — and his regular radio program job with Rudi Blesh's "This Is Jazz").

Albert also had boundless admiration for James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, Art Tatum, Duke Ellington (he was crazy about Duke AND about the band), Lester Young, J.C. Higginbotham, Rex Stewart. Many others too, but these are the ones whom he mentioned the most often when I happened to be around. However, if you went backstage after a concert of a more modern type involving younger musicians from the States (whom Albert had not known because they weren't on the scene yet when he left America), more often than not you would find Albert Nicholas there, listening attentively and giving encouragement and advice to his younger confreres. I do not speak of "avant-gardists" of the free school (I don't think that Albert got any pleasure out of it) but of modern jazz, based on chord structures and involving sound musicianship. You see, Albert was broad-minded, tolerant and had stayed young at heart (in fact, he was more broad-minded than some of his admirers).

Albert did not like to put any fellow musicians down if he could avoid it. However, he had no liking at all for most of the records made during the so-called "New Orleans Revival" (the work of Sidney Bechet, Kid Ory, Wilbur de Paris and a few others excepted). He called the music of most of the veterans who were part of the New Orleans revival "amateurish" and musically worthless. Albert claimed that these musicians, playing as they did on those records made in the '40s, '50s and '60s, would never have stood a chance in the twenties, when New Orleans-style jazz dominated the scene. He also thought that most of these revival groups, made up of old-timers from New Orleans, did not SWING. "And jazz without swing is not the real thing," he used to say.

I remember particularly well how pained Albert once was when someone played him a record by his own uncle, "Wooden Joe" Nicholas. He asked the collector to stop the record, explained that his uncle had once been a good trumpet and clarinet player some decades earlier and concluded that he had only a mere shadow of his former stature as a jazz musician when he had cut this record in the 1940s.

"I am a Creole but that doesn't matter much. Except for a few insiders, I'm just considered a colored US citizen." Albert was pleased with the (relative) lack of racial prejudice in Europe but he was peeved at the thought that a mediocre black musician would be preferred to a much more talented white one — as is common in certain jazz circles, most prominently in France. He declared that Claude Bolling and Henri Chaix counted among the most admirable pianists he had ever worked with and he also had a high regard for the Swiss pianist Fritz Toppel. Albert often mentioned Ralph Sutton and Don Ewell as being great pianists and he remembered with joy the many nights he had worked with them.

Although it was his belief that jazz was the creation of the black American and that the pace-setters on each instrument were mostly black musicians, he was too honest a person and too sincere a musician to deny that there were many real jazz musicians who were white. He would have been too proud to have been hailed a great jazz musician on account of his color. Albert wished to — and did — prove his worth via his playing.

I was always impressed by and full of respect for Albert Nicholas. Not just because he was older than I and a great artist I much admired.



There was more to it: Albert had some real dignity about himself; he was kind of a noble. Not having known him when he was a young man, I cannot say whether this special quality had always been part of him or whether he developed it as he grew older. In any case, everybody among my many acquaintances felt that way about him, that you had to deeply respect him. A gentleman in the true meaning of this much-abused word.

After a relatively short illness, Nick died in Basel, Switzerland on September 3, 1973. His passing came as a shock to his countless admirers and friends all over the world. He lived in Basel since 1971 and became a more and more popular performer in his adopted country. He was mourned by thousands of people of all generations and of the widest possible differences in musical tastes. They had all taken a

liking to the immaculate artist and the fine person that was Albert Nicholas.

It was therefore not surprising that close to two hundred people - including about 70 musicians from eight nations - attended Albert's funeral at the Hornli Cemetery in Basel on September 6. "Mr. Big Jay" (Caleo Ginyard), former member of the Golden Gate Quartet, a close friend of Albert, led the procession as Grand Marshall in the typically New Orleans-styled ceremony. Over forty musicians had brought their instruments and their playing of *Free As A Bird* as Albert's remains were put in the grave, brought tears to the eyes of many. The very talented trumpeter, Oscar Klein, played beautiful embellishments around the melody that were especially moving. Joachim Ernst Berendt retraced Albert's life, George Gruntz played some beautiful organ solos and the

clarinet player from the English Picadilly Six performed an unaccompanied piece so close to Nick's tone and phrasing that for a moment I thought they were playing a tape featuring Albert Nicholas himself. A very remarkable world citizen - because artists of Nick's sort belong to the world - had left us. Everybody was fully aware that this unique performer, who had given us so much of himself in his music, would and could never be replaced.

A selection of records featuring Albert Nicholas:

LUIS RUSSELL & His Louisiana Swing Orchestra
American Columbia KG 32338

HENRY RED ALLEN & His New York Orchestra. Volume I French RCA FXM1 7060
" Volume II " " " 7090

JELLY ROLL MORTON & His Red Hot Peppers
Volume I French RCA 730.599
Volume II " " 730.605
Volume VI " " 741.070
Volume VIII " " 741.087

BARNEY BIGARD/ ALBERT NICHOLAS
American RCA LPV 566

Memorial Albert Nicholas French Vogue DP.23

The Soul of Albert Nicholas
German Bellaphon BW5 314

Clarinet Marmalade French Musidisc CV 1170

Albert Nicholas Quartet
Danish Storyville SLP 126

"Albert's Blues" featuring Barry Martyn
British 77 LEU 12120

ALBERT NICHOLAS - "A Tribute to Jelly Roll Morton"
Danish Storyville SLP 221

Albert Nicholas with Geneva Dixieland All Stars (1971)
Italian Studio G CTS 6991

Albert Nicholas featuring Miriam Klein
Swiss Europa E412

"The Great Traditionalists in Europe"
German MPS 15228

ALBERT NICHOLAS - "Let Me Tell You"
British Duo 114

Since coming to Europe in 1953, Albert Nicholas recorded in France, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Italy, Poland, Holland, Switzerland, England and Germany as well as in the USA during his two visits to his homeland. Some of these albums, not included in the above compilation may still be available locally but I am not sure if this is so.

My sincere thanks go to Miss Gul Goksu, Albert's close friend and manager for many years, for her invaluable help in going over my manuscript and supplying me with a full list of all the recordings done by Albert since 1953. Miss Goksu is in possession of some unissued material of high quality. If anyone is interested in publishing this material, please contact her at the following address: Miss Gul Goksu, Bodenacherstrasse 54, 8121 Benglen, Zurich, Switzerland.
- **Johnny Simmen**

BLUES NEWS



BY DOUG LANGILLE

Getting right down to business, let us turn to a Swedish release: Roy Brown, "Laughing But Crying" (Route 66 K1X-2). I cannot help but praise Roy Brown and this particular reissue collection. Brown, a significantly influential vocalist whose heyday was between 1946 and approximately 1954, has certainly left his impress on modern urban blues, jump blues, R&B and rock and roll. His unique gospel/spiritual vocal and delivery style has left an obvious mark on the work of B.B. King, Bobby Blue Bland, Little Milton etc., as well as countless R&B vocalists.

The sixteen sides presented on "Laughing But Crying" were recorded between 1947 and 1959 and the bulk came from the Deluxe label. The material is characterized by the instrumental trappings of the various genres represented. The first session, *Special Lesson No. 1*, begins with the basic trio — hollow body electric guitar, acoustic bass and drums. Piano, tenor sax(es), baritone sax and trumpet are added for the remaining sides. The backing is appropriately quiet on the ballads, emotive on the blues and exuberant on the jumps and boogies. There is an abundance of good guitar, piano and sax work. Roy's vocal style permits and encourages call/response instrumental input and plenty of short, well-punctuated solo or ensemble breaks.

Brown is also a gifted lyricist. His compositions are often coloured by his own sense of humour and satiric perception of popular situations. On this note, check out *Letter From Home* and *Laughing But Crying*. Included in this collection is a heavy-duty double entendre ditty (not his own composition) entitled *Butcher Pete*. The story depicts the antics of a hyperactive character from the world of Snatch and the Poontangs.

The Route 66 presentation of this outstanding material is first rate. The sound is exceptionally good and packaging includes a detailed discography, informative and well-composed liner notes (written in the international aviation language - English), and the complete lyrics of all the songs. Route 66 appears to be dedicated to quality and integrity.

Roy Brown, still a young man, lives in L.A. Although taking a rest from the absurd world of show biz, he still makes the odd recording and public appearance. Without trying to be a hype monger, I feel Roy Brown is truly a giant of modern black music. *Coda* readers, if they like vocalists such as Wynonie Harris, Jimmy Witherspoon etc. should check out Brown and particularly this LP. "Laughing But Crying" can be ordered from Route 66 Records, Mr. R&B Record Sales, Halsingegaten 14A, 113 23 Stockholm, Sweden. Also ask about Route 66's Floyd Dixon LP, "Opportunity Blues" (K1X-1), and the new Ivory Joe Hunter and Wynonie Harris LPs. Gusto Records of Nashville has recently reissued an LP of Roy Brown's King material ("Hard Luck Blues" - King KS-1130) which is also well worth hearing.

"Central Avenue Blues" (Ace of Spades 1001) concentrates more on the urbane side of postwar West Coast blues. Included are late '40s and early '50s sides by known artists — Pee Wee Crayton (3), Amos Milburn (2), T-Bone Walker (1), Roy Milton (1), Little Willie Littlefield (1) and Charles Brown (1); and by lesser-known artists — Stormy Herman (1), Johnny Wright (1), The Blenders (1), Saunders King (1), Roy Hawkins (1), and J.D. Nicholson (2). The sound is definitely West Coast with the Texas/Kansas City imprint very clear. There is plenty of clean guitar, smooth and/or rocking

piano, clear vocal work and upfront horn breaks. On atypical cut is Stormy Herman's down-home bayou sounding *Bad Luck* - complete with harp (Herman himself) and heavy bass drum. The lyrics on this cut plus the lyrics on Milburn's *Walking Blues* and Crayton's *Central Avenue Blues* are interesting. Also of particular interest is Johnny Wright's *The World Is Yours* performed a la Guitar Slim/early Buddy Guy (superior modern electric guitar).

I can't emphasize enough how fertile the West Coast was, and to some degree still is, for urban blues. This postulate of past glory and import is well demonstrated on this healthy and varied reissue set. The compiler(s) of this collection, whomever they may be, should be congratulated. Without implying that \$25 (U.S.) were enclosed in the record jacket, I hazard to suggest that "Central Avenue Blues" is a must, if not simply a good bet. Serious collectors might grumble about not having a blow by blow discography and detailed liner notes, characterized by plenty of name, date, and record label dropping and migrational data. In terms of the music to be found inside, the cover photo says it all. Given all this, the sound quality at times suffers from the vintage nature of the material. Damn good music though.

A good complement to "Central Avenue Blues" is the Muskadine reissue anthology, "Unfinished Boogie - Western Blues Piano 1946-1952" (Muskadine 104). The title places the

collection in its proper thematic and temporal context. The music leans strongly in the direction of the more downhome Texas piano and piano/guitar traditions, with some K.C. sounding boogie piano thrown in as a counterbalance. There is a good mix of solo piano, piano/guitar duets, and economic ensemble sides (piano, guitar, bass and drums). This set is an appropriate sequel to the Muskadine anthology of downhome postwar West Coast blues - "Alla Blues" (Muskadine 103).

Texas, Thunder Smith is well represented with the speedy title cut plus four lonesome-sounding vocal numbers, plus one cut as accompanist to guitarist/vocalist Luther Stoneham. All his sides feature guitar backing by either Stoneham or Lightning Hopkins. Of particular interest are Jimmy McCracklin, Mercy Dee and Little Son Willis with three cuts each. The McCracklin sides feature McCracklin as vocalist with pianist J.D. Nicholson providing functional and sympathetic accompaniment. McCracklin's lyrics are quite interesting as he develops themes like *Highway 101*, *Street Walking Woman*, etc. The sides by Mercy Dee are first rate. Little Son Willis' sides are exceptionally strong, performed in a somewhat aggressive manner (good solid downhome blues). The set is rounded off by a flashy instrumental boogie by Little Willie Littlefield.

"Unfinished Boogie" is a recommended set and fits rather well with its sister LP "Alla Blues" as well as with "Central Avenue Blues". The material selected is generally interesting from a lyrical and musical point of view, and apparently new to the reissue LP format. The liner artwork and summary-type notes are also superior. However, the sound at times suffers from the vintage nature of the selections, Muskadine Records are readily available from producer Frank Scott at Advent Productions, P.O. Box 635, La Habra, California 90631 USA.

Now for a quick review of a reissue set that could have been so good. The LP - Johnny "Guitar" Watson, "Hot Little Mama" (Big Town BT-1002), and the original material comes from the Bihari family (not to be confused with Bob Geddins). The Biharis recorded the material in the mid-'50s for their RPM label. The original sides are essentially first-rate - a solid mix of intense electric guitar-led blues and more pop-ish R&B. Watson's blues sides are among some of the hardest hitting urban blues sides to be found anywhere. His slashing guitar breaks and razor sharp metallic punctuations and his youthful, self-assured vocals are a total assault to the senses. His music in general is raw energy and an example of total involvement by an artist committed to delivery. *Three Hours Past Midnight*, for example, is a modern blues classic. Some of this material has appeared on Kent anthologies, a Red Lightning release and an untouched Black Diamond EP.

The complaints levelled at this recent set include its short playing time (ten cuts with a total playing time of 26:54 minutes); the re-engineering of the sound for stereo; and the at times horrendous overdubbing. The reconstituted sound, although clean seems to take a certain edge off the performance. The overdubbing on some cuts of an at times out of tune electric clavichord, or synthesized cosmic rotorooter makes listening a trial. The producers should have let this superior material well enough alone. If interested Big Town and Ace Of Spades ("Central Avenue Blues") are distributed by Southern Record Sales, 5001 Reynard, La Crescenta, California 91214 USA.

RECORD REVIEWS RECORD REVIEWS..

DONALD LAMBERT

Meet The Lamb
IAJRC 23

Pork And Beans, All The Things You Are, Hold Your Temper, Chloe, The Lady's In Love With You, Golden Earrings, Don's Mother's Song, Russian Rag, The Bells Of St. Mary's, Wabash Blues, Let's Get Lost, Tea For Two, Harlem Strut, If I Had You/Pennies From Heaven, I Love You Madly, Hallelujah.

Although Donald Lambert (1904-1962) made only a few 78s and one now-unavailable LP, those who heard him play often describe his Harlem stride piano style in superlatives that, perhaps, no LP could hope to fully justify. The International Association of Jazz Record Collectors (dues \$7.50 per year — contact Gene Miller, 90 Prince George Drive, Islington, Ontario M9B 2X8 Canada) has added some substance to Lambert's shadow with this disc of solos (a drummer is present on *Madly*) culled from tapes of casual sessions made from 1960 to 1962 by various Lambert fans.

No doubt about it, the man could really get over the keyboard. The album abounds with two-fisted New York licks and tricks (*Tea*, a fun track, gives you melody and rhythm in the left hand contrasted with right-hand quotes from assorted well-known pop songs) mounted on a juicy, deadly accurate, fiercely swinging beat.

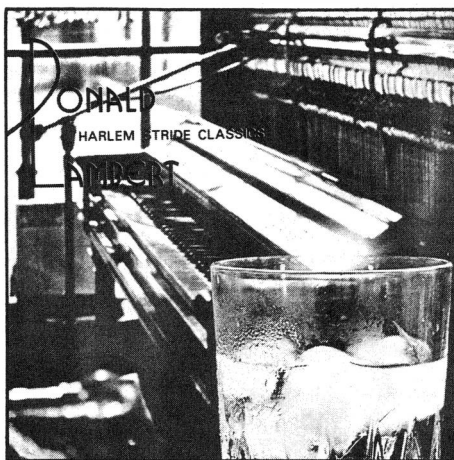
The informality of the proceedings shows through on a number of tracks where Lambert tosses off a couple or three choruses of very impressive tickling but doesn't bother to accept the challenge of developing the performance in any extended or particularly original way. *Lady's*, however, while keeping the melody going, builds in an increasingly ornate manner; *Pork* is a thorough exposition of Luckey Roberts' classic rag; *Bells* is red-hot and brilliantly explored via a varied approach to each chorus; and *Hallelujah*, the killer-diller finale, is a steamroller of searing piano.

Even on the weaker numbers, Lambert is an attractive, appealing artist who gives you flashes of his major talent plus that good feeling which rent party piano, when it's done right, leaves in its wake. Stride fans will want this one for historical and musical reasons and can get it for \$7.00 postpaid in the U.S. (\$3.50 to IAJRC members) from Bill Thompson, 1284 Old Johnson Ferry Road N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30319. Add \$1.00 to those prices outside USA. — *Tex Wyndham*

Harlem Stride Classics
Pumpkin 104

It's All Right With Me, The Trolley Song, Ain't Misbehavin', Daintiness Rag, Old Fashioned Love, Rose Of The Rio Grande, When Your Lover Has Gone, Jingle Bells, Keep Off The Grass, Carolina Shout, I'm Just Wild About Harry, You Can't Do What My Last Man Did, If Dreams Came True, How Can You Face Me, Russian Lullaby.

In the liner notes to this collection of solos performed in informal surroundings from 1959



through 1962, Dick Wellstood refers to Donald Lambert as the "single most exciting stride pianist". Wellstood — a contemporary keyboard giant who incorporates more than a little Lambert into his own playing — doubtlessly would offer this disc, even with its tinny recreation-room pianos and sometimes rough acoustics, to support his view, particularly side two (the monaural side) which contains some of the hottest, flashiest, and (let's say it) best Harlem tickling I've ever heard.

Try *Keep* — a killer, including out choruses featuring reverse stride and other eye-opening tricks, all crisp, clean and fast. Or *Harry* — pile-driving left hand under a right that keeps the melody going but adds embroidery at top speed. Or *Last* — an easy-going, big sounding, richly-voiced, inventive arrangement that Wellstood says was taken from a piano roll. Or *Russian* — fantastic closing chorus, all over the ivories. One incredible rendition after another.

Lambert suffered a stroke in the fall of 1961 and, judging by some of the 1962 tracks on side one (the stereo and better-recorded side), his work thereafter was technically impressive but less fiery and fertile. Still, *Jingle* entertains with its minor passage and blazing finish and *Rose*, in three dazzling choruses, has you wishing for more.

Lambert's virtually complete absence from the studios leaves this material as the only permanent legacy of a legendary artist. Despite its imperfections, it will be savored by stride piano buffs. — *Tex Wyndham*

STEVE LACY

Raps
Adelphi Records AD 5004

There is a problem which one must confront while listening to this record. If one has been following Steve Lacy's career and especially his ever-increasing recorded work over the last few years, one notices that his compositional style has stagnated and become one-dimensional. Lacy has been exploring to varying success the idea of simplistic staccato lines which derive their initial interest through the accumulated intervals, rather than any inherent melodic or coloristic elements. Over a long stretch of time this approach lacks sufficient variety, and ultimately places the soloist in a musical straight-

jacket, since solos are inevitably taken not as variational melodic transformation of the line itself, but instead usually through the rhythmic emphasis of the line. Lacy himself is, of course, a master at solo construction through a subtle use of rhythmically variable interval selection, but his various accomplices have not always shared this talent; as such his music is usually more successful in intimate forms. His various solo recordings, along with the duet record with pianist Michael Smith ("*Sidelines*", IAI 37.38.47) and his recording for four saxophones ("*Saxophone Special*", Emanem 3310) have succeeded in mostly clearly defining Lacy's musical position, at least for me.

Lacy's various group recordings, with traditional rhythm section, have not worked so well; for since the horns are adhering so closely to the precise rhythmic values and delineation of the "theme", drums and bass are not needed to keep regular time. In addition, they often tend to clutter up the texture, and sound overbusy and rambling.

Now that I've got that off my chest let me say that this recording is typical Lacy material, and yet is one of his better attempts at group performance. Saxophonist Steve Potts, one of Lacy's most frequent sidemen, is an excellent foil to Lacy's more sparse, pristine soloing. Potts is capable of breathing fire when the reins are loosened, and he is in fine form here, especially on *Blinks* where his alto solo pays homage to Johnny Hodges without resorting to quotation. Bassist Ron Miller and drummer Oliver Johnson have a long working familiarity with Lacy's musical conceptions and as a result are able to flow in a more convincing manner than many of his past rhythm sections. Because this is a working group this recording is free of the bizarre intrusions which musicians unfamiliar with Lacy's compositional style and structure often play (such as happened with Derek Bailey and John Stevens on "*The Crust*", Emanem 304). Both Bailey and Stevens are excellent players, but not in this context.

Lacy's solo voice here is, as always, sinewy, humorous, and supple. I only hope he continues to seek out adventurous ensembles in order to continue his musical growth. I'd love to hear him in a Dixieland setting, for example.

— *Art Lange*

GEORGE LEWIS

The George Lewis Solo Trombone Record
Sackville 3012

The 1970s have seen a proliferation of solo brass and wind recordings. Despite their new found popularity, the success of these performances rests on each musician's ability to make his non-chordal-playing instrument simultaneously play or imply harmony, rhythm, and melody while avoiding textural and timbral monotony.

George Lewis — who has greatly contributed to the music of the AACM, Anthony Braxton, and others — now presents us with his own musical vision. The trombonist has a prodigious technique, pushing his instrument to its currently accepted limits and beyond. Older techniques involving slurs, slides, and growls are used in both conventional and new contexts

as well as the incorporation of new and exciting sounds.

Lewis' technique, however, isn't used as an end in itself. The trombonist has great creative abilities to complement his technical skills. All the music is imaginatively and stunningly played. *Phenomenology*, for example, grows from individual notes into a collage of shapes, colors, and masses of sound. *Lush Life* — the album's only non-Lewis composition — receives a beautiful rendition. Lewis' warm, smooth, baritone horn-sounding trombone creates peaceful images and colors which are a joy to hear.

— Clifford Jay Safane

MALFATTI / MILLER

Bracknell Breakdown
Ogun OG 320

The Audient Stood On Its Foot; Friendly Duck.

Radu Malfatti, trombone, misc.; Harry Miller, bass, misc.;

Evolving out of the extensive English tradition of "spontaneous sound syntax" and the work of such groups as the Spontaneous Music Ensemble, the Music Improvisation Company, and various subdivisions of musicians therein, the Malfatti/Miller duo delves into a subterranean world of sound where detail is not as important as gesture. As a result the ritual aspects of a live performance (from which this album was made) carries an additional weight and emphasis which this recording can only approximate. Therefore, the success of recordings of music of this nature is dependent upon the atmosphere which is created by the tension between the musicians, and the variety of intriguing textures and voicings which they must manufacture.

Fortunately, the Malfatti/Miller duo is quite adept at both aspects, and create a sonorous environment the likes of which we might expect from a meeting of, say, Paul Rutherford and Kent Carter.

Miller's bass is more interesting from an ornamental and timbral standpoint than in his "mainstream" work with other Ogun ensembles, including his own Ipisingo (reviewed in *Coda* 160) — though his solo LP "Children At Play" (Ogun 200) hints strongly in his interest in freer, looser compositional structures. Malfatti seems to have a more spontaneous sense of humor, as he is continually interjecting bizarre squeaks, duck imitations, balloon squeals, and distorted trombone fragments into the proceedings. At one point he uses his trombone mouth-piece to recreate the sounds of a stock-car race.

Though the two sidelong compositions are based on the same elements of intuition and incongruity, *Friendly Duck* seems less successful due to its one-joke conceptual nature. *The Audient Stood On Its Foot*, on the other hand, is held together by a tenuous thread of instantaneous events which are all the more exciting for the risks they encompass. Miller's bass creates a flexible, imaginative ground over which Malfatti's surrealistic spicings and straightforward, more traditional tailgating hover like a hummingbird over a flower. Of course, in both compositions there are moments of rambling and hesitation, while the participants wait to see what might emerge from the air to give them their next direction. But for the most

part Miller's bass adds a sense of continuity which sustains interest.

— Art Lange

PETE MAGADINI

Bones Blues
Sackville 4004

Up until now one could find traditional jazz, mainstream swing, big band jazz and free jazz in the Sackville catalog, but nary a bop side. I am happy to report that John Norris and Bill Smith have taken a major step to rectify that situation with the release of "Bones Blues". They couldn't have selected a better choice to break through the thick ice covering the bop territory. What they have given us is a superior jazz recording.

The leader of the group is drummer Pete Magadini. I reviewed a record by Magadini with almost the same personnel some time ago in *Coda* ("Polyrhythms" on Briko Records, reviewed in *Coda* no. 155, June 1977). While the earlier album was by no means poor, it doesn't compare to this one. Magadini demonstrates how to swing hard and still support the soloist in a highly dynamic and creative manner. Dave Young, the (acoustic) bass player, is not well known outside of Canada — but he should be! Young supplies a solid rhythmic foundation and his choice of notes is faultless. Another new name to non-Canadians will be that of pianist Wray Downes. Downes displays that clean crisp touch and good taste that reminds me of players like Hank Jones and Al Haig, with perhaps just a dash of Oscar Peterson thrown in for good measure.

The man out front is Don Menza on tenor saxophone and I have never heard him play better. In fact, on the basis of this record, Menza proves himself to be among the best tenor players now on the scene. Menza, who originally hails from Buffalo, shows his upstate New York roots, as I find a stylistic similarity in his playing with such other tenor players from that area as Sal Nistico, Joe Romano and J.R. Monterose.

The quartet plays seven tunes on this album and there is not a weak one among them. Menza and Young each contribute an original. The remainder are jazz classics such as *Solar* and *I Remember Clifford*, and standards like *Old Devil Moon*.

In summation, this is a highly-recommended forty-two minutes and fourteen seconds of straight ahead modern jazz music.

— Peter S. Friedman

WARNE MARSH

All Music
Nessa N-7

Although superficially a different proposition from "Ne Plus Ultra" (Revelation 12), this collection reveals similar preoccupations on Marsh's part in regard to the jazz ensemble. At that splendid earlier session his tenor had been allied with alto saxophone, bass and drums, whereas here his accompaniment takes the apparently conventional form of a piano trio. In reality, though, the backing he gets from Lou Levy, Fred Atwood and Jake Hanna is very much akin to the resourceful work of Gary Foster, Dave Parlato and John Tirabasso on the Revelation disc. Each of the seven

items exemplifies the vigorous interaction Marsh and his sidemen achieve, but perhaps the most striking instance of their interdependence occurs in the closing choruses of *317 E. 32nd*, when Atwood's solo resolves into an even-handed collective improvisation by drums, bass and piano, a conversation which is then further enlivened by Marsh's insinuating himself into it before he brings matters to a close with the expected reprise. Note too, how Levy occasionally stays tacet when Marsh is improvising, whilst at other times the support which he provides is so assertive as to raise the piano part onto a level with the tenor's. Similarly differing levels of prominence mark Hanna's contributions as each of these performances unfolds, so that the overall impression the listener gets is of a much more flexible and dynamic unit than Marsh was wont to front fifteen or twenty years ago.

Comparison could of course be drawn between these procedures and those favored during the intervening two decades by Rollins, Monk, or even Cecil Taylor; but far from being grafted onto Marsh's work they arise quite naturally from the rhythmically complex character of his own phrasing. Moreover he has developed them without diluting the dense harmonic content of his music. In fact, it is Marsh's strength in all departments which makes his music so demanding an experience for the listener, and correspondingly, given the necessary attention, offers such rich auditory rewards. As with other members of the jazz elite, his melodic powers are often most startling at slow tempo, as demonstrated here by *On Purpose*, a slow blues notable for his fierce eschewal of cliché, and *Easy Living*, the emotional content of whose rendering hews closer to harsh admonition than to relaxed nostalgia. *Lunarcy*, with its abrupt tempo change, is the least consistent item of the set, though the intensity of Levy's contributions stands out and will shock many a listener whose mental image of him is governed by the urbanity of his accompaniments to such archetypal Getz performances as *Time After Time*. The programme is completed by *I Have A Good One For You*, *Background Music* and *Subconscious-Lee*, and it is in this last item that Marsh's feeling for overall structure takes on its most refined expression. Marsh has been exploring this theme now for thirty years and his close familiarity with the intricacies of its components enables him to build upon it improvisations whose athleticism, remarkable as it may be, finds itself quite overshadowed by the appropriateness with which each phrase relates to the whole. This, certainly, is all music: music cut down to the bone, music with all self-indulgence ruthlessly excised.

—Michael James

Jimmy & Marion McPARTLAND

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and welcome taste, skill and gusto. Feature numbers for the rhythm (*Things* — Ms. McPartland's glittering piano getting most space), Hall (*Walk* — a lovely player, with a warm tone and relaxed fluency), and the saxes (*Lonely* — a long, late-hours blues with the opening sax honking out some leathery stuff that nicely contrasts with the fleet, more sophisticated lines of his cohort) make up Side One, with Jimmy's drive and freshly-minted horn booting the full band through Side Two.

A solid, well-recorded jazz session falling somewhere between Chicago style and mainstream. Nothing these artists haven't done on many other discs, perhaps, but they do it well again in foot-tapping, enjoyable fashion that held my attention throughout. Available from Improv Records Division, Tobill Entertainment Corp., 107 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14202 USA. — *Tex Wyndham*

ROSCOE MITCHELL

Nonaah

Nessa N-9/10 (2 records)

Nonaah (three versions); *Erica*; *Off Five Dark Six*; *A1 TAL 2LP*; *Tahquememon*; *Improvisation 1*; *Ballad*.

Mitchell, alto saxophone; Anthony Braxton, soprano saxophone; Malachi Favors, bass; George Lewis, trombone; Mual Richard Abrams, piano; Joseph Jarman, Wallace McMillan, Henry Threadgill, alto saxophones.

Roscoe Mitchell's intense exploratory nature as a composer cannot be divorced from his instrumental sensibilities; it so happens that the two are inexorably welded; they support and feed off each other to the extent that the variety of voicings heard on this interestingly diverse program combine to paint as complete a portrait of the artist as has previously been assembled on vinyl.

As an instrumentalist and improvising soloist, Mitchell likes to analyze pitch intervals and motivic fragments, shaping them into a repetitious formal continuity. But he also extends this musical analysis further into the areas of color and texture, so that often he places each individual note under a microscope, so as to examine and display its weight and breadth, the aural spaces between its grainy timbre, and diagram its ultimate atomization. It is this approach which serves as starting point for the solo saxophone pieces he has recorded here; *Erica*, *Ballad*, and especially *Improvisation 1*. His solo saxophone conception can superficially be compared with that of Anthony Braxton, especially given both saxophonists' mathematical study of intervallic relationships. However, beyond this there are wide differences between the two, as Braxton is often concerned with melodic invention within a preconceived form, while Mitchell attempts to isolate the components of form. It must be mentioned, however, that both saxophonists ultimately create music which must stand or fall on its emotional and intellectual results — when they succeed the music is magical, and when they fail the music can be sentimental or astringent. Actually, their affinities are mirrored on this recording in their duet on *Off Five Dark Six*; they are obviously compatible in terms of intent and sensibility; unfortunately the piece is an uneven

sequence of pointillistic gestures which seems unnecessarily skeletal, never quite jelling into a coherent whole.

As a composer, in addition to his preoccupation with color and texture (which, by the way, is the basis for *Tahquememon* — a trio for piano, trombone and alto utilizing a kaleidoscopic juxtaposition of dynamics, timbres, and voicings in a referential setting of motivic material), Mitchell is concerned with experimenting with the relationship between a given theme and its instrumental and emotional environment. To this end he composed *Nonaah*, a rhythmically flexible and haunting theme which seems to take on totally different characteristics depending upon its presentation. Mitchell has recorded the theme three times previously; twice in extremely short solo saxophone settings (both on "Solo Saxophone Concerts", Sackville 2006), and once with a sextet (on the Art Ensemble of Chicago's "Fanfare For The Warriors", Atlantic 1651). Here it is performed three more times; twice solo (one a two-minute concise statement, the other a twenty-one minute extravaganza), and once by a quartet of four alto saxophones. The quartet rendition mirrors the structural scope of the longer solo performance and falls into three sections: first, an insistent, straightforward, extremely tense presentation of the main melody in a literally repetitious fashion; secondly, an ever shifting series of sliding long lines and sustained notes which stretch the fabric of the melody beyond recognition; and thirdly, a dense polyphony of shouting, electrically charged fragments based on the theme's original harmonic intervals. In all three performances of *Nonaah* there is a dramatically tense undercurrent which serves to emphasize the seeming inevitability of the chosen mood and mode of attack. Mitchell has stated that his next attempt will be an orchestral version, and this should reveal yet another of *Nonaah's* unique personalities. — *Art Lange*

PHIL NIMMONS

Nimmons 'N' Nine Plus Six

The Atlantic Suite

Sackville 2008

The Atlantic Suite: *Harbours/ Islands/ Tides/ Horizons; The Dorian Way*.

Recorded June 2 & 3, 1975.

Darryl Eaton, Herbie Spanier, Bram Smith, Mike Malone (trumpets); Dave McMurdo, Rick Stepton, Terry Lukiwski (trombones); John Capon (bass trombone); Phil Nimmons, Keith Jollimore, Art Ellefson, Tony Toth (reeds); Tom Szczesniak (piano); Andy Krehm (guitar); Dave Field (bass); Stan Perry (drums).

On this album Phil Nimmons emerges as a thoughtful and sensitive writer of modern jazz, whose four-part "Atlantic Suite" ranks among the most provocative big band efforts of recent times. Throughout, he reveals not only an enviable gift for linear construction and an ear for colorful sonorities, but an abiding respect for swing as well. No doubt, this lingering allegiance to jazz rhythms, most pointedly those of Count Basie, has a lot to do with the success of the Suite. His soloists are good, too. Prominently featured are the big-toned trumpet of Herbie Spanier, Art Ellefson's spirited Hawkins-rooted tenor, and the Carter-contoured alto of

Keith Jollimore. The latter, in particular, distinguishes himself by proving that long solos need not degenerate into yawning redundancies. On *Horizons*, his lengthy tour-de-force, never once does he fail to sustain interest. His sound is a deep, full one, rare among altomen at any time.

The only complaint about Nimmons' clarinet is that it is used too sparingly. He appears for the first time on *Islands*, the second movement of the Suite, and immediately establishes a mood of gentle relaxation. In terms of tonal quality, he most closely resembles Jimmy Giuffre and, by extension, Lester Young. It is a soft, warm, furry feeling that he generates, and one that is unquestionably sincere. Jazz needs him.

However, it should be mentioned that not even Nimmons is entirely free from harmful influences. Indeed, the only unseemly passages noted in his work at all are those marred by the intrusion of pseudo-rock effects. The drums, especially, would have greatly benefited had their initially crisp sound not been dampened to the point of obsequiousness. Moreover, I have yet to come across any band, large or small, that actually sounded better with an electric bass. Nimmons' is no exception.

— *Jack Sohmer*

PIANO

George Shearing
The Many Facets of George Shearing
MPS 0068.177

Masaru Imada and George Mraz
Alone Together
Three Blind Mice 5003

Clare Fischer
Alone Together
MPS 0068.178

The three pianists break no new ground on these recordings, but they ruminate over a nice combination of originals and standards in a mature, sensitive, and convincing manner. Although each has a masterful technique, none of them overindulges it. Technique and emotion are perfectly matched in each of their efforts.

Shearing's is the most rewarding of these albums to me, not because it is substantially superior to the others, but rather because this outing is such an improvement over what I have heard from him in recent years. He is here accompanied only by bassist Andrew Simpkins on five of the eleven tracks, and the solo and duet formats suit him well. He long ago exhausted the piano/vibes, small group sound with which he made his reputation in the '40s. The highlight of this album, that was recorded in Germany in 1976, is a pensive treatment of *Mack The Knife*. Louis Armstrong's raucous rendering and Ella Fitzgerald's swinging one are so much a part of our musical awareness that Shearing's approach is absolutely startling and refreshing. I hope this performance and album herald his return to sustained creative playing.

Practically as surprising as Shearing's album is Imada's duet recording with George Mraz. Playing four of his own compositions plus *Stella By Starlight* and the title tune, Imada establishes himself as a pianist of considerable facility who acquits himself well in the com-

pany of the established and challenging bassist Mraz. These performances lack the incredible precision and deep feeling of the Kenny Drew/NHOP duets, but they constitute improvised music of a very high order. Imada's earlier album for Three Blind Mice was good, but his playing on this 1977 date is the best I have heard from him.

Fischer's solo album from 1975 shares its title with Imada's, and he plays the same Brunner-Schwer Steinway as Shearing. After a rather obscure beginning in jazz, in recent years Fischer has acquired a substantial reputation as an arranger, pianist and composer (Shearing plays his *Pensativa*). Here he incorporates three of his own compositions (especially noteworthy is a rousing *Brunner-Schwerpunkt*) with *Yesterdays*, *The Touch Of Your Lips* and a lovely *Everything Happens To Me*. The Kern tune is the longest on the album (almost ten minutes), and Fischer changes mood throughout in an impressive rendering of this standard. There is an intimacy to this album that Fischer attributes to the surroundings in which the recording took place, but whatever the reason, this is a superlative solo piano performance.

These three pianists seem at first to have little in common, but each of these albums reveals an introspective — but never dull — pianist of considerable ability and appeal. Welcome back George Shearing.

— *Benjamin Franklin V*

FLIP PHILLIPS

Phillips Head
Choice CRS 1013

Spanish Eyes/Everything Happens To Me/Love Story/Fat Tessie's Ass/Nature Boy/Jeannie/Nancy/Makin' Whoopee/This Is All I Ask.

Flip Phillips (tenor saxophone, bass clarinet), Mickey Crane (piano), Milt Hinton (bass), Moushey Alexander (drums).
Recorded in New York, August 1975.

One of the most prolific and influential jazz tenormen of the forties and fifties, Flip Phillips recorded only once in the sixties and, with the exception of this choice item, only three times in the seventies. For those who haven't been keeping score, a few years ago Onyx came out with a 1963 quartet session recorded in Pompano Beach, Flip's home for the past twenty years; his only other recent appearances on record were as one of several star soloists — the 1971 Colorado Jazz Party (MPS-BASF), the 1972 Newport in New York set (Cobblestone), and the 1976 40th Anniversary Concert by Woody Herman (RCA). This comparatively scant representation on disc is all the more remarkable when one realizes that, far from showing any signs of diminishing powers, Flip's playing is actually better today than ever before.

Of all his attributes, Flip's sound is perhaps the most appealing. Feathery light yet deep and full, it ranges from a breathy, sensuous low register subtone to an exuberant, house-rocking shout. It is marked by a positive, penetrating core placed firmly in the center of the pitch, but its outer edges are furry and pliable. If comparisons are to be made, then one need look no further than to Flip's primary models Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster and Lester Young. From the varied approaches of these giants, all

of whom were close friends of his, Flip shaped a style that was at once both respectful of tradition yet unmistakably his own.

While the Hawkins harmonic paradigm is obviously at the base of Phillips' improvisatory method, Webster and Young each seem to exert more demonstrable effect on him, both collectively and separately. Some of Flip's pieces are overt tributes to his mentors. His conception of ballad playing, in particular, owes to no one else so much as to Webster; it is replete with all manner of that master's most revered characteristics — the musk-drenched sensuality, the Hemingwayesque synthesis of toughness and tenderness, and the mind-boggling, notation-defying subtlety of rhythmic placement.

On the set at hand, Phillips is joined by three veterans, only one of whom, Micky Crane, lacks current credits. This mainstream pianist, long a resident of the studios, was with Billy Butterfield for years and appeared on many of his records from the forties and fifties; he also recorded three sessions with Flip in 1949 and one in 1952. His jazz playing has undergone few changes since that period, but has remained as precise and considerate as ever. Not especially original or innovative, Crane is nevertheless an excellent supportive pianist and one to whom more flamboyant players should pay heed.

A further indication of Flip's discernment lies in his choice of material, the lovely Gordon Jenkins opus *This Is All I Ask* being a telling example of his taste. The interpretation here would do justice to Webster himself. Similarly expressive are Phillips' treatments of the other ballads with the seldom-played *Nancy* providing an especial treat. The romping blues *Fat Tessie's Ass* is based on those changes which Bird liked so much, and which are descended, oddly enough, from Morton's *Original Jelly Roll Blues*.

In addition to offering us some of the best recorded tenor of his career, Flip also demonstrates his artistry on the bass clarinet, an instrument to which he has been devoting himself increasingly these days. Few jazzmen, with the exception of Harry Carney and Eric Dolphy, have elicited as much warmth and sensitivity of tone from this horn as Flip; but as attractive as his playing of it is, it lacks the compelling thrust of his tenor work. Wisely, he limits its use to ballads.

A long overdue reminder of a fine jazzman's continuing worth, "Phillips Head" demands an encore — and preferably one before the eighties!

— *Jack Sohmer*

PRESERVATION HALL

New Orleans: Volume 1
Columbia PC 34549

Tiger Rag, Amen, Over In Gloryland, Good Blues, Bill Bailey (Won't You Please Come Home), Joe Avery, His Eye Is On The Sparrow, Memories, Panama.

While there is no dearth of albums featuring the elderly New Orleans Negro jazzmen who comprise the backbone of a typical Preservation Hall unit, mostly on various small, obscure, poorly-distributed labels, this Columbia disc is the first in some time, to my knowledge, to bear the "official" name of The Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Meanwhile, the Grim Reaper has claimed such irreplaceable stalwarts as

trombonist Jim Robinson (Frank Demond – white and in his 40's, for those who care – handles the slip horn on this session, competently but without much drive), so it is not too surprising that the survivors are not up to the standards PHJB fans have come to expect.

Clarinetist Willie Humphrey, the eldest hand on board, is consistently satisfying with his warm, woody tone; liquid, flowing lines; and carefully constructed solos (including his outing on *Panama*, an 8-chorus job that he starts in a whisper and ends in a wail). Banjoist Narvin Kimball, who should have been a little closer to the microphone, lays down light, foot-tapping rhythms, plus a few deft solos, notably a slow, feathery tremolo on *Memories*, an excellent number that effectively combines sentiment and roots. The gospelly *Eye* and the shuffling, boogieish *Avery* are the other two unqualified successes, showing fine cohesion and development.

The rest is uneven at best. Trumpeter Percy Humphrey's declamatory lead horn sometimes rides easy over a wide range but just as often sounds thin and tired. Pianist Sing Miller is OK in accompaniment or ensemble, but uninspired as a soloist. Who knows, maybe they and the others (Allen Jaffe, bass horn, and Cie Frazier, drums, complete the lineup) have gone through *Tiger*, *Bailey*, etc., too many times at too many concerts to work up much enthusiasm for this go-round.

As I said, there is no dearth of albums in this style, many outstanding, some immortal, and the majority (for my money) of an overall higher standard than this one. Without the magic Preservation Hall name, it's a weak entry.

– Tex Wyndham

JIMMY RANEY

The Fugue/ New Signal/ How Deep Is The Ocean/ The Way You Look Tonight/ Wait Till You See Her/ Smoke Gets In Your Eyes/ Blues Variations.

Strictly speaking, this album is solo only on two tracks; on the others Raney overdubs himself, occasionally using the deeper pitched F guitar as support and sometimes soloing on it. It's really a conversation album.

If I were a guitar teacher this would be among the principal instruction books, not only for the music itself, but for the sense of the man that is revealed. Within his generally restrained style, Raney plays everything from free pieces (*New Signal*) to very formal pieces like *The Fugue*, and they are all dense, meticulous and feelingful. Raney has also written the liners for the album, so you get a brief bonus tour through the music – modest and straightforward in approach. Raney comes across as a warm person, and intensely concerned about his music.

The album will repay close listening because of the care given not only to each individual piece but to the balance of the whole project. I don't recommend listening to it on earphones, though, as the track noise is quite noticeable. The only other qualification I have is that I'd rather hear Raney and someone else conversing than Raney and himself – a reservation I'd have about anyone, I think. This format has allowed him to realize some important musical ideas by himself, but I miss those possibilities which only manifest themselves with another player.

– Joel Ray

Live in Tokyo Xanadu 132

In April of 1976 producer Don Schlitten took a group of musicians on a tour of Japan. A number of recordings were made while there of which this is one. As simply put as possible, this is a beautiful album! Jimmy Raney is a masterful guitar player. He doesn't blast you out of the room with electronics nor does he attempt to dazzle you with amazing virtuoso displays. What he does instead is to combine the lovely sound he gets from his instrument with a marvelous technical ability plus an abundance of tasteful musicianship. The result is as fine a jazz guitar record as you are likely to find anywhere.

The powerful walking bass of Sam Jones and the sparkling drum work of Leroy Williams add greatly to the total excellence to be found here. Pay special attention to drummer Williams on *Autumn Leaves* where he revives what I thought was becoming the lost art of playing the brushes.

The eight tunes played are all jazz standards and there is not a weak one in the bunch. *Stella By Starlight* is the one solo performance of the album and a better rendition will be hard to come by.

In summation, John McLaughlin and George Benson may be better known and they certainly sell more records, but if you want to hear how jazz guitar sounds at its best then buy a copy of this record. The fact is you NEED to have it!

– Peter S. Friedman

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REISSUES

YUSEF LATEEF: GONG (Savoy 2226) repackages Savoy 12117, 12120 and one selection (*Sram*) from 12123. This is Lateef's working band from 1957 with Wilbur Harden, Hugh Lawson, Ernie Farrow and Oliver Jackson. The music, apart from a few mystical diversions into derivative Arabic dialects, is conventional 1950s style jazz. Lateef was a forceful soloist on tenor saxophone and an innovative voice on flute. Hugh Lawson shows us some of the graceful fluency so much a part of Tommy Flanagan and Barry Harris' styles (both were also part of the Detroit jazz scene at that time) while Wilbur Harden is a pleasing soloist. In the end though, the music doesn't rise above the vernacular.

DONALD BYRD/JOHN JENKINS (Savoy 1114) offers more music from Detroit in this reissue of Savoy 12202. As a bonus there is a previously unissued version of *Darn That Dream* which is a feature for altoist John Jenkins. It turns out to be the most interesting selection and reminds us of the talents of this "legend" of the jazz world. After a brief foray into the limelight in the late 1950s he disappeared into oblivion. The tunes are opened up for the soloists – Donald Byrd, Curtis Fuller and Tommy Flanagan are all featured. Doug Watkins and Art Taylor anchor the rhythm section in a recording whose importance is chiefly

for the tantalising look at John Jenkins.

MILT JACKSON: OPUS DE JAZZ (Savoy 1116) restores to the catalogue one of the most celebrated LPs of the 1950s. Frank Wess, Hank Jones, Eddie Jones and Kenny Clarke join Jackson in the execution of four extended pieces – three versions of the blues and a ballad treatment of *You Leave Me Breathless*. Frank Wess' flute solos made a big impact – helping popularise the use of the flute as a jazz instrument. Everything is very straightahead with Jackson's solos still among his most compelling recorded efforts. Today's listeners might find the rhythm section too laid back but they flow with effortless grace.

JOHN COLTRANE/WILBUR HARDEN: GOLD COAST (Savoy 1115) completes the reissue of material from the May 13 and June 29, 1958 sessions. *Tanganika Strut* and *Gold Coast* were not on Savoy 1110 and this LP is completed with previously unissued alternates of *Dial Africa* and *B.J.* The commercial possibilities of issuing anything by Coltrane must have been the principal factor in this reissue for the music is hardly exceptional. In fact it was originally issued under Harden's name. There are much better examples available of Coltrane's music from this period.

THE BEBOP BOYS (Savoy 2225) is an idiomatically mixed bag of 1940s jazz. Side one has far and away the best music. The eight tracks are from a Kenny Dorham/Sonny Stitt/Bud Powell date on August 23, 1946. All selections were previously on either Savoy 12011 or 12114. *For Hecklers Only*, *Smoke Hollow Jump*, *Boppin' The Blues* and *Moody Speaks* were on Savoy 12110. They feature Ray Brown (as leader) with Dizzy, Dave Burns, John Brown and James Moody. The balance of the set, new to LP, is little more than a set of dated curios. There are four titles by Gil Fuller's short-lived 1949 band (*Tropicana, Blues To A Debutante, The Scene Changes, Mean To Me*), a whole side of vocals by Kenny Hagood (*Baby I'm Coming Home, The Way You Look Tonight*), Babs Gonzales (*Ornithology, Get Out Of That Bed*) and Eddie Jefferson (*Body And Soul, The Birdland Story, I Got The Blues, Honeysuckle Rose*) and eight selections by Leo Parker groups which are shaded towards the R&B market. The first four selections also feature Joe Newman, Dexter Gordon and J.J. Johnson (*Wee Dot, Solitude, Lion Roars, On The House*) with Newman and Charlie Rouse on the final cuts (*Dinky, Leo's Bells, Sweet Talkin' Leo, Swinging For Love*). Recommended only to Bebop Completists.

GEORGE SHEARING: SO RARE (Savoy 1117) captures the pianist in transition. Side one (reissued from Savoy 12016) contains trio recordings from February and December 1947 which show clearly his allegiance to Teddy Wilson and Earl Hines as well as Milt Buckner's locked hands technique (*Buccaneer's Bounce*) which became an integral part of Shearing's concept. Side two (from Savoy 12093) was made nine days prior to Shearing's first MGM recording date where he recorded *September In The Rain* and guaranteed for himself a successful musical career in the U.S. According to Leonard Feather, the guitar, piano, vibes lineup was an accident due to Buddy DeFranco's inability to free himself from his recording commitments with Capitol. In any event these eight selections made originally for Discovery serve as a prelude to the MGM era. Shearing's music – lightweight, airy and melodic – is all

there in embryonic form at this session and is only marred by the two tracks featuring him on accordion.

CHARLIE PARKER: THE VERY BEST OF BIRD (Warner 3198) is a two-LP compilation of Dial masters — all of which have been reissued many times. The America 3-LP set has all the Dial 78s but the sound quality here (except for *Cool Blues* and *Drifting On A Reed*) is far superior. All this material (plus the alternates) has been available on Spotlite for many years and is now also available in a limited edition box from Warner. The music, of course, is magnificent and hopefully this reissue will introduce Parker's music to a new generation.

PEE WEE RUSSELL: THE INDIVIDUALISM OF (Savoy 2228) is hardly an apt title for this predictable collection of Condon style dixieland recorded live at Storyville (Boston) in 1952. Issued before on Savoy 12034/12041 (and in numerous other compilations) this is very much the kind of music which finally drove both Pee Wee Russell and Ruby Braff into the somewhat dangerous clutches of Marshall Brown. There is no room for thought, reflection or subtlety in "jammed" dixieland music. Only in the solos can there be room for expression — and both Braff and Russell occasionally offer us a few moments of tension-free musical thought. Trombonist Eph Resnick is predictable while pianist Red Richards runs through the routines without saying very much (he can be heard to much better advantage elsewhere). Choosing this material for reissue could only be because of Russell's reputation — not on the qualities of the music contained in the grooves.

RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK: The Vibration Continues (Atlantic 2-1003) is a collection culled from various Atlantic LPs showcasing various facets of Kirk's musical personality. They range from the sublime to the ridiculous, which is in keeping with his viewpoint on life. Kirk's reputation was founded on his considerable talents as a jazz soloist through the excellent Mercury LPs as well as the Limelight album with Jaki Byard, Richard Davis and Elvin Jones. This collection focuses on his later, broader-based musical ideals — ideals which attracted a much wider audience than he experienced working the narrower field of jazz. I suspect, though, that most readers of this magazine prefer Kirk's straightahead approach — as in his collaboration with Jaki Byard, Richard Davis and Alan Dawson on Prestige 7615.

TEDDY WILSON: ALL STAR SESSIONS VOLUME ONE (Musicraft 502) contains music which, for the most part, has been reissued before on a wild assortment of supermarket labels as well as by MGM. However it is important to have this music assembled in a coherent logical manner. Side one contains all the music from December 18, 1944 and January 15, 1945. Charlie Shavers and Red Norvo share the spotlight with Teddy and, as a bonus, there are two attractive vocals from Maxine Sullivan (*Everytime We Say Goodbye, This Heart Of Mine*). Side two is even better. Buck Clayton and Ben Webster lend their talents to two versions each of *If Dreams Come True, I Can't Get Started and Stompin' At The Savoy* as well as a definitive excursion into the idiom in *Blues Too*. Classic performances from a rich period of the music. The transfers and packaging are excellent — as you would expect in a Jerry Valburn production.

— John Norris

The JAZZ and BLUES CENTRE

As this is our 20th year of operation, and seems like a time for celebration, we have decided to relocate our record store and offices. As of November 1, 1978, our new premises are at 337 KING STREET WEST, in downtown Toronto. Our business hours for Toronto residents and visitors to our city are:

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As always, we will carry an extensive stock of domestic and imported records. We also have hundreds of jazz books, discographies and magazines. For the first four days (November 1st to 4th), we will have a "Dollar-Off-Of-Every-Record" Sale, to introduce our new store to you. See you then.

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"Music in Sweden 3 - Jazz" " 1131
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DAVE MCKENNA
"Dave 'Fingers' McKenna" " 175
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"The Journey" " 187
DICK HYMAN
"A Child Is Born" " 198
DAVE MCKENNA
"McKENNA" " 202
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"Tring-A-Ling" " 1016
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"Gentle Rain" " 1020
SAM RIVERS/JAMES NEWTON
"Flutes!" Circle Records RD 7677/7
Altena/Bailey/Day/Honsinger/Horsthuis/Waiswiz
"K'Ploeng" Claxon 78.2
VARIOUS ARTISTS
"Montreux Summit, vol. 2" Columbia PG 35090
Gordon Beck/Ron Mathewson/Daniel Humair
"Jazz Trio" Dire FO 341
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DOLLAR BRAND, others...
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AROUND THE WORLD AROUND THE..

CANADA

The declining dollar has sent prices escalating and imported records are rapidly approaching Japanese/European levels. Counteracting this depressing situation is a Fall lineup of distinctive musical events in Toronto. By the time you read this Anthony Braxton's solo concert at York University and Sun Ra's Horseshoe Tavern appearance will be history but upcoming are the Evan Parker and James Newton concerts at The Music Gallery as well as Randy Weston's first Toronto appearance at Town Hall (October 30) and the Art Ensemble of Chicago at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre the following night (31). On November 27 the Goethe Institute is presenting Albert Mangelsdorff in Toronto - just where he will be performing is not yet certain.

Imperial Oil sponsored three concerts at the Art Gallery in August with the popular groups of Guido Basso, Moe Koffman and Peter Appleyard. Montreal's Rising Sun is still the front runner of jazz clubs in Canada. In September they presented Clifton Chenier, Milt Jackson, Anthony Braxton and Phil Woods.

In mid-August the Merce Cunningham Dance Company performed for three nights at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, accompanied by John Cage, David Tudor and others playing their own compositions.

The Imperial Public Library and Tavern, 54 Dundas Street East (364-1297) is a very comfortable bar with the music of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday and many others on the jukebox.... Eddie Cleanhead Vinson played at Bourbon Street September 4-17 with a rhythm section of Wray Downes on piano, Dave Young on bass and Jerry Fuller on drums.... Maury Coles, Lloyd Garber and Stuart Broomer performed solo, in duets and as a trio at The Music Gallery September 9.

Radio Cinq (102.3 FM) points out that they, too, broadcast jazz in Montreal. There's an hour Monday to Friday at 2:30 p.m. and another hour on Saturday mornings at 9 a.m.

Appearing in Vancouver this fall and winter will be Muhal Richard Abrams and Oliver Lake, October 1; Friesen-Stowell Oct. 12; Sam Rivers with Joe Daley, Dave Holland and Thurman Barker Oct. 22 & 23; Lee Konitz solo Nov. 16; Evan Parker and the Rova Saxophone Quartet Nov. 5; Cecil Taylor solo Nov. 27; Roscoe Mitchell solo Dec. 14, and Jeanne Lee Jan. 14.

Both Evan Parker and James Newton will be appearing in Peterborough (Art Space) and Kingston (St. Lawrence College) as well as Toronto and Ottawa. The Phil Nimmons band will be appearing at Ottawa's National Arts Centre (October 13) with featured guests Big Miller and Kathryn Moses. The band will also be in Kingston for two days on the same road trip.

— compiled by John Norris

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — The usual summer vacation doldrums were enlivened by the beginning of a weekly music policy at the city's new jazz club, "The Earle". The Earle's new owners took over a seedy downtown hotel which closed in 1971 and converted its coal cellars into a sumptuous restaurant/club with excellent

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Saturday, November 25
"KERPLUNK" by the Air Raid Collective

acoustics (the other four stories will eventually house apartments).

The weekly music policy began in late May with local drummer Danny Spencer's quartet. Dexter Gordon inaugurated a regular series of Monday night "Special Performances" with an explosive one-nighter on June 5. Sonny Stitt cooked later in a month which also featured organish Lyman Woodard and Sam Sanders.

On July 24 Gary Burton's new quartet debuted before a full house at The Earle. It's a truism that new blood can revitalize a conception which is going stale, but the effect of replacing Burton's usual guitarist with a young Japanese trumpeter with the unlikely name of Tiger Okoshi has actually been to change that conception. Burton's music had been characterized by a thick background resulting from two accompanying instruments (guitar and vibes) in action simultaneously. The single lines of Okoshi's amplified trumpet seem to have given both Burton and bassist Steve Swallow refreshing freedom to move without restrictions, and the result was some unusually fiery playing by the quartet, powered by drummer Bob Moses.

The following night we went back to the Earle to hear a re-scheduled performance by the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra. The standard criticism is that on the road, away from their Monday night New York Village Vanguard appearances, you hear a much lesser band, one whose ranks contain a lot of ringers. That criticism was valid here; only the leaders, pianist Harold Danko and altoist Jerry Dodgion were familiar faces. And Jones, easily head and shoulders above the other trumpet soloists, nevertheless only contributed one solo to the set we caught.

Whatever their individual solo abilities, however, the members of the band were still able to execute the charts in that casually precise way that marks great jazz bands. Mel Lewis kept time with the effortless drive characteristic of the band — his drumming is central to the orchestra's sound and he deserves his co-leader billing. Third altoist Dick Oakes soloed in an attractively raw style, and tenorist Richie Perry played a lacquer-less hock shop refugee with convincing echoes of Coltrane. The charts are all good — *Love Theme From The Groove Merchant*, with impromptu choreography by the trumpets, is even fun — so the whole was far from a total loss.

A few days earlier, on July 21, Eclipse presented its one major summer concert, a

pairing of Betty Carter and her trio with the (unrelated) Ron Carter and his quartet. The concert coincided with the annual Ann Arbor Art Fair, as well as with one of the hottest days of the summer. As Hill Auditorium evidently predates air conditioning, the result was a little like an evening to sweat (or suffocate) by.

Betty Carter has something of a cult following, and like most singers who inspire that sort of adulation, her approach is extremely personal and stylized. It's also quite good — I enjoyed just about all of the performance. Her trio — John Hicks, piano; Ratsco Harris, bass; and Clifford Barbaro, drums — opened with something in 12/8 which became a fast minor blues, giving Hicks room for his Tyner-influenced chops to warm and showing that Harris can solo at any tempo.

Ms. Carter's non-stop set included only a few songs I recognized (*Trolley Song, But Beautiful*). Her ballads are breathless and agonized, her faster things employ slurs and flurries that are strongly horn-like. Her gestures and facial expressions are a little mannered, but her voice is warm and husky, her sense of pitch accurate. Although some of the charts are head arrangements (a tuneless modal ride on which she scattered like a saxophonist), the other arrangements are most interesting. Only in the closing band introduction, an endless free form extemporization on the words "movin' on", did I feel she was having more fun than we were, but the rest of the set more than made up for this.

Ron Carter, I've always felt, is a better accompanist than soloist. I'm not sure that his performance with Kenny Barron, piano; Buster Williams, bass and Ben Riley on drums changed that estimation much, but it did show that he's learned how to function as a leader. He only played his piccolo bass - sort of a cello strung in fourths - but it sounded better in this context than I would have anticipated.

The quartet opened with Miles Davis' *All Blues*, taken a little slower than the original but with an ocean-wave-like pulse. Carter plucked and bowed his dwarf instrument with interesting textures; Barron showed his command in a fine solo. Williams also soloed, showing himself to be at least Carter's equal. But there's no sense of competition here, and in this and the other charts there were string duet passages that made one imagine four hands controlled by one mind.

The band has an unusual repertoire — *Three Little Words*, in the medium tempo which is the band's upper limit, a long Latin waltz called *Sheila's Song*, Monk's *Epistrophy*, which works quite well on the small bass, and another Latin original. The band members all dressed in three-piece suits, but the music seemed unaffected even though they must have felt like sausages on a grill.

Eclipse's productions have had a negative effect on the local music scene, and as a result Eclipse put on a number of free concerts with local groups this summer (co-sponsored by the Musicians' Union Trust Fund and Ann Arbor Tomorrow). We caught the first, an excellent Friday afternoon concert by the Ron Brooks-Dave Kozal big band at Liberty Plaza, which brought a nice crowd to hear good charts by a "small big band" (12 pieces). There were several other such concerts, including almost continu-



photograph of Albert Mangelsdorff by Bill Smith

ous music during the Art Fair. After we go to press Eclipse will try to outdo itself with a five-concert Jazz Festival September 21-24, featuring a wide range of performers.

In Detroit the music scene is active as usual. Name performers continue to frequent Baker's Keyboard Lounge, with Leon Thomas and Woody Shaw scheduled in September. Dummy George's has been offering top national and local talent — vocalist Ursula Walker and Buddy Budson's trio were there in early September. The Ponchartrain Hotel's P'Jazz series brought jazz to downtown Detroit on Mondays and Wednesdays this summer, and a similar series (mostly jazz) ran in the new Renaissance Center on Tuesdays. And on successive Thursdays all summer people like Thad Jones, Hank Jones, Barry Harris and Kenny Burrell have joined local players in concert at the Detroit Institute of Arts' medieval Kresge Court — a series so successful it's been extended through this September, with a new season to start next March. — David Wild

NEW YORK — Studio Rivbea's Early (July 1-6) and Mid-Summer (August 18&19, 25&26) Festivals showcased several important musicians of the more exploratory sounds. Don Pullen's performance (Pullen, piano; Chico Freeman, soprano and tenor saxophones; Dave Holland, bass; Bobby Battle, drums) on July 2 was magnificent. The pianist created an engrossing music that was alternately lyrical and energizing. During one composition, Pullen produced incredible waves of sound, punctuated by giant clusters. He also engaged in a demonic dialogue with Freeman, his rich and intricate textures conversing with his colleague's powerful saxophone lines.

Jimmy Lyons' Quartet (Lyons, alto saxophone; Karen Borca, bassoon; Hayes Burnett, bass; Paul Murphy, drums) played at Rivbea on July 18. The saxophonist — heard mostly with Cecil Taylor — made the most of this rare opportunity to publicly perform his own compositions. Lyons' elastic lines wove in and out of the music's rhythm; their self-propelling quality created an energy that could be felt as well as heard. Lightning runs jumped out of the saxophone, each one answering the previous statement and introducing new ideas for exploration.

The Newport Jazz Festival presented pianists Mary Lou Williams, Bill Evans, and McCoy Tyner in solo performances (plus guitarists Larry Coryell and Philip Catherine in duet) at Carnegie Hall on June 28. Tyner is a consummate musician who has influenced countless pianists. Unfortunately in this performance, his presentation suffered from a sameness in volume, diluting the music's effectiveness.

Evans, on the other hand, employed a greater variety of material and sounds. His music was the opposite of Tyner's in its delicacy, yet it had strength and passion due to Evans' imaginative harmonic voicings and great melodic gifts. Duke Ellington's *Reflections In D* demonstrated these attributes as well as the pianist's sensitive touch.

The Creative Music Studio presented Roscoe Mitchell on July 22 as one of the featured artists of its weekend festival of contemporary music (July 21-23). Mitchell is an uncommonly imaginative composer/saxophonist whose tightly organized music explores a large range of timbres and colors. In his atonal and pointillistic *Sketches For Piano And Saxophone*

Duet, Mitchell and pianist Marilyn Crispell created a powerful sound spectrum, with the saxophonist's short phrases supported by his partner's denser textures. Mitchell also conducted the Creative Music Studio Orchestra in his *Sketches For Orchestra*. The music's intricate palette of ever-changing colors was quite beautiful, and the ensemble met its challenges.

Warren Bernhardt performed solo at The Bottom Line on June 28 and 29. The pianist demonstrated a command of many styles that were all integrated into a general romantic/impressionistic approach. Still, Bernhardt was able to change moods between pieces and even within a composition. One tune, for example, began with resonant chords and rolling arpeggios, alternating between major and minor keys. Eventually, the music became funky as Bernhardt's solo piano successfully took on the role of an entire rhythm section.

The Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band made a rare New York appearance at the Village Gate on August 10 and 11. The ensemble's music was shaped by Toshiko's imaginative arrangements, her sensitive use of various combinations of woodwind instruments being especially noteworthy. There were also many solos — including contributions by alto saxophonist Dick Spencer and trombonists Jimmy Knepper and Bill Reichenbach — which were effectively framed by the entire ensemble. Tabackin was most impressive in a shakuhachi-sounding flute solo, as he bent various notes, produced quarter tones, and hummed into his instrument.

Abdullah (Ahmed Abdullah, trumpet; Frank Lowe, tenor saxophone; Billy Bang, violin; Jay Hoggard, vibes, Leonard Jones, bass; Rashid Sinan, drums) played at Ali's Alley from July 11 through 15. As a band leader, Abdullah draws from the past and present, creating a point of reference for the group's more exploratory musical excursions. He is also an engaging soloist with a strong, rounded sound that is forceful without being strident. Abdullah's long singing lines were effectively complemented by tenorist Lowe, whose short phrases, leaps, twists, slap tonguing, and strong sense of humor provided variety.

Briefs: The Phil Woods Quartet (Woods, alto saxophone; Mike Melillo, piano; Steve Gilmore, bass; Bill Goodwin, drums) played at Storytowne the last two weekends in June. The leader's strong, bop-based solos were smoothly played, yet still projected a strong emotional involvement.

Harmony Books has published Brian Case and Stan Britt's "The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Jazz". The biographical listings include references to key recordings by the various musicians, illustrating their styles and contributions to jazz.... Impulse has initiated its "Dedication Series", featuring both previously released and unreleased material. The first six two-record sets include Sonny Criss/Kenny Dorham's "The Bopmasters", Cecil Taylor/Charles Tolliver/Grachan Moncur/Archie Shepp's "The New Breed", and Albert Ayler's "The Village Concerts".... New from Columbia is Adam Makowicz' solo recording "Adam Makowicz". The Polish pianist also appeared at Sweet Basil's from August 15-19. The possessor of a commanding technique, Makowicz was most impressive playing his own composition *Jig Saw Puzzle*. However, he sometimes failed to dig into the music enough, resulting in a pleasant, if one-dimensional performance....

New from Savoy is Gigi Gryce's "Signals", an



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"Abdul Wadud takes off on a stirring solo. The hum of the strings beneath Wadud's dancing bow.... intensifies, changes tone but never quality. The audience response is overpowering." – *Byron Robertson*

The Sacramento Bee

excellent album (with Hall Overton, Thelonious Monk etc.) by the once-active alto saxophonist. Other Savoy recordings include Booker Ervin's "Down In The Dumps" and Erroll Garner's "Yesterdays".... GRT's second installment of the Barnaby/Candid reissues include Don Ellis' "How Time Passes" and "The Jazz Life", an anthology featuring such musicians as Charles Mingus, Roy Eldridge, Eric Dolphy and Jo Jones.... Muse has released Joe Chambers/Larry Young's "Double Exposure", an excellent duet session featuring the former musician on keyboards and percussion, and the latter on keyboards. Also new from the company is Willis Jackson's "Bar Wars", a tasty tenor saxophone and organ combination.

Sunny Murray's "Apple Cores" – with Don Pullen, Frank Foster, Oliver Lake and others – and Bill Lewis/Khan Jamal's superb duet "The Rivers" (both on Philly Jazz) are available from New Music Distribution Service, 6 West 95th Street, New York, N.Y. 10025.

Galaxy has released Red Garland's "Red Alert" and "Crossings" – the pianist's first new recordings in many years, Cal Tjader's "Breathe Easy" and Tommy Flanagan's "Something Borrowed, Something Blue".... Zim Records (P.O. Box 158, Jericho, N.Y. 11753) has released pianist James Williams' "Flying Colors" and Howard McGhee's "Cookin' Time". The company also distributes Unique Records, including "Mingus In Stuttgart", a live recording with the bassist's 1964 sextet including Eric Dolphy, Clifford Jordan, etc.... Lucia Dlugoszewski's **Tender Theatre Night Nageire** from the album "Sonorous Explorations" (CRI) is a fascinating mix of timbres.... New from Pablo's live series is Johnny Hodges' "At The Sportpalast". Inner City has released Hannibal Marvin Peter-

son's "Hannibal In Antibes", Ray Mantilla's "Mantilla" and "The Revolutionary Ensemble", a superb but unfortunately the last recording by the now disbanded Revolutionary Ensemble.

"Ain't Misbehavin'" – an enjoyable musical tribute to Fats Waller – is playing on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre.... WKCR broadcast a 51-hour marathon (August 23-25) featuring the music of Rutherford Miley, Jimmy Harrison, Fats Navarro, Herbie Nichols, Herschel Evans, Dick Wilson, Jimmy Blanton and Frankie Teschemacher.... The Jazz Mobile has been active throughout New York this summer with performances by Cecil Payne, Duke Jordan, Dexter Gordon etc.... Marion Brown's "Solo Saxophone" - six unaccompanied melodic solos, recorded live at Environ in 1977 - is available from New Music Distribution or Sweet Earth Records (P.O. Box 821, Northampton, Ma. 01060).... Stash Records (P.O. Box 390, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215) has released "All Women Groups, Pianists: 1924-41" and "Swingtime to Modern" as part of their Women In Jazz series.

– *Clifford Jay Safane*

SAN FRANCISCO – There is a noticeable increase in music clubs here over the last couple of years. It is easy now to hear blues or jazz any night of the week. Joining Keystone Korner in presenting international acts now are several clubs, among them Cristo's, The Coffee Gallery and The Great American Music Hall. Pangaea has been displaying the modern-most of the music over the last three years, along with La Mamelle and Blind Lemon in Berkeley. The promising Mapeenzi club has had to narrow its vision because of lack of funds. The Metropolitan Arts Center at 1052 Geary Street, run by drummer Joe Sabella, has worked its way

out of some problems and is now restoring a full itinerary. La Salamandra in Berkeley has closed down. Check the weekly events calendars in the Sunday Chronicle/Examiner pink section, The Berkeley Barb and the Bay Guardian for most of your musical needs.

The annual San Francisco Blues Festival, now in its sixth year, is still a very remarkable event. Organized, promoted, produced and MC'd by the capable Tom Mazzolini. The week prior to the event was designated as Blues Week by San Francisco mayor George Moscone. Usually West Coast artists are represented with exponents from San Diego, the Fresno/Bakersfield Highway 99 circuit, Los Angeles, the SF Bay Area and the Pacific Northwest. This year Tom worked in groups from the east, central Texas and the Louisiana bayou country.

Starting the two-day affair off were the Hummel-Thompson Blues Ensemble, Charles Huff and Guitar Curtis. Huff is a vocalist and veteran of the Oakland blues scene. Curtis, from San Francisco, shows a versatility in playing the guitar in several positions, from holding it behind his head to sitting on it in a lateral position – a sound somewhere between Chuck Berry and the pull/twanged things of B.B. King. Omar Hakim Khayyam (aka Dave Alexander) came out for a grand piano solo comprised of a montage of quotes from the whole of the Black Music spectrum. Alexander can be caught during the week at either Major Ponds or the Kyomasa Nite Club.

Still very much on top of his thing, Lowell Fulson gave an unflinching performance. Directly from Los Angeles, the Rod Piazza band came off magnanimous. Using an echo on the P.A., fine arrangements and a tightly rehearsed band

the Gingerman left a strong impression. Sugar Pie DeSanto did a stimulating set backed by the Ed Kelley Trio, the house band at Mr. Majors in Oakland. Kelley is recording for Theresa Records and has an album coming out with Charlie Haden, Pharoah Sanders and Smiley Winters. (Pharoah is residing in Oakland now and Haden is with the Delancy St. Foundation here in SF).

Backed by the Rod Piazza band, Mississippi Smokie Wilson on his Fender guitar evoked archaic blues bottom excitement with knifing electric solos complemented by an equally gripping voice. Robert Lee Wilson, b. 1935 in Mississippi operates his own club, The Pioneer Club at 88th and Vermont in the Watts District of L.A., and can be heard to great advantage there every weekend. He also has two recent albums on Jules Bihari's Big Town label. Next Piazza brought out his mentor George Smith, who recited some striking chromatic harmonica pieces and then instigated an end-of-the-first-day jam session, including Smokie (proper spelling per R.L. Wilson), Kim Wilson (no relation) and the Piazza band.

The second day began with Isaac Scott from Seattle, a young guitarist and vocalist who has a new album out on Red Lightning. Louisiana Red (aka Iverson Minter) came as a real surprise, packing enough swing and intensity to easily qualify himself as an upcoming major figure in the blues. Mark Naftalin gave a solo piano set and later accompanied Phillip Walker and Lonesome Sundown. Phillip gave a super-charged performance and has a highly-recommended lp out on Joliet, "Someday You'll Have These Blues".

The Fabulous (as they are being billed) Thunderbirds from Austin, Texas gave a memorable set and Queen Ida and her Bon Ton Zydeco Band romped through some bayou numbers. Ida Guillory lives in Daly City and plays regularly for the creole population here in the Bay Area, travelling annually back to her beloved homeland on the bayou. Let's hope California proposition 13 doesn't get in the way of next year's production.

At 220 Montgomery Street, Suite 998 in SF is the Traditional Jazz Museum of San Francisco. Archives revolve around the thriving "traditional/dixieland" heritage here in SF that has been passed down through Lu Watters, Turk Murphy and Bob Scobey. Earthquake McGoon's is being torn down and the Turk Murphy Jazz Band is moving to a new location on Bay Street. In the band are Bob Helm, clarinet; Pete Clute, piano; Leon Oakley, cornet; Bill Carroll; tuba, Carl Lunsford, banjo and Turk on trombone. A hot line concerned with this form of the music is kept up by the NOJC of Northern California and the Hot Music Society of San Francisco at 415 398-NOJC. Also a monthly newsletter comes from these organizations, write NOJC, P.O. Box 1004, Tiburon, California 94920.

Julian Priester moved to San Francisco in 1973. Julian (aka Pepo) since then has worked with Eddie Henderson's group, formed and performed with Marine Intrusion (the group on "Love, Love", ECM) and recorded with Stanley Cowell. Presently he is involved in an octet led by the incomparable Johnny Coppolla at Cherry's, 3rd and Market in the city. This well-seasoned group consists of Johnny and Eddie Henderson on trumpets; Priester on trombone; Manny Boyd and Chuck Travis on saxophones; James Leary on bass; Larry Vuckovitch on piano and Eddie Marshall

on drums. Pepo's other concern comes in the form of a quartet with Joe Bonner on piano, Reggie Harvey on drums and Charles Thomas on bass.

At Pangaea in the Bernal Heights District on the night of a full moon John Gruntfest brought together a large ensemble; The Ritual Band, in this case The Full Moon Ritual Band for an evening of "primal music and Shamanism". The music; spontaneous and incidental with dancers, musicians and non-musicians alike. The proceedings began slowly with the natural flow of things, musicians putting their horns together, some exchanging conversation while others situated themselves. All manifestations within the walls of that building was music this night. Slowly the sounds assembled themselves into a blaring cohesion where the singular voice had no say. Where assorted tonalities convened into a thick total sound wall. It was during these sections that the physical power of John Gruntfest became apparent as he switched from conga to his alto saxophone and was actually able to rise above the fury to push the sound towards further directions. The continuous 2 1/2 hour projectile didn't always carry on at such a white heat level. Relenting to the ebb and flow of energy there were passing moments where distinguishable interaction took place. Notables were trombonist Loren Means and tenor saxophonist Henry Kuntz among the 20-plus improvisers.

The following evening, August 19, Gruntfest gave a solo concert playing conga, clarinets and alto saxophone. John has two albums on Independent Records available from him at P.O. Box 233, Fairfax, California 94930. They were recorded live at Pangaea April 28 & 29, 1977 with Joseph Sabella, traps and percussion; Weldon McCarty, soprano sax, flute and percussion and Richard Festinger, guitar and percussion. Other presentations during August at Pangaea were Museq Transcendprovisation from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Ed Drake solo, The Rainbow Quartet and the Soup Ensemble. Pangaea, 517 Cortland, S.F. 94110.

September 4 saw the departure of the Charles Moffett Family who have lived in Oakland for roughly eight years and are now going to ply their trade in New York. We caught them in their last couple of engagements and were surprised to see and hear such super-charged and legitimate music coming from so young a band. Charles Senior no longer plays with them but takes deep pride in managing them. When asked why he no longer plays he replies, "I do, through them." The oldest son Mondre, 22, also no longer plays trumpet with them so the band is a trio with vocalist: Charles Junior, 19, on saxophones; Codaryl, 16, on drums; Charnette, 11, on upright and electric bass; and Charisse, 14, on vocals. They may be reached at Point Woods No. 117, Albany, N.Y. 12201. Phone (518) 456-6120.

Fort Mason, one of the old fortifications overlooking the bay from SF has been having regular concerts, some of which included a performance over two days with five guitar players: Henry Kaiser, Chris Muir, Davey Williams, Chip Handy and Robbie Yolai. John Oswald from Toronto gave a performance utilizing tapes, radios and saxophone at La Mamelle August 19. And at the Blind Lemon August 25, a concert entitled "John Oswald and Friends" which included Henry Kaiser, and Jim French on soprano saxophone. Jules Broussard is another saxophone player that has

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been making waves locally. Frank Kofsky recently lauded him in the Chronicle. He may be caught at the Sweetwater in Mill Valley on the weekends. The Russian River Jazz Festival September 23 and 24 will include Ornette Coleman accompanied by Charlie Haden. In the city Haden works with local pianist Art Lande. Activities lately at Keystone Korner have included Jaki Byard, Stan Getz, Phil Woods, John Handy and upcoming, Johnny Griffin and Arnette Cobb. The Jazz Hotline in the Bay Area - 521-93FM. Catch Bari Scott's radio show on KPFA "The Secret's Out" Friday evenings from 7 to 11. Also Henry Peters' show on KPFA.

I have a few people I would like to mention individually. Some artists I believe you'll be hearing more about in the years to come.

George Sams plays trumpet, flugelhorn and sometimes mellophone. He is from St. Louis, born 1948, and has been living in San Francisco since 1973. Initially began in music with a drum and bugle corps which included Charles Bobo Shaw. Grew up with Gregory Davis (Miles' son),

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Leonard Smith, Shaw and later befriended Floyd Laffore, Oliver Lake, Julius Hemphill and the whole Black Artists Group. During the sixties he worked with the Oliver Lake Quartet and studied under Lester Bowie. During 1973 he worked with Andrew Hill. In the Bay Area he has been displaying his own brand of the Black music that came out of the mid-west in the late 1960s. Brujeria (1974-75) and The Sound Clinic (1975-77) have been his finest forums, revolving around Lewis Jordan and Andre St. James, who display professional facility, technical ability and a broad concept reflecting their knowledge of the whole spectrum of Black Music. Other musicians from these aggregations include Bruce Ackley, Bill Wilkes, Carleton Hoffman, Joe McKinley and Richard "Zyk" Wood. Presently he is recording and performing with poet Geraldine Kudaka and last November added Eugene Chadbourne to a recording session he assembled with Jordan, Ackley and St. James. Very nice stuff. Although he has hours of readily pressable material he is without a record. Sensing a form of prostitution in the recording industry has left him leery of jumping into that end of the business, preferring a more pure priority of what his needs are from the music itself. A very

objective and thoughtful intellect. He teaches music and Jazz history in the San Francisco public schools.

Lewis Jordan, born 1946 in San Francisco, grew up in Chicago and returned to the Bay Area in 1968. Lewis readily recalls some of the earliest AACM activities, groups led by Braxton, Lester Bowie, Roscoe Mitchell and Richard Abrams. Switching from guitar to alto saxophone in 1966 he cites Albert Ayler (although his own approach is different) along with the other mid-western activities as seminal influences. In the early 1970s he was in the Charles Tyler workshop which included David Murray and Butch Morris. Since 1973 he has been closely associated with George Sams in Brujeria and The Sound Clinic. A commanding technician and performer who is largely self-taught, he also presents his material under the banner Music At Large, works in a sextet with Ray Collins and Paul Yamazaki, reeds; Gordy Watanabe, guitars; Mark Izu, bass; and Kenny Endo, drums - and has a radio show on KPOO 89.5, Fridays 1-3 pm.

Andre St. James was raised in the Bay Area. His bass playing has been a vital asset to local musicians from "mainstream" to the freer musics. Currently he is recording with Sams, Jordan and Ackley and touring with the Gregory James Quartet who have just released a record on Inner City, "Alicia".

Bruce Ackley is now involved with a saxophone quartet called Rova with Jon Raskin and Andrew Voight and can be caught around the area. For information just call Bruce at Aquarius Records on Castro Street in SF.

Idris Ackamoor, a saxophonist who studied with Cecil Taylor at Antioch College and leader of the group Pyramid, is involved with an artists' interests house called Makin' It By The Bay. Artists involved in this organization can be heard in interviews every other Monday afternoon at 2 on Rob Singleton's KRE 103 radio show. Ackamoor recently did a jazz workshop for "Youth and young adults" in Oakland with Julie Homi, Rasul Siddik, John Otis, Wilbur Morris, Baba Duru and Muhammad Tsfofotsom Kaal.

The Bay Area is loaded with many musicians with redeeming qualities. Many mentioned in this column warrant further investigation and many more are still in the woodwork.

— Mark Weber

WASHINGTON — Relief from the hot, muggy air was provided by the fresh musical breezes of Betty Carter, Dexter Gordon, McCoy Tyner, Ahmad Jamal, Sonny Fortune and the big bands of George Russell and Thad Jones/Mel Lewis this summer. Courtesy of the National Park Service's "Summer In The Parks", they took their music directly to the people in a highly popular free outdoor concert series.

On another level, the upsurge in "the music" was evidenced in D.C. at the First Annual White House Jazz Festival. President Carter truly enjoyed hearing representatives of the tradition from Eubie Blake to Cecil Taylor, whose electrifying solo performance had the president running after him to express his awe. Mary Lou Williams' solo piano presentation was another highlight. She blended the rhythms of ragtime, stride, bop, and "out" forms into a moving history of black music that ended with a blue *Somewhere Over The Rainbow*. The White House festival closed with Mr. Carter himself on vocals for an unbelievable *Salt Peanuts* with Dizzy Gillespie and

Max Roach, who provided the President with the appropriate cues.

Already this official recognition in this institution-minded city has raised the public enthusiasm for the music. How solid this new interest is will be tested by an ambitious concert series this fall at the beautiful Corcoran Art Gallery, one block from the White House. D.C. Space is sponsoring major concerts there by the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Julius Hemphill and Cecil Taylor that are simply too large in scope to be held in their loft. The Art Ensemble will perform at the Corcoran on October 5, with solo and duet performances and workshops by members of the Ensemble to be held back at D.C. Space during the week of October 2-7. Julius Hemphill will get an opportunity on November 2 to realize a "musical theatre" or "audiodrama" concept that's been growing in his imagination for years. Cecil Taylor will conclude the fall series with solo and quartet performances on December 7 and 8. Perhaps President Carter will make this one.

The loft at D.C. Space will also be vibrating this fall with concerts by Byron Morris and Unity on October 13 and 14; Ken McIntyre's new trio with Hakim Jami (bass) and Beaver Harris (drums) on October 20 and 21; and solo performances by Abdul Wadud November 1, John Malachi November 11 and 12, and Marion Brown November 24 and 25. John Malachi was the arranger/pianist with the great Billy Eckstine big band that presented Charlie Parker, Fats Navarro, Dexter Gordon, etc. He now lives in D.C. and has been working recently at the new Jimmy McPhail's in Northeast Washington.

The pace at D.C. Space slowed this summer, but there were still fine concerts by Jaki Byard, Sam Rivers and Dave Holland, Chico Freeman, Anthony Braxton and Ray Anderson, and the Composers Workshop Ensemble led by Warren Smith. The latter was especially interesting as it brought a powerful nine-piece band into a loft where solo and duet performances have been the staple, with an occasional quartet treat. At an afternoon workshop, Warren Smith outlined his large ensemble concept. He likes to keep the arrangements loose and simple, allowing for each musician to add his full energy and creativity to a composition. What prevents this from becoming a directionless cacophony? The answer is the common understanding of the ensemble members, who have played with each other a long time, and the powerful playing/leading of Warren Smith. Whether on drums or marimba, Warren showed a great ability to lead and inspire the band. He has plenty of resources to work with in building each tune — a brass section led by trumpeter Norman Spiller, with the powerful, clear voices of Craig Harris on trombone and Emmett McDonald on bass trombone. On French horn, Vincent Chancey (like Craig Harris, recently with Sun Ra) could swing the brass or reed section, which featured Kalaparusha on tenor and Noel Scott on alto and baritone saxes. Boss Townsend on piano, David Moore on bass, and Omar Clay on percussion cannot be tagged a rhythm section, as the whole band played rhythmically. An ideal composition for this band was Horace Silver's *Ecaroh*, where the whole band cooked on percussion as the tune moved from an opening 4/4 to a 3/4 waltz. Added layers of sound and strong rhythmic accents created an exotic effect, a very African sound, maybe what Horace was getting at.

Warren Smith has also been playing with Sam Rivers' big band. However, a recent performance by the Sam Rivers Quartet at the Left Bank Jazz Society in Baltimore had Thurman Barker of the AACM on drums with Dave Holland (bass and cello) and Joe Daley (tuba and baritone). Barker's leaner sound seemed better suited for this small group. Warren Smith remains as a monstrous big band drummer and leader.

Summer ended in Washington with what has become a Labor Day tradition — the appearance of Kenny Burrell at his friend and fellow guitarist Bill Harris' Pigfoot. Those disappointed by the "cocktail jazz" sound of Kenny's recent albums would be glad to hear him in this setting, where he really gets down.

Finally, the first album recorded at D.C. Space has just been issued by, who else?, Andrew White. "Bionic Sax" features new versions of *Mr. P.C.*, *Red Top*, and an cappella *Giant Steps*. Andrew, who regards himself as primarily a repertory player, has also included versions of his own *Superfly* and *Andy's Alto Sax*. "Bionic Sax" along with Andrew's 32 (!) previous albums are available directly from him at: Andrew's Music, 4830 South Dakota Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017. — **Ken Steiner**

surprisingly, the tasteful drums of Tracey's 17-year-old son Clark. This group was followed by the Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek, playing together with Ralph Towner and John Abercrombie on guitars and a very indisposed Nana Vasconcelos on percussion. Unfortunately their music sounded stiff, forced and almost mechanical, radiating a cool beauty. There wasn't any fair interplay between these musicians, it was just like four guys fooling around and nothing important happened.

— **Friday, September 1** —

The concert on Friday evening showed a much better and livelier Nana Vasconcelos together with Don Cherry and Collin Walcott. Their appearance began on a very high level but was too soon reduced to triviality. Still they played nice music, but simply and without creativity. Don Cherry showed clearly that he is still a great trumpet-player, but that he is only one out of a hundred when he plays the piano or his more exotic instruments....

A real lesson in "Great Black Music" gave us the other trumpet star of the festival in the second half of the evening: Lester Bowie. Along with the fiery Arthur Blythe on alto saxophone, the beautiful and powerful Amina Claudine Myers on piano and vocals, the vital Malachi Favors on bass and the great Phillip Wilson on drums this famous new jazz-trumpeter overwhelmed the crowd with musical fireworks which culminated in a long story-telling trumpet-monologue. The Lester Bowie Quintet, one of the highpoints of the whole festival!

— **Saturday, September 2** —

In a restaurant-tent near the large wooden festival-hall the public had the opportunity to listen to a good and funny Swiss group called the Jerry Dental Kollekdoof Bänd, the musical part of a successful nonsense show. Their sometimes very Willem-Breuker-like playing gave a fine background for eating and drinking.

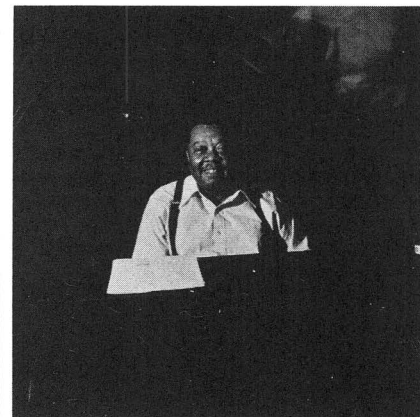
Because the previously announced Tomasz Stanko-Edvard Vesala duo broke up and therefore couldn't come to Willisau, Niklaus Troxler brought in one of the most important new jazz groups of the time, the trio Air with Henry Threadgill, flutes, saxophones and percussion, Fred Hopkins, bass and Steve McCall, drums. Their complex, highly advanced and creative playing showed the trio's perfect interplay and pleased the audience very much.

The next group played in a more swinging manner: the Albert Mangelsdorff All Star Quartet with Wolfgang Dauner, Eddie Gomez and Elvin Jones. Mangelsdorff blew his difficult multi-tone things on trombone, Gomez gave a solid harmonic and rhythmic background with his masterly bass-picking while Elvin Jones pushed the music along with strong drumming. Only Wolfgang Dauner seemed to be a bit out of the group and was not at his best all in all.

The evening began with the Norwegian Arild Anderson Quartet, including the Finnish tenor saxophonist Juhani Aaltonen. Although the band sounded quite nice the musicians performed rather dully and without much variety. They were followed by Johnny Dyani, well known for his work with Dollar Brand among others. The good-humored Dyani came on stage solo, performing on bass, piano and percussion. He played his bass at times almost like a guitar, besides singing little African chants! A real exercise in African music!

First class "Great Black Music" also came from Andrew Cyrille and Maono, which included Ted Daniel, David Ware and Nick De

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WILLISAU JAZZ FESTIVAL 1978

**Willisau, Switzerland
August 31 - September 3, 1978**

Willisau — a small, charming town near Luzern, besides jazz only remembered for their special fine biscuits with a hole in the middle... Willisau — also the best known Swizz jazz centre, since 1975 the site of the most interesting and creative jazz festival in Switzerland and one of the finest in Europe. This year the well-known graphic artist and producer of "Jazz in Willisau" Niklaus Troxler put together a very neat program, full of musical highlights. Because of this a big international audience found its way to Willisau.

— **Thursday, August 31** —

The British piano player Stan Tracey and his Octet opened the festival with a powerful, swinging, almost big band-like sound that gave plenty of room to the two competent saxophonists Art Themen and Don Weller. The strong rhythmic foundation of the band was laid down by the Monkish piano of the leader, the ingenious bass of Roy Babbington and,



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Gironamo. For more than two hours Maono and the gifted drummer Cyrille played in a very creative and energetic manner. The highlights of the group were David Ware with his wealth of ideas and his full tone on the tenor, and the many-layered, strong drums of the leader himself. The sole boring moments were unfortunately in Cyrille's fine and for a while interesting, but too long solo.

Sunday, September 3

The afternoon concert of the last day gave us the only impressive Scandinavian group playing at Willisau, the Jan Wallgren Quartet from Sweden. Their varied music inspired by Swedish folk tunes brought the talents of the leader on piano and Bengt Ernrud on trumpet to bear, but the absolute highpoint of the festival had to

wait until Max Roach hit the stage. Roach brought, together with Cecil Bridgewater, Billy Harper and Calvin Hill a fresh, advanced but classical modern jazz to the ear, full of power and solid ability. Roach's intelligent, stratified playing stimulated his musicians and led the heavy sound of this first-rate modern jazz group.

The evening started with the young tenor sax player, David Murray, joined by Andrew Cyrille on drums and Johnny Dyani on bass. Unfortunately the announced drummer, Sunny Murray, didn't show up, so Cyrille filled in — and did a marvelous job. The musical concept of this trio was quite aggressive and exacting, rather fascinating than heartstirring. Murray blew his horn as fiery as ever, while Dyani's

African bass playing and Cyrille's complex drumming gave a full, intense sound.

The great Willisau Jazz Festival 1978 ended with nice swinging, bluesy music from one of the masters of modern jazz, Horace Silver. As did all the musicians at Willisau, he and his young, unknown but very solid partners gave their best, playing Silver's first class compositions with a relaxed feeling. After four days of advanced but often very pretentious music, the Horace Silver Quintet sounded refreshing, and added one more highpoint to this festival's long string of highpoints! — *Markus di Francesco*

BRACKNELL

4th Bracknell Jazz Festival Bracknell, Berkshire, England July 8 & 9, 1978

During July 8 and 9 Bracknell was the scene of another summer jazz weekend in the Berkshire countryside. As in the past the festival was organized as an intimate affair with major concerts in a marquee, along with smaller performances in nearby bars and terraces. This festival is notable for its strong emphasis on "New Music".

Late Saturday afternoon Chris McGregor presented a 45-minute piano solo which rolled and flowed in and out of bluesy/gospel ruminations, Monkish counterpoints and thunderous currents a la Cecil Taylor. The depth of McGregor's sound is comparable to that of Dollar Brand, which is no mere coincidence, given that both are originally from South Africa.

Elton Dean's "Ninesense" followed with an hour of powerful rhythms and air raid blasts. Bassist Harry Miller and drummer Louis Moholo provided the rhythmic drive along with Keith Tippett's percussive chops and chord clusters on piano. Elton Dean pumped out some tense linear configurations with lyrical coloration. Trombonists Radu Malfatti and Nick Evans squeezed out some muted wails and farts, while Alan Skidmore (tenor and soprano sax), Harry Beckett and Mark Charig (trumpets) kept the air currents solid.

Saturday evening began with an hour of duets by John Surman (bass clarinet, baritone and soprano sax) and Stan Tracey (piano). The volume and poignancy of Surman's lines tended to dominate the duo, despite Tracey's percussive edge. Surman's technical command of harmonics and octave range was most impressive, yet his circular breathing lacked the sort of originality evident in the playing of someone like Evan Parker.

The trio of Trevor Watts (alto sax), John Stevens (drums) and Barry Guy (bass) followed with 45 minutes of frantic improvisations reminiscent of early Ornette Coleman. Watts blew racing scalar lines punctuated with high pitches, Guy scrambled furiously over his bass with unusual nimbleness and Stevens smashed out roaring rhythms.

It was ironic that the last set of the evening was left to none other than the new Ornette Coleman Sextet with Ron Shannon Jackson and Ornette Denardo Coleman on drums, Fred Williams on bass, James Ulmer and Bernard Nix on electric guitars and Ornette Coleman on alto sax, trumpet and violin. It goes without saying that Coleman is a giant jazz innovator and improviser, but I had some strong reservat-

photograph of Stan Tracey by Valerie Wilmer

ions about his new sound. The fact that the group did not start until well after 11 o'clock certainly did not help matters but fatigue aside, I honestly found Coleman's scalar lines one-dimensional. The guitars produced burdensome blocks of sound while the high-g geared drumming became monotonous. Without any apparent collective improvisation, the music sounded ferociously boring.

The real action during the second day took place in the recital rooms in a stately mansion away from the marquee. Here, solo piano concerts were given by Stan Tracey, Howard Riley, Chris McGregor, Keith Tippett and others. A late night tenor sax solo concert by David Murray was a real treat. He filled his funky, lullaby blues with full-bodied symphonic waves. To the delight of all, he created a sound spectrum ranging from a lustful fog horn to a high-pitched kazoo.

Unfortunately the Leroy Jenkins/Anthony Davis/Thurman Barker trio began their set close to midnight after many had left for home. I found myself thoroughly exhausted and in no condition to appreciate the music. After hearing their lovely dedication to Albert Ayler, my time ran out, and I had to hit the road back to London.

In closing, special mention should be made of Lol Coxhill, who acted as compere for the entire weekend. The notorious madman of British jazz performed countless versions of his infamous radio drama "Murder In The Air" and previewed his new work "The Assassination of Departmentality" between sets, along with some humorous soprano saxophone ditties. His folksy charm went a long way to making the occasion a friendly and relaxing affair. Perhaps next year he will have a set of his own.

— Peter Danson

NORTHSEA JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Hague, Holland
July 14-16, 1978

The Northsea Jazz Festival — the third annual jazz festival to take place in The Hague, Holland — this year was held during the third weekend of July, from Friday the 14th thru Sunday the 16th. This year's festival was the biggest and most successful so far. During the three festival days and nights more than 400 musicians, mostly Americans appearing with their regular bands, did more than 100 concerts that were attended by more than 20,000 people from all over Europe.

Well, from figures to the music — which is difficult, however. To mention everything and every name that impressed me would be impossible in this report, so the following is just a little about some of it....

I enjoyed Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen's bass playing with Oscar Peterson in a duo setting, Dizzy Gillespie's humour and vitality, Freddie Hubbard who proved that he is back in jazz, the lyrical, inventive improvisations of Stan Getz and Lee Konitz, Sonny Rollins' masterful playing, and the impeccable drumming of Max Roach. This was my first chance to hear a live performance by Roach's own quartet, and to me it was one of the festival highlights. Billy Harper, tenor saxophonist in the quartet, played beautifully and to these ears he was the most exciting of the "new" tenor players at the festival which also presented David Murray, Sam Rivers and Archie Shepp.

Alas, I missed Milt Jackson, Ornette Coleman, McCoy Tyner and Carla Bley, and I heard

only a little of Count Basie, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Paul Motian's fine trio with Charles Brackeen and Norwegian bassist Arild Andersen — and Danish alto player John Tchicai who performed with the Dutch Gilius' Haagsche Hofje. In addition to the big bands already mentioned, the festival also had Buddy Rich and Lionel Hampton. Gil Evans this time performed with an octet, an interesting band featuring Steve Lacy and Arthur Blythe among others.

Of the pianists it was nice to hear Joanne Brackeen with her own trio, Bill Evans with Mark Johnson and Philly Joe Jones, Joe Albany, Mary Lou Williams' solo and duo playing (with bassist Ronald Boykins) and Eubie Blake (now 95!) in a touching, witty and musical set.

A final tenorsax battle united Illinois Jacquet, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, David Newman, David Murray, Archie Shepp and Stan Getz and although the battle had its moments, the whole thing was more disorganized than musically satisfactory.

All that jazz - and much more - was played in the big Congress Centre of The Hague that also ran a jazz film festival, jazz video shows and from several stores sold jazz records and books.

The festival was a great cultural event, and staying at the hotel (Bel Air, next to the Congress Centre) with all the visiting musicians was a pleasure too. Among the festival guests, who did not perform, were Art Taylor who has a new book of interviews ("Notes & Tones") out and that irresistible Babs Gonzales whose book, "Movin' On Down De Line", John Norris reviewed in the 20th anniversary issue (No. 161) of *Coda*. If you don't know these books, do check up on them.

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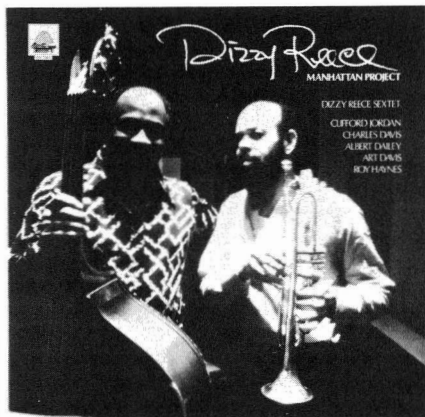
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Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the musicians, arrangers and friends for making this festival such a great experience. Also thanks to Ruth Ledergerber from Switzerland for being such a patient and beautiful companion.
— Roland Baggaens

LOWELL DAVIDSON

**Stone Soup Gallery, Boston
July 8, 1978**

Lowell Davidson is probably best remembered for a rather obscure recording that appeared during the mid-sixties on ESP. This recording, with bassist Gary Peacock and percussionist Milford Graves, prompted Ornette Coleman to champion the young pianist/composer as a potentially brilliant voice in the then-blossoming avant-garde.

On a recent Saturday evening the Stone Soup Gallery, located in the west end of Boston's Beacon Hill section, presented Davidson playing solo piano. It was indeed a musically rich and rewarding experience. Davidson plays infrequently now and when he does make an appearance in his adopted home (Boston) it is quite an event.

The concert was collectively entitled "Bits & Pieces" and found Davidson presenting several studies that were specifically geared to the peculiarities of the upright piano. He said during a brief introduction at the beginning of the program that "...I find this instrument fascinating, you can do so many different things with it..." Davidson, like many of the newer musicians, is concerned with many diverse disciplines and their relationships to musical phenomena. His notated scores, which he invited the small audience to view if they cared to, were worked out "neurologically and biologically" and related to various areas of the body as well as certain areas of the brain (one notated score was in the shape of a head and the notes were placed in all the strategic areas of the human brain to which they were to correspond).

Because of the elasticity of the old upright Davidson only had to notate the beginning motifs of the tunes, these tonal patterns were then developed throughout the pieces by a process of sound overlay. Davidson applied various manipulative techniques to the properties of the pieces until their essential musical worth seemed to be thoroughly exhausted. One piece for example, *Partials*, dealt with the upper register of the piano in a fragmented way and explored the jerky optimal qualities of half-tones and semi-tones in an exciting, rhythmically challenging, dissonant landscape. This piece, perhaps more than the three other compositions of the evening, showed how Davidson has actually transferred a certain method of compositional thinking to the advantages and disadvantages of the upright. There were times when some of the sustaining tones that the pianist drew from his instrument seemed to walk in space, velvety rich tones that were simply gorgeous. Davidson has finally integrated and shaped the ambiguities of the apparatus, the machinery, to meet his own compositional needs in a very complete and real way.

If there was any problem it might have to do with the fact that Davidson seemed, at times, somewhat fenced in by the instrument - for the pianist's talent is large and should not be limit-

ed to the eccentricities of one keyboard model (especially when these "eccentricities" have been so thoroughly modified by such masterful control). One must be careful not to allow mind and instrument (the extended machinery) to totally consume one's primal musical intent (i.e. method beginning to overshadow concept). But then there's probably no cause for alarm because the idea and the conceptual frame from which it springs can only escalate when the tools are changed (again and again) and re-worked. So when Davidson does return to the grand, which he will undoubtedly do at some point, the music will be all the more vital because of his experiments with the upright.

— Roger Riggins

ANTHONY BRAXTON

**San Jose Center for the Performing Arts
July 1, 1978**

A fast trip to San Jose but we missed the first piece on the program, which was an exploration of musical shape possibilities with Anthony Braxton on soprano saxophone and Philip Glass on piano. Variations on a trill were the sustaining foundations of this piece.

A quartet piece with Braxton on multiple reeds, Don Buchla - electronic instruments, Allen Strange - electronic instruments, and Pat Strange - electric violin, was both harsh and warm. The notion of this piece was that each instrument says the same thing, but each with its own voice. The synthesizers contributed tense hard buzzing and familiar currents/bleeps/outer frequency range sounds; the electric piano crashed. The electric violin sawed jaggedly with occasional harmonic sweeps. This setting counterpointed and meshed with Braxton's characteristic progressions on contrabass, alto, soprano, clarinet, his kind of rhythmic, humorous punning, the clarity of tone that makes his playing a joyous feast.

The Orchestra premiere was the event of the evening and of the entire New Sounds Festival, as it was a new work by a major composer. The orchestra (composed mainly of members of the San Jose Symphony and other participants in the Festival) was assembled on the large stage and Braxton conducted using precise, geometrical movements and squared off patterns of space. The conducting was integral in this piece as it consisted of lines, or curves of sound, and musical points woven into a sound tapestry. Rarely, if at all did the different sections of the orchestra play in unison. The trombones would sound one note, the violins would create a sharp upward rise, and then the cellos the same, switching to brass, now building another line, and to bassoon section or oboe; so that the overall effect was of a luminous weaving of sound, with abstract loops and holes in time that provided the listener space in which to check out this new land. — Elaine Cohen

KENNY WHEELER

**Toronto Percussion Centre, Toronto
August 13, 1978**

The tiny Toronto Percussion Centre housed a crowd for a sell-out performance by Canadian-born trumpet and flugelhorn giant, Kenny Wheeler. Everyone in attendance was full of warmth and anticipation, a sort of welcoming

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ODDS & SODS

The Milestone All Stars (McCoy Tyner, Sonny Rollins and Ron Carter, plus Al Foster on drums) will be on tour during September and October in various parts of the U.S.A.... The AACM held its 13th Anniversary International Summerfest in Chicago September 1-3.... The first Harlem Jazz Festival was held in August and utilised Small's Paradise, Vincent's Place and the Celebrity Club as venues for the week-long event.... Frank Lowe heads a ten-piece band October 9 at 426 Broome Street in NYC... WKCR featured music by "lost masters" during August. Musicians highlighted were: Bubber Miley, Jimmy Harrison, Frank Teschemacher, Herschel Evans, Dick Wilson, Jimmy Blanton, Fats Navarro and Herbie Nichols.

Barry Altschul, who in the past has been associated with such notables as Paul Bley, Anthony Braxton, Chick Corea and Sam Rivers, has now decided to concentrate his energies on establishing his own group, as well as solo performing. His plans also include composing, teaching and some producing. A new recording on Muse will feature a string quartet with percussion, a trio of piano, cello and

ions basically followed the same pattern. A short written section was followed by free improvisation and then repeated at the end. *Interludes*, however, introduced seven different sections instead of repeating the original one. This gives the improvisors carte blanche and if they don't bring imagination and craft to the music the result can be dull and/or chaotic. Of course there was no such problem at this concert. Soloists Wheeler, Cramer and Smith took turns throughout the evening to provide stimulating sounds and effects over loosely percussive rhythm. Wheeler would startle with choppy, brassy precision on trumpet, then tone down with soft winding figures on flugelhorn. Cramer interchanged thematic ideas with angular bursts on the trumpet, also making fine eclectic use of a plunger mute. Smith achieved a different sound by displaying the diverse influences of Albert Ayler and Anthony Braxton, on an instrument not generally connected with those men, the soprano saxophone. Excitement peaked during the interaction of soloists. A definite highlight was reached when, in the last set, Wheeler and Cramer exchanged fire for fire in a blistering trumpet duet. The rhythm section was able, but didn't quite generate the spark required to intensify the wilder moments.

This was not Kenny Wheeler's show although, as always, the complete mastery of his horn playing was well exhibited. This was group music in which everyone delivered their utmost to the spontaneity of well-chosen compositions. The audience, most of whom came for Kenny Wheeler, might not have known what to expect due to the many and varied facets of his career. However, the music was received with remarkable fervor. One last note: the music was recorded for possible release on Onari Records.

- Vic Remarc

committee, for a musician who left his home town of St. Catherines, Ontario, for England to become one of the most respected trumpet players in the world.

Kenny Wheeler is not to be labelled; he can play and improvise on any music, judging from hundreds of English studio recording credits which range from rock music to Indo-jazz fusion. However, it's obvious that his true passion lies within a wide scope of modern jazz. One aspect of this can be appreciated on two recent ECM recordings under his leadership, on which his immense compositional talents are revealed.

Mr. Wheeler is an eager participant in many forms of freely improvised music. Added to his many credits is a long time association with Anthony Braxton, perpetrator of some of the most free and driving music in jazz today. Therefore Mr. Wheeler's residency in England has not hindered him from becoming involved in one of the most vital areas of American contemporary jazz, along with European developments in new music.

On the night of the concert it was mildly surprising to find that Kenny Wheeler was a sideman and that Bill Smith, on soprano saxophone and alto clarinet, was leading the session. Another surprise was that Smith's group included an additional trumpet player, Larry Cramer, and a rhythm section consisting of David Lee on acoustic bass and Geoff Stewart on drums.

In Smith's hands the music took on a free nature. The first composition, *Eeltwo*, was written by Roscoe Mitchell. That, along with a Smith original dedicated to Mitchell called *Pick A Number*, made up the first set while a second Smith original, *Interludes*, comprised the entire second set. The first two composi-

percussion, a quartet of trombone and rhythm, a sextet and solo drums.

The 1978-79 program of the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock begins September 25. Further details are available from P.O. Box 671, Woodstock, N.Y. 12498.... Gerry Mulligan has put together a big band and it will be appearing October 29 at the Clarenceville High Auditorium, Livonia, Michigan.... Roscoe Mitchell appeared September 10 at Wayne State Community Arts Auditorium in Detroit.

Real Arts Ways is a Hartford, Connecticut alternative center for the arts which sponsored a two-week festival in August. Alan West of radio station WCWJ writes:

"In an extremely rare performance outside of their home area of Philadelphia, Khan Jamal (vibes), Byard Lancaster (reeds, flutes), and Sunny Murray (percussion) performed at the Real Art Ways loft in Hartford. Except for a highly inspired version of *Straight No Chaser*, all the compositions were Khan Jamal's. His compositions were vehicles for extended improvisations by the trio.

"Sunny Murray proved that his drum work remains the prime force in the liberation of the standard trap set. His sound is so fluid and honest that he richly provided spiritual/creative sustenance to the other players. No recent recordings have done justice to this master musician.

"Byard Lancaster is another of the many artists whose recordings have not done him justice. Except for a double album on Palm 'Exactement' and his new album, 'Exodus', on Philly Jazz, the emotional depth and beauty of Lancaster's playing hasn't been captured clearly.

"Khan Jamal is an even vibraphonist of the highest order. His Palm LP 'Give The Vibes Some' is an incredible example of his power. His new LP with Bill Lewis, 'The River', points up the delicacy and inventiveness of Jamal. His playing exuded the love and peace he brings to the music.

"Little needs to be said about this great concert except to urge readers to listen to the trio members' great new album on Philly Jazz."

...Jay McShann appeared in two Chicago clubs (Just Angels and Biddy Milligan's) at the end of July - his first appearance in the Windy City since 1955.... Muse Records took their equipment to Sandy's Jazz Revival in Beverly, Mass. in August. On hand were Ray Bryant, Arnett Cobb, Alan Dawson, George Duivier, Buddy Tate and Cleanhead Vinson.... The same club begins a two-week tribute to Jo Jones on September 18.

The Classic Jazz Society of South Western Ohio presented Dick Wellstood and Marty Grosz September 17 in a special program of Fats Waller material.

The festival season gets longer with events both large and small. The Vermont Festival was held July 29-30 at the Killington Resort.... The Space Coast Jazz Society held a festival over Labor Day weekend at Cocoa Beach, Florida. Terry Gibbs and Conte Candoli were the headliners.... The Parkway Festival took place September 9 in Philadelphia with Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Barry Harris, Sam Jones, Ray Bryant, John Bunch, Zoot Sims and Connie Kay among those participating.... The Great Northeastern Traditional Jazzfest took place September 16-17 at the Rainbow Lodge in Greenville, N.Y. with Pee Wee Erwin, Bob

Wilber, Doc Cheatham, Ed Hubble and Johnny Mince among the headliners.... The 1978 Ann Arbor festival took place September 21-24 with Mary Lou Williams, Stan Getz, Max Roach and Archie Shepp appearing opening night. On Friday Johnny Griffin and Dexter Gordon were on hand. Kenny Burrell, Stanley Turrentine and Sun Ra appeared Saturday with the final two concerts on Sunday featuring Chico Freeman, Mose Allison, Art Blakey and the Mercer Ellington Orchestra.... The Arcosanti Festival '78 will be held October 5 through 8. Lined up for this event are Anthony Braxton, Sam Rivers, Oregon, Gary Burton, Dave Liebman, Freddie Waits and Richard Beirach.

Marion Brown appeared in Japan at the festival in Nemuno Sato. On July 2 (prior to his trip) he recorded an album in New York for RVC (Japanese Victor). The theme of the album was a tribute to Johnny Hodges and Stanley Cowell, Reggie Workman and Roy Haynes were the rhythm section.... Also in Japan were various Fantasy artists for appearances at Tokyo's "Live Under The Sky" series. ...The State University of New York in Albany has instituted a Jazz Studies Program in their Non-Credit Department. Further information can be obtained from Bob Rosenblum at (518) 472-6695.

ECM is preparing a ten-record set of Keith Jarrett recorded in November 1976 during a Japanese concert tour.... Alberta Hunter's first album since her return to show business will be out soon on CBS. It's the soundtrack of the motion picture "Remember My Name".... Gene Perla has released two new albums of his group Stone Alliance on PM Records. The group will be returning to South America to



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promote these albums, which were recorded during the band's earlier tour.

Upcoming from Circle Records are lps with the Human Arts Ensemble, the James Newton Trio and Quartet, and the Phillip Wilson Trio with Leo Smith and Johnny Dyani... Shoestring Records has recently released material by Joe Sullivan, Art Tatum, Bunny Berigan and Coleman Hawkins.... "The Jazz Guitar" is a new book by Maurice Summerfield which traces the evolution and players of the guitar in jazz.... Greenwood Press (would you believe) have reprinted Rhythm On Record (1936), Blackstone's Index To Jazz, and Downbeat's Yearbook of Swing (1939).

Bassist Quinn Wilson died June 14 in Chicago; guitarist Teddy Bunn died in Lancaster, California on July 20; violinist Joe Venuti died August 14 in Seattle and Irene Kral died August 15 in Encino, California.

— compiled by John Norris

ERRATUM

There is an error in the pastep of the Sonny Clark article which appeared in the last issue of *Coda* (no. 162). The article should begin with line 12, column 2 on page 16 and continue from the second line from the bottom of column 3, to the first line of column 1, page 16.

The next part should continue through lines 6 to 39, page 17, then return to the last line on page 16 and proceed from there to the end.

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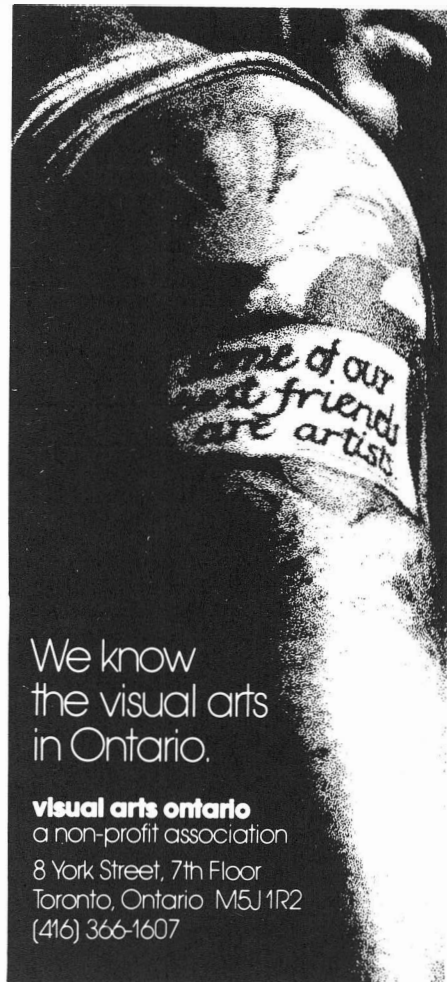
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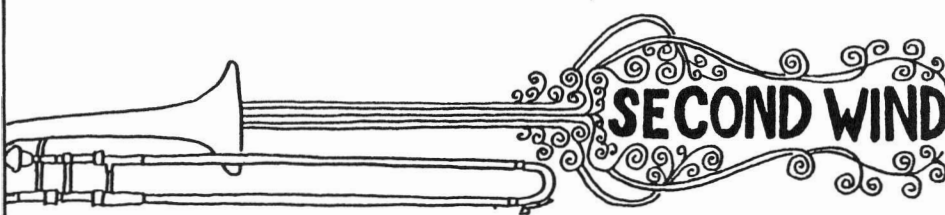
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J.T. BROWN → Windy City Boogie

J.T. Brown—call him “Bep,” “Nature Boy,” or whatever—played a mean blues horn, dubbed “the nanny goat” by his friends. WINDY CITY

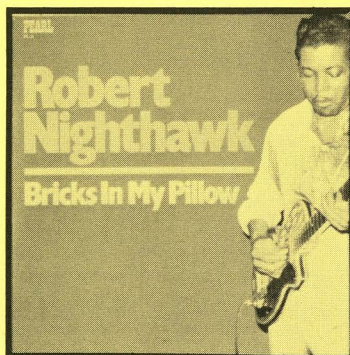
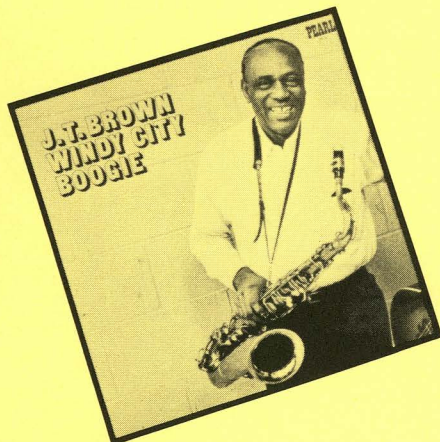
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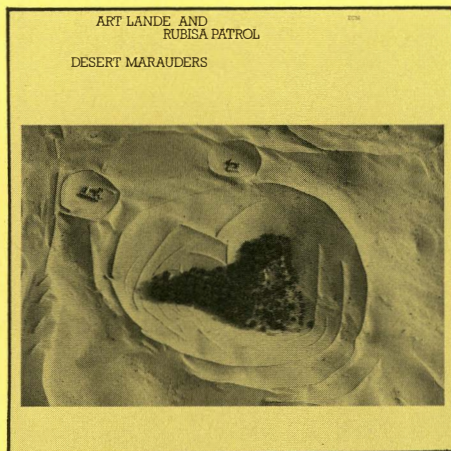
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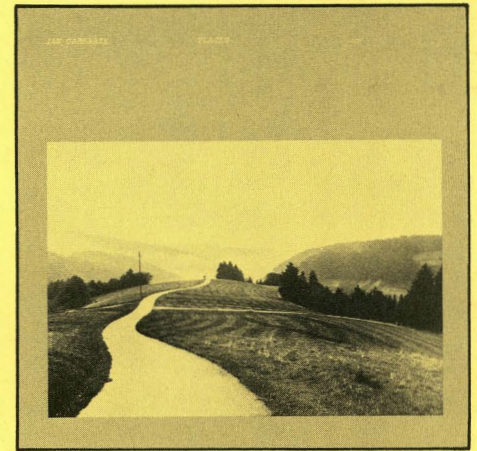
Art Lande and Rubisa Patrol
"Desert Marauders"
 ECM 1 - 1106

Art Lande, piano; Mark Isham, trumpet & flugelhorn; Bill Douglass, bass & flute; Kurt Wortman, drums.



Gary Burton
"Times Square"
 ECM 1 - 1111

Gary Burton, vibes; Steve Swallow, bass guitar; Roy Haynes, drums; Tiger Okoshi, trumpet.



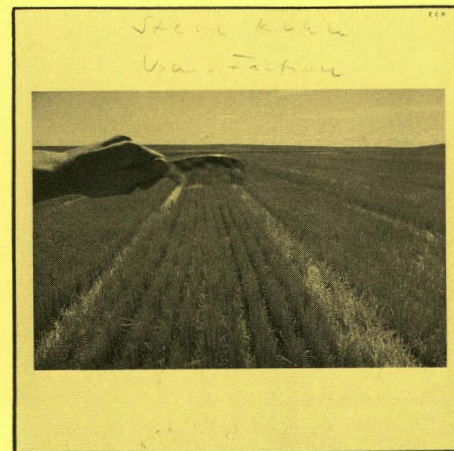
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Jan Garbarek, saxophones; Bill Connors, guitar; John Taylor, organ & piano; Jack DeJohnette, drums.



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"Batik"
 ECM 1 - 1121

Ralph Towner, 12 string & classical guitar, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums.



Steve Kuhn
"Non-Fiction"
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Steve Kuhn, piano; Steve Slagle, soprano & alto saxophones & flute; Harvie Swartz, bass; Bob Moses, drums.



Jack DeJohnette
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 ECM 1 - 1128

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