Coda

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE ● ISSUES 164/165 (1979)

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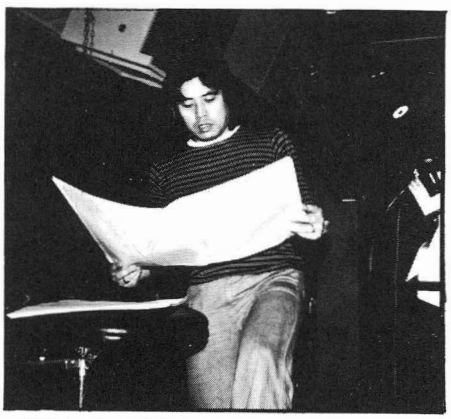

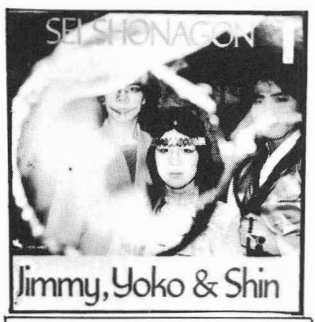

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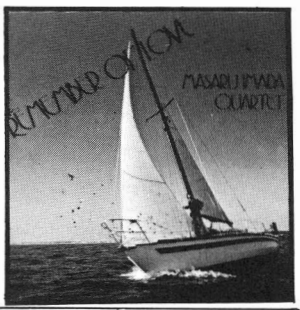

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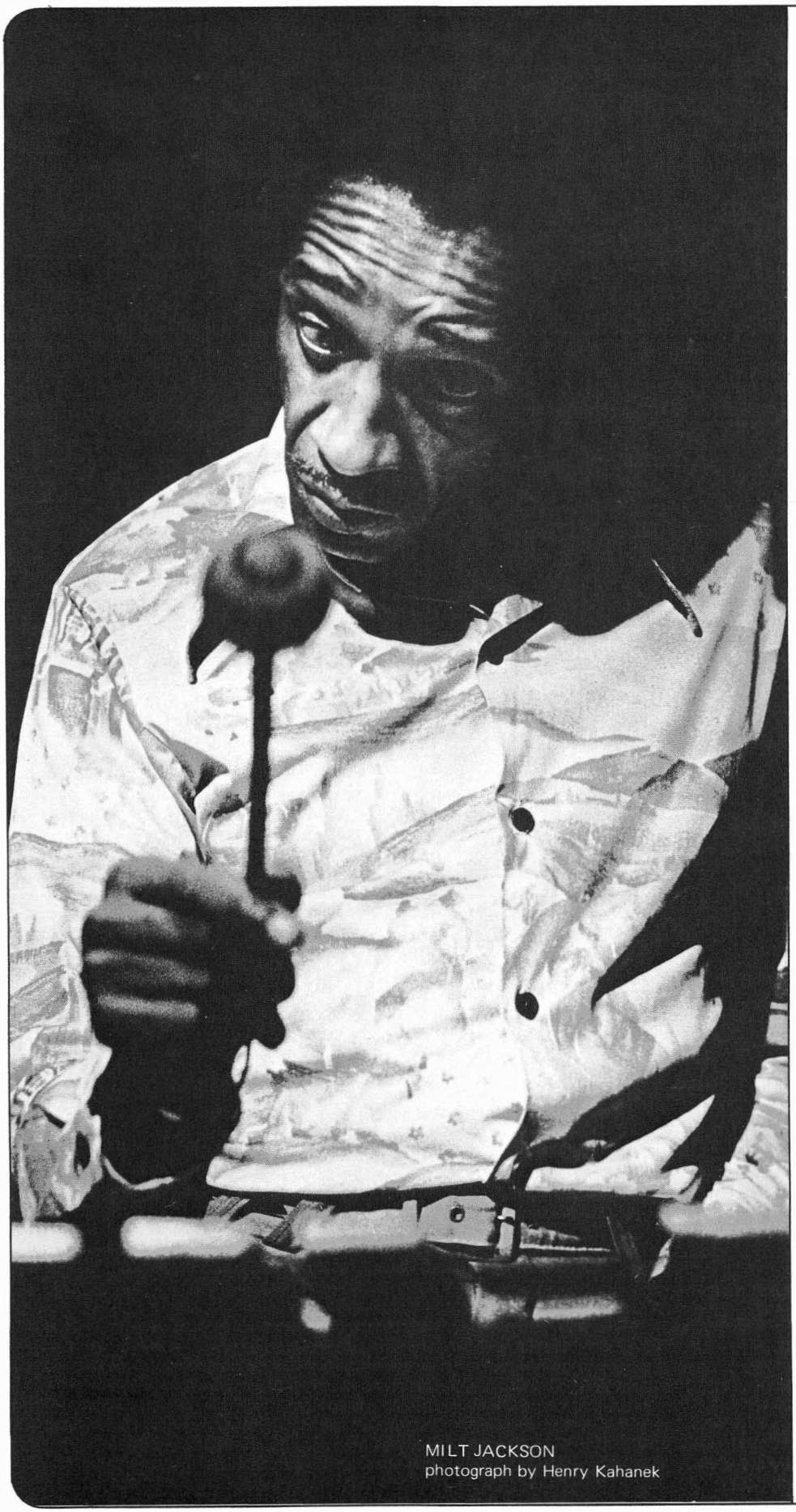

MILT JACKSON
photograph by Henry Kahanek

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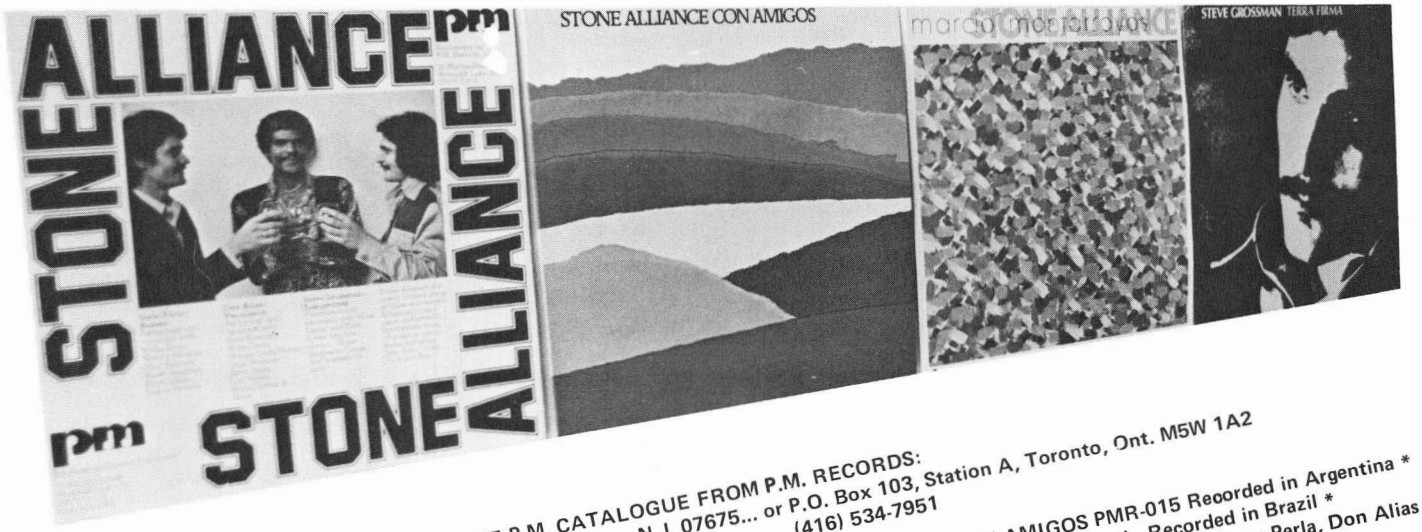

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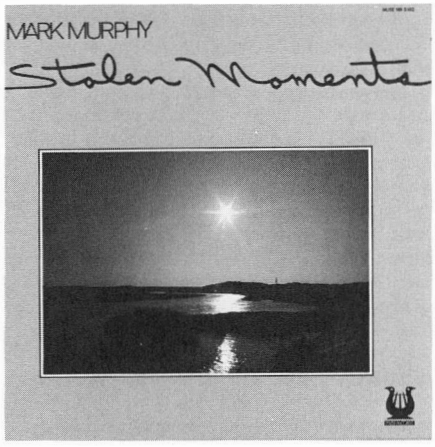

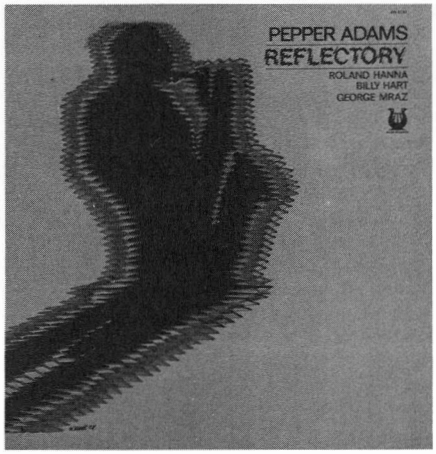

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JEANNE LEE

interview with ROGER RIGGINS

Jeanne Lee is one of the most original voices that jazz has produced. Her vocal interpretations are like masterful icons of a cross-cultural synthesis that uses as its point of departure those resources which have shaped the most advanced developments in the music over the last twenty-five years.

Her music making is a total experience and seems to be pretty much "organically conceived", in that Lee attempts to create and seek her own level when interacting with other instrumentalists. The vocalist emphasized that she's never really been interested in being "backed-up" by other musicians but is more concerned with integrating her vocal ideas and studies on a par with the other players. The pioneer singer said she likes to "... live the spaces in the music fully... to work with the people as musicians and not just as a 'fill-in'...."

Lee is very much concerned with that special quality of flexibility and relentless immediacy which is so much a part of musical utterance in general and the voice in particular. She attempts to refine and re-assess her capabilities as a "voice environmentalist" every time she hits the stand, so as to more clearly interpret the vibrational worth of the music happening in and around her.

This interview took place after one of the vocalist's frequent trips to Europe. I must say, too, that Lee is a fascinating musician to interview and one who embodies the entire cultural, psychological and social ethos of the New Art.

ROGER RIGGINS: I know the way that you are presently using your voice is quite unique and doesn't owe much to past "stylists" — yet when you were somewhat into lyrics, at an early stage in your development, who left the strongest impression in terms of influence?

JEANNE LEE: The person who left the most impression on me in terms of life-situations as well as what she was doing with her voice was Abbey Lincoln. From the credibility of her craft and her own reality and not so much as a "style". It was like using the energy as a painting. Billie Holiday too, but she comes from another era, Billie has the same kind of thing musically, but Abbey advances that type of understanding, like interplanetary creatures.... Abbey is more human, it's not just a woman who's a victim of her role. But I learned from a lot of people: Armstrong, Nellie Lutcher, Carmen McRae. You develop a sense of comprehension for just about everyone who's doing something a certain way, but I feel closer to the tradition of Abbey than say Sarah Vaughan or Betty Carter.

The thing about lyrics is that I stopped singing them because they no longer represented a reality that I could relate to. In the mid-60's I began to get into different sounds. I like to work with a feeling for the body as well as the mind. I like to, at times, take poetry as a point of departure for improvisation. I've been back into lyrics of late, and yet I also want to keep the abstract thing. In Europe Gunter and I just did a duo record on Horo using cycles and spirals of sound and just improvising with that. I really like the things we did on that record, really close to where I think I am right now.

At one point, as I said, I went away from lyrics, but now I've come back to them in a totally different way, from the inside out.

R.R.: You first appeared on record in a duo situation with pianist Ran Blake. In that situation you were still pretty much into lyrics and yet the other thing was straining to get out too — in terms of significant periods in your development how would you rate this embryonic stage and what exactly did you learn about the duo situation and its relationship to your voice?

J.L.: I regard that whole period as an apprenticeship so to speak. My father was a musician, into the classics like Harry T. Burley, William Lawrence as well as spirituals and alike. When I started work with Ran the music was so precise. It was a concert music and not too good in clubs. Some clubowners didn't like it because the people wouldn't buy any drinks, they'd just listen. Ran had this special hearing - I'd never been exposed to dissonance and non-chordal development. But working with him I developed a non-chordal ear. I was into Bartok string quartets in school and, of course, Ran and I went to school together (Bard College). And I felt comfortable within the duo thing because I'd done it before in school - small school productions, in plays and things like that. In the duo thing I don't feel that I'm missing the bass and drums, I can use my voice percussively or whatever. In the duo situation you have to address all the instruments simply because they're not there.

R.R.: Did you find that one of the reasons you stopped working with Blake when you did was because he became increasingly involved in academic pursuits and education?

J.L.: No, I don't know about that.... When I was working with Ran this was a summation. I've always been close to dance and the thing with Ran stayed very small, precious... vignettes and alike. I wanted to go with that part of me that was a dancer. I was into the voice as just an indicator of what I would have done in dance.

R.R.: During the mid-to-latter '60s there seemed to be an increase in working situations as well as an increase in visibility — in Europe during this period you worked with Gunter Hampel and Marion Brown and later you recorded two beautiful performances with percussionist Sunny Murray and Archie Shepp (1969). Would you elaborate a bit about this period and just how did these recording situations occur?

J.L.: I was in Europe living and working, Archie and Sunny were there after the Pan-African Festival and called me to do the recordings. The first blues I wrote was for Archie. I have a feeling about the music by Archie, Marion, Sunny and Monk — to me it's what the big bands were to Ella Fitzgerald or Helen Merrill.

R.R.: It seems that you use your voice as an "organically conceived" instrument and your approach probably does owe more, at this stage, to instrumentalists rather than singers?

J.L.: I don't know about instrumental approach with the voice. I'm more interested in what the voice is in itself. I listened to Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Sonny Rollins, and Yusef Lateef was another one I liked very much. I learned how to carry the note, how to breathe, and I did learn all of this from players and not so much from singers. Monk's sense of timing, for example, is like a whole world of knowledge in itself.

But it was around 1963 to 1966 when I was in California and I was working with Ian Underwood, who has since gone on to work with Frank Zappa, that I realized I was moving away from the conventional idea of music. I could take music out of musicality, add space and silence... singing in a way as to not be conscious of "singing" but just becoming a white light. I began to understand that this was another dimension. I began to write poetry again and to understand that the poem could be another reality.

I've just completed "Conference of the Birds" (Lee recently performed the ancient fable with a cast of four singer/dancers and multi-instrumentalist Gunter Hampel at the Alternative Center for the Arts in New York City). The "Conference of the Birds" deals with the progressive stages of enlightenment... the valleys one goes through in this journey are represented by the sakris, the connections up the spine. I would like to stage this again to get into the more ritualistic thing it sets up for the entire organism, which is human.

I look at myself as already an environment, the environment is there and it comes through me in sound. In turn the music is created as a total environment to the audience. I'm always trying to allow the environment to manifest itself through me... when I'm working with a musician I'm trying to deal with the sound. When I want to direct the music I create a poem and then there's a more deliberate environmental frame and we all work within that.

R.R.: What about the "Salute To Women In Jazz Festival" held recently in New York, I know that you participated. How did everything turn out and how do you feel about the woman's role in creative music?

J.L.: Cobi Narita had made this contract with a man from CasaBlanca 2. But at the last minute he decided he wanted 1600 more dollars that Cobi didn't have. So the festival was taken out into the street. And things turned out better because there was no club owner to pre-suppose things, it was like a celebration.

Women have their own thing and everyone was just being themselves. Jay Clayton, for example, has her own way of working and doing things. The festival was a real sharing and there was a common thing and a common marketplace where you could share your musical feeling. Younger women were looking up to you like you might have done when you were younger. It was a very tribal type of experience.

There's something to be shared in female sensibilities, with men and women. I think each person has an individual balance and how that balance manifests is due to the individual. Some women want to use a driving, masculine force and some go through another type of thing. It's all like a dance with everyone trying to get the right balance and configurations.

I think the point is to make more real contact with people. I feel very close to this. For example, just before I left for Europe this last time, I went to Carnegie Hall and George Wein was there because Cobi was going to use Carnegie Hall for an evening for the Festival, and one of the union stewards was insulting Cobi because she was Chinese and all of that, and I have no real interest in coming through that. It seems to be more integral in the street type setting, handling it on your own. We actually co-operated better there than at the CasaBlanca 2 or at Carnegie Hall.

While we were doing the festival in the

street Bella Abzug spoke, she brought part of that reality of "I can be like a man and the best at what's supposedly a man's thing...." But I think people can work in different ways with the same thing. It's my thinking that we should listen to each other, and what's the senes if everyone says the same thing in the same way, there's nothing left to listen to.

R.R.: Any important projects or records that you haven't mentioned coming up soon?

J.L.: Well, let me say that I think records are like calling cards, you really have to come and see. I mentioned earlier about the duo record with Gunter and I like that very much. (At this point I mentioned the short lived group called "Compost" in which Lee worked and recorded — a rather rockish/fusion oriented aggregation — Lee said that she really couldn't be her complete self within the confines of this group's musical schemata).

And then I recently recorded with drummer Bobby Moses on his Mozone label with Joanne Brackeen, Harold Vick and some other people... Moses is just nuts! (much laughter), I liked working with him because I could fit into his concept without shaving off any of my own reality. I'm in the process of doing one of Jean Toomer's poems in duet with Marion Brown too. Another one of my interests now is to study classical Indian singers and investigate the nine modes for the nine emotions. I'd really like to work with that.

On the implications of the New Art and the importance of cultural imperatives: "...this country is just building a culture, the culture to sum itself up is coming out of the new 'Jazz' musicians... the shapers of the culture... fountainheads of the culture, I look at my own work as a bridge.

"When I first started to sing people would be amazed, sometimes, that I was singing outside of the chord. The music has been borrowing from all cultures and sects, the mountain people and various other tribes, laying the mandates from which the culture will grow. Any time Marion, Archie, John Stubblefield, Anthony Braxton, Bob Moses want to do something I'm ready.

"With a master's degree from New York University I can go into the schools now and I see that the children just go into it, they don't ask questions, they just live it."

On the relationship between dance and the voice: "The voice is a very important instrument, it's part of the body and can emulate bodily feelings. One of the basic exercises I use is taken from yoga... the psoas muscles... which stem from the diaphragm are what dancers use as a source of movement... so using the psoas muscles and the diaphragm together you can take it into dance or voice or both... you learn to work with the dynamics of the feeling... you learn to work with the emotions... when your body is working you don't have to think of a horn but you can think of body movement... in this way the word becomes incidental to the sound."

A PARTIAL JEANNE LEE DISCOGRAPHY:

Ran Blake/Jeanne Lee Duo
"The Newest Sound Around"
RCA (out of print)

Gunter Hampel

"The 8th of July 1969"	Birth 001
"Spirits"	Birth 007
"Familie"	Birth 008

photo by Gerard Futrick

"Journey to the Song Within"	Birth 017
"Cosmic Dancer"	Birth 024
"Enfant Terrible"	Birth 025

Andrew Cyrille
"Celebration" IPS 002

Archie Shepp
"Blasé" BYG/Actuel (French)
(reissued in England on Affinity AFF7)

Sunny Murray
"Homage to Africa" BYG/Actuel (French)

Anthony Braxton
"Town Hall 1972" Trio PA 30089 (Japanese)

Jeanne Lee
"Conspiracy" Earthforms 1

AND GUNTER HAMPEL

GUNTER HAMPEL: When jazz music was born, a lot of elements were coming together from different cultures; there was the European influence, the African influence, every country took part because in jazz you had the European instruments, the European form of harmonies and songs, and the African rhythms, all together, and every time a new style in jazz is born all these influences meet again. Like in the twenties, there was the meeting in New Orleans of different folk musics, and African people who played piano changed the harmonic understanding and it came together, and now it's coming again to the U.S.A. with new forms of European music, and melting with the black Americans, who brought the rhythmic concept again; people like Sunny Murray or Milford Graves, or a piano player like Cecil Taylor, who definitely has European influences.

Jeanne and I come from different places very far apart, but we have in common what we create, what we offer to the world to extend their consciousness about life and about music. For me life and music are together. I know a lot of musicians who live their life like everybody lives his life and then they do some music; when I go on stage it's the same as I'm living, when I am offstage it's the same like I'm playing music — I'm not a different person. I might appear to be different because I'm not talking, I'm talking with my instrument, and I'm concentrating, opening myself up, in order to get in contact with the other musicians as well as with the audience. When I ever come back to your festival I would like to play in the middle, and have everybody sitting around as close as possible, and not on a stage where we are up as if we were some TV set. We like to be seen and felt as living beings, not as some faraway people making some music.

Question: Jeanne, what is the difference between your experience with Gunter and those with other musicians, as a woman and as an artist?

JEANNE LEE: It's really hard to say. It's like talking with different people, everyone has a different pattern of constructing, method of speaking, tonality of expression, ways of expression, and each person comes to you with their sum, the total of their being.

Question: What does creativity mean to you?

Gunter: There is a creative part of every human being and this creative part of ourselves, the act of doing something has been manipulated in our history, always by the political "superiors". The "superiors" manage to take this creative part away and place themselves in that part. You know, like 1984, Big Brother is watching you, you know the church: "You can't find a way to God, you have to come to the church to find God". They always take things away from you and substitute something else into you, so a lot of people don't see anymore that creativity is everywhere, and that may be something that our music might tell a lot of people, that creativity is in every moment of your life, every precious moment of your life is what you put your creativity into.

In music also it is the part that we try to connect with, let me say, with God, we connect a feeling to create God here on Earth, to let him talk and make people understand that there is a humanity among human beings and not only the needs that play for the survival of the political system. Creativity is something that comes out of any person who is able to express themselves. It's not only in what we call the arts of painting and music, it certainly is the big part of communicating with each other, it is hard to be awake all the time and make yourself communicate with people; the daily life of people who run around with closed eyes and closed ears, just follow the way because they have to make money, because we live in a society where capitalism asks so much of our life that we hardly have any time to be creative. There is an energy you have to pull together. In Jeanne's workshops she tries to make people aware that energy is not an outside system to be given to you, the energy is right there inside of you. Breathing is one of life's most vital necessities and most people don't know how to breathe anymore, they just go on with their short breaths and they cannot even think anymore because the brain doesn't get enough air.

Music is one of the areas where the communication of creativity between each other is most together, and in my groups I have the possibility to succeed in getting other people who are playing with me to create. I am not just a composer who makes some compositions and gets some other people to play them, I want the people who are working with me to get out the creativity they have within themselves as much as possible. Even more than that, usually I ask from them more than they are able to give, and this makes their creativity grow.

Question: Sometimes the music you play is difficult for a lot of people.

Gunter: Our music, or any new music, is not so much to be understood intellectually, in terms of "I have to understand the intervals or the harmonies they are playing". When Ornette Coleman appeared on the scene, everybody said this is too much, but listening now to Ornette it's so easy to understand. People have to try to understand the whole picture of the music, and that's not so hard. It's a feeling which comes over to you and this is what comes out of every good band. It's not that important to understand what Jeanne is singing or what Thomas is playing, let the music flow to you and try to feel it. There are people everywhere who as they breathe let the music in, and when they breathe out they feel better. When I play the first notes at a concert, and the wave of the feeling of the audience comes back to me, then I feel what they need, where they are at, where there harmonic understanding is, and then we play a melody and a rhythm and let it grow, we get it more together, and gradually we play more free. When you meet somebody you first say hello and shake hands, and that's what I'm trying to do with my music in live performances. First I like to shake hands with the people: "Okay, here is me, here is you, let's do something together, we'll play music and you listen". Listening requires as strong a concentration as playing, so in order for it not to be so hard for

photo by Alberto Ciampa

people we start where we think they will understand us and then we go to the other places where the other reality for us is, but first we try to bring them to where we are.

Question: Jeanne, can you tell us something about your experience with Cecil Taylor?

Jeanne: In the winter of 1976 Cecil called me about a play that had been written by a woman called Adrienne Kennedy, called "A Rat's Mass". It's the story of a brother and sister who were raised as catholic children in the American Midwest in the late forties and the conflict which came in their being between the feeling for each other and what they had been told by the church. They somehow thought that in their feelings they had committed some kind of sin; and the play is the exorcism of their guilt feeling. Cecil and Adrienne had gotten together and collaborated on this play. Cecil made something called a procession in shout. A procession in shout is an old black southern form of worship, it comes from an African ceremonial ritual. He took the play and translated it into a movement, a procession for voices. The brother and sister thought that they were turning into rats because they had committed some kind of sin. They saw the sunflowers that grew in their yard as food for them because they had become rats, they had become animals, and the play works between the tension of being a human and being an animal, the energy going straight up or going out of the tail. At some point they lose their battle and they become rats, because the bov commits suicide and the girl goes to an asylum for a year or so.

Working with Cecil on that was very interesting for me because I'm interested in rituals too, the fact that music comes out of life and life is music, and there is no separation between movement and sound, or between play and music. Unfortunately, the theatre that put it on did not understand that. They were working with a play, they didn't understand the place of the music or how complex music must be and how much devotion and energy you have to put into music.

So in some aspects it did not work, but from working with Cecil I learned how he hears and how he orchestrates, and Cecil is a fantastic dancer, have you ever seen him dance? You have to know that from the way he plays the piano. It was the first time that I had been in a production with another musician who was working some of the same things through in terms of dancing and singing and in terms of the voices of the instrument, along with a play, a story and a theme. I learned a lot from it, there were twelve of us in it and we had to learn to move as a body, plus we had to carry the energy in terms of individual characters. It was just beginning to grow into what it should have been when it was cut short because we weren't given enough time, we had six weeks for rehearsing right into production, and then we only had two or three weekends for the production. The theatre failed to provide us with a director, the directors were all coming out of the theatre and were so scared of it that they didn't know what to tell us to do, so we had to do it all ourselves, with Cecil's direction. Of course that meant a lot of changing things around, and these things didn't jell right away, another six weeks was necessary.

It also taught me that music has to be given its proper attention, it's not incidental. Theatre people think of music as incidental. Cecil had not written the music that way. It was an integral part of the movement of the play, it was essential to the play, and a production like that has to be considered. Rituals seem to be something so new, but I, we all, have rituals in our backgrounds. We just become separated from them because of the growth of industry, and the separation of people from their feelings in order to fulfill a niche in the industry, and the rituals which used to come out of our life, out of the survival tasks that we had to perform in order to stay alive, I mean you can push a button now and that is not a ritual, it has nothing to do with your feelings, we have really to rediscover the places where we are human, and then the rituals and the music and the movements and creativity come from there. It's very close to what Gunter was saying, that there is something sitting between people and their breath, and their pulse.

Question: These are not concepts they teach in school, are they?

Jeanne: It has something to do with the education I received, which was somewhat different

photograph of Gunter Hampel by Gerard Futrick

from the usual American education. My parents somehow were able to find the spaces to send me to a school which reached for what was creative in me. Usually when you go to school you are told one and one are two, two and two are four, you learn the right answer and that's it; you say what the teacher wants you to say and that's it. In the schools that I went to, the teachers were very conscientious about trying to find out what ***your*** perception of it was, and the main influence in keeping that alive in me, there were a lot of influences really, but the main academic influence was a school I went to called Wolver school. It followed the philosophy of Henry David Thoreau, that one learns by doing, not just by sitting and thinking and talking, you do it. So when we studied history they took us around the United States, they took us to Puerto Rico, they took us to Canada, we went in and out of where the wars were fought in the Civil War. We went to the fort where John Brown was captured, we started another civil war with some high school students from the south, we learned what the history was because we became part of it, and my whole education between the seventh grade and the twelfth grade was spent in an atmosphere like that. When I went on to college it was an extension of that, so I was lucky to be in an academic situation for at least nine years where I tried to reach for my creativity, to reach for my ability to communicate. One of my teachers told my mother when I was fourteen years old that I didn't talk, I didn't stand up for myself and that he would do everything in his power to make me angry with him so that I would at least say something that he could play ball with, and that is what he did. A lot of the teachers were like that and it showed me how important it is, the spirit which is inside of you, as a child that has to be nurtured. It shouldn't be channelled out of existence, it's your life and you deal with it from the beginning, and schools tend to separate that from you. So that you fit into a good place in the society, but creativity is not antithetical to society. Everything that I have learned and everything I have given goes into me, gets synthesized and comes out in some sort of form that I want to give back. It's not a question of getting the facts and keeping them for yourself or working on a level of "superiority" which really doesn't exist, but to share it so that the whole thing raises itself to a level where everybody is operating that way, especially when you have children, you think: well, in another thirty or forty years it's their time. Are they going to be living in a vacuum or are they going to be living in a society that they can communicate in and with? Will there be a society for them? So you give it back.

Along with that, in the history of the planet people have been living in different places and the knowledge that grew out of each culture has something to give to the world culture, and for the first time there are things that make communication easier. Technology is not an evil in itself, although it has to be used in the proper way. For the first time in the history of the world it is possible to have all the knowledge that has always been growing in every place, accessible to everybody. No one place should dominate the system of knowledge. A lot of the things that I've learned about singing have come from my father because he was a singer, and my love and devotion for music comes from that. The science of breathing is something that I learned from reading the Indian, the Hindu methods of feeling the breath. Feeling the unity of music, dance, poetry as one, that's coming from the African.

The other day I was standing on a bridge over the river Arno. Night was coming up from one side and day was disappearing on the other, and I felt like I was in a stream that was part of the evolution of this planet, I was standing between night and day, and I was part of that stream of energy. If I faced this way I was seeing one kind of energy, if I turned around I was seeing another kind of energy. I was connected so much to natural energy, and that's I think through the knowledge in me which comes from the American Indian, in my family. The knowledge of the whole world is in everybody, but to become conscious of that, then one studies and sees something, like when you read a book and there's a thought in the book and you say, ha-ha, yes, this is familiar even if it's written by somebody who grew up in Morocco in 700 A.D. You recognize a familiar thought because the knowledge of the universe is in all of us, we are just sometimes not so aware of it.

Question: When one discovers and expresses in some way his or her own creativity, this puts one more in balance with oneself, but less in balance with the structures one is compelled to live in, economic constraints for example. I'm thinking also about the whole jazz situation, artists who weren't given the chance to develop their potential just because they didn't fit into a fixed image, like Abbey Lincoln for instance.

Jeanne: Abbey Lincoln is one of the people in my life who has been, and is always, an inspiration. Abbey is working in California right now, in the theatre department of a university, and passing on what she knows in that way. Nothing would ever stop Abbey, she keeps growing, she keeps moving. It's just she had something else in her mind, and so do I. This in a way is why I've been so connected to children; I love children. I've been working with children since I was fifteen. When I went to college I got a teaching degree because I thought that was what I wanted to do, teach. But then I ran into all sorts of rigid situations that really hurt me, the teachers and the Board of Education had set up a system that took out of the children

what I found most beautiful and most life preserving and I couldn't function in that way, so I go to the schools now as a performer and works with the kids in terms of music.

I remember the first dance lesson I ever had, I was seven years old. A woman came from the Katherine Damon school to teach us and I still remember what she taught. Children remember, they never lose it. If you can touch that spark in the children so that they know there is something inside of them besides what's been fed into them, that there's something native to them, then you feel that you have accomplished something. Maybe you can reach the teacher or the parents, at least touch the people whom the path is being given over to. When you are more interested in keeping the status quo than in preserving the lives of your children then you are really ensuring that your children haven't a future, and I don't see how people can do that, I mean why have children? Because you hope for your children of course that life has more clarity, always, and for yourself too. I don't worry about whether there's a place, I don't worry about what's happening from the society to me in personal terms. I have a certain amount of energy and I see certain ways of doing things and I've lived long enough to understand and respect certain ways that are different from mine, as long as I can see that they're not against life. I'm on the side of life every time. I think it's a waste of energy to worry, you just do what you can.

One of the things that has kept me very concentrated and always wanting to move more and more forward is working with Gunter, because he sometimes put in front of me a piece that would be a complete puzzle and in order to work that puzzle out so that I could sing it I always arrived at another place as a musician, as a poet, as a dancer, it structures my range both vocally and creatively.

A few years ago I had stopped singing words because words kept the music constricted and I couldn't go where I wanted to go because of the words. Now after nine or ten years of working with Gunter and his music I found that place in myself which makes the syllables, the sound of the word live as much as any note so that words are a vehicle, and I began to write again. I've always written poetry since I was seven but it was always just poetry, it wasn't for the music and now I found myself composing structures that you couldn't classically think of as compositions, but they are structures that perhaps give someone else a key to their own creativity. It's like Gunter passes on to the musicians not just a piece that can be learned but work to keep your life moving, it's like nothing is ever the same and everything is always changing, and so to change with it and to see everything as something you can work with as a challenge and not as something that's holding you back or holding you down or defeating you.

Being a musician, being a person, being a woman, being a mother, all of these things are all connected and everything moves everything else along.

Question: You have brought your music into specific situations such as psychiatric hospitals. Were they positive experiences? To what degree has music the power to help people?

Gunter: Once I was lying in my bed, I was really sick, almost dead, and I had left a tape on, from "Spirits", and I was playing this tape. When the tape was over, after two hours, I was feeling a lot better. I didn't give any meaning to it right away, then I said: "Wait a minute, two hours ago you were totally sick and now you are totally up". I took no medicines, nothing, it was only the music that touched the sick centers in me. I know that music is able, if it has the right vibration, to heal.

Jeanne: Also once after a lot of travelling, when I came to a club with a fever and a cold, not knowing whether I'd be able to get up on stage and sing, and after the first set I was so clean and healthy. It transforms you.

Gunter: We try to let this music be a part of everyday life, not only for us but for the people who hear it. I mean people hear music all day, and most of the music they hear on the radio is all so commercial, it is a music that is made not to make people concentrate on themselves, but to take their mind away from themselves and place it somewhere else. When music is made for the purpose of making money it loses its direction, its aim.

We would really try to make aware people who program music that they are in a position to play more music which makes people aware of themselves. So we try to extend our music and appearances into theatre, we have worked together with dancers, we try to meet other disciplines. I also play very successful concerts in the streets, we just go out into the market places and play for the ordinary people who are just walking by and not especially coming to a concert. We have gone into some factories, and schools, and we went to old people's homes, and they all loved it, they all said, "Why don't we hear more of that music, we didn't know that people could play this music, with clarinet and flutes and singing". There are so many people not aware of this, because the industry is putting on its own commercial music. We would like more people to think about what kind of music they are listening to, that they themselves should make the choice. That's what's important if you collect records, you put on a record at home when you have a certain feeling that you want to hear something special, and you are not so much obliged to hear only the music which is on TV or on the radio.

I would like more people to become aware to live a life of their own choice, not only in music but also doing the things that they like to do, because then we can all add much more to the community of humanity. If an individual is not free to act the way he likes then this person cannot build a society the way free people can. If someone is always held down then he never can share anything other than a down feeling with other people, but if somebody is able to raise himself up and give something to the community, we'll all be more able to give, instead of only taking things away from each other.

Jeanne: A lot of the music that you listen to locks in your respiration and your sense of hearing, so that you don't have any inner flow, you are just boxed, it's relentless, it's always straight up and down, there is no room to move in between, there's no flow, there's no pulse, just straight up and down, chunk-chunk-chunk... and what happens with that is that it becomes a kind of monotony that puts you to sleep, to become a kind of a puppet, and I think that when people talk about music such as we and the other musicians who are playing creative music play, when they talk about it being difficult to listen to, they mean that it's difficult to listen to with that sleeping, monotonous feeling. It might be a little bit uncomfortable to have to wake and really be aware of what is going on inside you, or through you, or around you, and if anything is difficult about creative music it's just that quality, that it flows and that you've got to find your own pulse in that flow.

INTERVIEW BY ROBERTO TERLIZZI, FRANCESCO MARTINELLI AND STEFANO ARCHANGELI.

NICK BRIGNOLA

With the possible exception of torture, there has never been an art form more maligned than Jazz. So it is inevitable that every once in a while there will be an exceptional musician who will find that the financial rewards of being a Jazz musician are too small, and its spiritual compensations too infrequent, to continue this masochistic pursuit. Case in point — Nick Brignola.

If you say "Nick who?" then it is understandable, for Brignola, after thrilling audiences the world over with Woody Herman and Ted Curson, on baritone and saxello, came back to his small home town community of Troy, New York, to be the big fish in the small pond, and to slowly deteriorate into being a "local" musician. He copied music, played commercial gigs and weddings, taught music and amused himself by becoming a local guru and hero, and tearing up others in cutting sessions by calling upon only a small portion of this potential.

Like all Jazz musicians, he found the late '50s and the first half of the '60s to be cold and hungry years. He supported himself and his family primarily by non-jazz employment. All too rarely he appeared in concerts and local clubs.

In 1967 he was given the opportunity to show his hand in front of some of the big names at the first Jazz Festival at the State University at Albany. Dan Morgenstern was impressed with his playing and wrote, "he contributed robust, swinging improvisations," and "he performed on the big horn (baritone sax) with feeling and flow."

In 1969 he produced a record independently before it became popular to do so. It was called "This Is It!" (Priam 101). Reviewing the album, Pete Welding wrote that "Brignola is one of the better baritone players, with a striking command of the horn's full resources." Welding captured Brignola's quality well when he said that his playing of ***Mace*** was "a good illustration of Brignola's mastery of baritone, but is above all musical, full of blistering, hard playing.... Let's hear from you again, Nick".

But although the world was ready for Brignola, he was not ready for the hardships of travel. He had paid his dues for years, and now he was only interested in an easy and economically secure life.

It seemed that things were about to happen

photograph by Doug Brown

for Nick in 1970 when he was chosen the baritone saxophonist most deserving of wider recognition in an international critics' poll. On the strength of this new exposure he formed a group which incorporated some of the new rock rhythms without sacrificing any of the spontaneity of Jazz. This began a long and still standing assocation with a brilliant, though obscure, pianist, Don York. A college Jazz critic described a typical Brignola performance of that period:

"Brignola enters on saxello, whining furiously, while spiralling out of a fire fanned by Galleo (his drummer) who seems sympathetic to the various moods of the leader, and by the wild, almost insane runs by York. Brignola is once again left alone, slashing and jumping, changing tempi constantly while occasionally alluding to the theme. The piano returns, followed by bass and finally drums. York and Brignola then demonstrate their skill in avant garde jazz by frantically "battling" one another with no set rhythmic basis, but in a definite circular pattern. The song ends with an audience cheering madly."

It looked as though this new group was going to give Brignola the attention he deserved. The music was exciting and innovative. He captured the imaginations of college audiences and was in constant demand for college concerts. At one such concert his group appeared as a warm-up for Miles Davis, and his acceptance easily overshadowed the response for the trumpet great. His group was contracted to Capitol Records, and was asked to record a soundtrack for a movie: The Big Breakthrough seemed imminent.

Then, once again, everything fell through. The record remained in Capitol's vaults, the group disbanded, and Brignola was back to playing weddings.

Looking back at his flirtation with rock, he told me, "It was a deviation and as such I welcomed it, and learned a lot from it. The drag of it was, it was also supposed to be a commercial thing. But it did free me, and prepare me for what I'm doing now. But I'm glad it didn't succeed, because that would have really been a curse to play that now."

This hiatus was a misleading one. Nick was getting impatient; ready to take on the world. He knew he was the best, and wanted everyone else to know it, too. When a club temporarily featured well known jazz artists, he was often there, axe in hand, ready to destroy anyone in sight in a battle of musical minds. One such night Pepper Adams was in town. Nick got on the stand during the last set and ripped a series of astonishing choruses, frightening in their intensity. Ideas popped up that I had never heard him so much as approach before. He cut his fellow baritonist badly and Pepper, with a wry grin, knew it.

In the midst of an upsurge in jazz, Nick formed a group with Dave Holland and Jack DeJohnette called Friends. They drew record-breaking crowds during their debut, and from the looks of things Nick was ready to, once again, pay those dues, so that the world could hear him roar. The group lasted a couple of months.

Nearly a year later, in early 1975, Nick joined up with a group that was previously a trio called Petrus. Pianist Phil Markowitz, bassist Gordon Johnson, and drummer Ted Moore, were all graduates from Eastman School Of Music. They were a rock jazz unit, and their first concert with Nick, at the State University of New York at Albany drew nearly a thousand people. The response from the crowd was overwhelming, and it looked like Nick was, once again, on the way up. He worked frequently with this new group, filling clubs with excited young jazz fans.

Several months later calamity struck. Markowitz had his van containing his electric piano stolen. Gordon Johnson was signed up by Maynard Ferguson, and Petrus was no more.

Brignola's hunger for fame has made him cynical. He resents critics for ignoring him. In an interview I did with him, he told me, "Most critics read album covers and this is the basis for their criticism. It's a drag because in a way they have a say over your career. It's like putting your whole career in the hands of idiots."

He is also quick to attack those musicians who are no longer living up to their names, or those plastic giants who never deserved to be as popular as they are. That and his love of competition is what often attracts him to sessions. "A jam session is not a Sunday afternoon businessman's bounce for me. I go up there after a guy's ass, and expect him to be after mine. I always dig that competition thing and it results in great music. It also keeps away the bad players. You either play or get off the stage. I don't like to hear amateurs. I'd rather see them sell the horn and get two new suits. And I'm out to make a lot of musicians among the best dressed in the world."

Brignola will take on anyone. He has been on the stand with Clark Terry, Elvin Jones, Zoot Sims, Thad Jones, Chet Baker, Jimmy McPartland and, of course, DeJohnette and Holland. About the latter two he says, "I've played this kind of music before, but never with such great players. They had the basics before they got into this stuff, and it really allows us to work together quite well, while still being unpredictable enough to make it exciting."

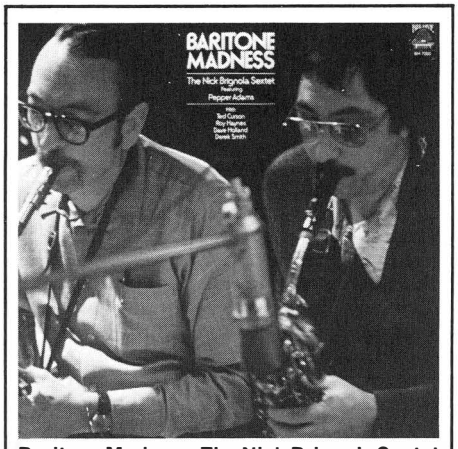
Nick can cover the whole field of jazz, as he proved to a sellout crowd at Cohoes Music Hall in June of 1975. There he performed a Dixieland set with Jimmy McPartland, a bebop set with Howard McGhee, and a more modern performance with Petrus. The response from both the crowd and the critics was ecstatic.

He has long ago given up on mainstream jazz fans, saying that most of them would rather "stay home and watch Bonanza" than go to a jazz concert. He senses that if he is going to make it he must rely on the true jazz fans who have never deserted the ship, and the under '30s who are looking for something more fulfilling than rock.

Meanwhile, Brignola will try once again to form a group of his own. "My problem is I've never fit into anyone else's group very well. I was just a cog in the wheel." He is looking for "young players who can really play well and develop with you. If I can get someone who can play bass, harmonica, or even a refrigerator, and can do it well, I'll bring him into the group." — ***Bob Rosenblum***

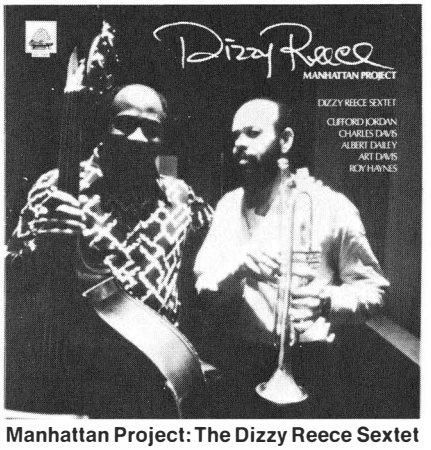
Editor's afterword: At this writing Nick Brignola is once again gaining attention with an excellent new recording, "Baritone Madness", on Bee Hive Records (1130 Colfax Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201). This record features Brignola on baritone with Pepper Adams, Ted Curson, Derek Smith, Dave Holland and Roy Haynes, and is available from ***Coda.***

Bee Hive Records



Baritone Madness: The Nick Brignola Sextet
Bee Hive BH 7000

Nick Brignola & Pepper Adams, bar sax; Ted Curson, tpt; Derek Smith, pno; Dave Holland, bass; Roy Haynes, drums



Manhattan Project: The Dizzy Reece Sextet
Bee Hive BH 7001

Dizzy Reece, tpt; Clifford Jordan, ts; Charles Davis, ts; Albert Dailey, pno; Art Davis, bass; Roy Haynes, drums

Starfingers: The Sal Salvador Sextet
Bee Hive BH 7002

Sal Salvador, guitar; Eddie Bert, tb; Nick Brignola, bar sax; Derek Smith, pno; Sam Jones, bass; Mel Lewis, drums

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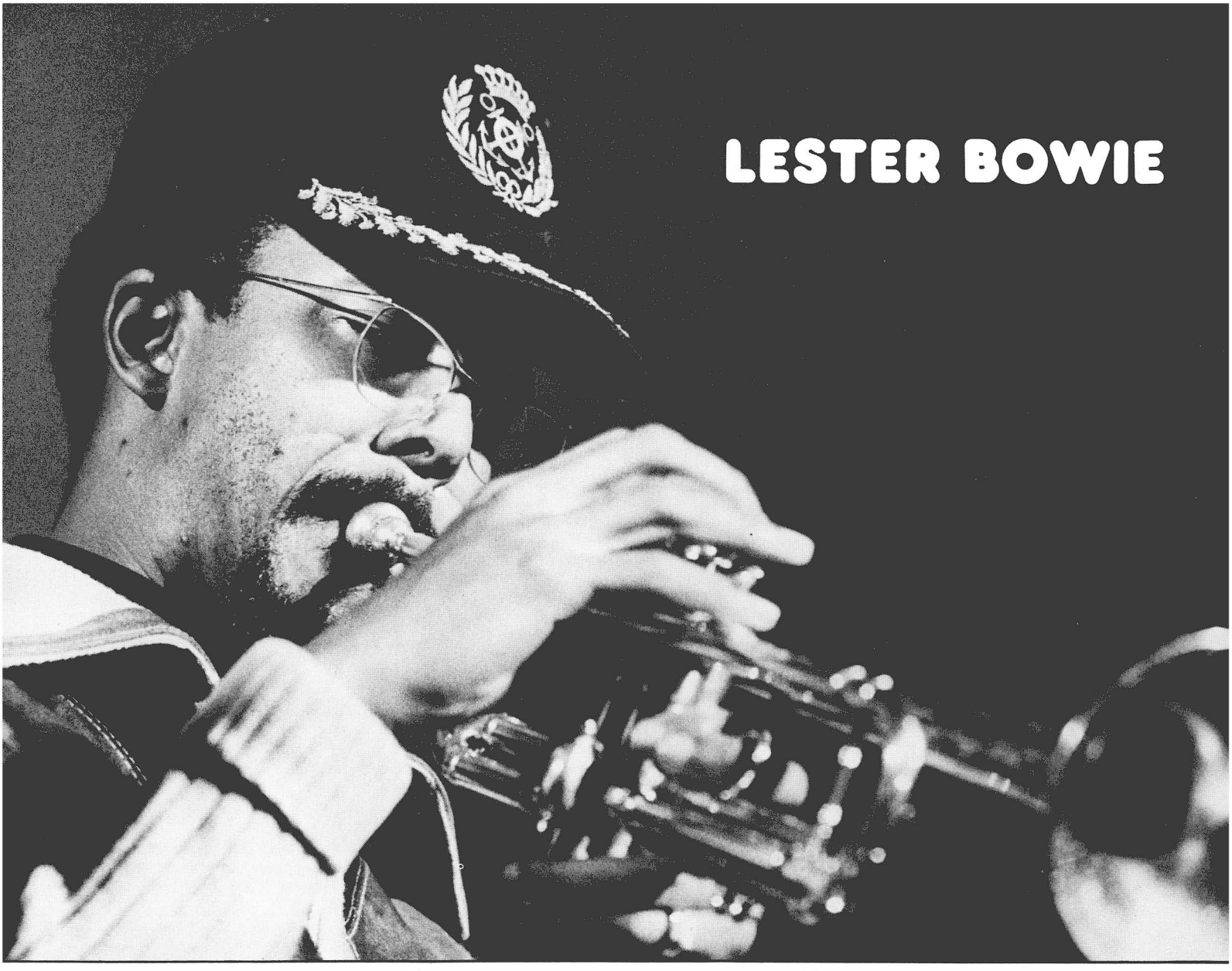
Bee Hive Records, 1130 Colfax St., Evanston, Illinois 60201, U.S.A.

LESTER BOWIE



LESTER BOWIE: My father was a band director and a music teacher. He was a trumpet player too and he had good technique. I think he wanted to be a classical trumpeter, but they wouldn't open up to black cats. He knew all that literature, because he had a master's degree in music. There's a lot of musicians in the whole Bowie family. All his brothers were musicians of the town and the area. They played whatever happened, celebrations, legion hall bands, marching bands. I remember a lot of uncles who played tubas and trombones.

I think me and my brother Byron are the only ones left of the Bowies who are still full-time musicians. There might be some younger cousins with rock bands. The whole family, they all respect musicians, the life style, the attitude. It's a very loose family.

I wasn't considering being a musician. I was going to be a lawyer. I figured I would play on the side. Play a few dances, parties, you know, not be a full-time trumpet player.

You first become a professional when you're in the union. You've got to be a union musician. When I was fifteen I became a union member. I never was a full member, though, I got a temporary card. Union cats would stop me from playing, because I owed them back dues. My card was never up. Now I played publicly and for money at parties and stuff before that, but at fifteen I started playing radio shows. There's a tape somewhere of a radio show I did, I don't know if anyone could ever find that tape, but one day it would probably be the one tape I would like to hear, because I was fifteen and we won this talent show and I would like to hear what this band we had could have possibly played, because I didn't know shit, man, I was just blowing!

I joined the military when I was seventeen. I wanted to be away from home, on my own. It was time for me to leave, I was ready to go out and see the world. I didn't have any disagreements with my parents, I didn't dislike being home. I had a good time, I had good parents. I thought I would travel abroad when I joined the military, but as I found out, I ended up staying in Texas for three years, I didn't travel anywhere, ha ha ha, I was in Texas, in the same place for three years!

GEORGE COPPENS: Where was your concept of trumpet playing formed, was it already there in St. Louis or was it developed mainly after you moved to Chicago?

Lester: It started when I started to play seriously. When I was down in Texas I used to copy Louis Armstrong. When I was young, about fourteen, I used to study with this cat named Bobby Danzie. He was a trumpet player from St. Louis, a really hip trumpet player. He used to tell me a lot of stuff. I've always been so amazed by all musicians, but not any one of them completely kills me for everything. I can't listen to one and say, this is my man and that's it for me, because I like Diz, Fats, Clifford Brown, Miles, I like all of them.

Bobby Danzie started me into jazz, but cats whose music I didn't notice, like Kenny Dorham, made me decide absolutely to be a trumpet player. Kenny was the cat that turned me out. I got his records, copied solos. Then Freddie Hubbard, I started getting into Freddie Hubbard. He taught me that the name of the game was playing trumpet. Like Kenny Dorham taught me that you gotta be hip and soulful. And that's what Bobby Danzie was telling me, you gotta be soulful, tongue the notes, be expressive. Kenny was hip, slick. From Freddie I learned to be a trumpet player, either you play the horn or give it up and do

photo by Markus di Francesco

something else. Because he was playing so good, there was no getting by him unless you could play. And then I got into Miles after Freddie. I'd been listening to Miles all the time, kind of, but he didn't knock me out. I'd think there was nothing happening. Then I got into Miles and Miles taught me to be original, because Miles is as bad as all of that, he's original, plays in a completely different kind of way, sideways, and I didn't realize it until I was copying what he was playing. I would study the way a cat progressed through the changes, the way he used intervals and the way things would be constructed. But Miles played the whole thing sideways. I was playing completely different passages and valve combinations that one does not normally play in the regular thing. Then I got into Miles and that taught me to be original.

By the time I got into Miles, I'd gotten back to St. Louis. I had been in the military service in Texas. I played with James Clay and Fathead Newman. Then I came back to St. Louis. By then any trumpet player working in St. Louis could play all of Miles' songs, so I had to know all that really good. It put me right into being original, because I would do it like him and then in the other kind of way, a little bit like Kenny, a little bit like Freddie, a little bit loud, a little bit soft and the scope of it just got wider and wider, because I worked all kinds of gigs. I went to carnivals, I worked in circus bands, a lot of road shows and I did a whole theatrical circuit, all the way down to Arkansas. Me and Phillip (Wilson) worked for the phony Drifters, I got Phillip the gig. Every time you got a famous group, you got three or four fake groups travelling throughout the South in the really small rural towns as The Drifters or The Impressions. They would copy those groups and we were the backing band. We were working different places and we didn't know who was going to be there, so one day we were The Drifters Orchestra, the next day somebody else's orchestra, Percy Mayfield or someone like that. I did that for a long time and that made me play all the time. And every town we travelled to we would find out where the jazz clubs were, meet the musicians and sit in.

George: What was the scene in St. Louis like at that time?

Lester: Oliver Lake was just getting started, but there was John Chapman, Joe Charles the drummer, John Mixon the bass player, Bobby Danzie, Sonny Hamp was bad, he's in New York now playing with the Ink Spots or someone like that. John Hicks was one of the younger cats, but he was bad. Me and Phillip, we had the baddest band, though, at that particular time, around 1962, '63, with John Norman on alto, John Chapman and Johnny Mixon. The whole world should hear this cat John Chapman, the music needs him. Cecil Taylor has done as much on the piano as can be done and everybody kind of plays like that, but John Chapman is completely original.

We played hard-bop, but we extended it. Completely wild and crazy, it was hard-bop, like the Jazz Messengers, Horace Silver, we did all that. We would extend it, we took it out. Not to the extent of like with the Art Ensemble of Chicago. I would do a little bit of that, but when I got with the Art Ensemble I learned how to develop this into extended statements.

George: Were the events going on in New York at that time felt in St. Louis?

Lester: We didn't feel much of what was happening in New York. The influence would be the records of Miles, Art Blakey, Lee Morgan. Those were the records everybody was listening to. We didn't get to see New York much, because we were working. I've always been a working musician, I didn't kind of dream of going to New York, like to move there and stay for the next twenty years. A lot of people I hadn't seen, because I was always working, whenever I could and you don't see a lot of jazz cats in Birmingham and Mobile, where I'd be working. But when I'd get a chance to get into a town where they were, I'd check them out. The thing that was weird about St. Louis was that they could do the stuff better than the cats in New York. When those cats came to St. Louis they would get scared. They would be running to see where Joe Charles' house was, come and hear John Chapman and sit there with their mouths open. The Midwest cats were bad, man! That's where Bird and all those cats came from.

George: At this time the Black Artists Group was not formed yet?

Lester: No, the Black Artists Group was formed by cats that hung out together. We used to do sessions at Oliver Lake's house all the time. All those cats, like Floyd LaFlore, Baikida Carroll, grew up together. Hemphill went to school in St. Louis, he was from Jefferson City. He would gravitate to St. Louis, then he moved there. For a long time before BAG started it was formulated, like the AACM was, by cats that had been playing and hanging out together. The AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) started officially in 1965, but we were hanging out together before that. Richard Abrams had the Experimental Band in 1961.

FRITS LAGERWERFF: When did you get in touch with the musicians of the AACM?

Lester: I moved to Chicago in 1965. I didn't get in the AACM until '66. The movement had been going on before that. I just came to Chicago doing all sorts of music, but I never really fitted in. I got bored quick with the musicians, with the music I was playing. It wasn't exciting enough. I was looking for more, so I found the AACM. One day Delbert Hill, a baritone player, took me to a rehearsal. It was very unusual for me, because I was accustomed to see in various cities, maybe a hard core group of three or four kind of eccentric, weird musicians. So I walked into this room and here's twenty of them. Here was everybody, Malachi Favors, Kalaparusha, Roscoe Mitchell, et cetera. They played the same kind of music they play now. I'd been doing that for years before even, and it was nothing new when I heard it. I was glad to hear and find some people that could play really good.

Frits: How did the development occur from the AACM to Roscoe Mitchell's Sextet to The Art Ensemble of Chicago?

Lester: The original founders of the AACM were Muhal Richard Abrams, Malachi, Steve McCall, Jody Christian, Phil Cochran. They became a legal organisation in '65, but all these things go back a long way. Roscoe and Malachi had been playing together since 1961. Then I came. Roscoe had his sextet and I joined that. We had a few personnel changes. We got down to where it was just three people. We had Phillip Wilson for a while. That was back in '66, I first came in '66. The pressure got greater.

Frits: What sort of pressure do you mean?

Lester: All sorts of pressure. Maybe pressure that I applied. I have certain standards of musicianship and the people I'm around have to deal with that. And that's like music all the time. At first the AACM was like, guys that did things on the weekend. Once a week they would get together, have a meeting. Roscoe's band was like that too. Roscoe worked in a factory that made adding machines. All the guys had jobs on the side. Malachi and I were the only full time professionals in the Art Ensemble. He worked at the airport with a trio in a cocktail bar. I wanted to start doing music all the time. We had to rehearse and play all the time, all day, all night, every day. The cats that couldn't make the rehearsals eventually dropped out. They couldn't make trips, when we would decide, let's go to California, who's going?

George: What was the reason for the Art Ensemble to move to France in the late sixties?

Lester: It was right into the spirit of the business. In order to survive, to stay intact we had to work enough with the Art Ensemble as a unit to survive. I sold everything I had in Chicago at that time. I got whatever money I had together and we all came over. I had my whole family over, my two children.

At that time it was important that we got well-known enough to kind of survive and make a little. And we survived.

Frits: During that period Don Moye was added to the band, whereas before there was no drummer with it. Why was that?

Lester: We had been auditioning drummers. We had used different drummers, but none of them were quite suitable, musically or personally. The group is kind of weird, I mean not really weird, because everybody is pretty down to earth, but it was the conditions we had to live in together. We lived in barns, tents, trailers, log cabins, we've been in hip suburban houses. When we go places we rent houses in the country, where we can have enough room for all of us to have an area to sleep and an area we can set up for practising.

A lot of drummers played with us. Steve McCall, Jerome Cooper, Bob Crowder, who did a record with us before we went to Europe, because we didn't have a drummer after Phillip split. You see, the music doesn't depend upon any kind of instrumentation, it just depends upon the spirit among the musicians. Whether or not they can make the music. You can make it with one person, two people or three, so we just continued as a trio; me, Malachi and Roscoe. Every now and then we would have a drummer. In Europe we started using different cats. Then we used Moye, he just came in, all sour, you know, hired for one or two gigs. He made his rehearsals and he stuck.

George: At that time radical black nationalism was strong. Have you seen any positive results coming out of that?

Lester: I can't see any positive results. Everybody was gaining reputations as powerful nationalists, but this didn't work, everything is still the same. One thing it did do, it stopped a lot of cats from making it. Clifford Thornton for instance, I remember he couldn't get back into France, he was arrested, put back on the plane. I have no time for that kind of stuff, I always said during that time, maybe it wasn't widely upheld, that all that political shit was bullshit. We tried to play music, we know nothing about politics. That's the politicians' problem. I mean, every human has a right to

have his own personal beliefs, that's cool, but as far as I'm concerned, I have a career as a musician that I'm about.

George: You think a musician should stick to the music....

Lester: The music is universal, our politics is the politics of the planet. We deal anywhere. Our politics transcends religions, race and language, so we're dealing in another area. They all made it look like that, if you were black, you were political. That's all they would ask you about, you were put into it. Some cats like it, Joseph Jarman was a little speechmaker anyway, he likes that kind of stuff, so he would do it. Everyone in the Art Ensemble has the right to do whatever they want to do.

George: To get back to the AACM, Anthony Braxton seems to be responsible for the direction a lot of Chicago musicians take, George Lewis, Douglas Ewart and others....

Lester: There's a whole branch of that, I call it neo-classical. They're in touch with this kind of thing and I feel it's very valid and very cool. I enjoy the music very much. There are some that have those leanings towards that area of the music, the area of the university guys, professors and things you know, but I am from a different kind of thing. I deal purely with ass-kicking. Period. Just good old country ass-kicking!

George: That way, though, they seem to ignore a whole lot of the cultural background of jazz, the blues, gospel, the roots....

Lester: Yeah, they do, but at the same time they are developing other areas that are just as culturally valid and expressive of our time and age. The music is spreading to encompass all of these areas. I'm more of a traditional kind of cat, at the same time I'm somewhat eccentric, but I believe in extending the music to even that, the classical.

Frits: In The Netherlands there are improvising musicians who don't refer exclusively to the Afro-american tradition of improvising. You have probably heard groups here that sound different from the American ensembles.

Lester: I have listened to Willem Breuker's group and it's a very good group, but it's re-establishing the principles that have been laid out. I was glad to see them go to the States. I'm sure that a lot of young people in the States are still running around trying to do something with these theatrical elements. It helps the whole situation for him to go there.

Frits: Where did these theatrical elements that the Art Ensemble uses come from? I see you onstage in your white doctor's coat. Malachi Favors, Jarman and Moye paint their faces, doing their ethnical thing. Where does all this come from?

Lester: It comes from the imagination. The thing with the Art Ensemble is, you're free to do whatever you want, how you want to express yourself. We like to put on something special for the music. I like to put on something special, if it's nothing but a tie on or a hat. Something special for the performance. I'm a specialist kind of doctor anyway. I'm very scientific about my musical approach and analysis, so I wear the coat to signify the importance of science. I used to wear a lot of different things. One day I'll change from that into something else, maybe a football uniform or a baseball player. If I had more money I would have more different costumes. The doctor thing is something easy. I can carry it all over the world, I can't carry a whole wardrobe. If I was in it on the level I will be on in a few years I will have many looks. I will be a waiter one day and a worker the other. I could be a judge, I could be a boxer. I want to get this boxing outfit and I'll be called Muhammad Boo-wee. Rope, trunks, the whole thing. And then play the concert with boxing shoes on, ha, ha, ha!

It's an extension of my expression. You're using all the aspects. If you're coming to my concerts not only do you hear me, you also see me, so I can give your eyes something too. It makes people think more, it opens them up. They see the paint and they think about the music. They see the different personalities up there.

Frits: Was Sun Ra an influence as far as these aspects of decoration and ways of thinking are concerned?

Lester: In a way, but Sun Ra had left before to go to Philadelphia. He had an influence in the way that a lot of cats knew him. It was through his work that our work came about, because he was a little bit ahead of us. He wasn't there when the AACM was developing. I never knew Sun Ra until years later. Sun Ra had his shit together long before the Sputnik, long before they put the first satellite up he was talking about intergalactic research.

George: In an interview some seven years ago you said you don't have fantastic chops.

Lester: I still don't have fantastic chops, that's why I'm a scientist. I'm not naturally fitted to that instrument. For trumpet I don't have the tooth structure and lips formation. I've had a history of embouchure problems in the past. I haven't had any lately, but when I was coming up, I went through certain dramatic changes and I don't have the natural chops. But... I have learned to use everything. I might crook my toes sometimes just to get a note or make a movement to jerk the note into place. I have learned how to scientifically get up there with the rest of the cats. And I can play loud!

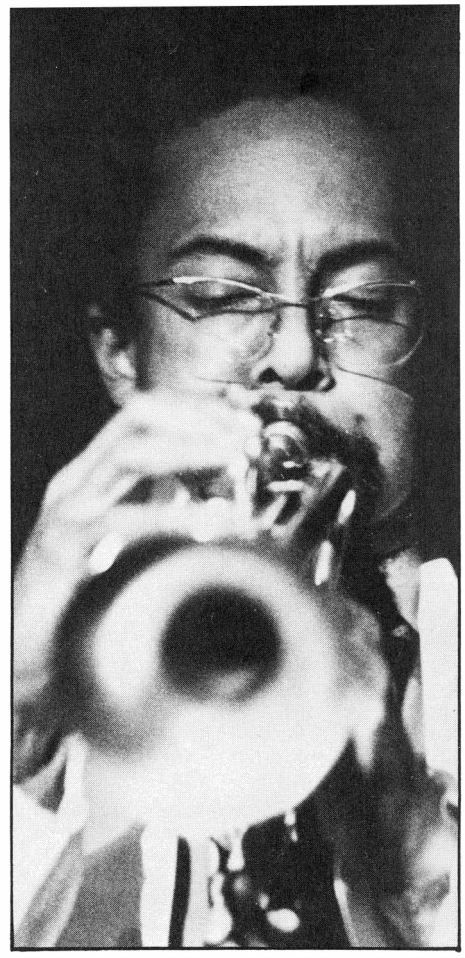
When I first got into music I stressed sound above everything else. Even if I played for a long time it would be so loud and strong. My father taught me all of that. I was taking lessons with a symphony cat, a trumpet player with the St. Louis symphony orchestra. My old man had me take lessons with the cat and he would be there with me every day to get it down.

George: So you really kind of turned your weakness into strength.

Lester: Exactly. I turned my analyzing exactly to where my weakness was, what my strength was and how to use one to help the other. I learned a lot. I learned an entire concept from mistakes. A lot of sounds that I do now were originally mistakes I made trying to get another note. I would remember how I did it at that time, the amount of pressure I was using, the particular type of embouchure I was using and I learned how to control the mistake to where I could make it any time I wanted to. I could make a mistake on purpose! I'd go for a note and the note would have to go "daaaa", and instead I would hit something like "arrrggh", so I learned how to say "arrrggh" and the contrast between the two I turned into a meaningful artform.

George: At every concert you seem to be out for a strong confrontation with the other musicians on the bandstand. They better play their best or risk being wiped off the stage.

Lester: That's the way I deal. I'm not trying to cut someone to hurt them, but I'm competitive,



photograph of Lester Bowie by Hans Nederbragt

I'm there only to play. I only enjoy playing on a very high level, everybody being sharp and up. That's the spirit I like to play in. I try to exude that feeling myself, the pressure to be creative.

George: Did it ever happen to you that you were wiped out yourself?

Lester: The cat that really wiped me was Sonny Grey in Paris. At that time I was sure I had the trumpet style of the future. I was solid. I mean, I wasn't getting smoked. The days when cats were cutting me went years before that. I had been wiping cats for years, just wiping, always wiping! Everywhere I went I'd been wiping, until I got to Paris and there was this Jamaican cat who had lived in Paris for twenty years, Sonny Grey. Malachi did a gig with him and he said, hey man, this trumpet player down there is pretty good. I said, oh. In my mind I thought, I can get this cat, I can get anybody. I had been smoking cats for the last five years, just killing cats, you know, so I knew I could get this cat. But Roscoe and everybody was telling me, hey man, Sonny is bad! Because they're waiting to see you get screwed up. I mean not really screwed up, because it's a very friendly competition, but it is a competition. So I finally had to get together with Sonny Grey: bebop! I take pride in dealing a cat in his own backyard, so if a cat plays bebop I say okay, let's play some bebop and I try to deal with them in the context of bebop and at the same time show them how it can be done a little bit differently and how to be very personal and original within the framework of bebop and even extend it. I thought I was going to kill this guy!

We started playing. I had the first solo. He just laid back. He was older than me, more

experienced. He was cool. I'd go out there and blow, I played every trick I knew, upside down and everything. I blew long solos, ten, fifteen minutes and then he could come out, blow two choruses and walk back, blow two dull choruses and walk on back. Then I came up. I'd hit, I was anxious. We did about three songs and in the middle of that third solo he could hear I was finished. Just tired. I had probably played a million high notes and low notes and he knew I was tired. And as soon as he knew I was tired he played his chorus and ended the tune. Then the cat said, okay, Lester, ***Sweet Georgia Brown***! (Lester indicates very high tempo) Then he went out, played twenty minutes, twenty, thirty choruses, beautiful, completely inventive, no repeating. Then he walked off the stand and left me up there, tired and there was nothing I could do!

Wiped me out, man. Never forgot that. Malachi was playing, he said, yup, he gotcha there. But ain't nobody got me after that. I got him repeatedly after that. He just tripped me professionally. You can be playing, but a pro can come up at you and wipe you out. Since then we've played some beautiful music together.

Frits: In the sixties the number of trumpet players was really small compared to saxophone players. This used to be quite different before that time.

Lester: There weren't a lot that we know about, right, but there have always been a lot. Not many good free trumpet players, that's right.

Frits: Do you have an explanation for that? There have been many good free drummers, bass players, piano players etc.

Lester: Trumpet is a very difficult instrument. It must be the most difficult. All brass is difficult. The main difference with the other instruments and the brass in general, but the trumpet in particular, is that with brass the sound originates in the instrumentalist, it comes from the player. In the reeds the sound comes from the vibration of the reed. I'm talking about the origin of the sound. Of course it's also physical, but it comes from this reed. With the drums its sound comes from the skin on the drum, with bass fiddle it's the sound of that string, that's resonated by this wooden box. The trumpet is the only one, where the sound starts right here (points at the belly-button). The source of the sound is the vibration of the thin membrane of skin on your lips. Instead of being a reed it's your lip. It takes a long time to perfect it.

Frits: If you're a very good trumpet player it sounds beautiful, if you're a fair trumpet player it sounds awful. A mediocre flute player can sound quite good.

Lester: That's what I mean, you could sound horrible. If you've listened to Clifford Brown, you love him, but you can't stand all these marginal people. It just sounds horrible to you. The trumpet is hard. You find a lot of saxophone players and drummers that used to be trumpet players and gave it up. You work all this time and you think you can play and you know how long it takes to progress just a little bit and then you see somebody doing it like it's so easy. You say, oh, I'll never be able to do that. It'll take me ten years.

Frits: You don't play a lot of high notes. Do you prefer to stay in the middle range of the trumpet?

Lester: I use the lower extremes and the higher extremes just for flexibility. Mostly I'm kind of midrange with accents low or high. I'm not a high note cat. When I'm playing I hit F's or G's sometimes, but I would never be a lead trumpet player. I'm an improvisor, I'm a jazz cat. In every band I was the guy who took the solos.

Frits: You don't feel the need to extend your range to the very high notes?

Lester: You don't extend your range. Let's say I was to develop a high note thing, I would have to sacrifice all my other notes. I wouldn't be as flexible. I can hit high notes now and I can hit low notes now. Have you ever heard Cat Anderson when he comes down to the middle register? It's nothing, it's thin and he can't even play low notes. You have to be a person that does it, you're a high note person. The first thing you have to do if you're playing music is to find out where your strength is and where your weaknesses are, or you become really frustrated. Suppose I was running around all these years trying to be a lead trumpet player and every time I'd hear Cat Anderson or Maynard Ferguson I'd cry. I don't want to do it because it's not a natural thing for me.

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an interview by George Coppens and Frits Lagerwerff

WOODY SHAW

Rosewood
CBS PC 35309

Obviously and fortunately, Woody Shaw is not (and has never been) a man of compromise. This record brings us the patient continuation of his efforts, wrapped in a very professional, very sensitive and very swinging manner.

Rarely have I seen a musician progress so steadily toward the realization of his musical project. His sound, that many found far too strident in the beginning, is now fully controlled and carefully polished. It conveys far more easily the full spectrum of expression. His music is very structured, highly organized, swings a lot and has a great deal to say. Shall we then speak of perfection? Certainly if we consider the high level of musicianship and creativity displayed here by everyone. Nevertheless, the first overall impression is that both the compositions and the arrangements are slightly conservative. After several auditions, though, this initial impression tends to fade away as one discovers many subtleties that might not have been immediately apparent.

Woody Shaw uses both of his working units: the quintet (Carter Jefferson, sax; Onaje Allen Gumbs, piano; Clint Houston, bass; Victor Lewis, drums) and the concert ensemble where Joe Henderson and Steve Turre join in. The cover is not explicit about who plays where and it sounds like more musicians than the aforementioned were there.

On this particular album I especially enjoyed the efforts of Clint Houston on bass. I found his composition ***Sunshowers*** a step above the rest: it starts with a beautiful ad-lib from Woody, accompanied by Houston on arco and various percussion. Shaw's trumpet sounds very ethereal, airy, lyrical — a sound you would not have expected from it ten years ago. After this rather impressionist prologue, the whole band starts cooking and provides some of the best moments of the session — Joe Henderson and Carter Jefferson trading explosive fours, inspired, swinging solos by Shaw and Gumbs, all backed by a terrific rhythm section. Clint Houston definitely belongs to the major league of the bass and I can't wait to hear more from him. His too short solo on ***Rahsaan's Run*** left me longing for more.

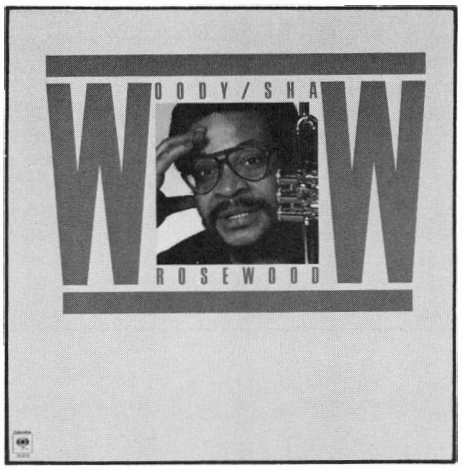
In a few words this is an excellent recording, that will bring you much pleasure on repeated listening. To the listener who might frown at the relative lack of innovation in the writing, be reminded that forty minutes of music where every second is blessed with imagination, feeling and swing *is* innovative, these days.

— Jean-Pascal Souque

SONNY STITT

Blues for Duke
Muse MR 5129

It is easy to take Sonny Stitt for granted. His chief virtues are the conventional ones of an expressive tone, characteristic phraseology, and fluent swing. All these, though, he possesses to



an advanced degree, so that, as ***Don't Get Around Much*** shows here, he can take a melody almost straight yet simultaneously turn it into a personal statement of real consequence. Before now, when support has been lacklustre, he has been known to grab the rhythm section as it were by its collective neck, and by dint of bearing down on the beat, irrespective of tempo, generate the deep-rooted drive inseparable from his playing. Such desperate remedies were not called for here. Barry Harris, Sam Jones and Billy Higgins combine unerringly to unfurl a rich tapestry of sound, and over and against this deep-woven backdrop the leader functions in purposeful yet relaxed vein. Only one of the six items, ***I Got It Bad***, is taken on alto: the rest have Stitt on tenor, and his treatments of ***C Jam Blues, Satin Doll*** and ***Perdido***, like those of the two items already mentioned, are just as typical of his work as his own ***Blues For Duke***, with no ill-advised modifications made to his normal style in the interests of a musical momento mori.

Yet if Stitt should be complimented on a top-drawer performance, the lion's share of praise must nevertheless be reserved for Barry Harris. Throughout this album his playing pulsates with a very special kind of magic; long ago this indefatigable artist found his metier in the complexities of the classic bop piano style and during the last twenty years he has worked tirelessly fully to tap the potential for self-expression which he discerned in its demanding disciplines. Today rhythmic subtlety, delicacy of touch and constantly renewed melodic inspiration combine in his work to transmit a sense of elation fraught amongst its many other shades of feeling with an all-pervading tenderness. Amidst the clamour of the market place little has been heard of Barry Harris, but few indeed are the players who could rival the sparse refinement he displays in his ***Perdido*** solo, or match for exquisite grace the variations he conjures from the chords of ***Satin Doll***.

— Michael James

I Remember Bird
Catalyst 7616

It is possible that Sonny Stitt has recorded more frequently as leader than anyone else in jazz history. If he has, the reason why is a mystery to me. He is, to be sure, a very good saxophonist (on both alto and tenor), but he reminds me of the girl with the curl: when he is good he is very, very good, but when he is bad he is horrid. His early work, as collected on Prestige 24044, is first-rate, as is his playing of Giuffre arrangements on Verve 8309, on the Cobblestone records featuring Barry Harris, and on several other discs. Many, however, are best forgotten.

This record contains three cuts of prime Stitt, and the rest are good but finally routine. The first, ***Body And Soul***, is all Stitt on tenor, and finds him able to milk new meaning out of this seemingly insatiable evergreen that all saxophonists find sine qua non. He is not only melodically sensitive here; he also quotes logically from ***Prisoner Of Love*** so as to enhance the original. He is obviously aware of the lyrics of both tunes — they express a similar sentiment and therefore reinforce their harmonic compatibility. This is something that Dexter Gordon, the most quoting of all jazzmen, is not always able to accomplish.

The second notable performance is on Leonard Feather's ***I Remember Bird*** that Stitt treats appropriately mournfully, and the third, surprisingly, is on ***Watch What Happens***. Here and throughout the album Stitt is accompanied by a rock-solid rhythm section headed by the Powellish Dolo Coker who also solos effectively (Allen Jackson is on bass and Clarence Johnston is on drums). Frank Rosolino joins Stitt on most of the tracks, and his staccato style is attractive against the saxophonist's fluid lyricism. Both men share an impeccable mastery of their respective instruments.

The album's title refers only to Feather's composition and to the spirit that informs the session. There are no Parker originals, as one might expect, and the master recorded only ***Body And Soul*** of the pieces included here.

— Benjamin Franklin V

DAVID SCHNITTER

Goliath
Muse MR 5153

The title of this release is well chosen, for contrary to the propaganda of the jazz publicists it is a much harder task for the newcomer to establish himself in familiar territory than to hit on a novel means of expression. The style in which Schnitter works instantly invites comparison with such luminaries as Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson, and, especially from the group viewpoint, middle-period Coltrane, and it is greatly to his credit that despite such intense competition his music here carries real authority. ***Swing Thing*** quickly shows us he can mount a sustained attack, building up the tension with jagged phrasing and a confident use of registral extremes, his exploitation of the lower reaches of his tenor being especially noteworthy. Overt muscularity of that kind also characterizes his contributions to the other four pieces, his ***My Funny Valentine*** solo evincing real passion if limited light and shade, though the shorter ***Night And Day*** suggests that he does have the potential to infuse a wider spectrum of feeling into his work, even if this particular album tends toward a rather monochrome aggressiveness.

His colleagues in the rhythm section play with tremendous professionalism. If, on the debit side, attention must be drawn to the occasionally leaden colouring of Cecil McBee's bass lines (surely this is an electric instrument, though not acknowledged as such?) credit must conversely go to the teeming elegance of Hubert Eaves' pianistics, and, in the case of Eddie Moore, to a drum solo in ***Night And Day*** that apart from its own extraordinary quality also helps us recognize the amalgam of restraint and power that unfailingly informs his work in the section. In two items, ***Goliath*** and ***Memories Part Two***, the quartet is augmented by the Brazilian trumpeter Claudio Roditi, who also wrote the latter of these. Its Latin flavour does not extend to his solo work, whose acrobatic character recalls the young Kenny Dorham, a comparison which extends to the neatly-tailored contours of his crowded lines. These trumpet passages, though, are but brief interludes in this thrustful programme, whose executive excellence and harsh yet disciplined fervour imply that Schnitter may well have the stamina to make real progress along the demanding route to which he has committed himself. *— Michael James*

RALPH SUTTON

Piano Solos
Sackville 2012

Medley ('Round The Old Deserted Farm; A Cottage For Sale; T'ain't So, Honey, T'ain't So), Echoes Of Spring, Morning Air, Eye Opener, In The Dark, Honky Tonk Train Blues, My Fate Is In Your Hands, Viper's Drag, Love Lies.

This Lp is a reissue of Eighty-Eight Up Right 88 UR-004, making more widely available a series of 1975 piano solos by Ralph Sutton that show a mastery of pre-bop piano as wide-ranging as any you'll find from contemporary ticklers. Boogie (***Train***), ruminative pieces from the 1920s then intended to be forward-looking (***Dark***), searing top-speed stride (***Opener***), lilting programmers (***Echoes***), and several pops enriched by an encyclopedia of substitute chords, fills and tricks,— it's a complete guided tour of the idiom by a man many would call today's top purveyor of Harlem-derived pianistics.

Although Sutton is a second-generation pianist, coming to prominence during the 1940s revival of interest in older jazz styles, a special beauty of his work is its naturalness. He never sounds like he's regurgitating licks picked up from old recordings, as so many current stride men do — once in a while, at least. Listen to the four-chorus exploration of ***Fate***, for example, developing from rubato opening to rolling, funky lines, to see how thoroughly Sutton delves into the material's potential.

All of this is delivered with a characteristic, bright, clean assured attack that constantly maintains its sense of swing, even when the rhythm is not explicitly stated. Possessing the technique to interrupt, without shifting gears, pile-driving left hand for complex two-handed interplay (***T'ain't***) and possessing the imagination to support a melody with ever-changing Wallerish block chords (***Cottage***), Sutton gets so much going on here, well, it's stupefying.

Congratulations to ***Coda***, from whom this album may be obtained for $7.98, for bringing an outstanding session within easy access to its readers. You cannot fail to be impressed.

— Tex Wyndham

LEW TABACKIN

Tabackin
Inner City 1038

Come Rain Or Come Shine/Morning/How Deep Is The Ocean/Bye Bye Blues/Soliloquy/Let The Tape Roll/ A Ghost Of A Chance.
Recorded December 19, 1974.

Tabackin, flute & tenor saxophone; Bob Daugherty, bass; Bill Goodwin, drums.

I have always been a little bemused by Lew Tabackin's tenor playing. While he is greatly accomplished in his devotion to the twin spirits of Hawkins and Rollins (especially the latter), celebrating here their vertical styles by omitting a piano, and while at the same time he is immediately identifiable as Lew Tabackin, there is a strain and a lack of humor in his playing which never fails to irritate me. He sounds at times as though he is sucking the notes in rather than blowing them, making the technique sound more difficult than it ought. He knows how to build a solo well, but sometimes it seems studied and you know what's coming. Finally, his playing at medium tempos is legato to a boring fault, academic Hawkins.

I register these objections partly in a reaction to the stridency of the various kudos on the liner (admittedly a superficial reason), but mostly because I believe that Tabackin is potentially more than a derivative player. Anyone who hears this album will agree that it is energetic and solid jazz, played by a man who understands the tradition. The hope is that he is not intimidated by that tradition, and will throw off the shackles to create his own style.

— Joel Ray

CECIL TAYLOR

The Great Concert of Cecil Taylor
Prestige P-34003

Second Act Of A, the extended work that comprises this three-record set, is the first recording that captures the musical marathon of a typical Cecil Taylor concert and the only recording that documents Sam Rivers' alliance with the master pianist. It is not, however, "The Great Concert of Cecil Taylor". In April, 1968, fifteen months before the recording of this Paris concert, I heard two Taylor performances that surpassed this one in cohesiveness, emotional power, and sheer physical stamina. I'm sure other listeners, before and since, have heard Taylor produce more compelling work than the concert under review.

This very good concert of Cecil Taylor fails to live up to its presumptuous billing primarily because Sam Rivers, a protean saxophonist in his own right, does not interact as comfortably with the basic Unit of Taylor, Jimmy Lyons and Andrew Cyrille as one might expect. Through the first half of the performance, Rivers' soloes sound so tentative that Taylor's torrential accompaniment washes them into the background. His lines in the improvised ensemble passages on sides two and three clash

with Lyons'; each saxophonist appears to be relating to a contrasting color within Taylor's densely-textured accompaniment. As the work progresses, however, Rivers improvises with increasing authority. His awesome solo in the twenty-minute encore rips through Taylor's keyboard orchestrations to reprise the thematic material developed during the main body of the performances. From the fourth side on, his blowing in the collectively improvised passages blends with Lyons' to create a secular counterpart to the exorcistic intensity of the John Coltrane-Pharoah Sanders saxophone dialogues. Although Rivers' freewheeling dynamism would appear compatible with Taylor's, his discursive method of structuring his improvisations differs too markedly from Taylor's intuitively ordered method to allow them to share more than an inconsistent compatibility.

Lyons, on the other hand, has found a home in Taylor's music, as Johnny Hodges found one in Ellington's, but has never received the critical acclaim his abilities warrant. Throughout the performance he plays with a fire that belies the sweetness of his tone. His keen sense of thematic development testifies to the brilliance obscured by the shadow of his leader's greatness.

Taylor, except for a momentary lapse, performs at the peak of his prodigious creative power. He develops the concert's basic theme with a deliberateness that informs his sometimes frenzied, sometimes rhapsodic improvisations and guides his sidemen through the thematic permutations they develop within his organizational concept. No matter how freely he appears to roam, his intuitive sense of form makes his most unpredictable turn of phrase pertinent to the overall structure of the performance. When he suddenly scats on side four, the move seems appropriate to the flow of the music. Unfortunately, as Taylor apparently realizes, his singing is better suited to shower stalls than concert halls. After the right move produces the wrong results, Taylor uses his voice to cue in Rivers, who extends the vocal line on soprano.

The inconsistency of Rivers and the one awkward moment of Taylor diminish the stature of what otherwise might have been one of the great concerts of Cecil Taylor. Nevertheless, any listener committed to Taylor's music will find this recording a rewarding experience.

— Vernon Frazer

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Reefer Songs
Stash Records ST 100

Copulating Blues
Stash Records ST 101

Here are two extremely interesting collections assembled by Jerry Valburn for producers Bernie Brightman and Roy Roisman that derive their fascination not so much from the music itself (although it's of a pretty high order) as the ideas to which the music gives expression. For these albums have been assembled not around an artist or style but around social themes.

Consider "Reefer Songs", a mini-library of 16 songs dealing with marijuana use recorded between 1932 and 1945. These were significant years for pot in the States, for they were the years in which its status passed from legal to illegal. In 1932 and '33 when Harlen Lattimore made ***Reefer Man***, Cab Calloway made ***The Man From Harlem*** and Benny Goodman did ***Texas Tea Party***, you couldn't get an alcoholic beverage in America. But you could enjoy a joint wherever and whenever you pleased. By 1936 when Stuff Smith made ***Here Comes The Man With The Jive*** and Andy Kirk turned out ***All The Jive Is Gone***, the situation was just the reverse. These songs tell the whole story. In 1937 Georgia White laments ***The Stuff Is Here***, meaning the hard stuff. But there's more than a little charm in ***The G Man Got The T Man*** or in catching none other than Ella Fitzgerald chirp about ***Wackey Dust*** with Chick Webb. Trixie Smith, Charlie Shavers and Sidney Bechet are heard in ***Jack I'm Mellow*** while Barney Bigard and Art Tatum are included in the rare ***Sweet Marijuana Brown***. And just for laughs, Harry "the Hipster" Gibson in ***Who Put The Benzedrine in Mrs. Murphy's Ovaltine.***

"Copulating Blues" is another matter. The material is mostly blues rather than swing, and the feeling, like the subject matter, is earthy. Here are songs about sex — not its meaning, its significance, its emotions. Just its pleasures.

There are a few familiar items such as Bessie Smith's ***Do Your Duty.*** But also some extremely rare material. From the Library of Congress recordings comes ***Winin' Boy*** by Jelly Roll Morton, never before issued. And so raunchy that even for this record the producers elected to edit out one chorus dealing with intercourse during menstruation. Also heard is the classic whore house anthem of them all, ***Shave 'Em Dry*** by Lucille Bogan. This track was made in the early '30s in two versions, and Columbia never issued this one until a year or two ago on an English LP. This marks its first issue in the United States. It's perhaps the dirtiest record ever made by a blues artist.

Young buyers will be particularly interested in hearing Merline Johnson and Big Bill Broonzy in the original ***Don't You Make Me High*** from 1938. Maria Muldaur made the song famous anew a few years ago — and frankly made the better version as well.

Perhaps this is the most important thing about both these LPs — the way they cross generational boundaries so easily. Everyone should dig these. All you need is an open mind.

— John McDonough

SOUNDTRACKS

Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway
Biograph BLP-M-3

Sound Tracks from: St. Louis Blues (1929); Rhapsody In Black And Blue (1932); Cab Calloway's Hi-De-Ho (1933); Jitterbug Party (1934)

St. Louis Blues (Bessie Smith, James P. Johnson Orchestra, Hall Johnson Choir, others); ***You Rascal You/Shine*** (Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra); ***Harlem Camp Meeting/Zaz-Zuh-Zaz/ The Lady With The Fan/I Love A Parade/Hot-Cha Razz-Ma-Tazz/"Long About Midnight/Jitterbug*** (Cab Calloway and his Orchestra).

Duke Ellington's Band Shorts (1929-1935)
Biograph BLP-M-2

Sound Tracks from: Black And Tan (1929); A Bundle Of Blues (1933); Symphony In Black (1935).

B&T: ***Black And Tan Fantasy/The Duke Steps Out/ Black Beauty/ Cotton Club Stomp/ Hot Feet/ Same Train*** (several titles repeated).

BoB: ***Lightnin'/ Rockin' In Rhythm/Stormy Weather/ Bugle Call Rag.***

SIB: ***The Laborers/ A Triangle/ A Hymn Of Sorrow/ Harlem Rhythm.***

Owing to the less than ideal sound reproduction found in early films, the material gathered in these two albums will have its greatest appeal to hard-core aficionados of the artists involved. Certainly, it would be foolish to recommend the Bessie, for example, to those who have yet to amass her available Columbias. Similarly, the sound tracks of Ellington's early film shorts assume their greatest value only after one has thoroughly immersed himself in Duke's more conventionally documented work. What will interest the already knowledgeable collector most, then, will be the degree to which these tracks compare with the artists' known output. And that, quite logically, must ultimately rest on the extent of one's exposure.

It is not intended as an easy dismissal to say that Bessie's classic ***St. Louis Blues*** with Louis Armstrong as accompanist is superior to her version on film, for the two are remarkably different performances. In the justifiably famous short, this most expressive of blues singers is backed by a heated group led by James P. Johnson, the personnel for which has never been satisfactorily identified, but which is believed to include members of the Fletcher Henderson band of the period. Additionally, a more formal element is introduced by the inclusion of the Hall Johnson Choir. Bessie's trenchant reading of the lyrics is spelled by the stomping band whose several uptempo choruses are frustratingly marred by overmodulation. By way of contrast, Armstrong's ***Rhapsody*** features the youthfully exuberant trumpeter in performances that rival his contemporaneous and more well-known versions of the same tunes, but the Calloway items are not quite so deathless. Accompanied by his regular orchestra, an outgrowth of The Missourians, Cab moans, groans, and wails over the blues-tinged colors of this one-time territory band. Unfortunately, speech takes precedence over jazz, a disability not shared by Cab's many excellent recordings.

The Ellington album, however, must be considered essential, for it contains the only known example of ***Symphony In Black*** played in its entirety. Actually, the title is far more presumptuous than the music, which virtually glows from the contributions of Billie Holiday, as well as those of the easily identifiable bandsmen. The sound quality of this more recent film is an improvement over that which flaws the earlier ones, but to negate the importance of any item of Ellingtonia simply because of poor fidelity is to sadly miss the point. Artie Whetsel is featured extensively on ***Black And Tan***, while the ***Stormy Weather*** section of Bundle Of Blues is treated tenderly by the frequently overlooked Ivie Anderson.

Film tracks represent one of the last frontiers of jazz collecting, and if the particular collector's tastes lean toward the glory days of this music, he must be prepared to accept with good-natured resignation all manner of non-musical irritants. However, the Biograph people seem to have made the job somewhat easier by transferring this material with great expertise. Readers unfamiliar with Biograph's track record can find out all about it by writing them in Canaan, New York 12029 USA.

— Jack Sohmer

(Biograph records are also available from ***Coda***).

EDDIE CLEANHEAD VINSON

The Clean Machine
Muse 5116

Cleanhead has finally made an LP to equal the qualities inherent in his music and revealed briefly more than a decade ago in his short-lived Bethlehem and Riverside LPs.

Vinson has gained a worthwhile reputation as a blues singer but his true forte is to be found in his alto saxophone playing. He is the prototype for the style of playing which gained popularity through Hank Crawford and Grover Washington but Vinson's expressive range is broader — and he reveals this better here than on any previous recording. There is some marvelous ballad playing (as only a jazz player can play a ballad — sweet but not saccharine) as well as swinging riff-styled South-Western instrumental blues where the altoist's soaring, singing phrasing transcends time and styles. There are three of Cleanhead's idiomatic vocals but at least he sounds here as though he believes, once again, in the lyrics.

A major factor in the success of this session is the compatibility of the musicians working with Cleanhead. Lloyd Glenn's piano is terrific — there are only a handful of pianists around today who still understand the nuances of this style of music and Lloyd Glenn is one of the best. He also has enough flexibility to feed the right chords for the more modern solos of trumpeter Jerry Rusch and tenor saxophonist Rashid Ali. But listen to his solo on ***Corn Fed*** and his opening statement on ***When My Baby Left Me*** to fully appreciate his capabilities. Larry Gales, Bruno Carr and guitarist Gary Bell are the rhythm section. They fit like a glove — neither treating the music in an old-fashioned manner nor marring it with fashionable gospel/rock patterns. In fact they play the music with the conviction it deserves but so often doesn't get. — *John Norris*

DICK WELLSTOOD

Live at the Cookery
Chiaroscuro CR-139

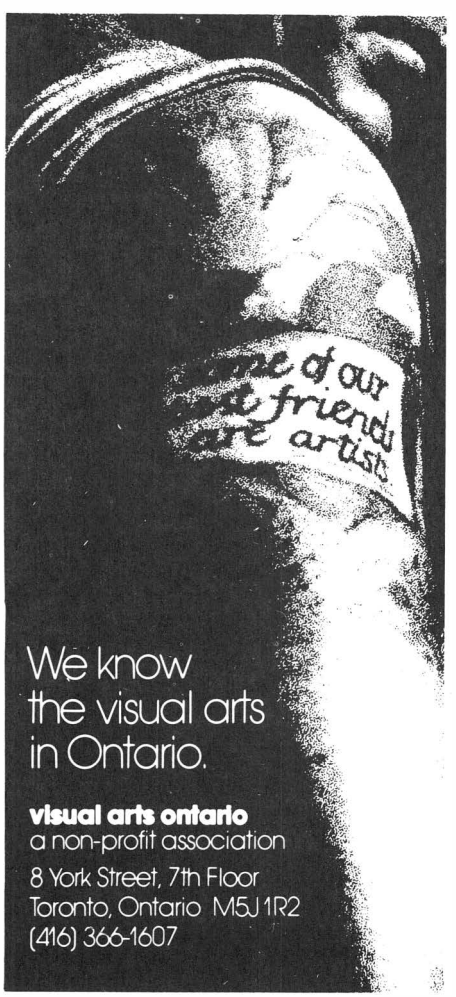
Paganini's Thing, If You Knew, Theme For Ernie, Let's Get Lost, Search For Piece, Snatches, If Dreams Come True, Lemmings, Jim Jams, Night-Song For The White Rabbit, I Concentrate On You.

The title of this Lp, recorded complete with Wellstood's irreverently humorous announcements during his solo engagement at a New York restaurant, is redundant in one sense — anyplace where Wellstood is at the keyboard is going to be a cookery. The jacket offers an alternate caption, "One Man Jazz Machine"; certainly apt, because if there is an artist who, all by himself, can generate more stomping, two-fisted, red-blooded, white-hot jazz than Wellstood... well, I don't think my constitution could stand up to hearing it.

Sometimes Dick starts off in a slow, reflective manner, and he might even keep it up to the end of the track (***Search***). Usually, though, the man has so much drive in him — you always have a sense of momentum from Dick — that a walking single-note bass line creeps in and then that left hand starts pumping out a bright, juicy stride. And just so you'll know who's boss, he'll give you a few numbers that grab you right away with breathtakingly fast and accurate Harlem-flavoured piano and, when you're ready to scream for mercy, turn up the steam about ten more notches — all of it without a fluffed note.

Four Wellstood originals (***Paganini, Snatches, Lemmings, Rabbit***) make up about a third of the program. ***Snatches*** is a worldbeater, a Confreyesque, exceptionally well-constructed novelty rag, extremely flashy and quite capable of standing beside a vintage example of the genre, Roy Bargy's ***Jim Jams***, also given a loose, rip-roaring, marvelous ride. ***Lemmings*** is a somewhat long but meaty blues, while ***Rabbit*** continues the blue mood, but with a more modernized, free-form structure. These are good too, but ***Paganini***, which includes everything from out-of-tempo rambling to blazing, pile-driving passages, tries to do too much.

On ***Concentrate***, Dick makes a complete statement with remarkable economy and imagination, keeping the melody going while constantly enriching the brief performance with fertile harmonics and fills. ***Dreams*** is masterfully handled, with something new, fresh, surprising and yet seemingly inevitable on each ever-more-urging chorus. I could go on, but you've got the picture, and you've got to get the record. — *Tex Wyndham*



BOB WILBER/SCOTT HAMILTON

Bob Wilber and the Scott Hamilton Quartet
Chiaroscuro CR 171

SOPRANO SUMMIT

Chiaroscuro CR 178

Before Ornette Coleman and his confreres prised open the lock on their particular Pandora's box some two decades ago, the number of recordings deviating from the fashionable norms of the day was very small. Now, with the greater diversification to which jazz has since become subject, there is no longer anything disreputable or, come to that, especially valiant about players exploiting styles hitherto viewed as passé, and whilst it would be an exaggeration to say that the whole rich patrimony of jazz has been opened up to its practitioners — the prejudices of the 20th century are not so easily gainsaid! — opprobrium no longer attaches itself as tenaciously as before to those musicians who discern in their forerunners' achievements potential for their own self-development.

Whether Scott Hamilton will be able to make for himself on tenor a career analogous to that which Ruby Braff has carved out on the trumpet has yet to be revealed, but he has certainly made an excellent beginning. He cultivates fluently and with confidence stylistic territory first staked out by Coleman Hawkins and later worked by such men as Ben Webster, Ike Quebec, Flip Phillips and Lucky Thompson. Echoes of all these players resonate in his soloing. At this relatively early stage he already appreciates the value of dynamics, can pace himself well, and is adept at assembling his solos so that no ends hang loose. Doubtless the programme his band interprets here has helped him in all these respects, for it encompasses as many as twelve items and thus despite the generous playing time never calls for improvisations that might otherwise have turn-

ed out to be overlong. The six originals supplied by Bob Wilber often display true melodic originality, *Treasures* being outstanding in this regard, and each performance is well crafted in terms of the balance between ensemble and improvisation. Besides his own considerable powers of extemporisation Wilber brings to the session welcome variety with the contrasting tone colours supplied by his clarinet and alto and soprano saxophones, both alone and in tandem with Hamilton's tenor. Add to these elements the tonal manipulations in which each man is so well versed and it is not surprising that this recital flaunts as rich a panoply of sound as many a more radical venture.

This concern with textural variety is even more pronounced in the music of Soprano Summit. Its two principals, Kenny Davern and Bob Wilber, present an extraordinarily varied array of tone colour, the former contrasting soprano, clarinet and C-melody sax with the latter's instrumental string as noted above. The resulting permutations are further enhanced by the group's rhythmic conception, which is as agreeably varied as the experience of its other three members, George Duvivier on bass, Marty Grosz on banjo and guitar, and Bobby Rosengarden at the drums. Such is the ease with which the band dons and doffs its numerous rhythmic personae that the casual listener might easily miss this aspect of its work; but comparison, for example, between the opening phase of *There'll Be Some Changes Made*, which features Duvivier's bass walking smoothly behind Davern's soprano, and, in sharp contrast, the attractively archaic support the three rhythm men engender in *Oh, Daddy!* makes the point clear enough. The repertoire too, as if to stress the catholic and free-ranging nature of late '70s jazz, looks unashamedly back to the '20s, taking in on the way such neglected items as Hawkins' *Netcha's Dream*, which he recorded with the Ramblers in Holland in 1935, besides two evocative Wilber originals in *Wequasett Wail* and *Arkansas Lullaby*. The experience which enables Davern and Wilber confidently to traverse so broad a compositional landscape is also reflected in their improvisations, which are not only immaculately executed but also benefit from a close awareness of the expressive advantages conferred by the astute use of vibrato and other vocalised effects. Nor, faced with the generous diversity of their music, should one overlook its converse values, for few indeed are the solo passages in this album whose impact is not fostered by their conciseness, as if the many years of playing chalked up by these men have endowed them with an intuitive grasp of what is relevant and, just as important, what is best left out. *— Michael James*

TEDDY WILSON

and his All Stars
Chiaroscuro CR-150

This most recent edition of the Teddy Wilson All Stars is a stylistic descendent of the sextet the pianist led during the early forties and transcriptions can be heard in all their pristine fidelity on Jazz Archives JA-28 and JA-36. The original Cafe Society group which was composed of Emmett Berry, Benny Morton, Ed Hall, Wilson, Slam Stewart, and Sid Catlett was a pacesetter, along with the similarly-inclined combos of John Kirby and Red Norvo, in that area of jazz known as subtle swing. It is only to be expected that some musicians, tiring of the nightly rituals by fire so indigenous to the large bands, would opt for the infinitely more relaxed and relaxing atmosphere of the chamber group. It is for this reason that the first group of this type, the Benny Goodman Trio, became such a permanent fixture in the jazz household. It provided that psychologically essential contrast to the exciting, but probably often ear-fatiguing power of the brass and sax sections.

Featured along with Wilson on this latest in Chiaroscuro's on-going documentation of the best in contemporary mainstream jazz are Harry Edison, Vic Dickenson, Bob Wilber (on both clarinet and soprano sax), Major Holley, and Oliver Jackson. The arrangements are typically loose and stylistically flexible. In the concerted opening choruses, the clarinet is usually voiced between the trumpet and trombone, thereby ensuring a contrast with the more free-wheeling later ensembles. Wilber, the most consistently appealing chameleon in jazz history, tastefully adheres to his understanding of the Goodman ethos. Never one to employ his enviable technical equipment gratuitously, he is the epitome of aesthetic control. Wilber has an innate grasp of the appropriate, an ability to evoke the most proper image regardless of the stylistic imperatives of his surroundings. This, of course, derives in the main from his all-encompassing and thoroughly assimilated understanding of jazz tradition, but no small credit must also be given his inherent and finely developed sense of propriety. Edison, Dickenson, and Wilson are their customary indefectible selves, and Holley and Jackson continue to earn their well-deserved reputations.

Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of this album is the selection of tunes. Only one of the twelve titles, *Fine And Dandy*, is a warhorse but even that is played here with a freshness belying its familiarity. The others, with one exception, are all seldom-heard standards that have two things in common — lyrical melodies and provocative, though basic, chord progressions: *Hallelujah, Thinking Of You, Alice Blue Gown, Lonesome And Sorry, Goodnight, My Love* (ex-Goodman/Fitzgerald), *Just Friends, Miss You, June Night, I'll Get By*, and *So Beats My Heart For You.* The one remaining title is an original minor blues by Wilson entitled *Blues In D Flat* (original title *Blues In C Sharp Minor*). If more mainstreamers, not to mention post-forties modernists, would likewise trouble themselves to investigate the hoary produce of Tin Pan Alley, their playing too could take on the renewed vigor and inspiration apparent here in the work of Wilson and confreres. Other promising vehicles warranting research are *Sunbonnet Sue, This Year's Kisses, Let's Swing It*, and that classic from "Gold Diggers of 1933" *Remember My Forgotten Man* — but there are literally thousands more of comparable quality. All it takes is some imagination and an A&R man like Hank O'Neal. *— Jack Sohmer*

Teddy Wilson Sextet 1944, Volume II
Jazz Archives JA-36

There is, happily, a resurgence of interest in small-group swing like that in this album of tight, impeccable performances with musicians under the nominal leadership of Wilson. Of the thirteen tunes (mostly swing warhorses), four are from the session contained on Wilson's earlier "B Flat Swing" on Jazz Archives 28, and they are not as satisfactory as the others: all taken at medium tempo, there is a businessman's bounce to them that may have been appealing to dancers but which ultimately tends to restrict the players and therefore lessens the quality of the performances. This is especially lamentable because the drummer is Sid Catlett, and if anyone could make a group swing it was he. The most obvious example of this over-arrangement is on *The Way You Look Tonight* that almost parodies the most mediocre society bands.

The other nine tunes are of a considerably higher quality than those just mentioned, however, and two soloists in particular stand out. The first, Roy Eldridge, is ebullient on *If Dreams Come True*, an untitled piece, and *After You've Gone*, all of which are taken at a brisk tempo. His fire is catching, and these performances therefore stand as some of the best music of its kind ever recorded. The other highlight is Remo Palmieri, a guitarist who was with Wilson in the mid-forties but who is now best remembered, perhaps, as a sideman on the 1945 Gillespie-Parker date that produced the bop classics *Groovin' High, All The Things You Are*, and *Dizzy Atmosphere.* That important date was recorded only a few months after these Wilson sides, and from his playing on this record it is easy enough to understand why Palmieri was chosen by the young Turks: he is a hard-driving yet slightly abstract player who can hold his own in the company of heavyweights yet is sensitive to the dynamics of the group's sound. He is firm but flexible.

The rest of the musicians and the recordings herein are engaging and suffer only slightly in comparison to the Eldridge/Palmieri performances. A special treat is some uninhibited Jimmy Dorsey clarinet on *I Got Rhythm.*

This record meets the generally high standard of musical quality that Jazz Archives imposes on its material. It is a welcome release, even in this golden age of reissues, and is certainly worth buying, even at today's inflated prices. Highly recommended. *— Benjamin Franklin V*

BRITT WOODMAN

In L.A., featuring Kenny Mann
Falcon FJP-100

Walking True/Together In April/Outer Space/Ken's A Flat Blues/Forever My Love/Minor 76/Lament In E/Flash Gorgeous/Good News.
Recorded January 12, 1977.

Woodman (trombone), Kenny Mann (tenor sax, composer), Dan Micheli (piano, electric piano), Jim Gannon (bass), Will Bradley Jr. (drums).

In view of the fact that Britt Woodman's reputation as a jazz soloist could use some beefing up about this time, his participation in this otherwise pedestrian combo date deserves more than mere cursory acknowledgment. Woodman is an excellent bop trombonist whose style incorporates the silken smoothness of Lawrence Brown and the harmonic incisiveness of Curtis Fuller, the result being a contemporary voice of surpassing appeal. His fellows here, though, present a slightly different picture. Mann, while an impressive writer of no small originality, fails to project a comparable independence

when playing his horn. His tone, at least on this record, lacks real substance, and his melodic ideas come across as a pastiche of others'. By the same token, the rhythm section is leaden, and this despite the occasionally encouraging thrusts offered by pianist Micheli.

There is a feeling of academic self-consciousness that pervades much of the music here. Mann's compositions are worthwhile, to be sure, and exhibit superb understanding of bop harmonies, but the readings thereof leave considerable room for improvement. The liner notes claim that this is a cooperative quintet, but this must pertain only to their financial arrangements, for there seems to be precious little cooperation abounding in the area of musical precision. In the proper circumstances, few instruments blend better than the tenor and trombone, their timbral similarities being peculiarly suitable for either unison or harmonized statements. In the present situation, though, it is frustratingly apparent that not enough rehearsal time was allocated for such niceties as uniform phrasing and tonal confluence.

Mann is now a practicing attorney in L.A., but one whose professional credits as a musician stretch back to the late '40s, when he worked in Lionel Hampton's band. Subsequently, he appeared with Rich, Kenton, Russo, and Krupa. Of the others, Micheli received exposure with Don Ellis, Gannon with Herman, Rich, and the Australian Jazz Quartet, and Bradley with a welter of New York boppers. As a group, however, they could have impressed more favorably had they been willing to spend a little more time on polish. Familiarity, in this case, would not have bred contempt, only the ease essential to natural, unforced swing. But perhaps Woodman's next feature album will find the trombonist in such company as his talents deserve: meanwhile, the present one is available through Robin Sinclair, 40 Duke Street, Coldstream, Scotland. — *Jack Sohmer*

HENRY RED ALLEN

Nice
Phoenix LP 24

Henry Allen is one of the great trumpet players of jazz, and also one of the small group of players unfortunate enough to play their greatest solos on their first recording engagements: not such a great misfortune perhaps — ***Feeling Drowsy*** is a solo to place beside ***Potato Head Blues*** and ***Singin' The Blues.*** His earliest recordings with the Luis Russell orchestra are his best, but he attained classic form again on the Billy Banks recordings with Pee Wee Russell in 1932. During the thirties he played with Fletcher Henderson and the Mills Blues Rhythm Band, where his playing was still outstanding and also highly influential. He was more advanced than Armstrong in his use and placing of unusual chords and intervals, and through this he had a considerable influence on the trumpet playing of the Swing Era. His series of recordings with small groups in this period include such minor classics as ***House In Harlem For Sale*** and ***Roll Along Prairie Moon.***

After World War II, the dominant taste in jazz found less relish in Allen's style of music, but he continued playing with small groups. He lived long enough to become a grand old man of jazz, and to be the subject of a New Yorker "Profile". Some of his last recordings, such as "Mr. Allen" (Prestige) and "Feeling Good" (CBS) were highly praised; but, while his style remained recognisably the same throughout his life, this later work has too much tricky, rhetorical blowing for me. In addition to being mannered, much of the playing of his final years was downright vulgar and bad.

This new compilation gives us a conspectus of Allen's work from the forties to the sixties. The first side is by his regular group from the late forties, which included his old colleague, J.C. Higginbotham, and the little heard Don Stovall — almost more legendary than the "legendary" Buster Smith — on alto saxophone. (Stovall left Allen and gave up playing in 1950). The music here should have been good, Allen plays well when he gives himself a chance, as do the others. It is a tight, swinging little group, but there is too much riffing on ***The Theme*** and ***Red Jump.*** Three further tracks are spoiled by humour: when the band chant in unison "The name of this record is ***Ride, Red, Ride***", you can almost see the funny hats. The remaining two tracks are features for Higginbotham and Stovall — both rather lugubrious. None of the seven tracks is as good as the one by this group included on the RCA Vintage LP of Henry Allen.

The last four tracks on the record are from 1963 by a group that included ex-Condonites Cutty Cutshall, Tony Parenti and Ralph Sutton. They play ***Cherry*** and ***Fidgety Feet*** nicely enough, but there is nothing out of the ordinary. In between come two tracks from 1957 by an all star television jazz group, with Vic Dickenson, Coleman Hawkins and Pee Wee Russell. The faster ***Rosetta*** does not come off very well, but on ***Wild Man Blues*** Allen shows some of his old power to move us with his daring plangency, to be at once natural and surprising. It is a track that unfortunately shows up the rest of the record.

The cover tells us that the first side was previously issued as Jazz Showcase 5009, but that side B is all new to LP. In fact, the two television tracks appeared in 1958 on Fontana TFL 5025, a record entirely devoted to material from the programme, which was the origin of Billie Holiday's famous version of ***Fine And Mellow*** with Hawkins, Young, Webster and Mulligan (a track currently on British Saga 6905). While Henry Allen collectors will want to snap up this new issue, if they don't already have the material, other collectors would do better to see that they have the first three Allen volumes on French RCA, and the four Collectors' Classics issues of his small groups of the thirties. (The Billy Banks recordings can be found on IAJRC and Collector's Classics). It is sad not to be able to give a better welcome to a new compilation by a major artist who was not lavishly recorded. — *Trevor Tolley*

LESTER YOUNG

Jammin' With Lester - Volume 2
Jazz Archives JA-34

To this day, Lester Young remains one of the most controversial figures in jazz history. Joyfully exuberant during his palmier days, he rarely gave indication of the pain and bitterness which was to so suffuse his later art that an entire community of otherwise perceptive critics would write him off as an otiose has-been. It is undeniable that Young's post-war playing

was markedly different from his earlier work, but to conclude that it was necessarily inferior indicates a failure of logic on the part of his critics. The so-called deterioration which they detected on occasion constituted not an irredemptive fall from grace but was, rather, the result of sheer happenstance. Lester, like so many other musicians who, ironically, are the sometime victims of their own ingenuousness and lack of artifice, simply could not "get hot" at will. But that he was still capable of forceful projection and emotive strength when feeling right is proven by his playing on two separate and distinct occasions which Jazz Archives has recently made available to the public.

The earlier of the two sessions is the one dating from approximately March or April of 1950 and featuring Lester's regular working quintet with youthful trumpet Jesse Drakes, of whom more anon. Although recorded at a dance in Harlem, the sound is surprisingly good and Lester has seldom sounded better. On the up-tempo versions of ***Tea For Two*** and ***Lester Leaps In***, and on the medium ***D.B. Blues***, he plays with the booting joie de vivre of the thirties — so well, in fact, does he play that any of these selections would be sufficient to restore to its proper place his unfairly maligned reputation. On ***Blue And Sentimental***, his tone is characteristically pensive and melancholy, but it is supported by a manly strength not often apparent in his later work.

It has been my long-standing opinion that Jesse Drake's presence was about as important to the success of Lester's latter-day recordings as was that of Natty Dominique to some of Johnny Dodds' classic items, but, in all fairness, I must admit that even his playing here is a notch or two above his more typical work. Ponderous tone and limited range notwithstanding, he nevertheless manages to get off a few apt boppish licks from time to time. Drake is never at a loss for something to play as long as he can interject his beloved quotation from ***An American In Paris*** — as a matter of fact, he employs this three-note motif exactly nine times in the space of three successive choruses on ***Tea For Two***, and once more while trading fours with Young on the same tune. That Gershwin's adaptation of the thematic material implicit in the sound of European taxi horns exerted such a strong influence on the young trumpeter suggests s stimulating subject for further research should some recondite jazz scholar wish to undertake the task.

The other session on this LP was recorded in Washington, D.C. sometime in the early fifties and features as Young's front-line partner trombonist Earl Swope, whose solos with Herman's Second Herd established him as one of the earliest bop-oriented stylists on that instrument. Though a gifted jazzman, Swope was also an excellent section man who earned his living mainly by working in big bands and "legitimate" show orchestras. He would occasionally take a jazz job when the opportunity presented itself, but more often than not, his improvising was confined to after-hours jamming. In this session with Lester Young, he takes full advantage of the extended space afforded him and constructs intelligent, meaningful solos that provide interesting contrasts to the tenorman's more impassioned statements. Tunes played are ***Lady, Be Good***, the variously-spelled ***Up And Adam, Jumpin' With Symphony Sid,*** and ***Lullaby Of Birdland.*** The quality of sound, though a little boxy, is still quite acceptable.

Lester Young's playing on these two sessions is far superior to most other recorded documents of his post-war period. To a large degree, it is understandable how negative impressions of his abilities during these years could have been formed, especially if those impressions were based solely upon what recorded evidence has previously been available. But with the release of this material by Jazz Archives, we have solid proof that Young, though not the same man he had been in the thirties, was nevertheless still a man — and a virile, potent one at that.

— Jack Sohmer

BILL BERRY

and his Ellington All-Stars
For Duke
M&K *Realtime RT 101*

Take The A Train/ Mood Indigo/ Things Ain't What They Used To Be/ Perdido/ Satin Doll/ I Got It Bad/ I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart/ Cottontail.

Berry (cornet), Britt Woodman (trombone), Marshall Royal (alto sax), Scott Hamilton (tenor sax), Nat Pierce (piano), Ray Brown (bass), Frankie Capp (drums).
January 11 & 12, 1978.

The burning question attending this record is one of worth. Does the purported improvement in sound quality made possible by the Direct-to-Disc recording process justify the vastly increased cost of the product? In order to answer this question fairly, it is necessary to hedge with a cautious "it depends". What it depends upon, we are told, is the relative degree of sophistication of the playback equipment used to reproduce the sounds. In other words, if one's system is severely inhibited in areas of frequency response, it is unlikely that anything startlingly different will be noticed. Conversely, the better one's equipment is, the closer the sound will approach perfection. Presumably, if the particular collector is affluent enough to pamper his ears with the varied delights advanced technology has to offer, he will not quibble over the inflated price of a Direct-to-Disc recording.

But if sound quality was all there was to commend this record, it is unlikely that space would be devoted to its discussion in these pages. Happily such is not the case, for, by any measure, this was a successful date. The musicians were well-chosen for their stylistic sympathies, as well as for their ability to turn in fault-free performances, a sine qua non of the Direct-to-Disc process. On the subject of repertoire, little needs to be said, the tunes being among the most dog-eared in the Ellington songbook. However, it is comforting to note that Hamilton more than holds his own in this heady company, especially in his driving solo on ***Cottontail***, only a smidgen of which alludes to his model Ben Webster's classic statement.

Each of the others has his moments also, with particular kudos going to Royal for both his remarkably personal interpretation of the Johnny Hodges anthem, ***I Got It Bad***, and his seldom exposed kinship with the blues, as on ***Things***. That Berry and Woodman are appropriately Ellingtonian as well should surprise no one familiar with their backgrounds, but to hear Count Basie's sturdiest son, Nat Pierce, in such a setting, fulfilling his Ducal role with characteristic intimacy, should at least upset a few long-standing assumptions as to the breadth of this under-rated pianist's interests.

"For Duke" is a limited edition put out by Miller & Kreisel Sound Corporation, 8719 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211 USA. It can be had by writing Ralph Jungheim

Associates Inc., Box 5565D, Santa Monica, California 90405 USA. — *Jack Sohmer*

BARNEY BIGARD

The Pelican Trio
Crescent CJP-5

Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams, The Man I Love, Don't Get Around Much Anymore, Wampum, Rosetta, Undecided, Stardust, Clarinet Gumbo, My Funny Lookin' Baby, Just You-Just Me.

Barney Bigard's clarinet is most inviting in this 1976 trio setting. Warm, woody, mellow tone and natural, oozing, liquid lines. Lazy, easy-going attack belying the difficulty of the swoops, glissandos, fleet runs and Noone-ish trills used to embellish his melodies. A welcome, comfortable, Creole-New Orleans sound dating back, no doubt, to Bigard's teacher, the legendary Lorenzo Tio.

Bigard's cohorts, Duke Burrell, piano/electric piano, and Barry Martyn, drums, provide sympathetic and intelligent support. Obviously paying attention to the ensemble, they pick up licks quickly, develop them, and steer smoothly through specially planned riffs, tags, breaks and intros. Thus, the combo gets a lot into its three-to-five chorus renditions, emerging as a cooking, cohesive unit.

Burrell has a few favorite ideas recurring in his solos, but his jabbing, active approach and his funky ways of bending the melody make his work successful overall. Martyn lays down a steady, insinuating four-beat, heating things up at the right times without calling your attention away from the two principal voices.

The program covers lush ballads (***Stardust, Man***), a mysterious minor-keyed stomper (***Wampum***), a back-roomy blues (***Funny***), and up-tempo swingers (***Rosetta, Just***), with the rest medium-paced material. Vocals by Burrell (***Don't, Funny***) and Martyn (***Rosetta***) are competent, adding further variety.

It all totals up to a low-key session, appearing relaxed and casual but actually producing intricate, stick-to-the-ribs jazz that should stand up well to repeated listening by traditional-to-mainstream fans. From Crescent Jazz Productions, P.O. Box 60244, Los Angeles, California 90054 USA. — *Tex Wyndham*

CARLA BLEY

European Tour 1977
Watt 8

The music on side one of this album is typical of the moody, impressionistic compositional nature of Carla Bley. ***Rose And Sad Song*** begins with an atmospheric acapella solo by trumpeter Mike Mantler, and segues into a sparkling Latinate riff via Andrew Cyrille's dancing drums and Roswell Rudd's space-age trombone tailgating. Since Terry Adams is this group's pianist, Ms Bley has chosen to adopt the organ, and this is unfortunate, for her simplistic solos on this carnival-sounding instrument contain none of the verve or attractive kinkiness of her previous piano work.

Wrong Key Donkey uses an effective stop-and-start rhythm and a catchy, leaping, jagged melody for an introduction to a strong series of solos by tenorist Gary Windo, tubaist Bob Stewart, Bley and Mantler. The combination of funk and freedom is well balanced, though the composition's inherent potential for counterpoint was not exploited to the fullest.

On side two Ms Bley returns to the same arena of musical/political statement which infused Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra with so much energy. ***Drinking Song*** is the same tune as appeared on that recording, though here it is given a tighter, more direct performance. It is, however, a tongue-in-cheek piece, and Barry Tepperman labeled it perfectly in his review of Haden's LP (***Coda***, January 1975) when he called it full of a "sitcom boozy businessman's bounce".

Spangled Banner Minor And Other Patriotic Songs is the longest piece on the album, clocking in at just over nineteen minutes, and is obviously the album's focal point. This piece is less interesting musically than as an exhibition of Ms Bley's satiric arranger's art; it stands as an Ives-ian melange of national anthems from around the world set into grotesque and comedic instrumental voicings. Elton Dean's alto cacophony over ***Deutschland Uber Alles*** background is interesting for a few minutes, but for the most part the piece is an unsuccessful attempt at musical satire. Stockhausen's ***Hymnen*** uses the same material in an electronic setting, in much more novel and engaging fashion.

All told, this album exhibits neither the stylistic variety of Ms Bley's "Tropic Appetites" or "Escalator Over The Hill", nor the adventurously insistent dream-like soundtrack montage of colors and voicings of her "3/4". Still, there is much attractive music here, especially on side one. And if the Liberation Music Orchestra LP moved you, you might find Ms Bley's music-hall political satire right up your alley. — *Art Lange*

HAMIET BLUIETT

Birthright
India Navigation 1030

This solo baritone saxophone album was recorded live at The Kitchen in New York City, and is subtitled "a solo blues concert". As such, it reflects Bluiett's concert with his musical traditions and his personal roots. Each of the pieces performed here are dedicated to a particular person or place which holds some importance in Bluiett's life. The blues connection is therefore manifested through both the formal blues structures, and through the emotional experiences which act as the basis for these "free-form telepathic compositions".

Given the evidence on this album, Bluiett is a virtuoso instrumentalist, able to articulate intricate patterns easily despite the unwieldiness of his chosen axe. He can negotiate a smooth legato line regardless of register, and often interjects a gruff burst of harshness to strong dramatic effect. His tone can be hard, plaintive, and emotional as on the three-part ***My Father's House*** suite, or fat, sassy, and happy as in ***The Village Of Brooklyn, Ill. 62059.*** He uses the entire history of his horn, from rhythm-and-blues vamps to space age expressionistic kinky chromaticism, but his main solo conception is firmly rooted in melodic invention. No matter how far "out" he strays he always slides gracefully back into a song-like lyricism, and he utilizes a continual internal variety of voicings which fit together with an emotional logic and a flexible though direct sense of shifting structure. For example, in the aforementioned ***Brooklyn,*** Bluiett begins with a familiar r-and-b vamp, but eventually changes the pitch intervals while keeping the rhythmic bounce. This manipulation of the known and the unexpected, likewise done in other places in not so obvious ways leads to a sectionalized though flowing sense of structural continuity.

Possibly the most impressive piece on the album is the composition ***In Tribute To Harry Carney***, where Bluiett uses squeals, slurs, wide angular leaps, repetitious note patterns, and juxtaposition of tempos in addition to the incorporation of a descending phrase to the very bottom of the horn which Carney liked to use to end his a capella cadenzas. In this one diverse dedication, Bluiett suggests the wealth and depth of the music which both he and Carney created. Throughout this recording, Bluiett pays homage to his musical and emotional birthright, and his message comes through loud and clear. — *Art Lange*

Bars
Musica Records 3029

In; Bars; Fifth Step; Mockingbird; Colloquio; Black Roses; Fingerprints; Out.

Hamiet Bluiett, baritone saxophone; Marcello Melis, bass; Don Moye, drums.

Given the quality and variety of musics which Bluiett and Moye have created in the past, it is a shame that their talents were wasted on this uneven album. The blame must therefore fall on bassist Melis, whose contribution to this session is eight dull, monochromatic compositions which act as straightjackets to bind Bluiett and Moye. For the most part, the various compositions are built upon over-simplistic three or four note bass ostinato patterns, and Melis' uninventive bass dominates the tonal balance, so that Bluiett is unable to wiggle free from the structures to create any of his usual gruff, pulsating flights of firebreathing. Moye tries hard to break through and expand the limited role Melis has set out for him, but his unique brand of percussive dynamism sounds out-of-place in this staid aural environment.

There are a few moments of interest which occur only when Bluiett and Moye are able to push themselves to the fore. ***Black Roses*** is a laid-back blues with an ironic tone a la Archie Shepp, and Bluiett infuses it with tough, ironic solo statements. Likewise on ***Out***, where Bluiett and Moye subtly turn what begins as a gratuitous, conceptually empty composition into some bluesy story-telling. Unfortunately, the rest of the LP is devoid of feeling or structural interest. — *Art Lange*

JAKI BYARD

Parisian Solos
Music 2008

A Tribute To Jimmy Slide/ Love Is Here To Stay/ Willow Weep For Me/ Bugle Call Rag/ When Lights Are Low/ Dedicated To Bob Vatel Of The Ten Gallons/ Isle To Isle/ Shiny Stockings/ Besame Mucho/ Going Home Blues.
Recorded 1971.

Jaki Byard was the first musician in my experience to demonstrate a command of nearly the entire range of jazz styles. He introduced Mingus' band at a Cornell University concert in 1963 with a seamless twenty-minute history of jazz piano; as wonderful as Mingus, Dolphy and the rest of the band were, Byard's revelatory grand tour remains, fifteen years later, the high point of a truly great 3½ hours of music (as I remember, it was one of the first college concerts ever for Mingus, and his band played with ferocious glee).

Gary Giddins of *The Village Voice* recently shone a welcome light on this unduly neglected master, pointing out most importantly that Byard's reputation as a mere encyclopedia of jazz piano styles has obscured his own personal gifts as an improviser (and composer). Indeed all the meat of his playing is in the details, not the imitative forms, and he is also quite capable of creating some startling containers of his own for well-known material. To my mind the best example of this on "Parisian Solos" is *Besame Mucho*, which he airs out with an intensely melancholy but simple bass ostinato that completely reorients one's perception of the song, making one ask why the song wasn't done this way in the first place.

The range on this album is of course broad, but more than his grasp of history it illuminates his own unpredictability. He is a Monkish eccentric really, breaking out unexpectedly into a sudden stride or other buoyant or raucous rhythm. *Bugle Call Rag* is outrageous, moving from the initial broad jokes through a dissolution, then into a mighty swing, another dissolution into abstract dissonance, back to swing, into a slow walk at the end to be followed by some hilarious false endings. Friends never fail to perk up at this one, even if they aren't especially interested in jazz.

Other pieces are pure straight ahead energy, such as *Shiny Stockings* and *Dedicated To Jimmy Slide.* Nowhere is Byard's "vital drive", as Andre Hodeir has called one of the essential elements of swing, more pronounced than in the slow, slow blues with which he ends the album.

You cannot listen with half-attention to this album and really hear it, so hush everyone up when you put it on. For all his knowledge of everyone else's style, Byard is a stubbornly personal pianist. — *Joel Ray*

KENNY BURRELL

Stormy Monday
Fantasy F-9558

Stormy Monday Blues/ Azure Te (Paris Blues)/ One For My Baby/ The Masquerade Is Over/ Why Did I Choose You?/ I Got It Bad.

Burrell (guitar), Richard Wyands (piano), John Heard (bass), Lennie McBrowne or Richie Goldberg (drums).
Recorded June 18-20, 1974.

Despite Kenny Burrell's stature, this is not a record to get excited about, but rather one to help foster those relaxed, intime moments we all need from time to time. Placidity, then, is the keynote here, not furor. Certainly not the hyperactive energizing favored by so many younger players. Burrell has always been a tasteful musician, one who valued more the communicative power of understatement than any corresponding display of irrelevant dexterity. And for this reason, as well as several others, the present set is recommended.

Burrell urges from his instrument the most dulcet, purring sounds this side of Herb Ellis, another guitarist for whom the blues reign supreme. On *Stormy Monday*, the Earl Hines/ Billy Eckstine classic, Burrell puts it right up front, his integrity alone a master lesson for those still snared in the clutches of funk. Every guitarist under 35 should listen to men like Burrell and Herb Ellis play the blues; they would soon realize that this most paradoxical of musical forms offers far more than can be encompassed in the mastery of a few cliches. Again, on *Azure Te*, we find bedrock blues swing, and again, a performance completely devoid of pretension. Richie Wyands emerges here as an expressive blues player in the tradition of Blind John Davis and Avery Parrish, although it is quite possible that he may never have knowingly heard either.

The other selections are similar to the foregoing in that they all maintain a respect for propriety and decorum. This is dignified music that Burrell and friends play, a music which derives its special character from the sincerity and honesty of the performers. Others may strain for currency or favor among the philistines, but not Burrell. Like the blues itself, his approach is deceptively simple: just play the music the way you feel. If your feelings are right, the music will be too.
— *Jack Sohmer*

BENNY CARTER

Carter, Gillespie, Inc.
Pablo 2310-781

Sweet And Lovely/ Broadway/ The Courtship/ Constantinople/ Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen/ Night In Tunisia.
Recorded in Los Angeles, April 27, 1976.

In the thirty-seven years that have elapsed since the first recorded encounter of Benny Carter and Dizzy Gillespie, innumerable changes have been wrought on both the music scene in general and on these two musicians in particular. In 1939, Carter was a jazz star of international proportions; with more than ten years behind him of top-ranking professional status, he had carved for himself a reputation for versatility, originality, and thorough musicianship which none could challenge. As a saxophonist, he was one of the major innovators on his instrument;

as a trumpet player, he was one of the most skillful of his generation; as a clarinetist (a role he did not pursue enough for my satisfaction), he had a breadth of tone superior to that of many a specialist; and as an arranger/composer, he had enriched the vocabulary of orchestrated jazz to the extent of literally inventing the sax section soli. In 1939, moreover, Carter could anticipate a decade as the leader of both large and small bands, and a quarter of a century of precedent-setting activity in films and television. That same year saw the young Dizzy Gillespie as a fledgling member of the Cab Calloway Orchestra with less than three years of professional playing behind him; still basking in the light of his model Roy Eldridge, Gillespie had yet to completely formulate the foundations of the style which was soon to irrevocably change the course of jazz history.

Having gone their separate ways in the intervening years, Carter and Gillespie now meet again in what can only be considered a mainstream format, the excesses and extremes of their one-time stylistic differences as much forgotten as are the ancient battles once fought between the advocates of tradition and the enthusiasts of innovation. They are on middle ground now, that area of jazz which welcomes hardy perennials as well as mellowed recondites. Carter still has the elegance and grace of yore, but his tone has hardened a bit and his articulation is more pronounced than once would have been expected of him. Like Lester Young, the Carter of the twenties had been impressed by the tonal purity and emotional restraint of Frank Trumbauer, and again like Young, he in turn was to prove a major influence on a succeeding generation of sonority-conscious saxophonists.

One of the eternal delights in Carter's playing is the unpredictability of his phrasing. An early master of the even eighth-note conception (as opposed to dotted-eighths and sixteenths), Carter had long ago perfected a manner of playing which neither surged forward nor lagged behind, but rather floated gracefully on the very top of the beat. His oblique melodic turns and frequent recourse to "simple" quarter notes endow his playing with a unique flavor which has captivated the imaginations of saxophonists as diverse as Hilton Jefferson and Cannonball Adderley.

Gillespie here is Gillespie as one would always wish to hear him. He is serious and involved, and the respect with which he undoubtedly regards Carter is evident in every note he plays. His technical command is still awesome and his muted sound fuller and more precisely intoned than many open horn players half his age. Joe Pass and Tommy Flanagan essay their solos with taste and imagination, and the rhythm team of Al McKibbon and Mickey Roker perform with an equal proportion of intensity and lightness. — *Jack Sohmer*

MAURY COLES

The Maury Coles Solo Saxophone Record
Onari 003

Yonge Street Traveller; Hats Off; Goats Hill Road; Tip Top Pop; Prepared Plastic Number One.

Maury Coles, alto saxophone

At this point in time, it is impossible to consider the state of solo saxophone performance without reflecting the far-reaching developments of such practitioners as Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Steve Lacy, Oliver Lake, et al. If, therefore, this debut album of solo performances by Canadian saxophonist Maury Coles seems slightly derivative of earlier work done in the form, this does not dilute the directness of Coles' creative commitment, nor does it lessen the pleasure which this particular album provides.

According to the aural evidence given in these five solo statements, Coles favors a flowing middle-range tempo which allows him the opportunity to stretch his malleable structures with contrasting timbral fluctuations, dynamic variance, and variations of intervallic material. ***Prepared Plastic Number One*** and ***Hats Off*** both feature these elements, with ***Hats Off*** especially interesting in terms of Coles' clear, light, refreshingly transparent tone, and his flexibility of phrasing and modulations.

Yonge Street Traveller and ***Tip Top Pop*** are more conceptual in nature, with the former consisting of an exploration of upper register staccato phrases which build in volume and intensity, expand occasionally into the lower register, but ultimately settle into a series of delicate upper-register precisely articulated effects which at one point incorporate a decidedly calypso-like rhythm. ***Tip Top Pop***, on the other hand, consists solely of an understated melody obtained by percussive key-popping, a la Oliver Lake and Gunter Hampel.

Successful as each of these performances are, given their attractive, unambitious nature, ***Goats Hill Road*** must be considered the high-point of the album. Written by saxophonist Bill Smith in celebration of Anthony and Nicky Braxton's wedding, this lyrical ballad contains a recognizably Braxtonian melodic contour in its melancholic, plaintive sound. Coles' tone is tender, grows aggressive only briefly, and for the most part is content to stretch out melismatically, while weaving a hypnotic web of motivic fragments into a restrained and sustained emotional performance.

The sound quality of the album, recorded live at Toronto's Music Gallery in November 1977, is close and clean enough to catch all of Coles' improvisational nuances and virtuoso techniques. Though not a record which jumps out of the speakers and attempts to grab you by the throat with its aggressive overstatement, it nevertheless seduces you with its subtle lyricism and attractive, tasteful compositional conceptions. — *Art Lange*

DOC CHEATHAM/SAMMY PRICE

Doc & Sammy
Sackville 3013

Honeysuckle Rose/ Doc And Sam's Blues/ The Sheik Of Araby/ Summertime/ Tishomingo Blues/ I Can't Give You Anything But Love/ You Can Depend On Me/ Ain't Misbehavin'/ Dear Old Southland.

Doc Cheatham (trumpet); Sammy Price (piano)
Toronto, November 17, 1976.

During the height of the New Orleans revival, it was not especially unusual to find musicians of advanced years actively engaged in playing jazz. And supporters of the revival, as well as those respectful of antiquity in general, were quick to explain away their heroes' technical shortcomings as being natural concomitants of age. Flabby chops and stiff fingers, poor intonation and sagging tempos were all excused, even ennobled, as unavoidable consequences of senority. But then, jazz itself was 30 years younger, and so were the giants of the Swing Era.

With the passing decades, the swingmen too have aged, and we are now in a better position to make comparisons. At this point, it is clearly evident that if a musician was once a skilled instrumentalist, and has continued to hone his craft conscientiously, there is no reason to assume that his powers must automatically diminish as he gets older. Proof positive lies in the playing of Cheatham and Price, who were 71 and 68, respectively, at the time of this session.

Cheatham has always been a first-rate musician, even an exemplary one, and the fact that his abilities are still very much intact should come as no surprise to those familiar with his background. Beginning fifty years ago, when he doubled cornet and saxes with Albert Wynn and recorded on same behind Ma Rainey, he mustered credit after credit over the ensuing years playing with the bands of Wilbur DeParis, Chick Webb, Sam Wooding, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Cab Calloway, Teddy Wilson, Benny Carter, Fletcher Henderson, Teddy Hill, Eddie Heywood, Claude Hopkins, Perez Prado, Machito, and Benny Goodman, as well as leading his own groups from time to time.

The trumpeter's style is one of judicious economy, taking as its lead the round, pure tone of one-time Henderson cornetist Joe Smith, and adding to it a staccato attack not unlike Punch Miller's, an exceptional range, and flawless intonation. When playing open, he sounds like a combination of Frankie Newton, Bill Coleman and Benny Carter, and, when muted, variously summons memories of Ed Allen, Sid DeParis, and Cootie Williams. Price is the prototypical bluesman, whose thoroughly orchestral style is so fully textured that one scarcely even notices the absence of supporting instruments. Now exhibiting a greatly matured approach to the barrelhouse idiom for which he has always been noted, Price has never before played better. As a matter of fact, he is so consistent throughout that any attempt to nominate a superior track would be pointless. His is, quite simply, jazz blues piano at its most definitive.

Kudos to Sackville, for the pairing of the two was an insightful piece of business, and will long serve as a concrete reminder that November years need not always be as chilly and forbidding as previously assumed.

— *Jack Sohmer*

EDDIE CONDON

In Japan
Chiaroscuro CR 154

I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me, Pee Wee's Blues, Stomping At The Savoy, Rose Room, Manhattan, Three Little Words, I Would Do Anything For You, All Of Me, Am I Blue, When You're Smiling, Royal Garden Blues.

Eddie Condon Lps are so widely available that any ***Coda*** reader interested in older jazz styles

just *has* to know (a) the basic stable of all-star jazzmen from which Condon made up his units, (b) the usual Condon format, (c) the bag of vintage standards making up a Condon repertoire and (d) the straight-from-the-shoulder, full-speed-ahead drive of a Condon ensemble. So, all you really need to know about a given Condon disc is whether, by Condon standards, it's a good or bad session.

This one, recorded before a live Japanese audience during a 1964 tour, is better than good — it's tremendous. The band shows the beneficial effects of working together on the trip and is totally free of the unevenness permeating some Condon gangs. The rhythm (Dick Cary, Jack Lesberg, Cliff Leeman and maybe Condon, though I really don't hear guitar) charges out right from the starting downbeat; riffs behind solos are crisp and clean, everyone's listening to everyone else (Vic Dickenson, trombone, and Cary, doubling alto horn, knock out two chase choruses on *Believe* that blend like one of Condon's favorite libations); and the combo in full cry roars like the good old days (dig the closing chorus on *Anything* for unadulterated heat).

The flat-out swingers are spaced around feature numbers for the horn men, a fine change of pace: *Pee Wee's* — Russell at his gentle, breathy best; *Savoy* — Buck Clayton crisp and crackling; *Manhattan* — Dickenson's plaintive, burry, bent notes; *Words* — Bud Freeman coasting into ever more complex lines; and three shouting vocals (*All, Am, Smiling*) by Jimmy Rushing. The package is tied up with a steaming *Royal*, and if you think this tune has been played to death, don't read the funeral service til you've heard this version (it includes a patented Condon all-hands-take-a-couple-of-four-bar-tags finish, with breaks by Russell, Dickenson and Freeman that just about melted my turntable).

As I said, Condon dates are predictable in a way, but if you won't hear new and different sounds, you'll hear a bunch of pros obviously having a ball doing what they do best. I have a lot of Condon already, but I'm real happy to add this one. A killer. — *Tex Wyndham*

DOUBLE IMAGE

Double Image
Inner City 3013 (Enja Series)

Rodney's Dream Of Fantasy And Self-Fulfillment/ Veldtland/ Truce/ Rag-Out/ Mist/ Aerobats.

David Friedman, vibes, marimba, perc.; Dave Samuels, vibes, marimba, perc., tablas; Harvie Swartz, bass; Mike DiPasqua, drums, perc.
Recorded Ludwigsburg, Germany, June 9, 1977.

This thoughtful and intimate series of conversational pieces involving the use of vibes and marimba calls up some of Gary Burton's work in its use of modalities and rhythmic shifts, and occasionally in the use of bent tones; certainly the textural space comes from Burton's conception of the instrument.

The pieces fall into fairly neat groupings: Samuels' *Veldtland* and *Mist* are both more or less pastoral poems; Friedman's two, the opener and the closer, are more driving with heavier and more dominating bass lines; Swartz's *Truce* seems the most intricate; and *Rag-Out*, credited to the whole group, is both the simplest and most exotic.

The group uses percussion interestingly, as for example the use of the far-off, tiny bells in *Veldtland*, or Friedman's very soft fast marimba trills played in counterpoint to Samuels' long vibes tones in *Mist*. Often the bass serves a primary role in establishing the feeling of the piece. On *Rag-Out*, for instance, Swartz bows a deep ground for the marimba and the bent tones of the tabla — perhaps the most piquant mix of sounds on the album. And on his own piece, Swartz's opening solo generates a real rhythmic surprise (the piece changes constantly in impulse and feeling).

The music on this album repays close attention. — *Joel Ray*

CHICO FREEMAN

Kings Of Mali
India Navigation 1035

Chico Freeman is an artist who seems determined to make his listeners feel good; from an optimism which is not in the least starry-eyed, his playing, composing and arranging radiate a passionate, life-affirming energy. In many ways Freeman fulfills a great need in today's improvised music — a need for a music that swings and is accessible, and does not hesitate to win its listener with lyricism and prettiness in both textures and melodies. Freeman gives the impression of having crafted his music very carefully in private, in order to delight with it in public.

Where his first India Navigation record combined a duet with Cecil McBee (bass) and a vigorous, hard-edged blowing session (*Merge*, with McBee, Muhal Richard Abrams, Steve McCall and Tito Sampa), his second presents four very meticulously - on *Illas*, perhaps too meticulously - arranged compositions. The band is faultless — Don Moye on percussion, McBee on bass, and a very intriguing combination of piano (Anthony Davis) and vibraphone (Jay Hoggard). Freeman's Coltrane influence is clear, yet most of today's modal, Trane-derived bands lack the tension-and-release, the good humour and the voracious bite that Freeman's music has. This record features fine chortling soprano on *Look Up*, some slapstick percussion and muscular tenor on *Minstrels' Sun Dance*, and a very unusual arrangement — sparse percussion, lead bass and overdubbed flutes over a background of bailophones (also known as balaphons) — on *Kings Of Mali*.

At first I found the symmetrical prettiness of *Illas'* melody, plus its lead voices of flute and vibes a bit too bland for my taste; on repeated listenings, however, it is the very tension between the light sound of these instruments and the darker feelings of the bass, piano and drums that provides much of the composition's interest, and perhaps this was Freeman's intent.

Knowing about Chico Freeman's background in the AACM and involvement in new music circles in New York City leads one to expect him to be more "avant-garde" than he actually is; seen in this context, he does seem more conservative or perhaps just more straightforward than many other musicians of his generation. Taken on his own terms however, he is clearly a most bright and creative jazz musician, who on his path to maturity has already produced a number of fully-realized musical statements such as this record. "Kings of Mali" presents not only some very lovely

music, but a glimpse at a talented young player and composer, who has the potential to become a giant. — *David Lee*

GIORGIO GASLINI

Free Actions
Dischi Della Quercia Q 28003
(Via Caminadella 9, Milano, Italy 20123)

Giorgio Gaslini (piano, composer, arranger); Gianni Bedori (tenor and soprano sax); Gianluigi Trovesi (alto and soprano sax, bass clarinet); Paolo Damiani (bass); Gianni Cazzola (drums); Luis Agudo (percussion).

I wonder how many of you dedicated listeners will bother to write to the Italian address mentioned above to get this record, but the happy few who do will be highly rewarded because this is an outstanding recording.

The suite *Free Actions* was composed by Gaslini during the spring of 1977 while the composer travelled from Milano to New Orleans and has been performed at the New Orleans Jazz Festival. Gaslini's music was totally unknown to me before I heard this record.

There is a particular quality his compositions possess: they all suggest and recall the works (but not necessarily the atmospheres) of Ellington, Mingus and Monk in terms of structural quality and lyricism. Every piece is carefully constructed and articulated both harmonically and rhythmically.

Noteworthy is the special care Gaslini takes in the arrangement of his somewhat complex but always swinging compositions. He always seems to be able to pick the most appropriate voicings, making intelligent use of the different yet complementary textures of the saxes and the bass clarinet. The precision with which every theme is stated shows us the tightness of and the mutual understanding within the group.

Should I put a label on the compositions, I would say that they evoke a sophisticated form of bop with a real concern for compositional innovation. None of them acts simply as a stepping-stone for improvisation. More than that, they all constitute the backbone of a carefully constructed "musical moment".

About the musicians, now - as a composer/arranger, Gaslini definitely ranks with the top. As a pianist he is not bad either. Listen to the third part (side 2, cut 1): he exposes a beautiful theme, somewhat haunting and highly melodic. Then, while repeating the line, he starts introducing colourful dissonances, as if they were smiles directed at his lyricism, and jumps into an improvisation blessed here and there with joyful exuberance. Unfortunately, Gaslini does not solo on the other parts and gives all the space to the rest of the sextet.

The spontaneous ease with which Bedori and Traversi explore most of the possibilities of their instruments is incredible. Virtuosi with feeling, these guys! Freedom but not anarchy! One short example: in the second part (side 1, cut 2) Bedori starts his solo with some Barbieri-like pyrotechnics that rapidly reach an emotional peak, then suddenly dives into the bass register of his horn with warmth and mellowness; then, he gently builds up the tension, and off he soars again! If there is one thing this guy knows thoroughly, it is how to construct a solo. Gianluigi Traversi is equally inspired on bass clarinet. Both are given almost identical time to improvise within the parts of the suite.

Gianni Cazzola, on drums, provides an honest support but I found him a little less exciting, in terms of creativity, than his colleagues; Luis Agudo makes intelligent and sober use of various percussion. Many more nice things could be written about this record that I, you guessed it, strongly recommend.

It is just amazing how these Italian musicians, along with other Europeans, can capture the very essence of jazz music; its roots and its idiom to create such a wonderful and very personal work of art that transcends some of the best contemporary American productions. "Free Actions" is one of the very few records I have totally enjoyed this year. Those interested in Gaslini's music should also check out the following items:
"Murales" — Dischi Della Quercia Q 28001: Gianni Bedori (ts, ss); Giorgio Gaslini (piano); B. Tomaso (bass); Andrea Centazzo (percussion).
"New Orleans Suite" — Dischi Della Quercia Q 28002: with Bedori, Gaslini, and Julius Farmer on bass and John Vidacovitch on drums.

— *Jean-Pascal Souque*

GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA

Improvisations
Japo 60021

Jahrmarkt/Local Fair
PO Torch PTR/JWD 2

These two albums continue the documentation of one of the "new music's" most important, creative, and intriguing ensembles. The wide gap between the two albums' individual tone and musical concerns has partly to do with the variegated instrumentation between the two recordings, and the fact that "Improvisations" was recorded in 1977, and "Jahrmarkt/Local Fair" in 1975-76. The Globe Unity Orchestra refuses to stand still, or rehash familiar musical territory.

"Improvisations" is divided into four spatially open pieces, the shortest of which is six minutes and the longest twenty-three. *Improvisation One* and *Improvisation Two* exhibit an empathetic sense of ensemble dynamics and an atmospheric, calligraphic, intricate design based upon a devotion to minute detail pieced together in a mosaic fashion. *Improvisation Three* and *Improvisation Four* are crisper and livelier throughout, with the group attempting larger gestures through spontaneous ensemble statements, cloudy clusters of sound, and occasionally harsher textures. Though in all four pieces the GUO breaks down into various components and combinations of duos, trios, and the like, the emphasis is not upon solo spotlights contrasting with the orchestral body; instead, an intense, though tenuous, chamber-music quality is sustained within these four elegant, ephemeral, galvanized, graceful works. This collection of GUO instrumentalists includes many names — Evan Parker, Derek Bailey, Paul Rutherford, Kenny Wheeler, Tristan Honsinger, Gunter Christmann, Peter Brotzmann, Manfred Schoof, Albert Mangelsdorff, Paul Lovens, Alexander von Schlippenbach, et al, and the experience and devotion which these veterans of free music bring is evident in the beauties of this recording.

"Jahrmarkt/Local Fair", while equally successful within its own limitations and boundaries, is altogether a different kettle of fish. Side one, the composition *Jarhmarkt* by Peter Kowald, is a studio recreation of a three-part piece which was originally performed during the "New Jazz Meeting" at Baden-Baden in 1975 (celebrating the tenth anniversary of the GUO). The first and third sections have the orchestra laid out in their usual stage positions, however during the second section the band is divided into six choirs and spread out around the studio, adding to the spatial diversity. While it would be superfluous and antithetical to the GUO's intentions to provide a blow-by-blow account of the work, a few of the many outstanding passages can be described.

The work opens with a dominance of winds and brass which seems like space-age Sousa; this resolves into a series of antiphonal and linear statements in which individual voices occasionally rise up out of the maelstrom for brief solos. Anthony Braxton's acapella alto outing is the longest of these, and leads into a fluttering percussion with dramatic brass bursts. The incorporation of *Straight No Chaser* and other quotes are effective foils to the pointillistic passages. Brotzmann on clarinet and Schlippenbach on accordion play a short, humorous parody of German dance music — but the incredibly diverse styles and genres which this composition employs are both parodistic and homogistic. Expressionistic tone painting, raucous polkas, relaxed waltzes, free-form sputterings, Kansas City Basie-style swing combine to create this entrancing work.

Local Fair, recorded live during the 1976 Wuppertaler Free Jazz Workshop, is something else entirely. This open-air collage of aural colors and musical characterizations combines not only the members of the GUO, but also a seventeen-piece German marching band, a four-piece Greek dance band, and a group of local musicians which included twenty-five (25!) accordion players. Needless to say, not everyone is playing continuously throughout, though there are sections where each ensemble overlaps and struggles for aural attention, as in Charles Ives' most cacophonic music. Here, the various styles and sounds rise and fall like a great sea, juxtaposing elements of fun, funk, frenzy, and folderol. More a conceptual work than a purely musical composition, perhaps no other recorded document so obviously defines and exemplifies the far-reaching open-mindedness and open-arms policy and aesthetics of the Globe Unity Orchestra. — *Art Lange*

GERRY HEMINGWAY

Kwambe
Auricle Records Aur-1

This first recording by percussionist Gerry Hemingway exemplifies the problems inherent in having talented musicians perform weak compositions and arrangements. Each of the four pieces presented was written by Hemingway, who appears on every track, assisted by a rotating cast of young musicians who have displayed strong and varied voices in other settings, but who in this case are placed in a creative straightjacket due to the narrow confines of the musical structures.

Kwambe takes up all of side one, and is performed by a quintet consisting of Hemingway, Jay Hoggard on vibes, Anthony Davis on piano, and Mark Helias and Wes Brown on bass (with Brown also providing much of the work's melodic impetus on Ghanian flute). The initial theme is a simple, lilting, lyrical tune in

waltz time, which leads predictably into a freer manipulation of the thematic intervals via five-part contrapuntal interplay. Unfortunately, the harmonic nature of the theme is so restricted as to allow mere articulation of thematic fragments rather than any real creative variation. The performance comes to life only in a few brief solo passages — pianist Davis' ornamentation of the melody into harmonically clashing cascades, and Jay Hoggard's thrilling but all-too-short Tanzanian xylophone solo.

1st Landscape: A Suite In Three Parts utilizes the concept of individually shifted and suspended pulses between three voices (here, Hemingway, Davis, and trombonist George Lewis). In each of the work's three sections the musicians were given notated material which they could perform or distort as they pleased. They obviously were not given enough time, however, to create a context from which they could then juxtapose contrasting rhythmic effects and ultimately develop the material in the fashion the composer envisioned. For example, in section three the contrasting nature of Lewis' sustained notes against Davis' piano flurries is an interesting textural effect, but due to the nature of the work's arrangement they are almost immediately forced to go on to another event, and thus are unable to develop their original interplay in any convincing, organic fashion.

Walking Alone, The Tall Trees Sang is a solo vehicle for Hemingway's sparse, imagistic drumming a la Barry Altschul. The album's last cut, however, finally provides a spark of electricity, courtesy of trombonist Ray Anderson. *Speak Brother* has the loosest structure of any of these compositions, and this allows Anderson (backed by bassist Helias and Hemingway) to rip off two excellent solos, one slow and bluesy with bent notes a la Dickie Wells, the other energetic featuring frantic flutter-tonguing and febrile phrasing; again, however, over all too soon.

— Art Lange

HERWIN RECORDS

Various Bands
Paramount Hot Jazz Rarities
Herwin 110

Plump Tillie, Anna Mina Forty And St. Louis Shorty, Quit Knocking On My Door, Don't Forget To Mess Around When You Do The Charleston (2 takes), *Lot's O'Mama, Houston Bound, Steady Roll, Barnyard Blues, The Bumps, What's That Thing, New Orleans Breakdown, Coo Coo Stomp, Sugar.*

Paramount was an extremely important jazz label, having recorded nearly every major Negro jazz talent to spend much time in Chicago during the 1920s. Despite Paramount's notoriously low fidelity, any Lp made up of previously unissued Paramount 78s from 1926-28 is going to look awfully choice to serious collectors of vintage jazz.

You're bound to find some hot stuff in any group of Paramounts, too. Blythe's Sinful Five rip through swinging solos from all hands into a loose, stomping ensemble on *Tillie* (and then move into the background behind Viola Bartlette on *Shorty* and *Knocking*, where lyrics are just too hard to understand for enjoyment.) Wilson's T.O.B.A. Band (*Roll/Barnyard*) is low-down and earthy, especially on the slow, minor *Roll.* Jeanette's Synco Jazzers (*Bumps/Thing*) turn in a relaxed, funky blues and a hard-hitting faster number with jabbing trumpet from Henry McCord. D.C. Nelson's Serenaders (*Breakdown/Coo*) feature flexible Albert Wynn trombone, wailing Dave Nelson cornet, and light, clean piano from the one-man rhythm section, J. Norman Ebron.

Of course, not every Paramount session was immortal. Austin and his Musical Ambassadors plod through *Charleston* twice. The Beverly Syncopators (*Sugar*) are poorly coordinated with wheezy reeds. Despite Herwin's E+ rating on the 78 used for the spirited *Mama* by the Hottentots, the sound is so hard to sort out that you can barely get a decent listen to the cornetist, much less try to formulate a view regarding Herwin's (to me very unlikely) aural identification of Freddie Keppard.

Musically, it's a marginal investment, but I'd buy it anyway. Realistically, you'll never get these sides in much better shape, if you get them again on Lp at all, and for historical reasons, I'd hate to pass it by. Available from *Coda*, or from Herwin Records, Inc., P.O. Box 306, Glen Cove, New York 11542.

— Tex Wyndham

Various Vocalists/Cornetists
Paramount Cornet Blues Rarities
Herwin 111

Ske Da Da, Black Hand Blues, You Gotta Know How, Outside Of That He's All Right With Me, Standing On The Corner Blues, He's My Man, You Never Can Tell What Your Perfectly Good Man Will Do, Humming Blues, Dishrag Blues, Rollin' Mill Blues, Rising Sun Blues, Worried Down With The Blues, Climbing Mountain Blues, Black Bordered Letter Blues.

It hardly needs to be said that an Lp which focuses on female vocals recorded for Paramount in Chicago from 1924 to 1927, who were accompanied by a combo that included a cornet, is a disc aimed at a specialized market. Most completists will be delighted to have these rare-to-Lp tracks and will disregard the fact that Paramount's primitive recording process causes the listener to work much too hard to decipher the lyrics, even on fairly clean original 78s, and that the music, some by well-known names, is often routine.

Rollin', by Leola B. Wilson, is terrific by any standard — down and dirty, with growling B.T. Wingfield cornet, and *Dishrag*, its session mate, also drips with blues. Elzadie Robinson (*Humming*) has a hard, husky voice nicely complemented by the pungent horn of Shirley Clay. *Perfectly*, by Viola Bartlette with a Lovie Austin unit, is an easy-going number (where Herwin claims to hear Punch Miller as the otherwise barely audible cornetist who takes the uninspired interlude behind Ozie McPherson (*Corner/Man* — same date), admitting that he wasn't supposed to be in Chicago at the time). And Bertha Henderson (*Black*) has a full, ear-catching sound.

After that, it's spotty at best. Bob Schoffner punches out a half-chorus of kicking Armstrongesque cornet behind Ms. McPherson (*Know/Outside*) on *Outside*, but the rest of the session fades into the rough fidelity. Cow Cow Davenport's bluesy piano can't fill in all the space left by Iva Smith's too-slow delivery (*Rising*). Ditto Cassino Simpson's back-roomy tickling for Madlyn Davis (*Worried/Climbing*).

One has to admire Herwin for making available tracks that only a few historians will really enjoy. From Herwin Records, Inc., P.O. Box 306, Glen Cove, New York 11542 USA.

— Tex Wyndham

INTERFACE

Live at Environ
ReEntry Re-001

True to the implication of its name, INTERface represents much of the characteristic strength of New Music in the 1970s, a consolidation of varied structural elements by group players via the common ground of their improvisational empathy. While the proliferation of solo performances by instrumentalists of all kinds is extending the tradition of jazz as a self-inspired, existential "take-it" art, most significant group endeavors have made real the possibilities of Ornette Coleman's concept of dependence upon each other rather than harmonic predeterminants or to quote Ornette's succinct line, "Let's play the music and not the background". In the late '70s though, harmony is not something to be rejected but exploited as an important tool without it being an abstract deity dominating technical and aesthetic decisions which was Ornette's point. John Fischer, as the composer and pianist of INTERface is actively aware of this. What he calls the "primary structures" of his pieces are varying compositional devices that are pinpoints of a skeletal structure which becomes a body only when the players breathe the music into it.

On *A Day In May* Fischer's primary structure is a series of long single-note harmonic references from which suspended phrases are built and altered; a cool, languid lyricism emerges conveyed primarily by Mark Whitecage's earnest-but-wondering alto playing. In contrast Fischer allows only a momentary harmonic touchstone on *Atlantis*, after he and Kilburn rumble together in the bass registers the piece opens up to a free trio improvisation. The two remain close to each other but are constantly shifting with a plasticized handling of clustered/textural movement. Phillip Wilson continually inserts small percussive reflectors of the movement and stokes the flickering, rather fitful fire generated here. Fire, as such is most often of the tempered variety due to the wide range of musical personalities. The most heated is Charles Tyler whose blustering baritone on *Quartet* presses a heavy momentum towards the purely expressionistic. But then there is Whitecage on the duet, *February.* Lee Konitz is peripherally present in his very fine playing; here combining a terse, distilled intensity with delicately shifting dynamics which contrasts brilliantly with Fischer's rambling pianistics, Whitecage's is a smouldering emotion glowing down in the frozen depths of that ice-entombed month.

In *Flies* the twitch-blink dashing of the depicted insect infests the movement of the piece but the dash and stop phrasing makes for a surprisingly melodic Morse code. This superficially whimsical piece reflects on a microcosm of the seeming random interactivity in nature which is directed by a logic of necessity and collective destiny, by which I mean natural (musical) energies moving ostensibly from individual necessity but actually determined by the relative presence (or absence) of other energies. Each one's "meaningful" direction following varying ends which in total define the oneness of their collective destiny. Jazz, as a

pure artform of spontaneous sources here (and in many instances) illustrates nature's truest and most significant processes.

The diverse collaborations and forms of expression of INTERface beckon for a fuller hearing, Perry Robinson's clarinet is only sporadically present. But John Fischer is a receptive "leader", the talented resources are thoughtfully tapped in varied, but wisely measured quantities which piques the imagination (how much can come out of this group?). The comparative restraint and understating of these six musical energies serves positively the causes of suspense, innuendo and intrigue for the future of INTERface. — *Kevin Lynch*

JOSEPH JARMAN/DON MOYE

Egwu-Anwu (Sun Song), In Concert
India Navigation 1033 (two-record set)

Despite the breathtaking diversity of musical styles and sonorities created within the eighty-odd minutes of the Jarman/Moye duo documented on this two-record set, one must keep in mind that it only encompasses half of the experience which the duo set down at these performances in Woodstock, New York. Both as members of the Art Ensemble Of Chicago and as individual performers, multi-instrumentalists Jarman and Moye view in-concert situations as a vehicle for total sensory bombardment, which includes visual and theatrical, as well as aural/musical,stimuli. This is based on their belief in music as a ritualistic experience, and as in any ritual, one component cannot be divorced without weakening the implied effect.

Nevertheless, this atmospheric recording comes as close to recreating a live performance by Joseph Jarman and Don Moye as is possible on disc. The sense of gestural immediacy informs every sound, and allows us to conjure up the appropriate image in our mind — such as in the slow and stately opening processional (performed solemnly on gongs and conch horns). Reinforcing this ritualistic sensibility is the structure of the music, which celebrates "the earth" and "the heavens" alternately on these four sides. Thus the two sides concerned with "the heavens" contain, for the most part, subtly airy, nearly transparent textures created by various combinations of flutes, delicate drums, and small miscellaneous instruments. The "earth" sides are more aggressive in phrasing and propulsion, with heavier timbres tied imagistically to the terra firma.

It would be extremely difficult, due to the wide range of stylistic stances displayed, to describe every aspect of the music. Hopefully, however, a few examples will suffice to show the duo's relationship to their material and the inherent philosophies. For example, the vibraphone/marimba duet on side one (*Enu-Igwe*) begins within a clear-cut oriental outline (in terms of scales and intervals) and slowly segues into a dazzling improvisational counterpoint — thus defining the duo's use of what Jarman has called "world music" (see the interview in December, 1977 *Coda*). In fact, quite a bit of the music herein reflects a utilization of ethnomusicology entirely global in its implications. With this in mind one hears any number of astonishing aural parallels, such as the sopranino solo following Moye's infectious conga drumming on side three (*Nke-Ala*). Here Jarman uses an incredibly wide vibrato and shifts in and out of a series of dance-like

sections which together sound startlingly reminiscent of the oboe-ish reed instruments (and the bagpipes) found in the Bulgarian Mountains (which can be heard on "The Harvest, the Shepherd and the Bride", Nonesuch 72043 and "Shadow of the Mountain", Nonesuch 72038) – and it is significant to note that this music is identified by both Jarman/Moye and the Bulgarians as music of "the earth"; functional, in terms of never straying far from its dance origins, and spiritual, in combining cerebral and celebrational intentions.

In any music such as this, which grows directly out of a spontaneous exchange of energy and preordained musical conceptions, ultimate success depends upon the compatibility of the participants. Famoudou Don Moye, like Barry Altschul, Phillip Wilson, and Steve McCall, is a "melodic" percussionist with a glittering palette of colors and timbres at his disposal. In addition, his timing and phrasing are refined to the point of telepathy in a duo or ensemble situation. Here, he is an equal partner with the ever-imaginative and emotionally logical lines and moods of Joseph Jarman, and the resultant duet, even divorced from a crucial visual component, retains an expressive weight full of fastidiousness and fury. *– Art Lange*

LEROY JENKINS

Solo Concert
India Navigation IN 1028

Leroy Jenkins, violin.

Improvisation; Why Am I Here; Opus/Supo-National Baptist Convention; Lush Life; Keep On Trucking; Brother; Nobody Knows De Trouble I Seen.

On this record Leroy Jenkins makes his most emphatic pronouncement yet for the violin as a renewed force in creative improvisational music. In his hands the sheen of classical technique and intonation is split and pulled back to reveal the elemental characteristics of wood, horsehair and catgut. A listener feels the violin Jenkins is playing; the heat and tension of bow and fingers to string. Jenkins' playing is at times flashingly vibrant but more often rough-hewn ebony and taut, brooding but constantly elastic in feeling and thought. His mind works in an angular, abstract manner which often takes his dark colors to distant recesses of his imagination. Five minutes into ***Why Am I Here***, a continuous staccato construction, the idea of hearing a violin is displaced by the sensation of a conversation of alien tonality and language; the indeterminate pitch alterations and clipped resonances are unearthly and ironically estranged from the affecting opening theme.

The title and music of ***Opus/Supo*** reflect as Jenkins' liner note indicates the loose rhythmic symmetry of "hip walkers in the city". A progression of swing fragments and jutting phrases are abated every three to six seconds by momentary pause. The piece becomes asymmetric but retains a gasping forward motion.

The conditioned expectations one might have for Billy Strayhorn's ***Lush Life*** are not met here but Jenkins' is a tauntingly ingenuous reworking. After stating the opening ascending lines, rather than the conventional swan dive to the romantic main theme of ***Life***, he takes off on a seemingly divergent path which is actually a motivic interacting of the intro and the body. Fragments of that "missing" body appear as curt phrases and disguised harmonic movements. Even the sweeping dive to A flat appears, belatedly, in a new context.

On ***Keep On Truckin' Brother*** the textural transformations are deft and flaring, sometimes startling as quick sound sketches dashed off in flashing chiaroscuro. Jenkins' high-speed bowing is earthbound by the distinct feeling that he plays from the hip to the head even though he does not swing (nor does he try to) in the sense of a Stuff Smith or Joe Venuti. The oscillating trips from imaginative abstraction to earthly black essence are completed with a moving, multiple-stopped rendition of ***Nobody Knows De Trouble I Seen*** which evokes the soulful harmonies of the plantation forebearers. Jenkins intones a truthful "Amen" upon finishing, a declaration that this modern musical traveler has come home. *– Kevin Lynch*

REISSUES

J.J. JOHNSON: MAD BE BOP (Savoy 2232) packages together material previously on Savoy 12106 and 12010. Side one dates from June 26, 1949 and has the unusual sound of Cecil Payne on alto sax and the mercurial Bud Powell on piano. There's the bonus of two alternate takes of ***Jay Bird*** and ***Jay Jay***. The May 11, 1949 session with Sonny Rollins, John Lewis, Gene Ramey and Shadow Wilson gives us fresh alternates of ***Audobahn, Goof Square*** (2) and ***Bee Jay***. The December 1947 collaboration with Leo Parker (baritone sax), Hank Jones, Al Lucas and Shadow Wilson is intact. So too is the initial 1974 session of J and K (Winding) which gave us eight selections with a rhythm section of Billy Bauer (or Wally Cirillo), Charles Mingus and Kenny Clarke. Johnson's studied elegance is much in evidence and the music is of idiomatic relevance.

CHARLIE BYRD: MIDNIGHT GUITAR (Savoy 1121) and IN GREENWICH VILLAGE (Milestone 47049) are early examples of the guitarist's craft. The Savoy LP is a reissue of "Blues For Night People" – the recording which first attracted attention to Byrd. It is still an appealing disc – more stimulating in many ways than the two live sessions repackaged by Milestone. The 1960 trio date was on Offbeat 3008 before its Riverside appearance and is notable for the lengthy ***Fantasia*** on ***Which Side Are You On.*** The 1963 Village Gate session with Clark Terry and Seldon Powell is as enervating as when it first appeared on Riverside 467.

KENNY BURRELL: MONDAY STROLL (Savoy 1120) is a reissue of material under Frank Wess' leadership. Five selections (***East Winds, Kansas City Side, Over The Rainbow, Southern Exposure, West Side)*** were originally on Savoy 12085 with Freddie Green, Eddie Jones and Kenny Clarke. Gus Johnson replaces Clarke on ***Woolafunt's Lament*** (ex-Savoy 12102) and ***Monday Stroll*** (ex-Savoy 12123). The combination of Wess' flute and tenor with Burrell's guitar is most attractive and Freddie Green's velvet carpet gives the music an understated grace.

NAT ADDERLEY: WORK SONGS (Milestone 47047) joins together "Work Song" (Riverside 318) and "That's Right" (Riverside 330), two above average sessions from 1960. Highlighting the first record is the guitar work of Wes Montgomery as well as the pioneering cello plucking of Sam Jones. The material is a nice blend of funk and prettiness. The second LP features Nat's cornet with the reed team of Cannonball, Yusef Lateef, Jimmy Heath, Charlie Rouse and Tate Houston. Jim Hall and Les Spann share the guitar chair and Wynton Kelly, Sam Jones and Jimmy Cobb make an excellent rhythm section. Even then Nat Adderley was a sensitive, expressive player whose full, brassy tone reflects such musicians as Roy Eldridge as much as his muted efforts are a reminder of Miles Davis' dominant personality at that time. Adderley's melodic grace is especially evident in this timely reminder of one of the music's better stylists.

VARIOUS ARTISTS: FIRST SESSIONS 1949/50 (Prestige 24081) is a collectors' hodge podge of bop styled music from the late 1940s. Most coherent, stylistically, is the reissue of the Lennie Tristano group's 1949 performances of ***Tautology, Retrospection, Subconscious Lee*** and ***Judy*** and Konitz's versions of ***Marshmallow, Fishing Around, Tautology*** and ***Sound Lee.*** All these were on Prestige 7004 and all but the Tristano version of ***Tautology*** were on Prestige 7250. ***Progression***, the other Tristano title, is on Prestige 24046 ("25 Years of Prestige"). Its inclusion, as well as the four Konitz titles from 1951 (***Rebecca, You Go To My Head, Ice Cream Konitz, Palo Alto***) and those from 1951 which were last out on Prestige 7827 would have made a more unified package. Instead, we are left with a lot of bits and pieces. It's good to see the Fats Navarro/Don Lanphere titles reissued (***Wailing Wall, Go, Infatuation, Stop***); they are not the best of Navarro but his short career was not too prolific. The Kai Winding (***Broadway, Waterworks***), Wardell Gray (***Easy Living***), J.J. Johnson (***Afternoon In Paris, Elora, Tea Pot, Blue Mode***), and Sonny Stitt (***Fine And Dandy*** - fine Bud Powell) selections are alternates to selections available on other Prestige twofers. The Al Haig sides (***Liza, Stars Fell On Alabama, Stairway To The Stars, Opus Caprice***) were on Prestige 7516. The remaining selections are either unissued material or were only on 78:

Don Lanphere (***Spiders Web, Strike Up The Band***), Lockjaw Davis (***Sweet And Lovely, Squattin'),*** Leo Parker (***Mona Lisa, Who's Mad, Darn That Dream, I'll Cross My Fingers***). The music is of historic interest but you should look elsewhere if you need to be convinced of the qualities inherent in these performers and their styles. Only the Tristano/Konitz material shows the artists at their best.

RED NORVO: FABULOUS JAM SESSION (Spotlite 127) is the 1945 Comet session with Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Flip Phillips, Teddy Wilson, Slam Stewart and Specs Powell (or J.C. Heard). Apart from an extra take of ***Hallelujah*** this is the same as Charlie Parker Records 408. Putting the original takes on one side is a definite advantage for those people who simply enjoy the music – which is a terrific amalgam of swing and bop. All the musicians are comfortable and compatible – a great session well deserving of reissue.

WILD BILL DAVISON: THE INDIVIDUALISM OF (Savoy 2229) is a new name for albums originally issued as "Ringside at Condon's" and "Jazz From Storyville". The individualism refers to Wild Bill's sound rather than the choice of material or the interpretation. All the familiar tunes are played in convincing fashion but the frameworks are so formalised that it is a wonder the musicians could play them with

determination even so long ago as 1951 and 1955. However the individual performances make the music worthwhile (but not memorable). Ed Hall and Cutty Cutshall are on the Condon session and Frank Chace and Ed Hubble are the lesser known but just as good performers at Storyville. Condon's rhythm team has the edge but both swing nicely. The sound has been much improved and while these live sessions do not match in interest the various Columbia LPs from the same period they are so superior to 99% of today's versions of this music that they deserve your attention.

JOHN KIRBY: THE BIGGEST LITTLE BAND 1937/1941 (Smithsonian R-013) follows quickly behind Columbia's own reissue (CG33557) which was discussed in ***Coda*** no. 156. This package includes eight selections from sessions under Buster Bailey's leadership (***Afternoon In Africa, Dizzy Debutante, Planters Punch, Sloe Jam Fizz, Chained To A Dream, Light Up, Pinetop's Boogie Woogie, Eccentric Rag***) which are on Rarities 17. Four of the five Decca titles (***Rehearsin' For A Nervous Breakdown, From A Flat To C, Pastel Blue, Undecided***) are all on French MCA 510.071. Another eight selections (***It Feels Good, Sweet Georgia Brown, Front And Center, Royal Garden Blues, Andiology, Blues Petite, I Love You Truly, Beethoven Riffs On***) are on the Columbia LP. ***Drink To Me Only, Chloe*** and ***Serenade*** are on Tax 8016 while ***Coquette*** and ***Can't We Be Friends*** are on "Swing Street" (Columbia SNN 6042). This leaves an alternate take of ***Sweet Georgia Brown, Jumpin' In The Pump Room*** and ***Zoomin' At The Zombie*** as the only titles new to LP (***Blues Skies, 20th Century Closet*** and ***Cuttin' The Campus*** were on Collectors 12-3). In many ways this is a better representation of Kirby's music than the Columbia package so if you don't have much of the above material you should invest in this set — an important documentation of a great band. Sound and packaging is excellent. Available from The Smithsonian Collection, P.O. Box 10230, Des Moines, Iowa 50336 for $9.99 postpaid.

COLEMAN HAWKINS: THE REAL THING (Prestige 24083) showcases the tenor saxophonist with rhythm accompaniment. Sides 3 and 4 are a straight repackage of Moodsville 7 "At Ease" — the first of several Hawkins ballad sets for that label. Tommy Flanagan, Wendell Marshall and Osie Johnson are the rhythm section but the principal focus is Hawkins. The brusque side of Hawkins can be heard in four selections (***Soul Blues, Greensleeves, Until The Real Thing Comes Along, I Hadn't Anyone Till You***) with Ray Bryant, Kenny Burrell, Marshall and Johnson from the LP entitled "Soul" (Prestige 7149/Swingville 2039) and three (***It's A Blue World, I Want To Be Loved, Red Beans***) from Swingville 2001 with Red Garland, Doug Watkins and Specs Wright. Both these albums could easily have been reissued in their entirety but what we do have is marvelously sensitive music from one of the giants of the art. If you missed them first time around don't hesitate now.

SONNY ROLLINS: TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS (Prestige 24082) repackages further classic examples of Rollins' first decade as a master musician. ***There's No Business Like Show Business, Raincheck, There Are Such Things*** and ***It's All Right With Me*** come from the "Worktime" LP (still available on Prestige 7750) with Ray Bryant, George Morrow and Max Roach. The fifth title from this session is on Prestige 24004. The "Tenor Madness" LP is reissued intact. John Coltrane joins Rollins on the title track but on the rest of the titles Rollins plays alone with Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. Completing this package are the instrumental selections (***Ee-Ah, Sonny Boy, B. Swift, B. Quick***) from December 7, 1956 with Kenny Drew, George Morrow and Max Roach. All of this material, part of Rollins' definitive recordings, has been continuously available but these remastered packages (Prestige 24004, 24050, 24082) are economically attractive and have the benefit of great sound and quiet pressings. — ***John Norris***

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MONICA ZETTERLUND with the Thad Jones/ Mel Lewis Orchestra
"It Only Happens Every Time" EMI 7C 062-35454

CODA MAGAZINE PRESENTS

1. 11 Days and 10 Nights at the MOERS NEW JAZZ FESTIVAL in GERMANY and the BIM HUIS FESTIVAL in AMSTERDAM HOLLAND.

$665.00

LEAVES FROM TORONTO MAY 28 AND RETURNS FROM AMSTERDAM JUNE 7.

MOERS is the earlier of these two trips. This small German town has quickly established itself as the site of the leading festival of contemporary avant garde jazz. Over the past two years just about every major musician (both American and European) has participated in this event and 1979 promises to be no different. This year the focus will be on large ensembles and by special arrangement with Burkhard Hennen, the festival director and producer of Ring Records, the participants in this tour will not only be able to attend the concerts, but also experience the growth of the music through daily rehearsals and attend nightly pre-festival sessions in a local nightclub where both the Rova Saxophone Quartet and the Chico Freeman Ensemble will be featured. The festival lasts for four days and the group will then depart to Amsterdam where a further two-day festival with many of the same musicians will take place at the famous Bim Huis.

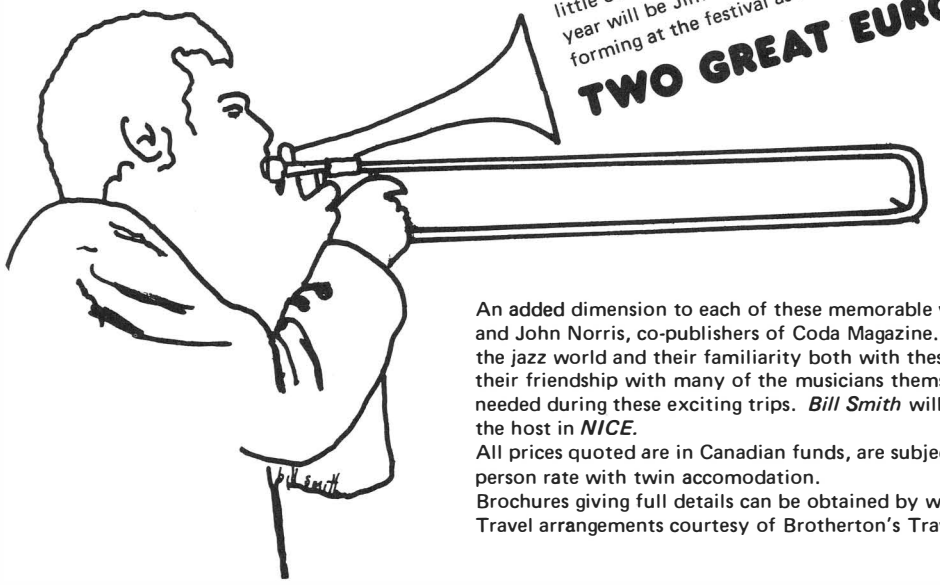
2. 12 Days and 11 Nights at the NICE JAZZ FESTIVAL in the South of FRANCE.

$985.00 (budget hotel) $1175.00 (first class hotel)

LEAVES FROM TORONTO JULY 4 AND RETURNS FROM NICE JULY 16.

NICE, one of the jewels of the French Riviera, every July reverbrates to the sounds of more than sixty of the best American jazz musicians playing within the central tradition of the music. Three bandstands provide continuous music every night for ten days with the groups changing every hour. Although such working bands as Dizzy Gillespie and Art Blakey are heard at Nice, it is often the surprising combinations of top names which result in the most exciting music. The casual, informal setting appeals to both musicians and listeners with the result that there is little of the hectic pressure so familiar at other festivals. Travelling with the group to Nice this year will be Jim Galloway, the noted Canadian soprano and tenor saxophonist. Jim will be performing at the festival as well as acting as co-host for the group.

TWO GREAT EUROPEAN JAZZ VACATIONS



An added dimension to each of these memorable vacations will be the personal direction given by Bill Smith and John Norris, co-publishers of Coda Magazine. They both have more than twenty years of experience in the jazz world and their familiarity both with these festivals and the music being performed is enhanced by their friendship with many of the musicians themselves. They will be able to give advice and direction where needed during these exciting trips. ***Bill Smith*** will be hosting the party to ***MOERS*** while ***John Norris*** will be the host in ***NICE.***

All prices quoted are in Canadian funds, are subject to change without prior notice, and are based on per person rate with twin accomodation.

Brochures giving full details can be obtained by writing Coda Publications or by phoning (416) 368-3149.

Travel arrangements courtesy of Brotherton's Travel Services Ltd.

Vinny Golia has been based on the west coast here in Los Angeles since 1973. I first heard him at Bobby Bradford's Little Big Horn in Pasadena where he would lumber in with a sack of instruments under one arm, in the other a shotgun totebag served as his bass clarinet case and in his mouth would be the ever present pipe, smoking. Sometimes he would only absorb the music quietly, other times, and most usually Bobby would ask him to join in during these Sunday sessions. He would almost always stand to the back, aloof, with quiet respect for Bradford, employing one of his larger horns into some deep underlying texture for the afternoon's music, awaiting the moment when Bobby would nod in his direction for him to solo.

Born at St. Mary's Hospital in the Bronx, NYC, March 1, 1946. He grew up in New York and studied the arts there, being formally trained in drawing and painting. Later he moved to New Jersey, from there he moved back to New York, to Greenwich Village, and then to Boston, New Mexico (where he had his first professional playing gig), and again back east, to Woodstock and finally California. A 'new school' player, he prefers many instruments, "For color like a full palette when you paint, each instrument has an inherent sound that I feel should be utilized to enhance expression and feeling." His first strong direction came, "...well the first guy I ever heard, as a real player, I saw this album cover, and I bought the record, it was 'Trane, and when I heard that, it was all over." In his youth around the house, "My folks would play a lot of Ellington and Bechet, my dad was into Dixieland and of course there were a lot of big band records too." But for the most part his "Influences have been mainly three people who I consider close friends — Dave Holland, Anthony Braxton and Dave Liebman. All of these cats have stressed a knowledge of tradition, harmony and instrumental technique. It is something that a lot of new players don't have (many don't play in tune). I'm basically self-taught aside from a few rudimentary lessons from Anthony."

At the time when he was living in Greenwich Village where he first began to play he had been experimenting with drawing along with live performances, "I tried to draw as fast as they could improvise, and having classical training I could retain their shape and form." An example of this style of his may be seen on the cover of Dave Holland's lp "Music From Two Basses" (ECM 1011). During this time he was working at The Metropolitan Museum of Art which led our conversation into several areas of art and somewhat surfaced with a comment I made about Albers; that he has his color values so distinct, like a jazz musician's tones. Vinny responded, "Yeah! Well you see that was the thing, the carry-over, the tones, and textures and different shapes." The carry-over being that during the time that he was living in the Village he finally came to a point where he couldn't resist the temptation to musically improvise himself. Now years later, "I got a lot of static from old friends who knew me as a painter in New York. They said that I'd have to live another lifetime to play music, but this was my belief, and still is: There is a thread of expression and spirit that runs through all of the arts. It's just a matter of transferring one technique to another medium and if it's something that you have to do then you have to find a way to do it.

VINNY GOLIA

"As you know I started as a visual artist, so composition means quite a bit to me, this attribute can be spontaneous but usually a balance of written composition and planned improvisation I find works best." As his album recording from October 18, 1977, "Spirits in Fellowship" (Ninewinds 0101) proves. Though it is his only record release to date it is not his only venture into making a record. Earlier in 1977 he had negotiated a deal with Helios Records and recorded an album (subsequently shelved) that reflected his long-standing fondness for eastern musics. Featured on the lp is Jasmine, a group that Vinny fronted here in L.A., and K. Subramaniam, master of the classical violin style of South India. Vinny had studied Indian music formally with Harihar Rao.

The thing that I see in music happening currently is that there is not a whole lot of exploration of ***true*** expression, there seems to be an adaptation of techniques that were used originally for self-expression, but now have been watered down to become just techniques for sounds and shock value. There is a lot of music around with no depth!

"An improvisor should be flexible to adapt to feelings and textures thrown at him." Something that he has gleaned from Dave Holland: "... he's very remarkable, and like the bass is a difficult instrument, and it's even harder to get a personal sound, and he's not only got a personal sound but a totally unique concept of where he comes from. He's one of the few cats that's a totally all-around musician. When I was last in New York I saw him play with a be-bop vibist one night, another night with Betty Carter, very intricate heads and time signatures, and also with Braxton, in a trio with George Lewis. I mean there's about three different scopes of music and he would just be cruisin' right through it, just put anything in front of him and he could play it.

"Since I've been playing such a short time I really concentrate on tone, technique and musical ideas. And there are a lot of cats playing with neither of the three, and getting a lot of publicity. Now I don't resent that but there are other cats, like here (in L.A.), like John Carter, he doesn't get anything and he's quite possibly the best clarinet player on the face of the earth and nobody even knows who he is."

Concerning living in the Village, "That whole 19th Street scene was (something)! Chick Corea was living on the bottom, Dave Holland was in the middle and Dave Liebman was on top. It was like constant music there, a conservatory. That is where I learned how to practice and all that. You would walk up the stairs and you could hear Chick practicing. Who had just met Braxton and he had him doing Cage and Stockhausen and all of that stuff. And then the next floor would be Dave's and would have say five basses, or maybe just be playing alone. And then on top would be Liebman who might have five tenors, just like ***Ascension*** all over again, constantly outrageous! And things would constantly change. There was a three day session in that house one time. And when things would get real out I would pick up my soprano, 'cause I had one by that time.

"When I lived with Liebman he helped me out through the rough period, showed me how to hold the horn, how to put it in my mouth. And Braxton showed me scales and taught me what that was all about. And Dave Holland he is like the harmonic textbook! Last time I went back there I helped him write out some charts for a class he was teaching up in Woodstock. When I stayed with him he would get up in the morning and say, "Hey, do you want to play a little?' and I'd say 'yeah' and then he'd go through the Monk fake book at like breakneck speed. Jeeez! After that I felt I could play anything!"

Vinny Golia plays piccolo, flute, alto flute, Eb, Bb and bass clarinets, soprano, tenor, baritone and contrabass saxophones. He plans to release a whole series of recordings on his Nine Winds Records, from solo and duet to big band and string ensembles. Hopefully he will release the out takes from "Spirits In Fellowship", which I hear are just as fine as the record. He also has a live recording of that group recorded October 16, 1977. The lp is available from ***Coda*** and from Vinny at 9232 McLennan Ave., Sepulveda, California 91343 U.S.A.

article by MARK WEBER

BLUESNEWS

BY DOUG LANGILLE

Again we turn to reissue LPs. To start, we have four Delmark releases. After purchasing a healthy supply of United/States masters, Delmark has begun to turn loose their U/S blues reissue series (on Delmark and Pearl). To date, they have released Jr. Wells, "Blues Hit Big Town" (Delmark DL-640); J.T. Brown, "Windy City Boogie" (Pearl PL-9), Memphis Slim, "Memphis Slim - USA" (Pearl PL-10); and Robert Nighthawk, "Bricks In My Pillow" (Pearl PL-11). All four LPs are well worth picking up and are all characterized by superior straight-ahead mono (no doctoring and no need to), high quality pressing and artwork, informative liner notes and an imaginative selection of first rate blues performances. All were a pleasure to review.

Captured on "Blues Hit Big Town" is the youthful spirit, the raw, but directed energy and uninhibited excitement of 1950s Chicago ensemble blues. The early 1950s were the creative, formative years for Chicago blues, and Wells and Co. (the list of sidemen reads like a who's who of Chicago blues) were well into establishing the structural framework for this highly influential blues genre when these sides were cut.

The material is drawn from three States sessions (1953 and 1954). Five of the twelve cuts are either unissued tunes or unissued alternate takes. All cuts feature Jr. on vocals and/or harp, while the core backup unit features Willie Dixon (bass), either Below or Odie Payne (drums) and the Myers brothers (guitars). Guest artists include the team of Elmore James (guitar) and Johnnie Jones (piano) on the first six cuts and the team of Muddy Waters (guitar) and Otis Spann (piano) on the remainder. Several of these cuts have appeared on Blues Classics (BL-12) and Red Lightning (RL-007).

The sound is vibrant and straight Chicago - upfront harp and vocals laid over a solid, percussive foundation of guitars, piano, bass and drums. As usual Jr. is in full control. His vocals are self-assured and his harp work is smooth, calculated and precise. The backing is pure South Side and tight. To simply say that the sidemen understood Jr. and the particular genre and were sympathetic in their assistance would be an understatement. On the respective sides, the guitar work of James or Waters adds a great deal of substance, identity and credibility to the sound. Catch Jr. wail and Elmore sizzle on ***Hoodoo Man Blues***; the whole crew (Waters and Spann) cook and open the valves on ***Lord, Lord***; and Jr. mellow out and get close to the senses on ***Please Throw This Dog A Bone.*** This last cut is quite exceptional. It features Jr. on vocals and harp with some functional acoustic guitar in the background. On the title tune (given both a slow and a fast treatment) Jr. lays down a strong theme about city life and the desire to head back south. "Blues Hit Big Town" is truly a celebration of Chicago blues and a reissue that both Bob Koester and Jr. Wells can be proud of.

If the Jr. Wells reissue is a celebration, then the J.T. Brown set is a waxed Saturday night happening. Brown's music is a mix of 1950s Chicago blues and jump. It leans toward the near urbane side of the Chicago blues spectrum and the sides tabled here project a certain low down and/or raucous after hours party atmosphere.

The late J.T. Brown was a distinctive vocalist and saxophonist. Some critics are quick to point out his narrow selection of material for recording purposes over the years and his obviously limited instrumental technique. While he was certainly not Lester Young or Charlie Parker on the horn, his lead work and accompaniment had an honest, throaty quality, and in the context of jump and blues acted as a catalyst to an exciting musical scenario. He is best known for his recorded work behind Elmore James, J.B. Lenoir, Johnny Jones, Roosevelt Sykes etc. His singing, when he was given the opportunity, was characterized by a matured, relaxed quality, and as illustrated on these sides conjures up an image of tuxedos and a 1950s South Side night club.

The thirteen sides presented here include alternate takes, unissued sides and a rehearsal take coming from several United sessions recorded between 1951 and 1956. All sides focus on Brown as vocalist and lead instrumentalist. The sidemen and the scale and format of the backing varies from session to session. Better known sidemen include pianists Little Brother Montgomery, Bob Call and Lafayette Leake; bassists Ransom Knowling and Willie Dixon, guitarist Jody Williams; and drummers Fred Below and Jump Jackson. Roosevelt Sykes (sans piano) makes his presence known on several cuts as an enthusiastic coach and pusher.

The excitement of Brown's music comes through strong and clear on the jump tunes like ***Windy City Boogie, Strictly Gone Boogie, Brown's Boogie*** and ***Use That Spot.*** A certain neo-urban working class supper club sophistication (a la Arbee Stidham) is evident in cuts like ***Going Home To My Baby*** (a favourite with Brown in the studio), ***Lonely As A Man Can Be*** and ***You Stayed Away Too Long.*** The last cut features the fuller band sound. Also of interest are ***Blackjack Blues,*** a gambling blues epic with a happy ending; and ***House Party Groove***, an alley instrumental blues featuring some exceptionally good piano by Bob Call laid on a basic sax, bass and drum foundation.

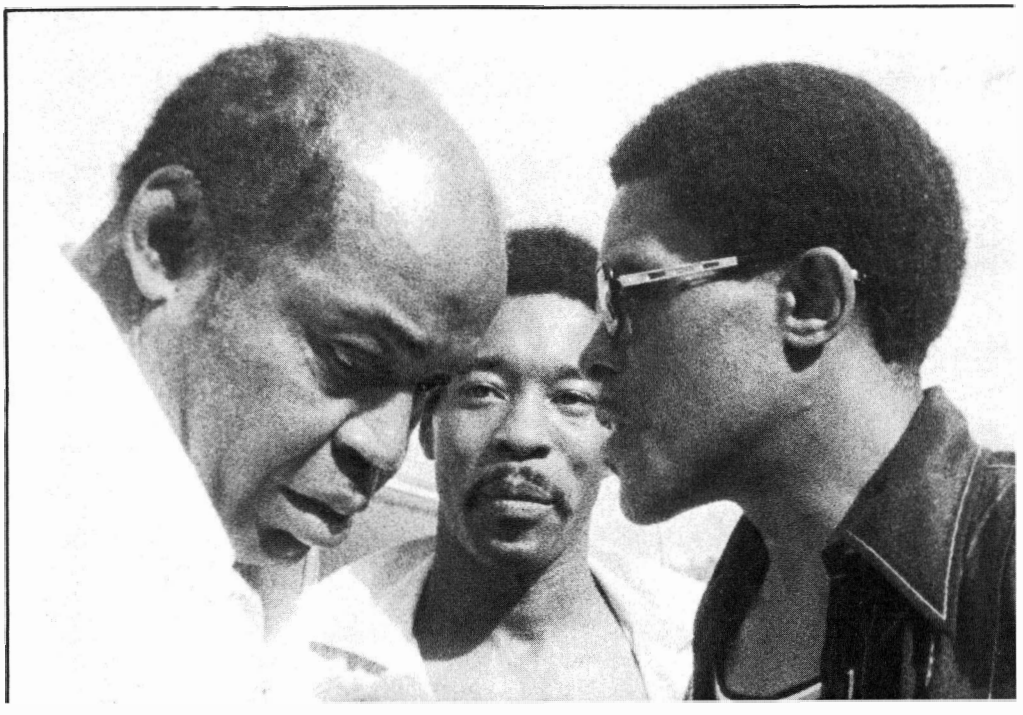
The production of this particular set is quite commendable. The production staff were imaginative enough to select cuts that showcased Brown as vocalist and lead instrumentalist in a varied program. "Windy City Boogie" is a superior complement to the Flyright set "Rockin' With J.T." (Flyright LP 4712). Only two cuts are duplicated and the Pearl sound quality is far superior. Also the Flyright set focuses more on Brown as sideman and less on Brown as vocalist/leader.

The promotional blurb that accompanied "Memphis Slim - USA" suggested that the LP should have been titled "Not Just Another Memphis Slim Album". Fair enough, since Slim was caught on his United sides in a straight ahead and somewhat sophisticated Chicago blues format. The twelve sides on the Pearl set were taken from two 1954 United sessions and include four unissued tunes, two unissued alternate takes, and a single sampling of studio ramblings.

Slim is backed by his band of the day - The House Rockers. Featured are Neil Green and Jim Conley on tenors, Henry Taylor on bass, Otho Allen on drums, with the additional threat of the blues guitar virtuoso, Matt Murphy. Slim's United sides were recorded shortly after Slim drafted Murphy into the ranks of the House Rockers. Throughout, Murphy shines and is showcased to good advantage, laying down some highly original and technically immaculate guitar licks. Murphy was and still is a guitar wizard of no mean proportions, bending toward: the jazz-tinged sophistication of the late T-Bone Walker.

Listening to these sides certainly clarifies the reasons for Memphis Slim and the House Rockers being so popular in Chicago in the 1950s. The music presented here is urbane, rock solid and exceptionally tight. The majority of the sides are vocals with Slim's piano and celeste (on two cuts) serving as an introduction and perpetuator of the theme. The horns riff in the background behind the vocals, or respond with drums and guitar to dramatize and punctuate particular vocal statements. The guitar, when not laying down a sustaining rhythm, is entwined with Slim's predominantly laid back piano behind the vocals, or is breaking out with a healthy sampling of upfront solo work. In particular catch Murphy's featured spot on the title cut and on ***Sad And Lonesome.***

A real bonus on "Memphis Slim - USA" are the two unissued guitar instrumental sides



featuring Murphy as leader – ***Jive Time Bounce*** and ***Backbone Boogie.*** For these cuts the horns are absent, leaving Murphy to lead the piano, bass and drums through a medium and uptempo exercise that would knock excess weight off most jazz guitarists.

Anyone who found Slim's 1959 Vee Jay sides (with Murphy) or his earlier King sides (without guitar) exciting should not hesitate to latch onto this legal and clean United reissue. Koester and Co. plan to release two more Pearl LPs of Slim's United sides sometime further down the road.

Finally from Chateau Delmark we have the Robert Nighthawk reissue, "Bricks In My Pillow" (PL-11). Again this is an exceptionally worthwhile reissue and a definite tribute to this highly influential and central blues figure. From these sides it is clear why Nighthawk was such a popular and influential artist. His impact on Elmore James, Earl Hooker and Muddy Waters is quite evident.

Included are twelve United sides recorded at two sessions in 1951 and 1952. Five are previously unissued and one is an unissued alternate take. The sidemen vary from session to session and include such notables as Roosevelt Sykes, Bob Call, Ransom Knowling, and probably Jump Jackson. The backing includes bass, piano, drums with second guitar (on two particular cuts) and is utilitarian but effectively tight and sober. Nighthawk's slide-dominated guitar is well upfront. On these sides his playing is technically flawless as he demonstrates his unique ability to marry the raw urgency of delta stylists with the sophistication of Tampa Red. His singing style is to the point and his diction is remarkably clear. The combination of his sobering vocal style with his at times eerie guitar technique produces a very haunting and occasionally sombre mood. This is especially true on the understated slower tunes, ***The Moon Is Rising, Crying Won't Help You*** and ***Seventy Four.***

Nighthawk and his sidemen really jump on the vocal sides – ***Take It Easy Baby, Kansas City*** and ***Maggie Campbell*** (two takes), and on the instrumentals ***Nighthawk Boogie*** and ***United States Boogie.*** Further adding to the variety are ***Maggie Campbell*** and ***Bricks In My Pillow,*** which project the loping influence of Tommy Johnson and the Jackson post-graduate school of blues. This particular influence is dramatized on one of the versions of ***Maggie Campbell*** by the addition of an imaginative second guitarist.

"Bricks" is a superior collection of high calibre blues by a blues giant. Nighthawk was a true professional. His clear vocal and technically smooth guitar work understated an emotional charge that launched a highly individualistic and well-tuned vehicle for his often first-rate choice of lyrical theme. Along with the Jr. Wells set, "Bricks" might just be one of the more worthwhile reissue purchases of the year.

Moving right along we turn to a Japanese reissue of Chance sides by Homesick James Williamson - "Chance Vintage Blues/R&B Crops Vol. 2" (P-Vine, PLP-706). The fourteen chronologically ordered cuts are drawn from Chance sessions taken from a single 1952 and two 1953 sessions. As should be expected, there is an overall downhome quality inherent in the sound and ensemble format, and a certain emphasis on slide guitar. As usual Homesick's vocals lend themselves to transplanted field hollers. Although Homesick's emotive lead work is clearly in evidence, as usual he mixes things up with more conventional electric guitar work.

The format has been somewhat standardized throughout. On all sides he is backed by piano (at times Lazy Bill Lucas) and bass. There is a second guitarist present on two sides and harp is heard on another five sides. On most sides the piano is well up front with the lead guitar. Unfortunately the piano periodically falters, appears off key and oblivious to the direction taken by Homesick James. The lyrics add to the downhome character of these selected Chance sides. Homesick sings about farming, the South, leaving the South, trains and unappreciated solitude. Two cuts that stand out in purpose and intensity are ***Farmer's Blues*** and ***Whiskey Headed Woman.***

The sound reproduction (in mono) is generally good. In lieu of liner notes there is a fairly detailed discography. Overall there is a good mix of tempo and themes. However, many of the tunes are Homesick James standards and have continually reappeared in full or in part elsewhere. It can be said that the set is of historical and musical interest. While such a multi-course dinner of Homesick James may be too much for the average blues sampler, the set is a good bet for the more hardcore downhome Chicago blues enthusiast. P-Vine records are available in North America from Southern Record Sales, 5001 Reynard, La Crescenda, California 91214 USA.

Now for something also from the West Coast but more recently recorded. First an anthology of contemporary San Francisco blues on Messaround Records - "Blues Bay" (MRS-001). This is Messaround's first release and the central idea behind the set is to give exposure to the often forgotten contemporaries of West Coast blues. Featured are urban blues guitarists Hi Tide Harris, Luther Tucker and Sonny Rhodes; country bluesman Robert Lowry; guitarist Ron Thompson, and the harp-led Gary Smith Blues Band. On the band sides the backing ranges from piano and rhythm to expanded ensemble with horns. Guest sidemen include Skip Rose and Charlie Musselwhite.

Although the musicianship is basically competent throughout, the ensemble sides generally chunk-a-chunk along in a self-indulgent manner, missing the sensitivities and intricacies that are characteristic of good blues. The exceptions to this are Sonny Rhodes' ***The Highway Is Like A Woman*** and Tucker's ***Mean Old World.*** Also of particular interest are Lowry's solo interpretation of Robert Johnson's ***Crossroads Blues***, and his ***Gambling Man Blues***, performed in the Lil Son Jackson mould. Although Lowry's offerings do not stray far from the Johnson/Jackson formulas, they do demonstrate his versatility, interest in tradition and musicianship.

In all there is a wide mix of influences represented here. The performances range from so-so to quite good. Some of the artists could have done with more encouragement and possibly a more sympathetic final mixdown (to add needed bottom to the sound). "Blue Bay", while not the final statement of San Francisco blues is certainly not a dead loss, and fares better than the Jefferson (a Swedish label) coverage of the 1976 San Francisco Blues Festival (Jefferson BL-602). If interested contact: Messaround Records, P.O. Box 1392, Burlingame, California 94010 USA.

West Coast blues guitarist Sonny Rhodes fares much better on his own recent release. The LP entitled "I Don't Want My Blues Coloured Bright" was recorded in San Francisco in 1976/77, and issued on the Swedish label Amigo (AMLP 821). Rhodes is both a sensitive and professional lead guitarist and vocalist. His guitar work has a light, clear Texas feel to it and is used primarily as an extension of his smooth and calculated vocal phrasing. On this set Rhodes comes across as a disciplined performer and band leader. In turn, the sidemen are also disciplined and actually appear to have rehearsed. The backup format is mixed around for good variety and at times includes a mixture of harp, piano, second guitar, bass, drums, baritone, tenor, alto and trumpet. Featured sidemen include Rhodes' long time associate J.J. Malone to good advantage on piano and Gary Smith on harp. Malone is present on most cuts and gets vocal time on two. He also is a pleasing vocalist and as sideman works well with Rhodes. Gary Smith, when heard, plays calculated and supportive harmonica (good stuff). The horns are quietly used as an understated support system, smoothing out the proceedings and reinforcing the very urbane sound of the set.

The material includes original sides by Rhodes and Malone, plus titles from St. Louis Jimmy – ***Take The Bitter With The Sweet;*** Howling Wolf – ***Killing Floor;*** Guitar Slim – ***Just Got In;*** and Jr. Parker – ***How Long*** and ***Sitting And Thinking.*** This is an exceptionally impressive premiere for Rhodes. He, Malone, and the sidemen deliver the goods, and Amigo Records dresses it up with good engineering, pressing and packaging.

Finally a quick review of a recently recorded LP on Big Town Records. The title is "Blowin' Smoke" (BT-1001), and it features a little-known Los Angeles blues guitarist/vocalist, Smokey Wilson. Wilson, originally from the Mississippi/Arkansas blues scene is a clean, somewhat original guitarist in the modern blues vein. However, on this particular set he or his second guitarist strays into a heavy rock guitar style on certain cuts. Vocally he projects a downhome image, at times sounding like a smoky Jimmy Reed, but Wilson is not really a strong vocalist.

With a 40 minute-plus playing time the set is dominated by uptempo sides, and consequently is lacking in variety, even though there is a slide number, some electronic gimmickry on one number, and a few sides that would appeal in a funky disco setting (if there is such a setting). The backing, although tight and characterized by some obviously sympathetic interplay, is also generally lacking in variety. Behind Wilson is a basic unit featuring harp, second guitar, bass and drums. At times this ensemble sounds more like a rock band than a blues band.

In all there are eleven vocal sides, all of which are accredited to Wilson. Most are drawn, if only in spirit, from other sources, the most obvious being ***Annie Lee*** and ***How Many More Times.*** The latter is performed in a heavy metal Howling Wolf vein.

Generally Wilson is an adequate, but not necessarily a strong artist. He relies too much on sameness in band sound and stock blues themes. On the whole the production of the set could have been more original. However, the pressing is quite good and the merits of this first LP set by Wilson might lie in its potential as a good rocking party LP. It should find a market amongst a blues audience with modern rock tendencies. Other recent releases by Big Town include a second LP by Wilson plus LPs by Joe Huston, Joe Turner, and Charles Brown.

(left to right) Willie Dixon, Buddy Guy, Junior Wells. photograph by Bill Smith

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

Ain't Misbehavin': The Story of Fats Waller by Ed Kirkeby with Duncan P. Shiedt and Sinclair Traill (1966). $3.95

From 1938 on, Ed Kirkeby was Fats Waller's personal manager and frequent traveling companion. Moreover, the list of persons interviewed for this biography includes many names from Fats' family, early childhood, Harlem rent party days and other phases of show business. Add in respected co-authors (Traill edits England's *Jazz Journal*), and you have the makings of a manuscript that's about as authoritative as you're likely to find.

One needs this assurance of eye-witness accounts because the wealth of anecdotes about Waller, with which this brisk and readable volume is jammed, are, like Fats, somewhat larger than life. Fats' irrepressible personality, which shone through everything he did and caused his contemporaries to love him despite an unpredictability, immaturity, and irresponsibility that would have wrecked the career of an artist of less warmth and genius, is captured in stories from his youngest days (Fats would evade punishment for his misdeeds — or switch the blame to his innocent sister — by quoting bible verses to his extremely religious parents) to his death at age 39 from high living and the backbreaking pace of one-nighters (suffering from the bronchial pneumonia which was to be the immediate cause of his death in just a few hours, Fats joked about the Kansas winds making a noise like Coleman Hawkins' saxophone).

Background information on Fats' milieu and cronies (James P., The Lion, etc.) is briefly supplied, rounding out the picture and offering perspective without drawing away from the emphasis on Waller. His important recording sessions are included in the 15-page selected discography, and the (unindexed) volume is supplemented with 39 pictures.

All in all, these 232 pages of text tell you all you need to know about Fats, definitively and in an enjoyable fashion. A 1975 paperback edition, published by Da Capo Press, Inc., 227 West 17th Street, New York, New York 10011 and distributed in Canada by Holt, Rinehart & Winston of Canada, Ltd., is well worth its modest $3.95 list price to anyone who appreciates Fats — and that's everyone, isn't it?

— Tex Wyndham

FATS WALLER

Fats Waller: His Life and Times by Joel Vance (1977) Contemporary Books, Chicago $8.95

One hesitates to suggest that Vance researched this slim (170 pages) and superficial work mostly by reading Ed Kirkeby's fine 1966 Waller biography and then spending some time with old newspaper files. However, if you read Vance right after reading Kirkeby (as I did), you can't help coming away with the feeling that, except for some stories contributed by saxophonist/vocalist Joey Nash, nearly all of

the detailed information cited by Vance about Waller is given in at least as much detail in Kirkeby (which is, naturally, included in Vance's two-page bibliography).

Vance pads his book with such liberal quotations from newspapers that the incidents they describe get blown out of proportion in light of the thin text (e.g. Fats' 1942 flop at Carnegie Hall and a silly interview regarding ASCAP complaints about royalties on Sousa marches). In fact, seven pages (separating chapters) are blank, five more reproduce verbatim a casual and tasteless 1941 Fats-Eddie "Rochester" Anderson broadcast, and additional space goes to quoting song lyrics. The worst puffery, which Vance may believe somehow belongs here because he thinks it illustrates Fats' "times", involves dragging in total irrelevancies via armchair speculation like the following: a paragraph on Scott Joplin appears because he ***might*** have attended a concert that Fats saw, a Paderewski movie is synopsized because it reminds Vance of a Waller film, the lyric to Bert Williams' ***Nobody*** is set forth because Vance considers it similar to Waller's ***Black And Blue*** (which is not set forth and for which Fats didn't write the words anyway), and a full page describing the World War I reports of Negro Private Henry Johnson is, believe it or not, included because the young Waller might have seen Johnson in a parade.

Such digression is hardly scholarship; moreover, in Vance's hands it is neither entertaining nor interesting. It does provide a means of writing a book without doing much work and of sneaking yet another overpriced tome ($8.95 for this one from Contemporary Books, Inc., 180 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60601, distributed in Canada by Beaverbooks, 953 Dillingham Road, Pickering, Ontario L1W 1Z7) through publishers who obviously don't know enough about jazz to spot the volume's weaknesses.

Kirkeby's book is in print at this writing, and as long as it is, Vance's is totally superfluous. Buy Kirkeby in paperback, use the savings to get a Waller lp, and help hasten Vance to the remainder bins. Make that the wastebasket.

— Tex Wyndham

IN SEARCH OF BUDDY BOLDEN

by Don Marquis
Louisiana State Press $9.95

BRASS BANDS AND....

Brass Bands and New Orleans Jazz
by William J. Schafer
Louisiana State University Press
($12.50 cloth; $6.95 paper)

A new generation of writers is rewriting many of the once established viewpoints about what occurred in the early years of jazz. These two books are important new contributions to jazz research.

Only a few years ago it would have seemed inconceivable that a book of 150 pages devoted to the life of Buddy Bolden could have been compiled. Don Marquis' extensive detective work in the archives of various New Orleans and Louisiana government offices as well as new interviews with the few remaining people with any ***personal*** reminiscences of Bolden has enabled him to sift out much of the legend. What is left is a glimpse at a man who began to tip the scales towards improvisation and personal expression in the urban musical idiom of black America. It squashes the stories that Bolden was a barber and editor of a scandal sheet. It also makes more feasible the stories of Bolden playing his horn loud enough to "call his children home". He used to do this when playing at either Johnson or Lincoln Parks. This book establishes that these two parks were only a block apart. We still can only conjecture at Bolden's sound and such statements by Marquis as "Music of the post-Bolden period lacks many of the characteristics that made Bolden's music so new and unusual, and his music can only be judged in its own context, against what was being played then" simply can't be authenticated because none of this music is available to us in recorded form. In the same way Marquis' statement that Manuel Perez "was one of the true giants of the New Orleans jazz tradition and it is unfortunate that so many jazz historians have given him so little attention" is a little harsh. Perez never recorded and his reputation exists through the opinions of other musicians - in much the same way that Bolden's did. Perez is referred to as primarily a reading musician in Schafer's book while George Lewis, in his new biography by Tom Bethell, says he "went like hell". Lewis also says that he played like Peter Bocage - another musician who claims his principal attributes were as a reading musician.

Marquis also puts forward a strong argument that Bunk Johnson, to justify his claims (in the 1940s) that he played with Bolden, put back his birthday by approximately ten years - thus making him in his mid fifties when he began his comeback in 1942.

Another subject not pursued in either book is touched upon by Marquis. He mentions that drummer Dee Dee Chandler was credited with developing the first foot pedal and a photo-

photograph opposite by Bob Schranck: (left to right) Louis Nelson, De De Pierce, George Lewis

graph of John Robichaux's Orchestra in 1896 has Chandler posing with the bass drum frame facing forward - indicating he may well have been striking the drum with a stick at that time. Such other drum developments as the hi-hat also need to be researched further.

William Schafer's book is a synopsis of brass band history in America from a black perspective. It indicates that brass bands and brass band techniques were the principal entrees to music making for all persons except the minority able to afford classical training. The book makes clear, through interviews deposited in the William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University, that early New Orleans brass band music was a more compact version of the music performed by larger military and concert aggregations. The stock arrangements were adapted for whatever instrumentation was available (the music for one of these works - ***War Cloud*** - is included in this book).

William Schafer articulates the very reasonable thesis that New Orleans brass band music has changed with public taste and the gradual replacement of musicians playing written music by those who rely on improvisation. He also points up the tremendous impact which this style of music (loud and brassy) had on the instrumental techniques, ideas and approaches of most early jazzmen who derived inspiration and some employment from this musical form.

Both books are short but between them they help to give the listener insight into understanding some of the fundamentals which shaped the early days of jazz in New Orleans.

— John Norris

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ

New Orleans Jazz; A Family Album
by Al Rose and Edmund Souchon

This is a 1978 revised edition of a 1967 photo album, with brief descriptive captions and text, dealing with traditional jazz played in the city of New Orleans or elsewhere when performed by Crescent City natives. Rose has penned new introductory comments which indicate that the revisions consist primarily of correction of errors in dates or names, replacement of certain pictures with better or more accurate ones, insertion of some dates of deaths, and addition of a sixteen-page supplement that incorporates material concerning the more recent N.O. scene and a few more vintage photos. No specific comparison with the first edition has been made for purposes of this review, but one can't help noting that the longest section of the volume — listing birth, death, and principal gigs for individual jazzmen — quite often speaks from the mid-1960s.

This biographical section is of the least interest because many of the shots are candids of old-timers who survived long enough for a jazz buff who lived in New Orleans to get a snapshot. What we want to see is how things looked in the old days — and we get plenty of it in the remainder of the work via photos that make one marvel that they were ever taken, much less that they endured to be published here. How about Buddy Petit and Frankie Duson in full cry with the Eagle Band in 1916? Or Kid Ory's first band, the Woodland Band, sitting in the grass in 1905 with Ory blowing valve trombone? Or the legendary Emmett Hardy pensively regarding Bill Eastwood's saxophone with the rest of Norman Brownlee's combo? The list is endless, and endlessly fascinating.

The next longest chapter, on places, is just as good, with a 1906 panorama of the Storyville area; the dumpy, broken-down structures like Luthjen's and the Astoria Hotel, which nevertheless housed some of the city's best sounds; Mahogany Hall; the Halfway House, interior and exterior; and more. Remaining space goes to brass bands, jazz on the riverboats, cemetery plots, New Orleans men in show bands, and casual pictures (Nick La Rocca as an infant on his father's knee, Jack Laine in his blacksmith shop in 1898).

Picture books are expensive in terms of the relatively little "hard" information you get in the text; thus, it probably is not worth the $24.95 price to get this revised edition if you have the original. If not, and if you're interested in the roots of Dixieland jazz, you're going to see a lot of stuff in this book you're previously only read about. And if you just can't handle the tab, make sure it's on your want list for Christmas, birthday, anniversary, or Easter basket.

— Tex Wyndham

GEORGE LEWIS

A Jazzman from New Orleans
by Tom Bethell
University of California Press

A new generation of writers is demolishing many of the established theories of jazz music. Most of the historical data goes back to the writings in the pioneer jazz history "Jazzmen" (1939) and Rudi Blesh's "Shining Trumpets".

Tom Bethell uses the career of George Lewis to put forward his viewpoint that the indigenous music of New Orleans did not go into decline in the 1930s and was then revived in the 1940s with the discovery of the "archaic" music of Bunk Johnson. On the contrary he presents a convincing narrative to the effect that Lewis and other musicians of his generation were busy through the Twenties and Thirties developing their styles and, as mature men, were at their peak by the 1940s when the world discovered them. He traces the gradual evolution of New Orleans music from a formal written music (brass bands, dance music) at the turn of the century to the embellishments and improvisations of the younger generations who relied extensively on their talents as "ear" musicians.

By the time of the American Music sessions in 1944 Lewis and his associates had incorporated into their ensemble style many of the rhythmic elements of the Swing Era. The pulse of the music was much different to that of the 1920s and it is not difficult to accept his judgement that this music reached a high point of artistic merit during the 1940s when Bill Russell was actively recording his music. Bethell pursues his arguments with a logic which justifies his feelings that the quality of the music has declined since that time - when its function began to change from an indigenous neighbourhood dance music to staged entertainment presented for listeners far removed from New Orleans' environment. He further suggests that the "revival" is more accurately applied to the music of the latter-day European musicians while the Preservation Hall circuit is the last painful gasp of a music which is all but extinct.

Bill Russell's diaries serve as a fundamental source for Bethell's narrative and the middle section of the book dealing with the war years and the emergence of George Lewis and Bunk Johnson as world renowned musicians is particularly valuable.

This is the second book about George Lewis and the musical perspective of Tom Bethell's narrative more than balances the emotional perspective of Dorothy Tait's "Call Him George". Bethell has also helped right many popular misconceptions about the music performed by Lewis and his associates. Above all else it should finally make people aware of the marvelous music recorded by Bill Russell —

an invaluable part of the recorded legacy of jazz music. — ***John Norris***

O.D.J.B.

The Story of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band
by H.O. Brunn (1960)
Da Capo Press, New York **$17.50**

Following a 14-year correspondence with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band's leader-cornetist Nick LaRocca (during which LaRocca produced piles of ODJB clippings, contracts, etc.), plus interviews with other ODJB members and families of deceased musicians, H.O. Brunn authored this 1960 chronology of the pioneering quintet, republished in an outrageously expensive ($17.50) 1977 hardcover edition by Da Capo Press, Inc., 227 West 17th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011. The volume concentrates on gigs, from LaRocca's early work for Jack Laine in New Orleans, to his trip to Chicago in the teens to play in taverns with the ODJB nucleus under drummer Johnny Stein, to New York and the first jazz recordings in 1917 plus tremendously successful club, vaudeville and casual dates, to the first overseas trip by a jazz band, and to the ODJB's ultimate breakup, principally through squabbles over money in the late 1930s. Supplemented by photos and liberal newspaper quotations, the ODJB's scene — which, as a show band accustomed to playing to white polite society, the ODJB undoubtedly saw somewhat differently than a more typical 1920's jazz outfit — is presented as fully as you could desire.

Brunn properly spotlights the combo's historical importance, its felicity at composition (an astonishingly high proportion of its tunes are Dixieland standards), its ability to generate well-knit, vigorous music that, decades later, is still satisfying (incredible accomplishment for a ground-breaking band!) and its eager imitators who nevertheless could not duplicate the OD JB's blend and verve. While appreciating the band's accomplishment, the reader cannot help wanting to know more about the five jazzmen as people and regretting that Brunn did not seize the opportunity (having talked with many eyewitnesses whose voices are now forever stilled) to sketch them in more fully. It is implied, for example, that LaRocca was a womanizer, the doomed pianist Henry Ragas was an alcoholic, and the brilliant clarinetist Larry Shields had something of a drinking problem and an aptitude for mathematics, but we are given very little of the personal anecdotes that would have fleshed out portraits of the more-or-less two-dimensional figures who play the jobs Brunn describes.

A more irritating failure, but less serious (because the reader can easily discount it), is Brunn's determination to exalt the ODJB as the pinnacle of jazz perfection. The band's considerable merits are really diluted for any but the most unsophisticated audience when placed against a background that overpraises ODJB imitators (The Original Memphis Five, a fine group, simply can't live up to Brunn's claim that it is "second only to the Original Dixieland in historical significance)" in a work that purports to analyze the direction of 1920's jazz without once mentioning, to name three, King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five, and Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers.

Still, if you want a pretty good amount of authoritative info on the ODJB, there is, at this writing, no better source to my knowledge. Besides, the book does a more accurate job of placing the band in its proper perspective than the casual dismissals and unjustified barbs it often gets from critics who measure the ODJB against the music of the famous jazz bands of the mid-to-late twenties. The book's price obviously is set with libraries and institutions in mind; try one before considering outright purchase. — ***Tex Wyndham***

TREAT IT GENTLE

An Autobiography
by Sidney Bechet
Da Capo Press, New York (paperback) **$5.95**

Sidney Bechet expressed all life's experiences in terms of music — music with ***feeling.*** It was expressed in his superlative soprano sax and clarinet playing, as one of the seminal figures of jazz and one of its legends. It is expressed in his taped memoirs ***Treat It Gentle***, available once more, in the same evocative terms.

Thus Bechet's autobiography is as much the story of a musician's life as that of black musical folklore (a.k.a. jazz) of which it was an integral part. Bechet's origins paralleled those of jazz — from Congo Square, Chicago and Harlem to the festivals of Paris and Juan-les-Pins where, in his later years, he was to find new fame. One chapter, dealing with the slave Omar, Bechet's grandfather and his direct link to Africa, is a piece of authentic American folk literature far more compelling than "Roots" (and without the latter's fictionalized hokum).

Omar, from what Bechet's father told him, was a born leader — he led the dancing and singing in Congo Square, beating out rhythms on drums he made himself. An encounter with a young slave girl Marie from another plantation led to illicit romance and tragedy. Wrongly accused of rape, Omar was hounded through the bayous of Pontchartrain and St. John to be betrayed and killed by a friend, for the reward. Marie was freed and allowed to take the family's name — Bechet — for her child by Omar. This was Omar Bechet, Sidney's father.

Though Omar Bechet was not a musician he had a feeling for it. "Everyone in our house liked music," says Sidney. "When they heard it played right, they answered to it from way down inside themselves." Sidney was a mere toddler when he was taking part in New Orleans' street parades, in the Second Line. Practicing in secret on his brother's clarinet, he was proficient enough on the instrument to impress visiting George Baquet at six and by age eleven he was playing in his brother's band and soloing with Bunk Johnson's Orchestra (Buddy Bolden's band) among other groups.

Sidney was still too little to go home after gigs without a chaperone. But he was making his mark as a "musicianer" and carving out his own unorthodox style with King Oliver, Kid Ory and others and, like many of them, going North, though his first trip ended in one of many misadventures.

Soon Bechet was taking his unique Creole sound to New York and, with Will Marion Cook's orchestra, to Europe in 1918. Europeans went wild over the new "ragtime" music the band introduced and, Sidney recalls, at a Royal Command performance, even King George V and the Royal Family were tapping their feet to Bechet's ***Characteristic Blues***. The trip ended in another misadventure, with Sidney being deported from London.

Back home, Bechet was touring with Bessie Smith (whom he also dated) when Duke Ellington became one of his fans and invited him to join his first band. But professional jealousy — generated mostly by Bubber Miley and Charlie Irvis, who made things uncomfortable for the youngster — forced him to leave. It was the sort of jealousy Bechet was to encounter time and time again in his career.

photograph of Sidney Bechet courtesy of Blue Note Records

That career was to take Bechet back to Paris, this time with the ***Revue Negre*** featuring Josephine Baker. This trip too ended in disaster; with Sidney going to jail for eleven months for firing a pistol in a provoked affray. In New York in 1932, there was renewed activity with Sidney's hottest band — the original New Orleans Feetwarmers — at the Savoy Ballroom. But things became so bad he ran a tailor's shop in Harlem with Tommy Ladnier for a while. A return to music with Noble Sissle was marred by personal feuding of the sort Bechet was by now familiar with. But Bechet survived it to reap the rewards of new-found fame in the jazz revival of the late '30s and early '40s.

The rest of the Bechet story may be familiar to most jazz fans but Sidney's behind-the-scenes scenario, with friends, associates and most of all his music (Tommy Ladnier's death; Mezzrow holding out on fees for the Panassie sessions; the shameful exploitation of Bunk Johnson; Armstrong's strange behavior on their last recording date — 25 years after Bechet gave young Louis 50 cents to repair his shoes) make fascinating reading.

Ultimately Bechet returned to Paris and in 1950 decided to make France his home because "it's closer to Africa" and "I've wanted to be as close to it as I could". Adulation followed with Bechet becoming a show biz personality on par with Chevalier. But he didn't let this "personality thing" interfere with his music.

As he repeatedly insisted, "If a man can really play where the music is, he's entitled to all the personality they'll give him; but if the personality gets to come first, that's bad for the music.... What I say is, you've got to be the music first."

And with Bechet music (he called it 'ragtime' because jazz "could mean anything: high times, screwing, ballroom...") was what carried him on life's road: "Life isn't a question of time; it's a way you have of talking back and forth to the music. You tell it to the music, and the music tells it to you. That's the life there is to a musicianer." He could be mean at times, he admits. "But not to the music. That's a thing you gotta trust. You gotta mean it, and you gotta treat it gentle...."

Fortunately for Sidney Bechet, and for us, a fan named Joan Reid got to Sidney before he died and taped the master's life experiences to go with his legacy of recorded music. (The tapes were transcribed and the project completed by Desmond Flower days before Bechet died). When the book first appeared in 1960, it didn't make much of an impact. Today, with new "Roots" consciousness and renewed interest by a new generation of jazz fans, this new paperback edition should get the wider attention it deserves.

Authentic jazz autobiographies are indeed rare (most of them, like Armstrong's ***Swing That Music***, are ghosted PR jobs or, again like Armstrong's ***Growing Up In New Orleans,*** heavily edited and laundered). While we'll never hear from the likes of Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Charlie Parker or Bix, we can at least hear what Bechet says, besides his music. Like many of his recorded pieces, Bechet's book is a masterpiece. *— Al Van Starrex*

THE HEART OF JAZZ

by William L. Grossman and Jack L. Farrell
Da Capo Press, New York **$17.50**

This 1956 volume is the only one I know of that attempts to cover the traditional jazz revival of the 1940s in any depth. Where else can you find much discussion of the two styles that came to prominence at that time (West Coast two-beat — Lu Watters, Turk Murphy; "early" New Orleans — Bunk Johnson, George Lewis), of the individual musicians involved (Wally Rose, Bob Helm, Jim Robinson), and of the bands that seemed destined to carry on in the idiom (Firehouse Five, Red Onions)?

This part of the book is Farrell's product. While his chapters are brief, and while his predisposition in favor of this brand of jazz somewhat twists his judgement when appraising musicians who do not play it, his perceptions within the field are usually accurate and interesting. For example, his comments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the Yerba Buena Jazz Band are sound without in any way disparaging its considerable merits and accomplishment; similarly, the paragraphs on the difference between George Lewis' and Kid Ory's combos, both made up of New Orleans veterans and working the same branch of the traditional genre, are apt yet appreciative. Unfortunately, Farrell wrote at the beginning of the Lp era, so he had comparatively few recordings to serve as the basis of an analysis of the current scene; thus, much of what he says is, though valid, noticeably dated.

To reach Farrell's half, one must plow through Grossman's pontificating, intolerant, repetitive, boring and annoying philosophizing, apparently designed to demonstrate that the purest kind of New Orleans jazz occupies some kind of superior moral plane to other types. By the time he runs out of gas (I use "gas" advisedly), he has descended to the sort of name-calling that characterized the worst excesses of the moldy fig-bopper feuds occurring several years prior to the book's publication. To name one of too many instances, Grossman goes to great lengths to point out Christian elements influencing the jazz he likes and then ridicules, rather than analyzes, a TV show which attempted a similar demonstration on behalf of Dave Brubeck.

Farrell manages, perhaps unintentionally, to undo some of Grossman's damage. (Grossman: "If Duke Ellington were to search in the emotional content of New Orleans jazz, he might find, even now, a solid path...." Farrell: "One [should not] judge musicians by their failure to sound like the very music they wish to avoid.") But not enough to make this 1976 republication from Da Capo Press (227 West 17th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011) worth anything close to its $17.50 price.

— Tex Wyndham

JAZZ IN PIAZZA

photographs by Carlo Bianconi
introduction by Arrigo Polillo
Edizione ARTNOVA
Perugia, via Pievaiola 2

"Jazz in Piazza" is an exciting new book of photographs. The images of the greats of jazz — from the established names such as Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Art Blakey, Sarah Vaughn, Sam Rivers, Horace Silver and Don Pullen, to the newly recognized talents such as Rodney Jones, Joanne Brackeen, Tom Harrell, Cameron Brown, Syd Smart, David Schnitter, Joe Daley, Enrico Rava, Bob Berg, Mickey Tucker and others — photographed in the unique atmosphere of the mediaeval squares of Umbria — the green heart of Italy — during the unforgettable concerts of "Umbria Jazz '76".

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To order "Jazz in Piazza" send 18.000 Lira (about $22 U.S.) to the above mentioned address or to Futura-Verlag Anderegg & Katz, Lindenstrasse 35, CH 8008 Zurich, Switzerland.

— Mario Luzzi

THELONIOUS MONK

Jazz Masters/Thelonious Monk
(Twenty Monk Originals)
edited by Bob Houston
music compiled by Bob Houston
arrangements by Brian Priestley
profile and analysis by Dave Gelly
Wise Publications, London/New York/Sydney
U.K. price 2.95 pounds

The publication of sheet music dealing with major jazz figures has long been extremely inadequate, both in the quality and the quantity of the publications. Many important composers have been misrepresented by folios containing abbreviated, simplified or distorted versions of their works, while others have been virtually ignored in sheet music publication, especially those of the post-swing era generations. Although Thelonious Monk is undeniably a major jazz composer, his work, too, has been ignored in sheet music publication, perhaps because of the very real harmonic difficulty of his music.

The arrival of this collection of twenty Monk compositions, then, fills a large gap in the literature of jazz sheet music. (Prior to the publication of this volume there existed only a folio of seven Monk compositions in "head" arrangements published in England by Parnes Music in 1966, now unobtainable). The compositions represented here, compiled and edited by Bob Houston, range from such Monk standards as ***I Mean You*** and ***Straight No Chaser*** to the less known but equally valid ***Introspection*** and ***Coming On The Hudson.*** Generally speaking, the pieces have been transcribed from their first recorded versions, on the Blue Note, Prestige and Riverside labels, and are comprised of a theme statement and one or two choruses of Monk's improvisation (excepting ***Skippy, I Mean You*** and ***Trinkle, Tinkle*** which have no transcribed improvisation). On the whole the transcriptions are extremely accurate, something of a miracle considering Monk's extremely dissonant piano texture. The theme statements are also very true to the original, particularly where they have been transcribed from trio performances where Monk himself has voiced the theme at the piano.

Herein lies the difficulty and, perhaps, the flaw of this folio. Because every one of these transcriptions is based on a non-piano solo recording, there is a certain amount of adaptation (i.e. distortion) involved in reducing the arrangement to a piano solo, particularly in the theme statements of larger than trio performances, and in the left hand throughout. It is a shame that piano solo recordings have not been used where possible (Monk has recorded five of these compositions as piano solos) since the very important inner voicings and inner rhythms of Monk's music originate from his very personal piano style. It would have been nice to have a folio of pure unadulterated Monk.

That said, it only remains to be emphasized that this folio, despite its flaws, is a very valuable means of understanding Monk's music, by acting primarily as a key to the structure of some of his compositions. Useful in this respect is the inclusion of chord symbols which, though rather simplified here, reveal in conjunction with Monk's figures more about his creative process than any amount of analytical prose could do.

An important means of further understanding and appreciating Monk the composer, if perhaps not Monk the pianist. — ***Julian Yarrow***

STOMPING THE BLUES

by Albert Murray
McGraw-Hill **$9.95 (U.S. paperback)**

Once you have overcome the semantics of the title — to Albert Murray all conventional jazz music is The Blues — it is possible to enjoy this existential viewpoint of the social motivations of the music and its original audience.

The Father, Son and Holy Ghost of Jazz (sorry Blues) are Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. At least they are cited more often than any other artists in a book which succeeds in dealing with the music, its structure, its implications, its effect on its audience and its relationship to other musics without once going through any of the tedious rehashes of its history.

I suspect "Stomping The Blues" will be dug in a very positive sense by those listeners who have always felt (intuitively or intellectually) that the Blues Pulse is the heart beat of the music they love.

Others will back off in many different directions. The many collectors/followers of vocal blues (as delineated by Heff and Connor in "The Blues") will find much to disturb them for there is only an occasional (casual) reference to the likes of Blind Lemon Jefferson and Robert Johnson. In general Albert Murray has a very poor opinion of the vocal blues except in the more sophisticated hands of such artists as Bessie Smith, Joe Turner and Jimmy Rushing. He feels that the advocates of the vocal blues read too much into the lyrics of the blues and the social situation of the singers as a result of these lyrics. He cites the recordings of Bessie Smith as an argument that the ecstasies and agonies of love are the central theme of the blues. Albert Murray, in adopting this viewpoint, reflects perfectly his situation as a thoroughly urbanised listener rather than a down-home country laborer who dug the meaning of such singers as Sleepy John Estes, Tommy Johnson and Charlie Patton. What he fails to realise (or at least fails to point out) is that most of Bessie Smith's songs were written by city slickers (eg. Perry Bradford, W.C. Handy, Clarence

Williams) who knew exactly the kind of double-entendre sex songs which would sell.

"Stomping The Blues" will mean little to those listeners who still perceive of the music as an extension of their Middle-American heritage (i.e. Bix - Berigan - B.G. - Mulligan - Brubeck - Jarrett). It will also have little effect upon those who are only avid followers of today's musical expression (whether it is Chick Corea or Anthony Braxton). The photographs of Coltrane and Ornette Coleman are a token gesture to an extension of the blues tradition which barely warrants mention by Mr. Murray. His world is that of Louis, Duke, Bean, Pres and Lady Day, with Bird coming in as a final thought.

But "Stomping The Blues" will be a joy to those whose love of jazz music follows the pulse beat of the blues from its earliest times until now - you can experience an heroic salute to the men who were giants of their time. The musicians whose music should be experienced by all of America rather than just the 20% of Blacks who made it all possible.

Finally, but very importantly, acknowledgement must be made of the superb photographic illustrations. Not only is there great depth of selection but the reproduction is first class. Something which sets a standard for any future books dealing with the world of the blues (jazz). Even if the text turns you off you have to be impressed by the photographs. — ***John Norris***

PLAYBACK

by Dave Dexter Jr.
Billboard Publications

JOHN HAMMOND ON RECORD

an autobiography with Irving Townsend
Ridge Press/Summit Books

The music world of Dave Dexter and John Hammond is far removed from that of today. Both men carved their own indelible niche in the annals of Twentieth Century popular music and helped shape the music we listen to today. Their halycon days were before the power moguls of today's conglomerate industry snuffed out the enterprise and excitement which made it possible for individuals to change the direction of a company.

In many ways their careers parallel one another. Both were infatuated with jazz at an early age and began lifelong crusades for the musicians they believed in by writing about the music and then becoming involved in the recording of it. Both men became intimately involved with a major corporation in its young and growing days — Hammond with CBS and Dexter with Capitol.

Both men played important roles in the careers of entertainers who became world famous stars. Hammond worked with Basie, Goodman, Billie Holiday, Teddy Wilson, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen while Dexter brought Nat Cole, Stan Kenton, Peggy Lee, Kay Starr, Frank Sinatra, Nellie Lutcher and Sammy Davis to Capitol as well as producing most of Capitol's jazz recordings between 1945 and 1965 (including Duke's first recording of ***Satin Doll.***

And yet these two books are totally different in style and outlook. They reflect the widely differing backgrounds of the two men and their ultimate place in the scheme of things. Hammond's book is very much a personal odyssey and deals as much with his family and his growing involvement in the Civil Rights movement as it does with the music business. Music lovers will finish the book with a certain degree of frustration. The kind of insight and inside information which Hammond could have provided about many of the musicians he helped become famous is simply not there. Dexter, however, deals almost entirely with the music and the entertainers who make up his world. We barely gain any insight into his family, his personal feelings and ideas except where they pertain to music. His book is especially valuable as a textbook guide to how Capitol changed from a small independent company involved with music to a large, unfeeling corporation which no longer controlled its own destiny. Dexter's dismissal from the company without warning after more than twenty-five years of service is an increasingly familiar scenario in today's business world. Johnny Mercer, one of the founders of Capitol, saw the ultimate direction of the company and quickly decided to leave.

Ironically, both Hammond and Dexter never stepped outside of the corporate world to invest their own money in the music they believed in. This sets them apart from such men as Alfred Lion, Harry Lim, Bill Russell, Bob Weinstock, Les Koenig and others who have made an indelible mark in the destiny of recorded jazz music.

Hammond today is officially retired but still functions in an advisory capacity for CBS while Dexter works as a copy editor at Billboard magazine.

Both books have much to recommend them and they complement the growing number of volumes written by the artists themselves.

— ***John Norris***

AUNTIE NATURE....

Auntie Nature, Uncle Tree, and Cousin Blade-A-Grass
by Lloyd Garber
Published by Lloyd Garber, Box 7020, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X7 Canada.
265 pages (paperback) **$37.00**

Given the evidence within the pages of this book, Lloyd Garber seems to be a composer, guitarist, and front-porch philosopher (and I do not use the term in any negative sense). Never having met the man, nor heard any of his music, it is somewhat difficult for me to come to any value judgements concerning him or his art.

Well over 200 pages in this book are devoted to an extensive series of exercises, instructions, and techniques for erstwhile guitarists. Like Eugene Chadbourne, Derek Bailey, and others, Garber is especially involved with timbral manipulation, and there are a number of instructions for "preparing" the guitar and creating any number of novel effects. In addition, Garber has a near-encyclopedic knowledge of harmonic intervals and chord clusters, and spends a fair amount of time explaining and exemplifying his theories about intervallic weight, effect, and meaning.

In addition to this "new music guitar manual", however, Garber provides a text which not only explains how music relates to ***his*** life, but also raises a number of aesthetic questions. As a non-guitarist, I found my attention gravitating to the diary passages and those statements which told me something about Garber as a person, as opposed to the sections of technical shop-talk and jargon which, although certainly helpful to guitarists, seem somewhat exclusive to non-practitioners. Fortunately, Garber's prose style is personal but never pontificating; he never takes himself too seriously, and though there is a bit of rambling verbiage, the book never reads as rhetorical. Garber often takes time for an aside or joke, which makes him seem like someone you'd like to meet and spend the afternoon talking to. Certainly, his book is recommended for guitarists, and for anyone who'd like a glimpse at a unique individual. — ***Art Lange***

NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL

An Illustrated History
by Burt Goldblatt
The Dial Press **$14.95**

The mere fact that Burt Goldblatt attended (and photographed) every Newport Festival is in itself some kind of achievement. That he brings to his story a certain wit, sharpness of tongue and irreverent commentary shows he is still beyond the control of The Producer.

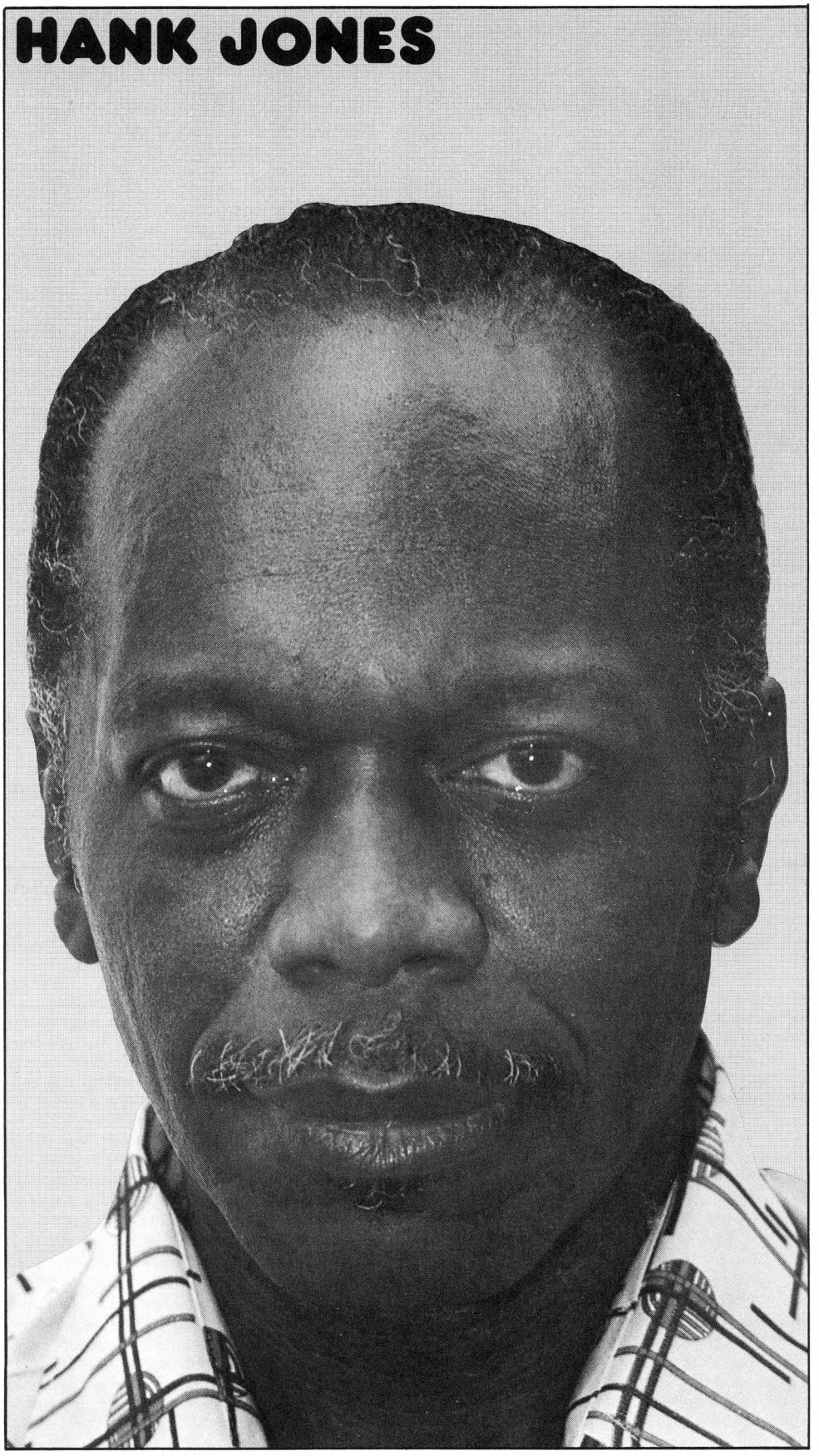
It is remarkable that he has found something to say about each festival without it becoming a catalog of names. His privileged position as a member of the Press Corps enabled him to gain access to areas not available to the average enthusiast and his obvious rapport with many musicians of differing eras enables him to give a perspective to his coverage. For instance he found Cecil Taylor's first Newport appearance (1957) "impressive. Taylor played a brief but exhilarating set...." He was skeptical, that same year, towards the highly touted efforts of a high school band. In fact, throughout the text one detects a disenchantment towards the gimmicks and non-jazz idiosyncracies which have continually plagued Newport. Yet, at the same time, he is unreserved in his praise of the artistry of such a compelling non-jazz performer as Frank Sinatra.

The photographs are there in abundance, of course. Some have graced album jackets (and are therefore familiar) but there are others which are not. There is a marvelous grouping of candid backstage Billie Holiday portraits, for instance, and a touching page of backstage shots of Muggsy Spanier during his only Newport appearance in 1964. Photographic quality varies — all photographers agree that shooting at Newport presented special problems and the bear pit made most photographs similar from the festivals in the 1960s. Goldblatt's photographs suffer a little from the softness of the paper used — the sharpness of a harder paper stock would have made quite a difference.

There are a few typographic gremlins (which suggest that Goldblatt didn't do the final proofing) as well as a couple of errors in the captions: Baritonist Cecil Payne is identified as Cecil Taylor (page 217) and Dick Sudhalter is mistaken for Warren Vache Jr. (page 247).

"Newport Jazz Festival" is an important document of an event which continues its domination of the American jazz scene. It will also evoke fond memories for anyone who made the trek to Newport. It brings back into focus events which time will have dimmed as well as reminding the reader of all the stimulating music he missed by not attending a particular year of the festival. — ***John Norris***

HANK JONES



I came to music, I guess, in the classic manner. There was always a piano in our house. My mother wanted me to be a famous concert pianist; to come to Europe and study and all that. I never made it to Europe during those days, see; I was forty years ahead of my time. I should have been born twenty years ago and I could have come to Europe to study. Anyway, when I was seven I started taking lessons.

I came to jazz just by listening to records; when I was a small boy we had lots of records: Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, but never James P. Johnson until later — that's funny! Earl Hines, Fats Waller records like ***Your Feets Too Big, Spread Rhythm Around, Ain't Misbehavin'*** (this is now a Broadway show I am appearing in. I have been in it just about one month with some other musicians such as Seldon Powell and Joe Marshall), and I was enthused by the sound of the big bands like Duke Ellington.

When I was thirteen years old I got my first paid job; I don't say professional because I was not of professional calibre. From then I played school jobs, school dances, parties; and thus day by day, step by step, I was getting into the business.

Around 1940 or 1941, I left my home town Pontiac and went to Flint, Michigan where I would stay for three, four, five days and then come back to Pontiac. There was a local band there directed by Jimmy Parker who was a great arranger and played all the instruments, though his main instrument was saxophone. He could have made it very big!

I had a friend named Lucky Thompson, from Detroit, who had been working in New York with Hot Lips Page. At some point he told Hot Lips Page about me, and I got a letter from Hot Lips Page.

I didn't come directly to New York, but first I went to Cleveland and spent about three or four months there, then went to Buffalo (New York) and spent another five or six months there and by degrees, I went to New York. I went to work with Hot Lips Page at the Onyx Club (on 52nd Street; "Swing Street" we used to call it). It was a five piece band: trumpet, tenor saxophone, bass, drums, piano; the right size for those clubs; they were maybe twice as large as this room. As you know Lips was a blues player (not many pop tunes) and singer; he did a few other things like standards, swing tunes of the day, not too many ballads; I don't recall playing any ballads or any theme song with Lips, we just called the tunes.

I played six months at the Onyx, three or four times at the Apollo with Lips who then in 1944 took a big band out on the road. We went through the South, Washington D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, all the southern states, Tennessee and then gradually we worked our way back up through Michigan, Ohio and then back to New York: three months of one-nighters, very difficult! The big band was built around a nucleus of the small combo and finally wound up with five saxophonists, Joe Eldridge (alto), two tenors with Shirley Green, Carl "Flat Top" Wilson (bass), Jessie Price, a very good drummer from Kansas City, Joe Keys (trumpet), a guy called Stumpy and Sandy Williams on trombones. The big band didn't record, to my knowledge, and broke up. But I do remember Lips Page being with Artie Shaw; he recorded ***St. James Infirmary*** and a couple of other sides. He was really a great blues singer and blues player. Actually, I think what hurt him the most was the fact that he sounded too much like Louis Armstrong. At the time there were three or four trumpet players who sounded pretty much like Louis: Frank Humphries who was not as well known as Lips, but he was a good player and used to play at the Apollo; King Kolax, and Hot Lips Page.

This ***Lady In Bed*** you are playing now I think was the first record date I did, or the

photograph of Hank Jones by Carol Friedman, courtesy of Muse Records

second.... I think that's Vic Dickenson playing, Leonard Feather wrote the lyrics for that... Lips is excellent and has a lot of power and flavour... blues all the way! Ah, now ***Jammin' The Blues***, who is the guitar player?... Barney Kessel — he sounds like Charlie Christian. He's excellent! It was made in 1944, sounds like it was made today.... Illinois Jacquet, Jean Baptiste: he's always had a big and beautiful sound on the entire range of the horn. Very good! One of his best records, about perfect!

Around 1945/46 I joined John Kirby's small combo: Buster Bailey (clarinet), Bill Beason (drums), Charlie Shavers (trumpet) and Russell Procope (alto sax), that was a good band. I didn't work a New York club with that band. We went on the road and did several radio shows: you did the first show for the East Coast and had to do another one, three hours later, for the West Coast.... I recorded with John Kirby and Sarah Vaughan: ***It Might As Well Be Spring*** and some other things, on that recording date.

Then I was regular pianist in Andy Kirk's band. Kenny Kersey was just before me and he made the famous record ***Boogie Woogie Cocktail***, an excellent recording! You've got to get this. It's one of the most famous boogie-woogie records anywhere. I did several theatre dates, the Apollo of course; the Royal Theater in Baltimore, a couple of other dates. I didn't stay very long, although it was a very interesting band. I enjoyed it.

Bean? I call him Hawk. I worked with him in a little club on 52nd Street called the Spotlite (run by Clark Monroe) in 1946/47 for several weeks. I did some club dates outside of New York with him, and dance dates and several recording dates... I remember ***I Mean You*** (which I think Thelonious Monk wrote).

Coleman Hawkins was very relaxed. I worked with some band leaders who were very strict; John Kirby wanted you to play exactly what was written and that meant a lot of notes. He had very good arrangements and most people remember that band for its precision, the exactness with which everything was played. With John Kirby the solo work was secondary, with Coleman Hawkins it was prominent.

Then I did some singles around New York. 1947 was the first year I did the tour with Norman Granz and Jazz At The Philharmonic. The following year, Ella joined the tour and of course, I started working for Ella for four and a half, five years. It was the first time I was backing a singer of Ella's calibre, of that stature, a very big singer at the time and still is, of course.

With Ella the trio was composed of Ray Brown, who was her husband at the time, Charlie Smith on drums and myself.

Ella, as opposed to Sarah Vaughan, prefers block chords, big fat chords so that's what I tried to play for her. These full chords come from listening to Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Art Tatum, that's my normal style.

Playing in a big band or behind a singer makes no difference really, because you still have to listen. I go out to do clinics at colleges and universities (we always have a rhythm section at a clinic); I always tell the kids that the first thing you must do when you play with any kind of group or combination, or accompany a singer, a big band, you must listen to what's going on around you and accompany, which is really essential, what a piano does all the time. The piano's role in an orchestra is as an accompaniment. When you play solo it's a different thing, then you'll do whatever you like: that's the essence of playing. So when I play with a singer it's automatic. I should say, I try to stay out of her way, lead her sometimes, sometimes you follow, you fill the empty spots and harmonically lead to the next chorus.

I think most people do that instinctively, some don't because they don't want to. Most pianists when they play in groups think in terms of solos... I think you should try to enhance, to be cooperative. Well, I might be accompanying Eddie Lockjaw Davis or Harry Edison... you enhance them, then when it's time for the pianist to solo, then you solo and you expect to have an accompaniment from the bass player and the drummer.

When you work with a bass player like Ray Brown, George Duvivier, Milt Hinton, they are very comparable with your left hand; the bass player stands here and he watches my left hand, he can follow you by listening; relatively few bass players can do that.

I think it's really a question of what they really want to do, I think you first have to listen, then you can get a feel of the scheme of things.

The rhythm section must work together as a unit; this presumes a general knowledge of harmony... once you know that, you can even anticipate because, unless you work with somebody like Ella who is a past master of improvisation (she does improvise all the time), the soloists give you some indication where they are going melodically and then you can adjust harmonically to what they are doing.

When I was with Ella, I recorded with Louis Armstrong: that was the only time I ever worked with him. It was for Decca and it was very easy. Louis is very relaxed and he sounds relaxed; that's a peculiar thing about people who play or sound or manage to sound relaxed: actually they are very intense about what they are doing; there is a difference between relaxed and sloppy. They are never sloppy. You've heard of Coleman Hawkins, you've heard of Louis Armstrong and they know exactly what they are doing all the time; it is marvelous to work with people like that because you learn something, a relaxed intensity. It's very deceptive, the way they make it sound easy. It's like, for example, Art Tatum — I was fortunate enough to meet him and listen to him play.

We were in Buffalo (this is while I was on my way to New York). We'd finish earlier than he did, at one o'clock and we'd go right over to catch his last set. Then when he had finished, he'd go to a restaurant in town where they had a piano and play from 2:30 until 12 o'clock or 1 p.m. the next afternoon. We were sitting and listening, unbelieving... because when you watch him you don't believe the things he's doing. He would play with his hands in this position, this is the classic way of playing and his fingers never got higher than ***that*** (half an inch) off the keys, he would play like lightning. When I first heard him, way back in Pontiac I thought that they were two piano players, Art and Tatum. I couldn't imagine it was just one man; that was my first impression.

He was very warm, intelligent, very knowledgable about any subject and particularly about sports, baseball, fielding averages. He was the most appreciative; he could hear something good in anybody. I never heard him denigrate any other player's ability. Never! If he didn't have any praise he didn't say anything. A great man in every way.

He was not a composer per se; that is to say he did not sit down and put a lot of notes on the paper like Fats Waller or other pianists or composers but when he was playing the piano, he was actually composing all the time, in the highest order because the things that he did, his piano arrangements, are classics. I have seen piano transcriptions of his recordings, his solos and it's like the hardest pieces of music I've ever seen in my life, like Liszt or some of Chopin's things. He was the greatest composer at the piano. As a matter of fact Philippe Beaudouin, the pianist from Paris, has some Art Tatum piano transcriptions. I would never have that patience, talent or ability.... When you see it on paper, it's frightening, the things he did, how could he do that?

I wish I could justify that comment. I wish I had anything at all because I listened so much to Art; he seems to express what I feel but cannot express. It's a sort of vicarious association that I have with his style, because he was the absolute epitome of the greatest possible exponent of jazz. He's the greatest. I think his feeling for jazz was the most complete. I don't think there'll be another Art Tatum for the next hundred years. Now there are people around who have his technique but there's not that inner feeling; it takes a while.

My last year with Ella Fitzgerald was 1951 and I came to New York to settle down. I got a job at the Embers with Jo Jones, Tyree Glenn, Tommy Potter and sometimes Lester Young; off and on for two years. Then I went to the Roundtable which was operated by the same people, and played with the same band, sometimes Lester Young and some other tenor saxophonists; Lionel Hampton used to come and sit in with us all the time. Most of that period was spent doing club dates in and around New York, and doing hundreds and hundreds of record dates.

The longest job I had was at CBS, off and on from '58 right through '73 and of course, during that period I recorded and made many many TV shows... the Gary Moore show (six years), Jackie Gleason (two or three years), Arthur Godfrey's radio shows and the Ed Sullivan show (four years and a half)....

Oh, did I tell you I had been in Billy Eckstine's big band? (before Andy Kirk), and that I had played and recorded with Artie Shaw's small group? I played for Benny Goodman in '57-58. We toured the Far East and I've played with him off and on for years.

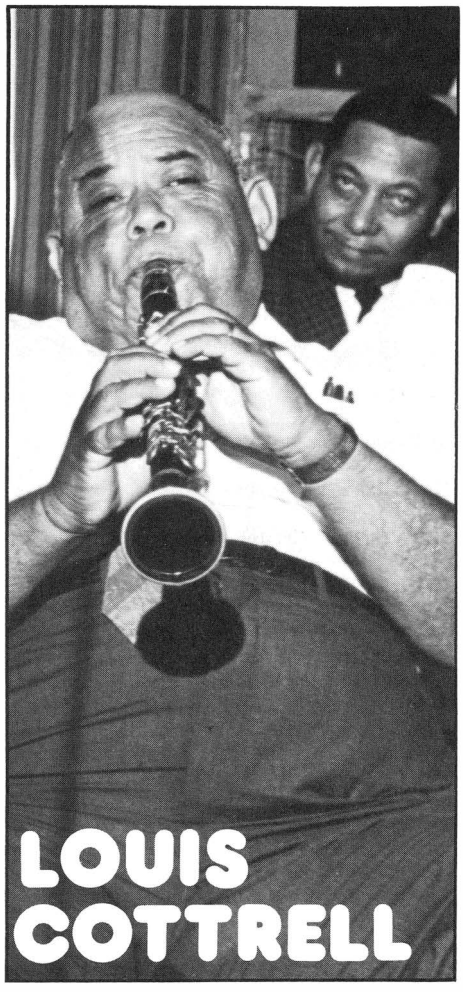
I think that, including the seven albums I have recorded for the Japanese company Eastwind (I am going to do another one at the end of this month), there are thirty albums under my name. As the A&R men always have an idea (they are receiving a lot of songs from songwriters) about what they want you to record, you are never totally free, with the exception of one original or two. I'm not complaining, because you can always do something good. Someday maybe... it's so simple to give you free rein.

I have a waiting list this long (!) of people wanting to take lessons from me. I don't have time, I am always travelling, and teaching would be a full time occupation.

Think of me on July 31st, because I was born in 1918 and will be sixty on that day.

INTERVIEW BY CLAUDE & JEAN-PIERRE BATTESTINI - IN BIARRITZ & NICE 1978.

LOUIS COTTRELL



I was born in New Orleans on March 12, 1911 — in the morning, I was told. My father was ahead of me in the music business and always his ambition was for me to become a drummer, but my mother said, one drummer was enough in the family.

My father was born on December 25, 1879, and he lived until October 17, 1927. He taught me in the beginning but I wasn't doing very well, so I bought a clarinet and he placed me with Lorenzo Tio (Jr.); I studied under Lorenzo from 1922 until the latter part of 1923.

In 1923 my dad went to New York with Lorenzo Tio, so he placed me with Barney Bigard until he and Lorenzo came back, in the latter part of 1924, from their New York trip, in A.J. Piron's band.

In those days we had a lot of brass bands, some fine brass bands. We had the Excelsior Brass Band which was under the direction of George Moret (one of those old cornet players) and which was the best in my time; I can remember they had another one by the name of The Tuxedo Brass Band, led by Oscar Papa Celestin, and the Imperial Brass Band, led by Manuel Perez. During that period, I was six or seven years old, my father played with the Onward Brass Band and then with the Excelsior....

My father's style of playing was the New Orleans style, but he was known for his one/two beat, especially with the hands and the sticks on the snare drum. And this I don't know, but this is what I heard: he was the first one to start playing traps in New Orleans. That was somewhere towards the turn of the century; before that, you had two drummers, the bass drummer and the snare drummer. He was playing in Joe Robichaux's dance band which was the best high society band then. In that band there were such men as Lorenzo Tio Jr. again, Joe Robichaux (leader) and Baptiste Delisle (sax); I used to often hear of him but I didn't know him and there was Babe Frank; he used to play the piccolo part.

In 1924, Barney left and went to join King Oliver, who was in Chicago at the time, and Lorenzo, after he came back, had a stroke; he couldn't speak and he had lost his execution so the best thing for me was to try to carry on. So I got most of my formal training from Lorenzo Tio and Barney Bigard.

I didn't begin to play until 1925 and the first band I played with was the Golden Rule Band. In that band was Joe Newman's dad (piano), Joe Cie Frazier (drums), Lawrence Marrero (tuba), Eddie Marrero, his brother (banjo), Dennis Alvis (sax), I was playing tenor sax, Paul Gant (trombone), and Bush Hall (cornet). This band lasted a year and a half then Bush took sick; he never recovered. When he died he was 18 or 19 years old; if he had lived he would have been one of the most prominent cornetists of all time. In the latter part of 1925, the tunes we played with that band were the pop numbers of that time: ***Yes Sir That's My Baby, Oh I Miss You Tonight, Yearnin', Spanish Shawl, Spain***....

In between that Golden Rule Band I played for a short period of time with the Hippolyte Charles Society Orchestra (trumpet and leader). In that band were Sonny Andrews (trombone), Joe Welsh (piano), me on tenor and Robert Hall, Herb Hall's eldest brother, on alto.

Then I played in the Pelican Roof Guard located on South Rampart Street (Gravier Street at the time) with Joe Rouzon (alto), Walter Pichon and Raymond Barnes (trombone), Henry Red Allen (trumpet), Paul Barbarin (drums) - he had just come back from Chicago for a short period of time because he used to play in Chicago with King Oliver - Emmanuel Sayles (banjo) - that was the end of 1926, beginning of 1927.

From that group, I went to work with Sidney Desvigne's big band on the Harlem (?) Queen Boat, that was a musical boat coming down from Cincinnati. They had lots of boats down there, Fate Marable was on the other boat of the Streckfus line, the Senator Captain. Paul Barnes and Horace Miller on altos, Bill Mathews on trombone, Red Allen and Sidney Desvigne on trumpets, Willie Foster on banjo, his brother George "Pops" Foster on bass, Fats Pichon on piano and Louis Barbarin on drums. With that band I went up to Cincinnati, where I had to leave it because it was time to go to school.

Now with that band we played nightly from 8 to 12. On Sundays they had matinees from 2 to 5 and back again from 8 to 12 at night. The people came to dance to our band which was playing swing music, old traditional tunes such as ***Bye, Bye Blackbird, Red Red Ride Go***. One of the best tunes, where Sidney Desvigne featured himself, was ***Milenberg Joys.*** He would use a mute for this swing tune. He was powerful and would play with a little swing behind the melody. Then finally I went from Sidney Desvigne's band to the Ridgley's Tuxedo Band because he needed a saxophone player. The Tuxedo Brass Band had split up two or three years before so Celestin had his group and Ridgley had his group; I stayed with him from 1928 until the later part of 1929, then I joined Don Albert's band. That included me, Herb Hall, James Taylor and Alvis Patterson on saxophones, Jimmy Johnson (bass), Don Albert (trumpet), Franck Jacquet (trombone), who was Illinois Jacquet's cousin, Hiram Harding, a good trumpet player from Dallas, Albert "Fats" Martin, Ferdinand Dejean (banjo), and Albert Freeman (piano); we had changes but the nucleus of the band stayed on: me, Herb Hall, Dejean, Freeman and Jimmy Johnson. The other musicians would come and go; we had Harold Holmes (who played with Buddy Bolden) one time on bass.

Freeman and Herb Hall did some arranging, and Lloyd Glenn did some arranging when he came to the band; then Billy Douglas, who was from Connecticut and stayed in the band for two or three years, did quite a lot of arranging. We had Alvin Alcorn in the band, too; he stayed from 1932 until the band broke up in 1941, but I left in 1939 and John Hardee replaced me.

The first band I recorded with was Don Albert's band, in 1936 for Vocalion. Four records, eight sides: ***Deep Blue Melody***, composed and arranged by Lloyd Glenn, ***You Don't Love Me, On The Sunny Side Of The Street, Sheik Of Araby, Tomorrow.*** I played a tenor saxophone solo on ***Tomorrow***, I think, and my clarinet solo on ***Sheik Of Araby*** was the only one I did for that session.

Don Albert's band was one of the swingingest bands of that era, not because I was in the band but because it was one of the best bands in the country during that time. We travelled all over the Midwest, Texas, Louisiana; we came to New York, played several engagements in and around New York, we were on the same show as Ralph Cooper, but most of the time we played the Midwest and the South. We had no tap dancers as it was strictly music but we had singers: Sam Burt(?), Merle Turner and Melvin Moore.

I stayed about ten years in Don Albert's band, from 1929 to 1939. After I left the band, I went back to New Orleans and started playing around.

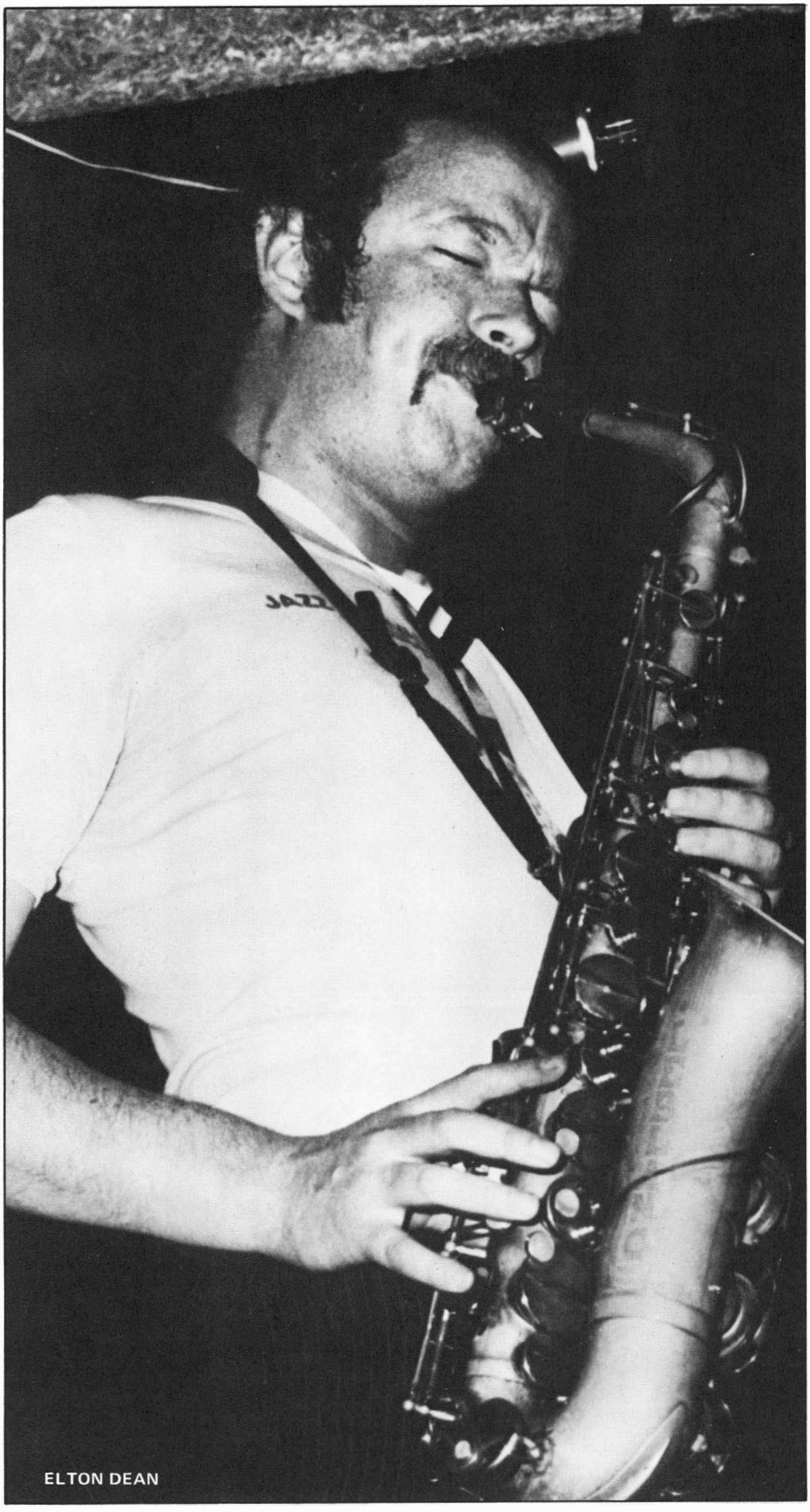
In 1961, they felt that all the bands had gone and that in a few years they wouldn't have any more music of that type, so I worked with Jim Robinson for one recording session; then they asked me to record with a trio and I said it was something I was unprepared for since I hadn't touched my clarinet in six or seven years; of course it had some clinkers in it but it worked pretty good. So I started back playing the clarinet ever since then.

Peter Bocage - on one of those sessions, said to me, "I would like for you to play a whole session with me." I had always wanted that in my life because he was a friend of my father from when they were little kids; they all played together in the brass bands, including the band he played with just before he passed away, A.J. Piron's band that is. Peter Bocage plays tuba on that session.

After that, our little group went on trips in and out of New Orleans.

In 1966, after Mardi Gras we went to South Vietnam: Placide Adams, Frog Joseph and Paul Barnes were in that group. Then again we would make trips to and fro to different places, now with this trip to Nice (France) we are up to date. **Nice, July 18, 1975**

INTERVIEW BY CLAUDE & JEAN-PIERRE BATTESTINI, & JEAN-PIERRE DAUBRESSE


ELTON DEAN

Ogun

LOUIS MOHOLO OCTET
"Spirits Rejoice"
OGUN OG 520

Louis Moholo, drums; Evan Parker, tenor saxophone; Kenny Wheeler, trumpet; Keith Tippett, piano; Nick Evans, Radu Malfatti, trombones; Johnny Dyani, Harry Miller, basses.

HARRY MILLER
"In Conference"
OGUN OG 523

Harry Miller, bass; Trevor Watts, alto & soprano saxophones; Willem Breuker, tenor & soprano saxophones, bass clarinet; Julie Tippetts, voice; Keith Tippett, piano; Louis Moholo, drums.

Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath
"Procession"
OGUN OG 524

Chris McGregor, piano; Evan Parker, tenor sax; Mike Osborne, Dudu Pukwana, alto saxes; Bruce Grant, baritone sax, flute; Radu Malfatti, trombone; Harry Beckett, Mark Charig, trumpets; Johnny Dyani, Harry Miller, basses; Louis Moholo, drums.

LOL COXHILL
"The Joy of Paranoia"
OGUN OG 525

Lol Coxhill, soprano sax; Michael Garrick, piano; Paul Mitchell-Davidson, bass guitar; Ken Shaw, guitar; Veryan Weston, piano; Richard Wright, Spanish guitar.

TREVOR WATTS String Ensemble
"Cynosure"
OGUN OG 526

Trevor Watts, alto & soprano saxes; Steve Danachie, violin; Dave Cole, Steve Hayton, guitars; Sandy Spencer, cello; Colin McKenzie, bass guitar; Lindsay Cooper, bass; Liam Genockey, drums.

KEITH TIPPETT'S ARK
"Frames"
OGUN OGD 003/004

Keith Tippett, Stan Tracey, piano; Elton Dean, Trevor Watts, alto saxes; Brian Smith, Larry Stabbins, tenor saxes; Mark Charig, Henry Lowther, trumpets; Dave Amis, Nick Evans, trombones; Maggie Nichols, Julie Tippetts, voices; Steve Levine, Rod Skeaping, Phil Wachsmann, Geoffry Wharton, violins; Tim Kramer, Alexandra Robinson, cellos; Peter Kowald, bass, tuba; Harry Miller, bass; Louis Moholo, drums; Frank Perry, drums, percussion.

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RED HOLLOWAY "WHATEVER SUITS THE OCCASION"

Ruth Brown's pianist was running through a handful of numbers with the house musicians prior to her opening at Los Angeles' Parisian Room. Saxophonist Red Holloway, who leads the band and generally takes care of business at the noted nightspot, laid down his tenor and joined me at my table. As far as he was concerned, the skimpy rehearsal was over. "Ain't nothing but the blues," he declared, "I can play that any time."

Such thinly veiled contempt for a major Afro-American art form seemed a little out of place coming from a seasoned musician like Holloway, but he has never made any secret of his disdain for those he considers less than adequate. Although his long and successful career in music points to him being a good politician, Holloway has paid his dues. If he considers an artist just isn't delivering the goods, he'll say so. And whatever he says, he can back up his words with action.

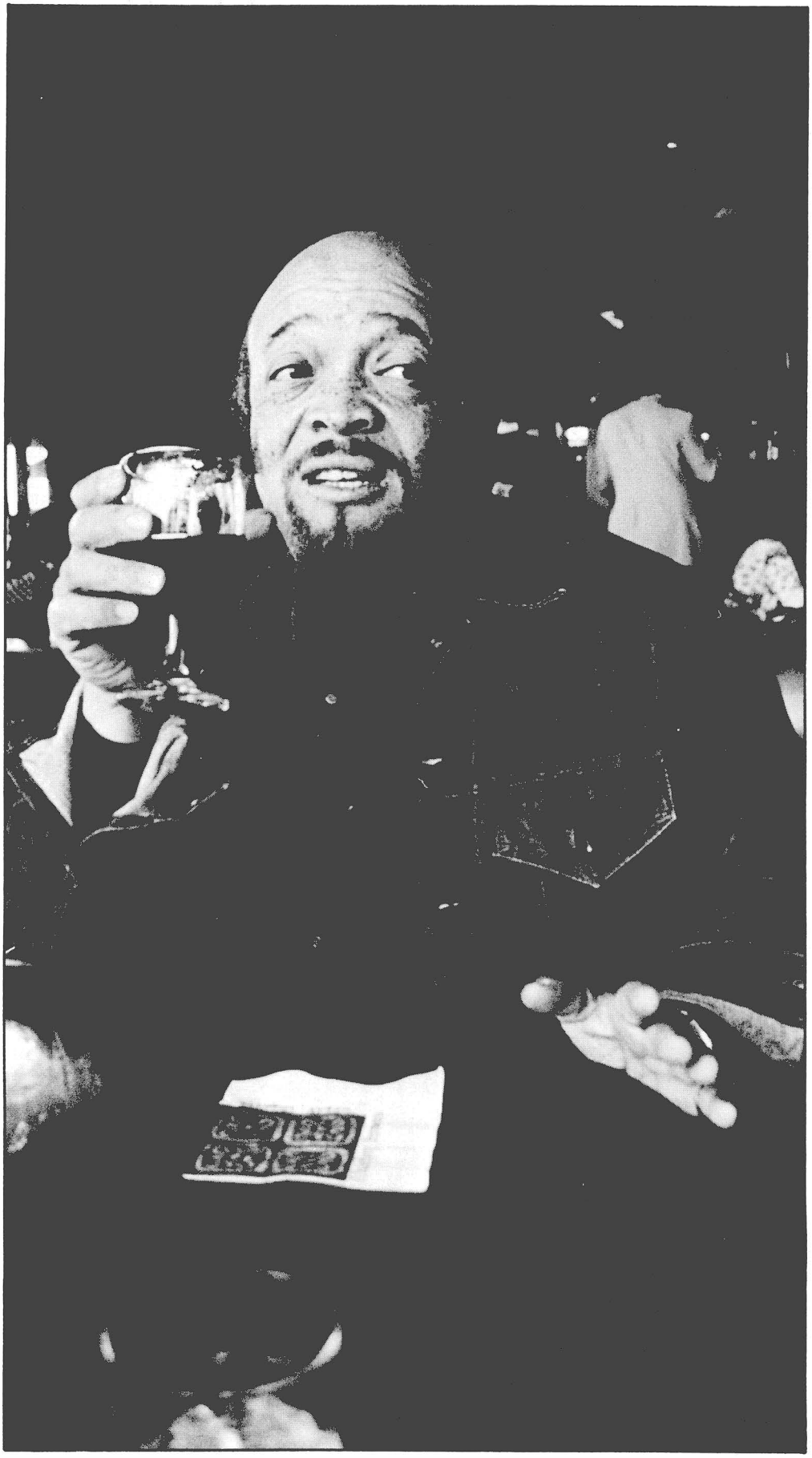
"After you've played the blues day in, day out, all day, there's nothing different. The blues can only have so many changes; there's nothing to learn. But in jazz, there's so many things that there is to learn. And I'm still learning."

And that sums up the saxophonist's attitude. He is a thorough professional, jealously proud of his skills and his good business sense and ability to play well in any style. Holloway's personal story illustrates the kind of compromise creative musicians frequently make in order to maintain a good standard of living. He was born in crushing poverty in the South and determined to be a success in music. As a child, he slept on top of an old upright piano because the 9 X 12 kitchenette room he shared with his mother was sparsely furnished. His musical career began at the age of seven on the sidewalks of Chicago's South Side, dancing a buck shuffle on the sand-covered concrete, collecting pennies for his efforts. He followed this up running errands for the employees of a ghetto brothel, and was soon playing four-string banjo to entertain the waiting customers. Later, he also played piano there.

When, after years of mixed fortunes, Red Holloway found himself on the West Coast for the first time, he never looked back. "When you've spent your life in hotel rooms and funky one-room apartments, the fact that you find somewhere that you can actually own a piece of land and have a yard really means something to a black man," he said. He moved to Los Angeles in 1967 where he lives well and even owns a 26-foot yacht, the Wild Goose 1, which is moored at the exclusive Marina del Rey.

Through his frequent appearances with John Mayall's Jazz/Blues Fusions and his recorded work with other bluesmen, Holloway has lately been cast in a blues mold. But excellent though he is in this idiom, his real interests lie in more challenging areas. Despite the difficulties he faced in childhood, Holloway worked his way through DuSable High in Chicago where he studied under the famous "Capt." Walter Dyett and played in the school band with Johnny Griffin. He started his professional career in 1943 with the big band led by bassist Gene Wright, and through this earned enough money to continue his formal education at the Chicago Conservatory of Music.

For six months in Chicago, Holloway shared the bandstand at the Stage Lounge with Ben Webster, an invaluable experience. He also learned licks at firsthand from Charlie Parker and Lester Young. He knew Gene Ammons as a



youngster, has worked in the same band as Sun Ra, and played and recorded with Dexter Gordon and Sonny Stitt. As a house musician at Vee-Jay, he recorded with artists as varied as the Spaniels, Jimmy Reed, Pee Wee Crayton, L.C. McKinley and the Dells. He made many sessions for United and for Chess, including a major hit, ***Forty Cups Of Coffee***, with singer-guitarist Danny Overbea. His other recording activities have included blues artists like Bobby Blue Bland, B.B. King, Little Junior Parker and Jimmy Witherspoon, as well as the Coasters, Gene Ammons, Oliver Nelson, Della Reese, Bill Cosby, Charles Brown, Monk Higgins, John Mayall and Freddie Robinson. Under his own name, he made some vocal sides, and four albums for Prestige, one of which, "Sax, Strings and Soul", was arranged by the impeccable Benny Golson

Red Holloway was active in Chicago for sixteen years, during which he led the house band at several lounges. In 1953, for example, he backed Billie Holiday at a club, Nat King Cole at a theatre, worked with Sun Ra at one lounge and with Muddy Waters at another. In between, he sandwiched in sessions with people like Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon and Count Basie.

The saxophonist has travelled extensively with Jimmy Reed, Bill Doggett, Lionel Hampton, Earl Bostic, Jump Jackson, Memphis Slim and Roosevelt Sykes, and out of New York with Lloyd Price. He has backed Aretha Franklin and Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson and played briefly with Duke Ellington. From Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins to Dakota Staton, Chuck Berry and Jimmy Rushing, the list is endless. And all of this activity took place before he moved to Los Angeles.

"When I was a youngster, I had to decide what I was going to do. I said I can't be a pimp, and I don't want to be a pullman porter or a barber, so I would rather play music.if I can. Of course, like everyone else, you were more interested in playing solos than in learning how to read. I did learn to read because I was going to school, but I always did try to learn whatever was "in". If bebop was "in", I was wearing records out trying to learn how to play it so that I could work. And then when bebop kind of petered out a little bit and rhythm-and-blues came in, I said 'Well, I'd better learn how to play this!'

"So I would get records and practice solos note for note in order to learn how to play what was happening during that era. And then when they changed it to 'the James Brown sound', I started doing that. I never really quit playing jazz, because even though I would practice a lot of rock-and-roll, I would still get the jazz records and copy them and try to find out what they were doing. It's really something to have to kind of get your mind together and decide, 'Well, what direction am I going in this month?' It's pretty hard.

"I used to be a dedicated musician — like I only wanted to do certain things and I just couldn't see how anyone could do anything less than that. Then I had a thing called 'missed-meal cramps' and that kind of changed my whole outlook on music. I worked at Sears and Roebuck for a while, I worked as a waiter in an exclusive restaurant. At the restaurant I was making 90-100 dollars a day in tips - 3 dollars in salary - but I still would rather play music. I said, 'This isn't for me; I want to play music.' So if I have to play whatever suits the occasion, that's what I'm going to play.

"People say to me sometimes, 'You look like you're not really happy', but I am. It's just that when you do something every day, the same thing... it's like they're only there in the club for a few minutes, but I'm there every day, with all different groups. Now Clark Terry will be in soon and it will be a real beautiful occasion, I know I'll enjoy that. When Sonny Stitt was in, I had a great time playing with him. Lockjaw Davis - a great time - but when some of these blues packages come in... The thing I can't stand is this 'fifties' bit (nostalgia for the rock'n' roll era). This is boring to me, these kind of gigs are killing me. But of course, to the average public, it's great!"

Red Holloway's story began in Helena, Arkansas, where he was born on May 31, 1927. Self-sufficiency began for him at an early age. "It's not hard for me to play music this way, I can assure you. Why? Because I love to eat! I love to live the way I'm ***not*** accustomed to - that's my theory, that's my saying. I came from a very poor family. My mother was thirteen when I was born, so naturally I don't have the background that a lot of people have, having a father and a mother. I'm a loner; I don't have any running buddies. If any questions needed to be answered, I had to answer them myself because my mother worked all day from 7 in the morning to 7 at night. So I grew up being my own man, more or less, I raised myself. And like when you're a loner you're not accustomed to answering to anybody. So you just decide what you want to do and you do it.

"I decided that I wanted to play music and I said the best way for me to do that is to be able to play any type that could fit any occasion. I missed a few jobs not knowing how to play certain types of music. I won't saythat I'm a great musician, but I get along enough to be able to maintain a fairly decent living and eat and keep a gig - which is the secret of living."

Holloway went into the Service in 1946 where he spent a year as Bandmaster in the United States 5th Army Band. On his discharge he worked at the Pershing Hotel with John Coltrane, Ahmad Jamal and Yusef Lateef, and also met Roosevelt Sykes for the first time. The blues singer and pianist had gone to school with Holloway's mother and was visiting one day when he heard him playing saxophone.

"He said, 'That boy's a pretty good musician! Boy, you want a job with me?' And I thought this was a great thing. I said 'Yeah!' so I went to work. In fact, he was the first band I went out on the road with, to spend any time with, and I spent a year with him. I'd been on the road before but it was like for weekends or maybe a week.

"When you went on the road during that time, in the 'forties, there were places that you couldn't eat - in fact, plenty of them. Our big problem would be this, so when you go to a town, you have to go to the local restaurant to let everybody know you're in town. And if you've got a bus with the name on it, you drive around the main drag for a while and everybody says 'Hey man, Roosevelt's in town! You going?

We had an airline Pomolea - that's a long automobile with about four doors on each side, like an airport thing where you put the luggage on top and they drive you from the airport to the hotel. Roosevelt had one. And we would go to these little towns in Texas and Oklahoma, and Ohio and everywhere, and go wherever the main drag was. And that would let everybody know that the band is in town so the dance is on tonight. Because lots of times the band didn't show up!

"In those days they didn't have Holiday Inns. They had the Sheraton, I think, but anyway in those days black folks weren't in those good hotels. So what you would have to do is go to the local restaurant and they would say 'Oh yes, you can stay with me' and 'so-and-so can stay there' or 'I'll take the drummer' and stuff like that. At that time people were glad to see entertainers. Nowadays they lock their daughters up! But then - you were just king for that particular period of time you were in town.

"Like when I was with Jimmy Reed, we were in Mississippi. And Jimmy Reed was drunk and he ran into a dude's car. This dude got out of the car and he snatched the door open and was going to hit Jimmy. And I said, 'Man, wait a minute. We'll pay for it, you know. This is Jimmy Reed and I'm trying to get him to a gig.' He said, 'You Jimmy Reed?' Jimmy said 'Man, I'm Jimmy Reed.' 'Well, why didn't you say so?' He was saying, 'Hey man, this is Jimmy Reed! Hey, looka-here,Jimmy, I got your record!' And he's going to be at the dance tonight, blah, blah, blah....

"So then the cat's buddy was out trying to straighten the fender out so that they could go. And he said 'Man, what's the matter with you? Leave that fender alone! ***Jimmy Reed*** put that dent in the fender!' I said, 'You must be joking,' but these are things that actually happened. That was in the 'fifties.

"But I enjoyed it. People were a little more friendly then, even Southern Whites, when you were an entertainer, even though they would always - as they call it - try to keep you in your place, you still had a little more freedom than the average person.

"Roosevelt Sykes taught me how to play the blues. I knew how, I had that feeling, but he really taught me how to put over a blues tune. There are certain things that it's hard to explain in words. It's just something that you have to do as a means of communication with people that have the same feeling, and you can communicate with music if you all got that same vibration going. And usually most blues people have got that same vibration. So I'm very grateful to Roosevelt Sykes because now I can really play with anyone.

"And he taught me lyrics I've never heard anyone else do. Usually you find some people that will copy other people's material, but I've never heard anyone else copying his material. We had a theme song — you're talking about attracting attention! When we were going on stage, we would be talking and bullshitting around, and he'd start: (sings piano intro) 'I wanna do-do....' People'd say, 'What the hell is this, what's this motherfucker talking about?'; 'I wanna do-do...' and people are saying 'Hey, you can't sing that!' 'I wanna do-do-do what you want me to, I wanna do-do!' Oh, his words were so funny, and he had such a clever way. And no one else has used them - to my knowledge. He used to have one, in fact I sing it every once in a while, called ***Ice Cream Freezer***. I worked with Memphis Slim too, and they're definitely two different people, but they have things in that same vein. You can tell they're more or less from the same school, they have the same train of thought, if not the identical ideas."

Red Holloway met the legendary Sun Ra, then known as Sonny Blount, in 1953, through the late Al Smith, sometime bassist who used to handle T-Bone Walker and Jimmy Reed. Later, in 1957, Holloway had the house band at the Club DeLisa in Chicago and Sun Ra, who had played piano and written arrangements for the band led by his predecessor, Red Saunders, continued to work with Holloway.

"Sun Ra was a very quiet type of person. He didn't drink or smoke, and he was very devoted to his art – which I'm certain you can tell if you hear some of his music. He never had much to say, like if you would ask him a question, he would give you an intelligent answer - no more, no less. He didn't really comment on anything. Hanging out? Yes, he did it, but like I say, he didn't drink or smoke so it was really of no fun to him. He never frowned on you doing your own thing, but he never participated.

"Sun Ra is a fantastic arranger, a fantastic musician. And he was playing then, like in the 'fifties, the same way he is doing now. He's learned more, but he has always been like a very mystifying pianist. And he's a very good pianist, he can play in any style. But he had his own type of playing and everyone used to listen and try to figure out what he was doing, at that time it was strictly a straight-ahead type of jazz playing. You didn't have a lot of the chords you would have today, and so normally when you had a gig, it was just a straight gig. But when Sun Ra was on it, it was a ***mysterious*** gig, trying to figure out what the chords were! But he was always correct in his playing, it was just the way he would voice his chords. He was something more or less like Thelonious Monk - in a way - but he had his definite own style. He still has. Yes, he's something.

"I know he lives in Philadelphia. I saw him at the dedication of the Louis Armstrong stadium in New York when I was working with John Mayall there. By us knowing each other for so many years, he was, 'How you doing, Red?' - very jovial like. We talked about various times and the people that we knew, but it was almost time for them to go on. And when that time came, his whole mood changed. But Sun Ra, he's a very ***nice*** person. People say he's mysterious, but I can't condemn a man for having his own set of morals and values, as long as it helps his purpose. It wouldn't really suit mine. He never spoke of politics or any particular religion back in Chicago, but he did talk about "celestial beings" and all that. A lot of people used to say 'Man, you hear that stuff that Sonny Blount is talking about?' And I'd say, 'Well, can you prove that he's wrong?' And they'd say 'Well, no, not really.' So, who am I to dispute what another person says? I may have my doubts, but nevertheless, so many things have happened that I wouldn't dare say that he was wrong."

Red Holloway's musical experiences have been so many and varied that they could fill the pages of this magazine. The knowledge he has gained through the years has stood him in good stead whatever the gig called for, and he is fortunate indeed to have arrived at such a relaxed philosophy concerning his activities.

"As far as being a musician is concerned, I don't regard myself in any particular way. My thing is I'm interested in making some money so I don't have to do anything else. I enjoy having my free time, so I'm like what you call a prostitute musician. Most musicians will stick to jazz, most will stick to rhythm-and-blues or whatever, but I will play anything that's going to make me some money so I can continue to do nothing in the daytime!

"But when I play the blues for anybody, I try to play really straight blues unless they say otherwise. And if I play jazz, I try to stick to straight jazz. In fact as I told you I cut an album with Sonny Stitt and it was so good to do it. I've been knowing him for thirty years, anyway. We used to be on the road together. I used to work out of Shaw Artists Corporation in Chicago, and whenever he could come to Chicago, he would always go out with my bands and we would go to various cities and whatnot.

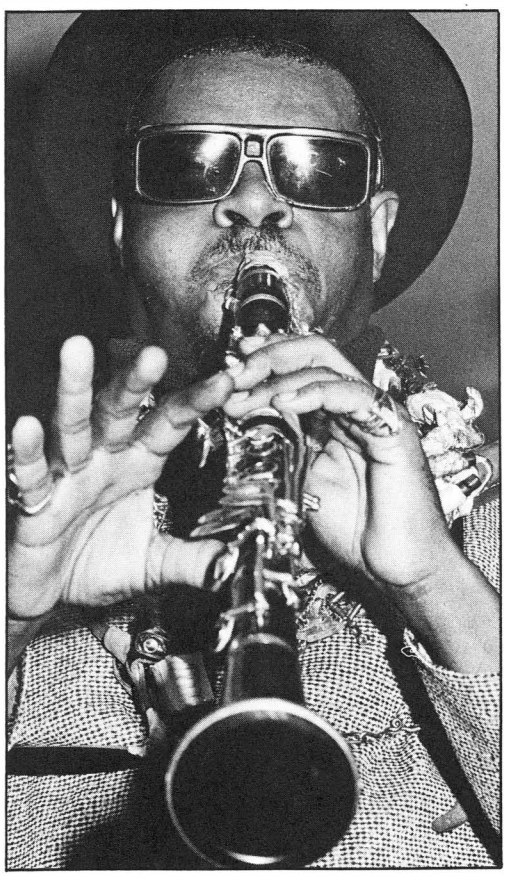
"Basically, I'm just satisfied being able to maintain some kind of a living staying in one place. I would like to make big money like everyone else, and I have done so to a degree. But never under my own name. When I was with Jack MacDuff, I think that was probably the highlight of my career. Well, I didn't make big money with him, but I'm talking in terms of popularity. In the 'sixties, that was one of the hottest groups in the country, and being just four men, the popularity was rather evenly distributed! But as far as making money, I think I made more money with John Mayall than anybody else. Hard work? When I used to work as a shake-out man in the steel mill it used to be harder – and hotter, believe me! Actually, with John, there isn't really any work to it. They lay down a rhythm track, then I listen to it. He tells me how many choruses he wants and I figure out what the chord changes are, play a couple of solos, and that's it. No music involved, just strictly from your head, spontaneous.

"John always uses black musicians. In fact, out of a seven-piece band, he and the drummer were the only whites. I was with him for about two-and-a-half years and out of all that time there was never more than two or three white people involved. In fact, this time there are more whites in his band than I've ever seen him with ever.

"He's going to change this year, he does that every year with his musical personnel. I'm sure I would be happy to work for him if he does decide to go on using me. He always says 'Out of all the saxophone players, you're the one I like best!' Like I say, I try and play whatever suits the occasion...."

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE WILMER

THE JAZZ PHOTOGRAPHER



HENRY KAHANEK was born in 1942 in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where in his youth he concentrated on photography, and on playing jazz on a cornet held together by tape, rubber bands and utter faith. In 1968 he moved to Montreal. After a series of hard times he managed to put together a small photographic show in a now defunct theatre, along with a notice requesting any information that could lead him to a job. As a result of this he found work as a legal photographer.

Accidents, divorce cases, court reporting. "The most boring, and sometimes dangerous part of photography," he says laconically, "But the money had to be earned somehow. I had brought with me an old Praktina which had a hole in the shutter, but if I advanced the film quickly enough, I managed to save the picture."

From his first earnings in Canada, he bought an enlarger and eventually his first secondhand Leica. He has remained a Leica man to this day.

Kahanek terminated his legal photography work after three years and though he had no idea on how to run any kind of business he decided to set up shop on his own. He took every assignment which came his way: portrait, theatrical and child photography and even weddings. He bought some equipment as he went along but, besides money, there was little in this work to bring him much pleasure. Music still being very much a part of his life, he found himself at various jazz clubs and concerts, but taking photographs rather than listening. The problem faces both critic and photographer — either you work or you listen, and to this day, both Kahanek and I work through one set and just enjoy the next.

Musicians started asking Henry for a look at his pictures. They became his first customers, followed by record companies and magazines.

"When I got my first press card and staff job with a small Quebec musical weekly I was really thrilled," he reminisces. "Now I could get to see and hear the music without buying a ticket — which half the time I couldn't afford anyway!"

Pretty soon, he was working for all the major record companies around Montreal, his work was published in ***The Star*** and ***The Gazette,*** magazines such as ***Coda, Downbeat, Creem, Rolling Stone***, and ***Time.***

No more weddings which, he declares, "will kill any talent or imagination. You can't be creative and commercial within the same day — sometimes even hour. Even by being 'diplomatic' I ran the risk of losing myself in the lie."

Photographing musicians, on or off-stage, presents several problems. "I prefer to meet and speak to the musicians before I start to shoot, although it is sometimes hard to do. That way, I know what I can and cannot do in order not to disturb them. Also, I get a better understanding of them as people that way, and it settles my own emotional perceptions. After all these years of shooting music, I still find it painful to push my shutter, even as quiet as the Leica is, particularly with jazz or classical pianissimo moments. Fortunately, this problem does not exist with rock!

"Technically, the lighting is a constant problem. Flash is neither very good, nor is it always permitted. One must always work with the most sensitive film, a wide open lens, and be very precise with the exposure. The lighting is usually very contrasty and to overexpose or underexpose even one stop means life and death to the picture. The one degree Pentax meter is ideal when the light does not change intensity or colour and if the musician stands still, but that never happens. I use an SLR, because of its zoom, macro and perspective control lenses, but that requires the use of the illuminator to see the exposure meter in the viewfinder, and since I always forget to switch off the illuminator, the batteries die on me regularly. The new SLR photomatic with built-in illuminator forces the photographer to use his middle or index finger, which he actually needs for focussing.

"The problem might be solved by the use of an automatic-exposure camera, but I haven't tried one yet since I like to purposely under- or over-expose my shots for skin texture or backlight effect. I must admit, though, that I am tempted by the new Leica R3".

After two recent exhibitions in Montreal, Kahanek found the favour of the National Film Board who bought a large collection from him. He is also hoping for an exhibition in New York and awaiting confirmation on the dates for exhibits in Paris and London. And he hopes to travel to New Orleans and capture some jazz history there.

"I am also doing some brainwork toward the concept of a new portfolio, besides my musical photography. For a long time now, I have been planning to capture some of the absurdity of our human race from the optimistic point of view. Maybe I can weave music into this project too."

— article by Nighthawk

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Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Thad Jones

photograph of Ella Fitzgerald by Henry Kahanek

AROUND THE WORLD AROUND THE..

CANADA

TORONTO — Mostly everything has been interesting in Toronto in the last four months, the Horseshoe Tavern ended its jazz policy with Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor and the Leroy Jenkins Trio. The Art Ensemble of Chicago and Anthony Braxton were promoted in concert by GBM, to a very large audience at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and Randy Weston at long last played a concert of his wonderful music at the St. Lawrence Centre.

Gary Topp and Gary Kormier have moved their business into a new location called the Edge (Egertons) and so far the Jazz has been The All Time Sound Effects Orchestra and Sonny Greenwich. A club with a very warm feeling... Doug Cole was honored for his contribution to jazz with a big bash at the Casa Loma, the turn out, at $25.00 a ticket, was very large, the profits are to go towards a scholarship fund for promising young Canadian jazz players. Basin Street, one of the restaurant/clubs that the Cole family own, has a very successful cabaret show called Indigo, which features three very talented performers. The irrepressible Salome Bey, who not only performs as a singer but was responsible for a great deal of the actual production. The two dancer/singer/comedians, Rudy Webb and Dennis Simpson, almost made me interested in cabaret. This is only the second show of this kind I have ever seen, the other being Jacques Brel Is Alive And Well And Living In Paris. The music for Indigo was performed by a trio of Joe Sealy on piano, the great Jimmy Norman was the percussionist and Larry Smith on bass. Jazz fans should check this show out.

Bourbon Street is beginning to repeat its acts a lot these days, bringing in the same players, or players with the wrong rhythm sections. The most interesting return was Milt Jackson, who was fortunate enough to have Ed Bickert on guitar, Don Thompson on bass and Terry Clarke on drums. They all dazzled everyone, just like they're supposed to....

And then on January 5th, in Mexico, Charles Mingus died. Damn! I don't have to tell anyone who and what he was, for all jazz people know that.

In 1963 my wife and I emigrated to Canada from England, and part of our dream realized was to go to New York City, to all those clubs, to all that music. The Five Spot Cafe, on Saint Marks Place had a sign that said The Charles Mingus Quintet, this was to be the very first live music we would hear in New York. We're FULL, says this big guy, Joe Termini was his name. We came a long way to hear this music, says my wife, from England. They put us in a front table, took off the reserved sign (I learned about that stuff later), and there he was. CHARLES MINGUS. Thank You.

— Bill Smith

MONTREAL — Jazz and blues have continued to flourish here. There were so many musical events this past fall, it became impossible to review the entire scene. The following report will deal with some of the highlights.

The Rising Sun hosted everything from Anthony Braxton, the Art Ensemble of Chicago and Albert Mangelsdorff solo to the Phil Woods Quintet, the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet, Betty Carter, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Sonny Greenwich and Max Roach's Quartet, as well as Willie Dixon, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, and Son Seals.

The Anthony Braxton Quartet was absolute dynamite. Braxton sported his usual array of reeds, accompanied by Thurman Barker (percussion), Ray Anderson (trombones and trumpets) and John Linberg (bass). Their music produced some incredibly bizarre and sublime aural imagery. Typically the group commenced with an innocuous line, followed by a collective shift in rhythmic gears within a broadened harmonic spectrum. The structural transformation created the most preposterous delusions, thus setting the stage for fierce individual improvisations. Braxton performed some lovely subterranean conversations on his contrabass clarinet, Linberg passionately strummed his bass as if it were a guitar, Anderson pumped out lyrical growls and wails, while Barker cooked up polyrhythmic colors. Usually a call and response dialogue among the members swung the sound back to the original pattern, leaving many in the audience dumbfounded, but most pleasurably overwhelmed. I only hope this quartet gets recorded before its members venture elsewhere.

Betty Carter did her standard repertoire, including a 20-minute version of ***Movin' On***, and her lovely dedication to Billie Holiday, ***No Tears For The Lady***. Carter's themes were characteristically sexual and emotional, yet the lyrics had a directness, and the sound a sculpturedness, which defied romantic mush. And the rhythmic drive of John Hick's rich melodicism on piano, Kenny Washington's sharp (occasionally brash) beats on drums and Ratso Harris' bass playing pushed the music on and on and on.

Sonny Greenwich, along with Don Thompson (keyboards), Gene Perla (electric bass) and Claude Ranger (drums), played to capacity crowds three nights running. Somewhat like McCoy Tyner, Greenwich built up warm, full-bodied melodies out of which he scrambled over a series of progressions at a horrendous pace. Unfortunately health problems have begun to tarnish some of his quicker articulations. The group's accompaniment and individual solos followed a standard format, but Ranger's and Thompson's playing was anything but routine. Ranger swung with a crisp rhythmic diversity, and Thompson's textures were more percussive than usual.

The Musee des beaux-arts presented two very different solo concerts. Evan Parker's solo saxophone recitals have been reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Paul Bley (who is originally from Montreal) has actively participated in all the major reformulations of jazz since be-bop. On October 25 he gave a commanding two and a half hour solo performance in which he played through all the traditions. Beginning with a bluesy abstract, he brewed melodic and harmonic nuances to create a metamorphosis of coloured serenity and liquid impressionism. Yet his classicism never lingered ad infinitum like a Jarrett groove. Bley's scope is encyclopedic. He resorted to plucking and caressing the interior of the piano, shifting into a swinging, struttin' stride, tumbling upon a Monk and Tatum theme or concluding on a Parker/Gillespie coda.

On November 5 the Jazz Workshop (founded by Bley and Keith White in 1952) presented Pepper Adams and a local rhythm section at the Musee. The McCoy Tyner Sextet played at Place des Arts on November 27.

The 50-member Montreal Black Community Youth Choir, founded and directed by Trevor Payne, put on an excellent performance of traditional gospel and modern spirituals at John

photograph of Charles Mingus by Henry Kahanek

Abbott College on October 26.

At The Rising Sun in January are confirmed Jay McShann and Dexter Gordon, Bill Evans (Feb. 20-25) and Joe Pass (Feb. 27-March 4).

Local jazz is featured regularly at Chez Dumas, Rockhead's Paradise, L'Air du Temps, Terrasse St. Denis and Cafe Campus. Guitarist Yvon Symonds has opened his own spot, the Jazz Bar, where his trio plays nightly and local musicians jam. And Gilles Archambault's "Jazz-Soliloque" has been extended by a half-hour, and can be heard on Radio Canada every night of the week from 10:00 to 11:00 p.m.

— Peter Danson

OTTAWA — This fall Ottawa, generally on a thin diet of contemporary jazz, has had a feast of avant-garde performances. Bernard Stepien has put on a further series of recitals at Hull's Theatre de L'Ile, and SAW Gallery has had a music programme that has included performances by Evan Parker and James Newton.

Anthony Braxton was at Theatre de L'Ile, where he enchanted a packed audience from his first phrases. He began with a ballad, ***A-26(3)***, richly caressive, pure in tone, close in its treatment to the traditional explorations of the chords of a tune — immediately winning, like his version of ***You Go To My Head***, with which he opened his second set. Several of his pieces were based on a single phrase or effect, as was ***H.46(N)***, another ballad like performance that consisted of a sequence of lyrical runs. The tour de force of the evening was ***408 (K)***, played out of register in a series of squeaks, squawks and breath notes, without any fully formed note in the instrument's natural range.

The audience for the next recital in the series, by pianist Mike Nock, was disappointing: there seems to be only a small group in Ottawa who can be relied upon to turn out for any but the best known of artists. While we were waiting for people to show up, Nock remarked how important he felt the quality of sound was to his music. He certainly exploited the possibilities of the piano, pounding on it, dwelling on its sonority, running intrepidly over its whole span. In luxury and variety of sound, this was an impressive and engrossing recital, with Nock often standing and humming as he drew his effects from his instrument. Some of Nock's pieces were too long, and the material seemed to be conducted through a range of styles that echoed performers and composers as various as Horace Silver and Moussorgsky. Nevertheless, this was a driving, dedicated and exciting evening.

At SAW Gallery, Evan Parker gave an exhilarating solo performance on soprano and tenor saxophones. On soprano, Parker produces a completely individual sound, moving in and out of the normal range of the instrument with such rapidity and such clean execution that one could feel one was hearing a duet. His pieces often build up out of the reiteration of a single effect with growing and piercing energy.

The following week, James Newton was at SAW with a solo flute recital. Newton, too, is an exponent of unusual sounds on his instrument, and sometimes chants and shouts over it as he plays. ***Choir*** gave us some impressive chord-like sounds. Delicate, but more conventional, were his slower ballad style pieces, and one had the feeling that Newton's playing was not as revolutionary as it might at first seem.

Very much responsible for getting Parker and Newton to Ottawa was Ron Sweetman of Jazz Ottawa; and he gave us another impressive evening when Jazz Ottawa and Carleton University Staff Association brought Paul Bley to Carleton. Bley's early playing owed a lot to Bill Evans, and we can still hear that influence in the delicate variations of intensity and the singing quality that Bley gets in ballads. There is now what one might call a Monkian side to his playing; an aggressiveness of fingering, a rolling resonance in the left hand, a readiness to explore the more earthy possibilities of the instrument. After the recital, Bley said that he employs a "James Joyce technique", taking up material as it comes to hand, so that each period of improvisation contains parts from many pieces. This can give a looseness of form not wholly satisfying, as was the case with Nock's recital.

Billy Robinson was at The Wildflower Cafe for three evenings with a trio that included Paul Dynes on bass and Mervyn Jolly on drums. They made a lovely group, and gave us one of the best evenings in an exciting month. Robinson's playing comes out of the Rollins and Coltrane of the mid-sixties; but he has his style together, as we saw only too well when he played Rollins' masterpiece, ***You Don't Know What Love Is.*** It was a daring thing to do; and, in the first phrases, there were clear acknowledgements to Rollins. For a while the melody was handled devotedly and traditionally; but, as the performance progressed, the fingering became more rapid, the conception more adventurous. In other numbers Robinson got that floating effect that Coltrane attained in rapid phrasing; although he fingers at great speed, there is never a sense of effort or pushing, but rather of the sweep of the whole thing. His control and fullness of tone throughout the range of his instrument was remarkable. As local saxophonist Vern Isaac put it: "This man really knows his horn."

At the National Arts Centre, Chick Corea appeared with Gary Burton; while Nimmons 'N' Nine Plus Six gave an evening of bland conventionality. *— Trevor Tolley*

(Trevor Tolley covers the Ottawa scene for ***Ottawa Revue***)

HALIFAX — Early this fall Pepe's jazz club closed its doors, allegedly for renovations. The club, somewhat pretentiously named Cabbagetown (Stephen Leacock smiles in his grave), was apparently going to move to the second floor from the basement, and the format altered so that patrons could dine while they took in the music. That was many months ago, and while no renovations have as yet begun upstairs, the old jazz room is being transformed into a disco.

It seems that the club owners have gambled on jazz and decided to move on to greener pastures. It may be months before the jazz club re-opens, and this writer for one doubts that it will open at all. But the question which bears answering at this point is, why did the Pepe's jazz experiment fail?

For openers, the club suffered from the very outset from poor, and more pointedly, nonexistent promotion. It seems the owners were content to rely on word of mouth for the club's success, when a little more professionalism was clearly in order. Token newspaper and radio ads heralded the club's arrival, and then a period of invisibility set in. Unfortunately, the crowds began to be invisible as well. Sure, they turned out in droves to hear Moe Koffman, whose trendy new perm was an omen of things to come. But Ed Bickert, Bernie Senensky, Steve Lederer and others played to nearly empty houses. Even a moderate promotional campaign at this time would have been a tremendous asset, and by the time ads finally did begin to trickle into the newspaper, the damage had been done. The fact that Halifax has only one daily newspaper should have been utilized from the day the club opened its doors, for management had a guaranteed audience for its ads.

Just as unfortunate was the format chosen for the presentation of the music. It was decided to have a house band, which would back up solo guest artists. This placed quite a large responsibility on the members of the house band, and it is sad but true that they were unequal to the task. Skip Beckwith is a much-travelled bassist, and has done his share of studio work. But as a live performer he lacks the spontaneity and imagination that are required of a jazz musician. Tim Cohoon, while a hard worker on drums, still has too much of the rock drummer left over from his days with Lionel and the White Stains. A jazz drummer he isn't. The third member of the group, keyboardist Joe Sealy, was also too limited to provide an exciting foil for any guest soloist. His right hand has developed at the expense of his left, with the result that he has realized only half of his potential. It was embarrassing when Milt Jackson had to lay down his mallets and give Joe a lesson in proper use of the left hand.

Inevitably, the result was that guests had to find inspiration within their own playing, while ignoring the backup group. Jazz is not supposed to work that way. It is at its best when a group of musicians incite, tease and lead each other into new areas of creativity. Not surprisingly, the best dates at Pepe's were those in which guests brought their own players with them. Ed Bickert, Don Thompson, and Terry Clarke put on a monster of a show, perhaps the best in the club's short history, while Doug Riley, Don Francks, and Bernie Senensky's groups were also exciting. But tedium was sure to return the following week.

Last, but not least, the people of Halifax are to blame. They were willing to turn up for Moe Koffman or dinner musician extraordinaire Peter Appleyard, but the same people stayed away in droves when the Lederers and Senenskys were appearing. That is, they supported the familiar but spurned the unknown. More precisely, to attend a Moe Koffman concert was to make the scene, but a Steve Lederer concert was nowheresville in the mind of the Halifax socialite. Such behaviour is not the sole domain of the Haligonian, but the phenomenon does serve to illustrate a disturbing point — the actual hard core jazz audience in Halifax is a small one. If this is the case, then it does not augur well for the future of jazz in the Halifax area. The future is upon us, and it is disco - a fact which Pepe's management is clearly aware of. And, make no mistake about it, the same masses who flocked to Moe Koffman will flock to the new disco. After all, it's hip. *— James E. Candow*

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — After Eclipse's Ann Arbor Jazz Festival squeezed a season of music into one

September weekend, it would seem like nothing else could be happening around here. But this fall brought a bountiful harvest of the music, enough to satisfy the most voracious appetite.

One thing helping jazz locally is an informal net of promoters through whom an artist can often arrange three or four separate concerts. We cover southeastern Michigan from Ann Arbor, but Ann Arbor, Detroit and East Lansing are far enough apart to offer fairly distinct audiences (depending on advertising). For example, Woody Shaw and later McCoy Tyner each followed a week at Baker's (in Detroit) with two nights at the Earle in Ann Arbor. Oregon played at Grosse Pointe's "Punch & Judy" Theatre October 1 and moved to the Earle for the following two nights. And Pat Metheny hit East Lansing's "Showcase Jazz", The Earle and the Punch & Judy in one four-day stretch. We generally caught performers at The Earle – it's close to home, and both the acoustics and the food are excellent.

Stephane Grappelli's quartet (at the Earle October 24) echoed the classic Hot Club Quintet of the thirties both in instrumentation – Grappelli's violin, Diz Disley and John Etheridge, acoustic guitars; Brian Torff, bass – and in style. They speak swing, but with a fervor and inventiveness which made that style seem not at all dated. In his solos Torff showed himself a fast-fingered descendant of the sixties, but he blended well with the rest of the group.

It was a surprise when Grappelli moved to the piano "to give my band a break". Evidently piano was his first instrument, and he remains a much better than competent stride pianist. The range of the group's repertoire is unexpectedly wide – not only the "usual" tunes (***Fascinatin' Rhythm, The Man I Love***), but a Jean Luc Ponty tune, Rollin' ***Pent Up House*** and an excerpt from the classics ***(Something*** by Edvard Grieg, with Grappelli's folk roots on display). A quartet led by local flugelhornish Louis Smith (who has a new LP out on SteepleChase) opened the evening with smooth late-fifties bop.

An uncomfortably small crowd turned out to hear an interesting solo concert by trombonist George Lewis on October 27, an Eclipse Bright Moments concert in the Residential College Auditorium. Lewis opened with six short pieces from a suite of eight entitled "Miniatures"; each seemed to explore a different area of sound possible on the horn, and with Lewis it almost seems all sounds are possible. Lewis' sense of humor was especially evident in one piece where he carried on a conversation while blowing, with words teasingly blurred (it ended with "Yes sir"). ***Tone Bones***, a set of three explorations of trombone sounds (one with a bassoon reed, one with electronically distorted trombone, one with bowing on the bell), got pretty dull after a while – as with classical electronic music, it often seems to be more fun to make than to hear. To close the set, however, Lewis made a little speech (tongue-in-cheek): telling us "Never let it be said I'm not sentimental", he promised to take us "back to acoustics, before there was all this electronic stuff". The piece proved to be a masterful version of ***Lush Life***, verse, main theme, and a chorus of solo, in tempo and with a remarkable flow of triplet eighths and sixteenths.

The guitar duets by Rodney Jones and Bruce Johnson (an Eclipse Bright Moments concert on November 17) suffered from an attempt to work from the theoretically valid concept of spontaneous interplay. Although the two are fine guitarists, well-attuned to each other and able to play inside and out, the result was a lot like a private backroom jam – more interesting for player than for listener. There were excellent moments, inventive interaction, but the very variety grew dull as the two skipped from idiom to idiom, idea to idea like children let loose in a toy factory. Both are obviously creative players, but I'd like to hear them in a less self-indulgent, more structured setting.

The next night we drove up to East Lansing to hear a Showcase Jazz-produced concert by Jack DeJohnette's Directions. An apt name; the four players – DeJohnette, drums, keyboards; Eddie Gomez, bass; Lester Bowie, trumpet; John Abercrombie, guitar – seem to have come together from the four points of the stylistic compass. Yet each brings something different to the band, giving it the strength, vitality and versatility of a true hybrid.

After some free noodles by Gomez and DeJohnette (the latter on an amplified, blown keyboard), Gomez set up a rock-flavored feeling, a repeated four-chord pattern; Bowie began to add choice notes, DeJohnette picked up his sticks, and we were into an updated "Bitches Brew" feel. I remember thinking, this is how

photograph of Jack DeJohnette by Gerard Futrick

fusion ought to be — the beat and textures of rock given the rhythmic and tonal freedom, the personal inventiveness of contemporary jazz. Gomez outlined the changes without resorting to a lockstep bass line, DeJohnette contributed complex licks and fills, while Bowie blatted and screeched. A free section (Bowie's breathy pedal tones matching the low timbres of DeJohnette's keyboard) led imperceptibly into a very free ***Autumn Leaves***, with Bowie bending and smearing the head most effectively. Gomez eventually set a medium tempo; Bowie's solo reconfirmed my feeling that the really good "free" players are extremely interesting when they do play inside. Abercrombie: dense, complex counterrhythms, and suddenly there's one; eights and fours from DeJohnette. DeJohnette then offered a clean crisp solo piano interlude, a minor modal thing followed by a delicate ballad; he stayed there as the others returned and kicked off a blues which Bowie and Gomez picked right up. With DeJohnette on drums again a cooking backbeat shuffle developed, with all (but especially Gomez) soloing well. DeJohnette then introduced the band, but Bowie wouldn't fade afterwards, playing a dirty old lick (remember the Bunny Hop?) to which DeJohnette sang (in response) "bow-legged woman". It's an exciting band, full of the unexpected.

Woody Shaw came to the Earle with his regular quintet — Carter Jefferson, soprano and tenor sax; Onaje Allen Gumbs, piano; Clint Houston, bass; and Victor Lewis, drums. The leader's bright, brassy tone and quartal chops were much in evidence, and Jefferson's tenor playing reminds one of early Wayne Shorter with its hard-edged tone and Trane-ish harmonies tempered by sparser melodic ideas. Gumbs is another strong player — Shaw let him lead the rhythm section as a trio on Houston's ***Watership Down***; Houston plays well, with a lot of Body English behind each solo. In a day when pick-up groups are the norm, it's a pleasant shock to be reminded of the quality music a good working group, its members familiar and comfortable playing together, can produce.

A Milt Jackson set on November 20 at the Earle (with Claude Black, piano; Ray McKinney, bass; and Roy Brooks, drums) was smooth but a little too relaxed (almost tired). Kenny Burrell's first set at the Earle eight days later was something else again, many notches above his September festival performance. With Larry Gales, bass, and Sherman Ferguson, drums, Burrell cooked his way through a long, rich set, with less common material like ***A Sleepin' Bee.*** The set included an acoustic solo interlude with two tunes from his 1964 Gil Evans collaboration, "Guitar Forms". Nothing that remarkable, I suppose, just good, straight-ahead jazz.

Incidentally, both the Earle and Eclipse had jam sessions going earlier this year, although the Earle's shut down in November. We stopped by the Earle's (on Sunday) several times, and one night we ran into drummer Danny Spencer, who told us he was to tour Europe the end of this year with saxophonist Joe Henderson. The Eclipse sessions, Monday nights at the University Club, are currently headed by trombonist Dave Kozal.

In Detroit jazz got a boost in October when the Michigan Arts Council awarded grants totalling $50,850; the grants may be matched with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. $6000 will help fund a tour of college campuses produced by the Allied Artists Association and John Sinclair; another $11,700 will fund a large-ensemble concert series at Orchestra Hall/Paradise Theatre (the schedules are still pending). Trumpeter Marcus Belgrave and the Jazz Research Institute each also received money. — ***David Wild***

LOS ANGELES — Living with us now once again after several years in New York City is the remarkable bassist Mark Dresser. Veteran of the Stanley Crouch Black Music Infinity and most recently with Anthony Braxton during his latest west coast visit, Dresser performed October 8 at the Century City Playhouse (10508 West Pico) with fellow San Diegan Jim French (reeds), Diamanda Galas (voice), and Phil Keeney (percussion of the Harry Partch variety). Jamil Shabaka brought together a ten-piece outfit to play October 15. And October 22 John Carter and Bobby Bradford gave a rare duet concert. And Bradford gave an even rarer solo performance on two tunes. I believe this is the first time Bradford has performed for the public in this capacity. John spent the summer equally between NYC and touring Europe, playing in Paris, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, the Northsea Festival, etc. Bobby spent the summer in Chicago studying, and taking the time during his road trip back to visit Indian reservations.

Well a real coup came in the form of a solo Evan Parker concert for us Southern Californians October 29. A total reassessment of music and the saxophone! Backed by extreme technical know-how. The audience was transfixed by his mantric waves over which he negotiated concurrent lines spelled out in his rotary breath rhythms.

September 29 to 31 Rudy Onderwyzer's Lighthouse saw the Jack DeJohnette Directions with Lester Bowie, John Abercrombie and Eddie Gomez for their second appearance in L.A. this year. In Sierra Madre at The Raven And The Rose, 322 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. every Wednesday is the Gary Foster Quartet. Including some of Foster's fellow collaborators of ten years standing: Dave Koonse (guitar), Putter Smith (bass) and John Tirabasso (drums), all Revelation recording artists. On October 3 at the Whitehouse in Laguna Beach Big Joe Turner teamed up with the Lloyd Glenn Quartet. October 11 at the George Sand Bookstore in Westwood were Roberto Miranda and Alex Cline "Alone Together". October 13 to 15 at Howard Rumsey's was Johnny Griffin in his first west coast appearance in 15 years.

Glenn Ferris left the second week in October to take up residence in NYC. We will remember him for his many years work with Don Ellis' bands and as an integral part of Bobby Bradford's Extet for the last two years. His working experiences run the gamut from playing with Harry James, Dr. Jazz and Britt Woodman to Frank Zappa, the L.A. Philharmonic and Stevie Wonder. He may also be caught on James Newton's first album (reviewed in ***Coda*** Oct. '77, no. 157) as well as on several recordings by both Billy Cobham and Don Ellis. On July 31, 1977 his 20-piece Celebration Orchestra gave a recital at Century City Playhouse which included Bobby Bradford, John Carter, Vinny Golia and James Newton. With all of this in mind, you can agree that we in Southern California will sorely miss his trombonely talents. — ***Mark Weber***

NEW YORK — Recent attractions at the Public Theater have included Anthony Braxton and Muhal Richard Abrams on October 27 and 28, and Julius Hemphill and Ran Blake on November 10. Braxton's set (Braxton, woodwinds; Ray Anderson, trombone; Richard Teitelbaum, synthesizer) was highly inventive. The three musicians played a free-flowing music that continually evolved as various instrumental combinations appeared and disappeared. Their opening statement of unison trombone and saxophone with synthesizer accompaniment created a high-spirited atmosphere that was maintained throughout the performance. In addition, the leader's solos on his many woodwind instruments were quite impassioned, projecting an air of exhilaration. Alternating lyrical and energetic passages all helped to make his music emotionally expressive.

Julius Hemphill's multi-media presentation (Hemphill, woodwinds; Baikida Carroll, trumpet; Abdul Wadud, cello; Famoudou Don Moye, drums; Malinke, actor) was based on a section of Ralph Ellison's book "Invisible Man"... Despite the interesting employment of the actor, it was the music that was most impressive. Hemphill played with an invigorating, blues-drenched sound. He and his fellow musicians explored many textures, both as soloists and as members of the ensemble. The shifting focus back and forth created a constantly changing collage of colors.

Randy Weston (Weston, piano; Alex Blake, bass; Azzedine Weston, percussion) played at The Village Vanguard from October 10 through 15. At times, he and his rhythm section took on the sound of a percussion orchestra with layers of different rhythms intertwining with one another. Weston's solo rendition of his composition ***Hi-Fly*** was outstanding. The pianist began the piece by stating the melody in single notes in the keyboard's upper register against a low resonant bass line. He then employed a stride accompaniment in the composition's bridge before returning to the widely spaced, two single lines. The improvisation that followed utilized various polyphonic textures and meter changes in dissecting the tune's melodic and rhythmic structures.

The Milestone All Stars (Sonny Rollins, soprano and tenor saxophones; McCoy Tyner, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Al Foster, drums) performed at the Beacon Theater October 21. Playing in various solo, duo, trio, and quartet settings, the musicians amply demonstrated their unique talents. Tyner's solo presentation - ***A Little Pianissimo*** - featured soft, delicate sounds in addition to his usual thunderous approach. Rollins' solo number was also a delight. Quoting from several tunes, the saxophonist's heated improvisation demonstrated that he is still a very creative and vital musician.

Seventh Avenue South — a new jazz club — featured Sheila Jordan and her trio (Harold Danko, piano; Cameron Brown, bass; Beaver Harris, drums) from October 25 - 29. Jordan is an unfortunately neglected musician whose vocal timbre defies description. She is one of the few singers who uses a song to create a musical experience. ***St. Thomas*** — which served as her tribute to Sonny Rollins — had her continually repeating the saxophonist's name in various rhythmic and melodic variations until the words were transformed into musical textures rather than having any specific literate meaning.

The Heath Brothers (Jimmy Heath, soprano and tenor saxophones, flute; Tony Purrone, guitar; Stanley Cowell, piano; Percy Heath,

bass; Keith Cobland, drums) played at The Village Vanguard from October 21 to November 5. The inclusion of Purrone's marvelously facile guitar instead of another horn gave the band a fresh and appealing sound as they played a swinging, bebop-based music. Jimmy Heath played an excellent solo on his tune ***Gingerbread Boy***, punctuating his lines with some emotionally powerful upper register cries. His brother Percy's baby bass solo on ***Yardbird Suite*** was also noteworthy, featuring an infectious rhythmic quality and flowing lines.

Piano Pinnacle III presented the trios of Tommy Flanagan (piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Joe Chambers, drums), Walter Davis Jr. (Davis, piano; Greg Maken, bass; Mark Johnson, drums), and Barry Harris (Harris, piano, Bill Lee, bass; Leroy Williams, drums). The three pianists each displayed their remarkable talents. Davis used some Monkish clusters and lightning runs in several cadenza passages that showcased his considerable, yet overlooked, talents. Harris' rendition of ***You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*** incorporated many imaginative inner voicings, demonstrating his mastery of the bop idiom.

In The Tradition - featuring Arthur Blythe, alto saxophone; Hilton Ruiz, piano; Fred Hopkins, bass; Steve McCall, drums - played at The Tin Palace November 22 - 25. Although usually associated with exploratory music, the four musicians performed swing and bebop compositions. However, they presented the material in a contemporary manner while maintaining its harmonic structure. During his solo on ***The Theme***, for example, Blythe employed angular lines and streams of notes while trading eight-measure phrases with Ruiz and McCall, giving the familiar bebop tune a new vitality.

Briefs: The Chico Freeman Quartet (Freeman, soprano and tenor saxophones, flute); Jay Hoggard, vibes; Reggie Workman, bass; Famoudou Don Moye, drums and percussion) was featured at Sweet Basil's September 11 - 16. Freeman's powerful, yet lyrical style was well showcased on ***U'mla***, utilizing blues elements, trills and powerful runs encompassing the entire range of his tenor saxophone.... Oliver Lake played at Carnegie Recital Hall September 15. The saxophonist used various sized instrumental combinations, ranging from solo to a nine-piece ensemble, to explore various sounds. Particularly noteworthy were ***Spaces*** with its excellent string writing and ***Clevont Fitzhubert*** featuring provocative solos by Lake and Baikida Carroll.... The Ted Curson Quartet (Curson, trumpet; Armen Donelian, piano; Ratso Harris, bass; Jeff Williams, drums) was featured at Beefsteak Charlie's from September 27 - 30. The trumpeter played several exceptional solos, including some beautiful, long-lined melodic passages on ***Blue Bossa***.... The Johnny Griffin Quartet (Griffin, tenor saxophone; Ronnie Mathews, piano; James Leary, bass; Eddie Marshall, drums) joined Dexter Gordon's group (Gordon, soprano and tenor saxophones; George Cables, piano; Rufus Reid, bass; Eddie Gladden, drums) at Carnegie Hall on September 23. Playing with verve and authority, Griffin demonstrated a masterful bebop-based style. ***Soft And Furry*** included an unaccompanied saxophone solo that successfully conveyed the composition's formal structure and emotional content...Keith Jarrett's concert at the Metropolitan Opera House on October 15 was a disappointing affair. The pianist created many impressionistic-sounding, hypnotic passages with repeated chords and rhythms. Yet, Jarrett's physical gyrations seemed superfluous and distracting, and ultimately robbed the music of much of its impact.

New from ECM are Jack DeJohnette's wonderfully eclectic "New Directions" (with Lester Bowie, Eddie Gomez and John Abercrombie) and Steve Reich's "Music For 18 Musicians"....New from India Navigation are Chico Freeman's "Kings of Mali" and Munoz's "Rendezvous With Now".... Michael Moss' "Cross Currents" (Fourth Stream Records), Eugene Chadbourne/John Zorn's "School" (Parachute Records) and "The Glass Orchestra" (Music Gallery Editions) are available from New Music Distribution Service, 5 W. 95th St., New York, N.Y. 10025.... "The Story of Jazz" - edited by Joachim Berendt (Prentice Hall, Inc.) - contains essays by various writers chronicling the music from its New Orleans sounds to today's explorations.... Inner City has released Johnny Griffin's "Live in Tokyo", Jackie McLean's "New Wine in Old Bottles", The Great Jazz Trio's "Live at The Village Vanguard", and Richard Sussman's first release "Free Fall".... Horace Tapscott's "Song of the Unsung" - a fine solo album by this very under-recorded pianist - is available from Interplay Records (P.O. Box 7000-115, Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277).... New albums from Columbia include Stan Getz's "Another World" and Woody Shaw's "Stepping Stones".... Improvising Artists has released "The IAI Festival" - featuring Jimmy Giuffre, Lee Konitz, Bill Connors, and Paul Bley - and Sun Ra's "St. Louis Blues" - a solo piano recital, including a unique reading of the title tune. — *Clifford Jay Safane*

JAMES NEWTON QUARTET

La Mama, New York City
November 10, 1978

This is a spotlight review of the first concert in a series of five performances that included a solo percussion concert by Famoudou Don Moye, the quartet of pianist Don Pullen, Olu Dara's Okra Orchestra and reedist/composer Kalaparusha Difda's group. The series was presented by the Human Arts Association and the New Wilderness Foundation under the title "Jazz Composer Showcase".

James Newton's quartet (Newton, flute; Stanley Crouch, percussion; Anthony Davis, piano; and Wes Brown, bass) was the first group to perform on November 10th and the music was of an extremely high order. The band, I believe, was somewhat of a special aggregation of Newton's and one which was probably a stronger group than the previous one (which included the legendary drummer Dennis Charles and pianist Bob Neloms). As a matter of fact, the energy and resourcefulness of pianist Anthony Davis and the tonal "reverb" of Stanley Crouch's drumming made for a fine rhythmic bottom that oscillated constantly from one density level to another. At times it even seemed as though Newton's improvisations became lost in the maze — for Davis, Crouch and bassist Wes Brown create a multiphonic hardness in the music that is only relieved by shifting the patterns of the melodic lines, the rearrangement and "alteration" of the rhythmic parameters is a crucial formation for the success of the sounds. These "shifting patterns" in the music are often times quite dense and have a certain "weight" to them that should be taken in strict account with an instrument like the flute and especially so when this instrument is taking the melodic and thematic "lead" in the music. Although Newton handled the job adequately, many of the musical ideas one looked for in his playing were simply lost or not fully developed because of an inability to get "in tune" with the densities and to completely allow the music to truly sing as one organic force. This was especially true of the swiftly paced numbers, the timbral purity of the instrument itself was in conflict with the "foreign" tonalities of an elevated rhythmic base.

Newton began his performance with a solo

photograph of James Newton by Hans Nederbragt

piece entitled ***Toru*** dedicated to the Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu. This piece was quite "airy" in spots and gave one the feeling of an isolated lonely spot on the countryside near a lake or stream, the water moving to the whispering breeze. Newton exhibited a flowing tone as well as a keen sense of form and compositional exactitude in his playing. Perhaps the only drawback of this sensitive work was the flutist's overtly situated patterns of overblowing.

The second piece was dedicated to Newton's son and was quite reflective and retrospective. Here Newton showed his most "whole" playing on the instrument. A simply stunning line with some very graceful playing by Davis and minimal shading by Crouch catapulted this warm piece to the height of clear crystal. Newton was quite simply impeccable on this one.

All of Newton's compositions employed very alive and thoroughly convincing lines. The rather intricately arranged tune ***Lake*** (dedicated to reedist/composer Oliver Lake) showed Newton's firm relationship to the episodal tendencies inherent in the thematic structure of the tune, there was always a thread that kept the variations connected to one another in a very original and wholly exciting way. The dense sound of the "rhythm section" was again, a bit rough for flutist Newton to spin his magic, and yet the subdivided motif was so beautifully conceived that one was able to overlook that slight heaviness in the wedding of the contrapuntal playing of pianist Davis, the rather strict pen-pointed bass playing of Brown and the rhythmic clusters put forth by Crouch.

The high point of the evening can probably be said to have been the swinging, no nonsense, maze-like tune ***Monk's Notice.*** Here pianist Anthony Davis took charge and played some truly important music. This was a multi-directional, swiftly paced piece that had everyone playing the shifting rhythmic nuances in the music. Although Newton seemed a bit lost for a clear direction in the improvised segments, pianist Davis rendered accompanying music that was indeed first rate. I have called the young pianist-composer "the astute champion of contrapuntal designs in modern music" and his playing on this particular tune clearly pointed out his unique gifts. The pianist was all over his instrument playing ideas in rapid succession in all registers of the piano, and with the fierce rhythmic barrage of Crouch — probably his most "demanding" playing of the entire set — along with the bullwhip round aboutness of Wes Brown's bass, the music was really allowed to fly in all kinds of directions and still keep a swing and grace that was (or is) only essential. Whether in solo or in his "accompaniment" pianist Davis was "the man" on this tune — weaving the thread that held everything together.

The four other pieces — a rather energetic duet with Crouch that failed to really catch fire for whatever reason, two beautifully conceived lines written by Davis entitled ***Backs*** and his famed ***Song Of The Old World*** and the concluding number, a sensitive lyrical line by Newton entitled ***Rose.*** On this final piece the entire group was perfectly balanced and Newton played some unparalleled flute — the type of playing that actually could extend the post-Dolphy contingency of flute players.

If this band stays together, which is doubtful, Newton could develop an important "group" identity. By the time this appears Newton will have toured Europe in a duo with Anthony Davis. On his return one can only speculate as to what his musical thinking in relationship to "groupings" might be. Although this band needs time to grow and develop it has already gone beyond mere reflection and has moved into the area of bringing certain essential truths into being. ***— Roger Riggins***

SOME POSSIBLE NOTES ON THREE SOLO PERFORMERS

EVAN PARKER
The Music Gallery, Toronto
October 7, 1978

Jazz music in its original definition has become a description beyond thought. At first/or at one time, it was quite possible to arrive at some conclusion, no matter how incorrect the opinion may have been, that had to do with an easily understood universal language. The boundaries of its art appeared to be readily defined, thus making the critical process a possible means of obvious recognition for writer and listener alike.

Improvisation though, cannot, by its very quality, remain static. Perhaps some performers/writers/listeners are locked in time zone warp, unable to hear clearly the developing process. Others hear sound that has not yet arrived. (Imagine anything if you will). So where is the point to write a word description of a sound? How will you know from the paper what was in the air unless the interest

from reading will expand into further investigation, causing one to continue to seek out the music performance, in person or on record? Perhaps this is the real time logic of written description.

Inner ear is something often said, related to as a secret mystical knowledge. Inside. So private. Dollar Brand talks of it continually as the essence of musical awareness. And still this is something only said. With Evan Parker's solo performance I feel inclined to say the inner ear is realized, not in any secret/hip way, but by a whole roomfull of people. Music projected on such a level that it was possible to hear more than simply notes. It is true that he has a great ability in a technical manner, multiphonics and cyclic breathing being two of the more obvious, but I feel this is not the point of his music, not the character of Evan Parker.

A friendly open man such as this could not contain secret music.

Is this really so - goes the line from a popular song.

What can be heard clearly?

Is it a message?

Fun perhaps?

For who?

For the saxophone players in attendance the interest is above normal, for Evan Parker's reputation has preceded him, he has created another system of improvisation, outside of the content of black American music, developed a style so much to do with himself that he already has scores of imitators across the planet, even to the point of influencing attitudes in some American players. Another step forward in the art of improvisation.

So what the hell is it he does then? It can't be just that he performs solo, everyone in this review does that, even though in itself a difficult achievement. Not that many people seem inclined to dance, there was no intellectual program with revolutionary political overtones, no promise of anything in fact. Just this friendly Englishman projecting from his own discoveries something that he invites you to participate in. Music purely and simply being just there. Whatever your musical inclination it's most important you check him out or you may never ever know for sure.

"Would you like another beer?"

"Sure why not." (a bonafide conversation)

JAMES NEWTON
The Music Gallery
October 14, 1978

It's really true. A young lady, who is in normal time Liz Aimers, from Artspace in Peterborough, comes up to James Newton at Axis in SoHo and says, "You should play in Canada". And so he did.

If there is some concern about the traditional bearing of improvised music, of its changes being away from the past, then James Newton will be able to reassure your doubting self. He has come to the flute in the "correct" learning process, his admiration of Frank Wess, Eric Dolphy and Roland Kirk are most definitive factors in his style of playing, he is the perfect link to the past of Black America, a Heritage realized.

Amazing is a wonderful word (I have often thought) James Newton is truly amazing, a flute player of such magnitude that jazz really needed him. Powerful beyond comparison, no thin little air tube. Large proportions of sound that makes you feel so good and warm inside, filling this resonant room with jazz sound. His piece for Takemitsu shows a technique away from fixed pitch, with a sound as clear and pure as the Shakuhachi. Movements sliding continuously from sound to sound (or note).

The concept of blues, in his own compositions, bop right on the changes.

Tap and/or stomp.

Your foot.

Ballads so airy.

The flute has occupied an unsatisfactory position in Jazz for almost its entire history. The exception has been the rule, and only the foolishness of a Herbie Mann and such has succeeded in attracting overtones of admiration. Now this will change much in the same way Dolphy made it change, not by altering the basic idea of the music, but by natural expansion. James Newton may be one of the chosen few. We will surely see.

ALBERT MANGELSDORFF
Music Gallery, Toronto
Theatre De L'Isle, Hull
Quebec City
The Rising Sun, Montreal

Sitting on the train, returning to Toronto, feeling tired and just a little sad, outside of my weak bones it has been a perfect occasion. A time of travelling together, with the purpose of being a friend, an assistant perhaps, or maybe just travelling.

It's not always, if ever, possible to assimilate improvised music in one sitting, a concert, in such a singular way, becomes just a memory quite quickly, the music itself not being the memory. But the occasion.

In this time zone the tape recorder/phonograph recording allows us the possibility of repeated listening, but only to the same performance, only to the same sound and order, thus allowing us though, a more intimate look at this singular act.

To travel with a performance is not this, for although the titles of the tunes (pieces), if they are indeed announced, are the same, it is not possible for an improviser of the stature of Albert Mangelsdorff to repeat, verbatim, his art. Its shapes, in accordance with the environment in which they are created, most personal developments based on the original idea, a soloist in single connection with an instrument having no limitations save the performer's self. A Jazz player as he would insist.

I have little to say about Albert Mangelsdorff's solo music, no analysis, no recommendation, just that he, like Evan Parker and James Newton, is a master of this new arpeggio art.

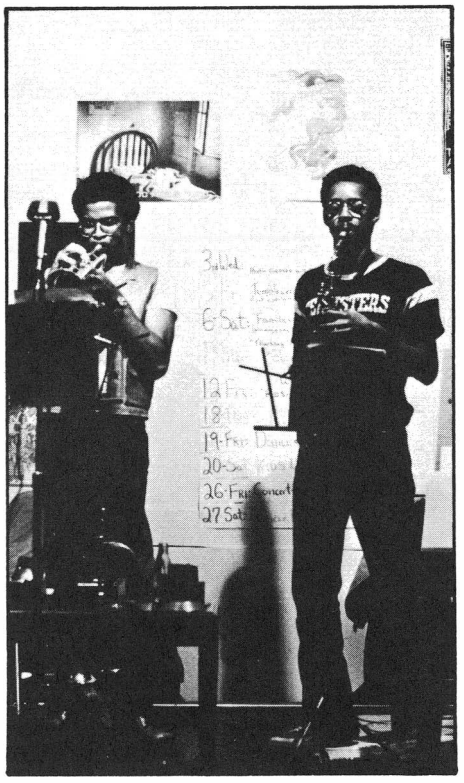
— Bill Smith

GEORGE SAMS....

An Evening of Improvisation, Composition and Poetry
Metropolitan Arts Center, San Francisco
October 6, 1978

Russell Baba, solo reeds and flute; Q.R. Hand, poet; Quartet - George Sams, trumpet; Louis Jordan, alto saxophone; Andre St. James, bass; Karl Hoffman, percussion.

A rare night gathering some of the best of the Bay Area's performers. Opening with solo alto and soprano improvisations, haunting and rich, but somewhat too extended, Russell Baba then startled the audience out of their chairs and into an eerie journey, a stark drama, with a spine-chilling bamboo. As he phased into Tibetan



drum, one could easily imagine dancers, hear their footsteps echo on a vast plain. The landscape tilted to "white sands stretching out from a Brooklyn basement" and into the worlds of Q.R. Hand, poet. Q.R.'s poems, words as music, deeply felt and often funny, cut an acute edge complementing the instrumental statements.

The Quartet set was ripe with hot blues feelings and the blazing energies of song. Compositions by George Sams and Louis Jordan, who have been playing together since 1973, emphasize the freedom of melodic context. Over the earth, wood, water and bottom of bassist Andre St. James and percussionist Karl Hoffman, George Sams used his trumpet as a seasoned paintbrush, a deft palette knife; Louis Jordan's alto was the torch. They paid tribute to their roots — opening with an Archie Shepp piece and ending with an original composition dedicated to Robert Johnson and John Coltrane. But the favorites of the evening were an intimate duet by Sams and Jordan, witty and fanatical, and Jordan's composition ***No Visible Means Of Support*** (the title taken from an ex-landlord's remark). This piece has been choreographed by the dancer Adela Chu and the theme has that strange ability to stick in the mind like a bright jewel, surfacing at odd moments and refracting its light over and over.

This concert was a welcome affirmation that creative music is strongly happening in the Bay Area, a fact which is sometimes questionable due to lack of performance spaces, the isolation from the centers of the East Coast and the domination of commercial and rock idioms.

— Elaine Cohen

RANDY WESTON

Town Hall, St. Lawrence Centre, Toronto
October 30, 1978

The role of the solo performer has been re-

photograph of George Sams and Louis Jordan by Ruby Opiela

(left to right) Johnny Griffin, Rufus Reid, Dexter Gordon - photograph by David Wild

defined in the 1970s through the efforts of such musicians as Albert Mangelsdorff, Anthony Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell. It has also resulted in many pianists re-evaluating their possibilities in this area. Solo performance was commonplace for the founding fathers but by the late 1930s piano styles were being shaped within the totality of a rhythm team of piano, bass and drums.

The interlocking particles of these principles dominated piano jazz for twenty five years and even such individualists as Thelonious Monk, Herbie Nichols, Horace Silver, Ray Bryant, Sonny Clark and Cecil Taylor all performed within these boundaries. The same was true for Randy Weston and the recent reissue of his earliest recordings confirms this. What he is doing today is far removed from those beginnings but the foundations are still apparent. Like other soloists he has realised that merely playing themes and variations as he would in a trio is an inhibiting concept. Weston, today, has turned the piano into an orchestra and has expanded his melodic themes into complex, often dense, explorations of the many rhythmic and harmonic possibilities open to him. Like other soloists he has incorporated elements of Duke Ellington's harmonic frameworks into his own playing — as well as Ellington's penchant for strong percussive drive.

What has emerged, and what was presented with tremendous authority, is a solo concept which surrounds the listener with embroidered sound patterns which ebb and flow with the cadences of an experienced storyteller. And this is what Weston is doing. He is giving us a musical message — drawing us into the myriad possibilities inherent in his music. As a solo performer Randy Weston does it all which is in sharp contrast to his evolution as a group musician where his economy became more and more marked as he concentrated on rhythmic elements of the music.

Weston's journey on this particular evening was especially rewarding as he reworked his favorite compositions through improvisations which led up to the familiar themes as a conclusion rather than as an introduction. Concerts such as this are a reaffirmation of the creative possibilities of the music. They are something special — and the music remains fresh in the mind long after the final notes have ended. There is also a purity to Randy Weston's music in this setting. No one can interfere with or alter the shape and mood of his music.

— *John Norris*

ANN ARBOR JAZZ FESTIVAL

In Celebration of the Music of Duke Ellington" September 21-24, 1978

It was "too much, man" — in the positive sense, a weekend of excellent music presented with Eclipse's usual attention to detail; in the negative, simply "too much music" in too short a time.

Eclipse (affiliated with the University of Michigan, with partial funding by the US National Endowment for the Arts) has new blood at the helm (Neil Scott, Mike Landy); with the volunteer's understandable enthusiasm and perhaps a certain amount of hubris born of three successful seasons it is not surprising that the festival jams sixteen different performances into five concerts in four days.

In the university's Hill Auditorium (by Sunday evening I have developed an almost marital attachment to Seat 3-J-10), the Eclipsians have tried for a festival atmosphere: kiosks with blowups of musicians decorate the lobby, a huge banner proclaiming "1978 Ann Arbor Jazz Festival" hangs as a backdrop to the stage. Some kind soul has consented to part with his Bosendorfer grand for the weekend; it sits stage center, big, black, beautiful.

Thursday, September 21, 8:10 PM — After some introductory remarks about Ellington from Mike Landy, Mary Lou Williams appears, a large woman, stately, dignified. She speaks about the history of jazz (or her own conception of it) and demonstrates her command of the early idioms, a link with Ellington the keyboard master. Then she tells us "I'm going to show you the way I play now", bassist Ronnie Boykins joins her, and we're "On Green Dolphin Street". She plays with power, authority, assurance; hers is an interesting style, more than a smattering of bop, an obvious awareness not only of ancestors but of descendants (Tyner, Hancock). There's a very sombre, strange blues, a funky, quite witty version of ***My Blue Heaven*** (over a Latin ostinato), and a fast romp on ***Caravan.*** Boykins' bass solos recall his tenure with Sun Ra. An auspicious beginning to the weekend.

9:30 PM — It's no surprise that Max Roach carries his age so well; his drumming (during his quartet's hour-and-a-half set) is probably equal to six hours at Vic Tanny's on the exercycle. In fact, one problem with the music offered by Roach's group — Cecil Bridgewater, trumpet; Billy Harper, tenor saxophone; Calvin Hill, bass — is a certain calisthenic quality, a feeling of constant strenuous physical exertion. The opener, Max's ***It's Time***, is the worst offender: it's a tonally free, ridiculously fast race, too fast for the twenty-odd minutes it lasts — like a ballet troupe intent instead on running the mile flat out. Harper's ***The Call Of The Wild And Peaceful Heart*** is better, an interesting if at times raucous line in 9/4 (4+3+2).

Roach comes forward to tell us of a traumatic experience subbing for Sonny Greer with the Duke, and leads us to ***In A Sentimental Mood***, mostly a Bridgewater feature (backed with a relentless Roach 12/8). Roach then performs the 5/4 solo from ***As Long As You're Living***, evidently preconceived but clear and musical. Jymie Merritt's 7/4 ***Nomo*** finishes the set out. sweatily, satisfyingly.

11:45 PM — Stan Getz, blond hair receding, looking tired and worn, like a Grosse Pointe yachtsman in polo shirt, white deck pants and Adidas. None of his sidemen — Andy Laverne, piano; Wayne Dockerty, bass; Victor Jones, drums; Lawrence Killian, percussion — were alive in the Four Brothers, "Early Autumn" days, but Getz (like so many others) seems to find in his juniors a fire that continually revitalizes his own playing.

Strangely, his hour-long set at an Ellington-themed festival features only the compositions of pianist Laverne and Wayne Shorter (which recalls a review of Miles Davis on Newport 1958's Ellington Night: "Asked backstage why his group did not perform Ellington tunes, Miles logically declared that performing familiar material effectively would be the best sort of tribute"). Like Miles that night Getz this night is quite good, swinging strongly, dominating his band. Jones sounds good in four-bar exchanges; Killian is equally fine. Shorter's ***Infant Eyes*** shows that Getz is still the master balladeer (how he can smoke and still get that sound is beyond me); Laverne creates a Scriabin-voiced out-of-tempo segment, advanced ears and well-trained fingers both on display. Laverne's ***Secret People***, with multiple textures, and ***Pretty City —*** a samba, airy Corea-like chords, hot, rhythmically interesting Getz — close the set.

12:45 AM — Still to come are Max Roach and Archie Shepp. But it's too much — the 8 to 5 world (which pays the rent) will demand our presence in a few hours, and there are still four concerts to go. Sadly but unreluctantly we leave, having failed round one of our musical endurance test.

The music is not lost, however. Eclipse has always made a practice of recording all its performances (with the artist's permission, of course). Many of Eclipse's tapes are broadcast locally; more than a few have wound up on National Public Radio's "Jazz Alive". So eventually we will hear how Max and Archie

sounded (although an affiliate in Boston gets the tapes first). Max's ***Force*** is a two-part suite written for a concert in Europe on the occasion of Mao Tse-Tung's death, performed here as a duet. Those who stayed into the small hours however tell me that Shepp's unaccompanied solo on ***Sophisticated Lady*** is a festival high-point.

Friday, September 22, 8:15 PM — "The Little Giant", Johnny Griffin, back after fifteen years of European exile. As he blows (bending, weaving), claps his hands (listening), his body language speaks of an extroverted, good humored self-confidence, the attitude of one who has successfully navigated foreign waters. Unlike fellow ex-expatriate Dexter Gordon, Griffin's style has changed little in his years abroad. He still blows classic fifties hard-bop, but the idiom remains effective in his hands, its familiarity outweighed by his fire.

Griffin brings pianist Ron Mathews and two San Franciscans, James Leary (bass) and Eddie Marshall (drums). They pace him through a strong set: ***Autumn Leaves*** (a fingerwarmer), ***Monk's Dream,*** a Griffin tribute to his one-time employer. Griffin's ***56*** is followed by his ***Soft And Furry***, with a beautiful unison theme statement by Griffin and bowed bass (Leary's solo here is especially good). With Griffin's ***Blues For Harve***, we are on home turf; its joyous medium-up swagger brings a huge grin to Leary's face. To end the set, Griffin bows towards the Master with ***Sophisticated Lady.***

10:10 PM — Dexter Gordon has played Ann Arbor several times in the last year, with his regular group (George Cables, piano; Rufus Reid, bass; Eddie Gladden, drums); by now the outlines of the group's performance, the contours of Dexter's solos are relatively predictable. Yet the group is marvelously tight, Cables is a model of virtuosity blended with musicality, and (like Griffin) Dexter's passion and smooth, supple swing more than make up for the occasional overfamiliar personal cliche. Gladden and Reid are each strong players — it's a good band.

11:15 PM — Out comes Johnny Griffin, horn in hand, to take his place beside Gordon. Dexter announces a classic Sonny Stitt/Gene Ammons line, ***Blues Up And Down***, and away we go. Dexter takes off first with what seems like twenty building choruses of heat, uncluttered eloquent lines, classic riffs, an occasional Coltrane echo. Griffin follows, equally hot, stylistically similar if a bit more limber, a bit more conservative. We're really burning, and a fleet Cables solo followed by free crashes from Gladden keep the fires stoked. But the ultimate comes as Grif and Dexter return to stage-center to stand toe to toe and blow, in the mold of those classic, legendary tenor battles of the thirties and forties. First they trade whole choruses (twelve bars each), then fours, then twos, and finally they join in a cataclysmic shrieking duet. Standing ovations are not uncommon here, but the frenzied applause that follows is well deserved. An encore, ***Cheesecake***, good but without the cutting contest (and after two hours the rhythm section is tiring). Age and exile have not touched the pair's music; it still burns brightly.

12:45 AM — Poor Freddie Hubbard. The night's schedule leaves him to follow the timeless, white-hot combustion of Gordon and Griffin with a new, fusion-oriented band (Hadley Caliman, tenor sax, flute; Marshal Otwell, keyboards; Larry Kline, bass; and Carl Burnett, drums), and he must watch the tired audience trickling away like sand through an hourglass. Dressed like a jogger, Hubbard bounces around on stage as if exertion and willpower are enough to make his music fly. It's a pity; given a chance, the approach and his chosen sidemen are more than adequate. Caliman is a hoarse-toned Trane-child, Burnett a powerhouse. But for all Hubbard's flapping arms the music won't fly, stillborn in the face of his own second-thoughts and self-mockery. An easy blues signals the short set's end, and we leave the half-empty hall.

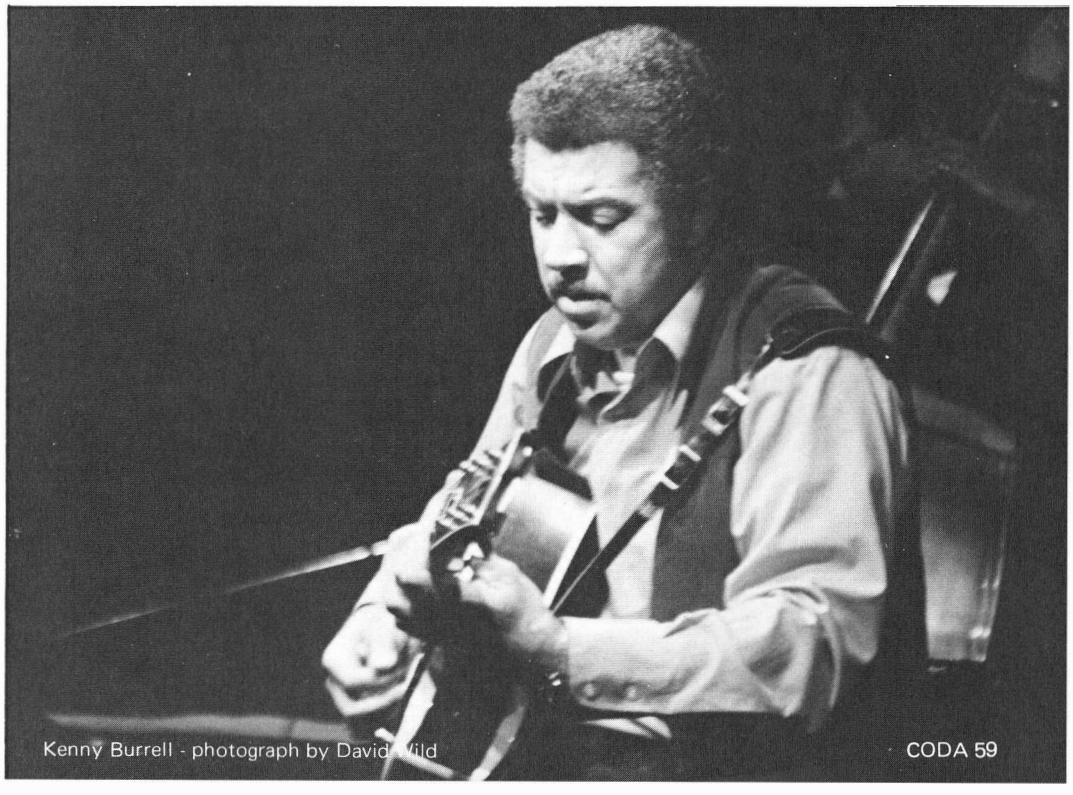
Saturday, September 23, 8:45 PM — Kenny Burrell's is the only all-Ellington set of the festival — keeping my seat-mate from the Ann Arbor News racking his memory for titles I don't even pretend to know. Strangely, Burrell's program seems to honor only Ellington the songwriter; the various compositions are used as vehicles for casual solos by Burrell and a pick-up group (brother Billy Burrell, bass; Detroiter Harold McKinney, piano; and James Brown, drums). Burrell is nimble-fingered and inventive, as always, but McKinney is too florid for my taste, and Brown fumbles tempos several times playing catch-up when Burrell juggles tunes. Highpoints of this set are Burrell's unaccompanied explorations of half-forgotten works like ***I Got Nothin' But The Blues, I'm Just A Lucky So-and-So***, and ***What A Short Unhappy Dream*** (titles courtesy of my neighbor). And we sorely miss announcements of those titles (for most of the young audience Burrell's choice of material is meaningless).

10:30 PM — There is little to say about Stanley Turrentine. Turrentine is an Act — his four-piece band (keyboard, guitar, bass, drums), dressed in matching coats and ties, offer up some funky wallpaper (rudely cutting off Eclipse's Neil Scott in mid-sentence) before Turrentine makes his grand entrance. He is not a bad saxophonist — the News critic aptly compares him to Earl Bostic (an earlier, talented, commercially-oriented saxophonist). But Turrentine's music remains formularized, packaged, predigested; like the suitcoat he never unbuttons, he never ventures beyond the approved limits of commercial pop music (as set forth in the charts his band reads). Two mildly interesting moments in an otherwise dull stretch; a not-as-interesting version of Zawinul's ***Birdland*** and a back-beat arrangement of ***Walkin'.***

12:35 AM — The last time we heard Sun Ra here, about a year ago, I was generally disappointed. Perhaps due partly to the brain-softening effect of being bombarded with so much music, I react much more positively to tonight's performance. There are of course a number of other reasons: both performances follow the same course, and advance knowledge makes the boring moments easier to take; Ra's more aberrant moments make weird sense when seen in the historical context of this Ellington-themed festival; the Arkestra's ragged fire is a welcome contrast to Turrentine's antiseptic, shrink-wrapped disco-mania. Most important, this evening there is a lot of John Gilmore on display. Gilmore is probably the chief asset of the Arkestra, sort of a Desmond to Ra's Brubeck; the caliber of his solos makes me wonder how he would sound on his own.

The Arkestra, 22 strong this evening (with some local reinforcement), files out and muddles around for a while — a sea of dark faces, in black tee-shirts advertizing a Philadelphia radio station, with little clumps of instruments, they half-recreate those grainy photographs of black territory bands in the twenties and thirties. A percussion thing gradually develops, with James Jackson's huge African drum in the foreground. June Tyson comes out to tell us "the world is waiting for the sunrise" — and magically Ra appears out of the floor on a rising section of the stage, jangling wires which form an arch around him, costumed dancers on either side kneeling, arms outstretched reverently.

Ra leads the crew through some ensemble shrieking, then hamfistedly mashes out ***Mood Indigo*** on his cheap portable organ. A number of charts by Ellington and earlier contemporaries follow, played in a gritty, out-of-tune twenties style. Gilmore's clarinet is shrill and flat, but his booting tenor is right on the



Kenny Burrell - photograph by David Wild

mark — his solos, with that big thick sound, start from a swing/R&B base but gradually work forward through bop into more complex harmonies. ***Christopher Columbus*** and ***King Porter Stomp*** stand out, marked by distorted Ellingtonian textures and the human sound of imprecision.

Later there's the usual freedom display, with Marshall Allen's only solo spot: still later Gilmore gets a chance to examine ***Somewhere Over The Rainbow.*** Eventually things degenerate into quasi-religious dancing and chanting, with Ra (looking a bit like Queen Victoria in drag) marching at the head. It's well after 2:00 AM when we finally give in and leave, with the ongoing intergalactic chanting still echoing in our ears.

Sunday, September 24, 1:30 PM — Feeling quite lightheaded in the afternoon sun, we are among the few in place as David Swain's II V I Orchestra opens the matinee concert. The Orchestra (its numeral name a reference evidently to the group's favorite chord progression) is one of the better local rehearsal or "kicks" bands; with ringers Marcus Belgrave in the trumpets and tenor saxophonist Lamont Hamilton added, the band sounds quite good. Time will tell how much of its potential will eventually be realized. Unaccountably there is little Ellington in their hour's set, but it's nice to have even this pale reflection of the medium for which the Duke created. Belgrave and Hamilton are the best soloists, with altoist Kenny Garrett a good second.

2:45 PM — I've been looking forward to Chico Freeman's performance here, based on his duets with Don Moye here last year, and his hour-and-a-half set does not disappoint. Along with Famoudou Don Moye on drums, Chico brings Jay Hoggard, vibes, and Reggie Workman, bass. Freeman, on tenor sax, kicks off a rhythmic tune whose title I miss, familiar to me from its performance here last fall. The theme is rather boppish, but Chico's solo is an all-out excursion through the freer pathways of the new music. One evaluates such performances on technical ability, inventiveness and use of sound, and Chico scores high in all areas, carrying on the family tradition of his father (the legendary Chicago saxophonist Von Freeman). The head returns to introduce Hoggard's vibes solo, an abstract hazy wash of sound — there are ideas, lines, chords in his four-mallet movements. Theme repetitions demarcate solos first by Workman and then by Moye; a long fade leads into ***Illas***, its somber waltz set up by Reggie's repetition of the ostinato bass pattern. Chico is now on flute over metallic vibes clusters; his and Hoggard's solos are in tempo, in contrast to the freedom of the first piece, and Moye propels equally effectively in this context. A faster version of ***Freedom Swinging Song***, in tonally free 4/4, brings an excellent set to a close.

4:30 PM — I go backstage to interview Freeman and Workman, and my wife Angelyn (for whom the festival would make strong grounds for divorce) takes notes on Hubert Laws' set. Laws' amplified flute is here combined with the electronics of fusion, which doesn't much appeal to either of us. The opening ***Rio*** is a fast samba, with guitarist Barry Finnerty and bassist Chip Jackson heavy on the rock side, pianist Mark Gray more in the middle. Gray's ***The Teaser*** has an R&B flavor, an incongruous mix with Laws' classically pure-toned flute. After a rock ballad, drummer Kenwood Denard kicks off a fast ***Airegin***, which develops into an unaccompanied piccolo solo which is quite good. One more rocker ends the set.

8:25 PM — That the Duke Ellington name is both an advantage and a handicap for the 17-piece aggregation directed by Mercer Ellington is evident from the beginning of the extremely effective opening arranged by Eclipse. Eclipse's Mike Landy announces "The Duke Ellington Orchestra" and the house lights dim, but instead we get a 1962 color short subject of the original band plunking through ***Take The A Train***, sparked by a Ray Nance trumpet solo. Duke announces "***Satin Doll***, by request"; as the screen band kicks it off, the new (live) band threads its way onstage, and halfway through they pick up the chart from their screen predecessors, as the film fades out.

It's a perfect way to re-emphasize the continuity between the old and the new, and obviously having the original charts to things like ***Satin Doll*** would be an immense advantage to any band. Yet this is not that same band, but a descendant, with an individual identity underlying the familial resemblances. Mercer Ellington is too good a musician not to let this band develop its own sound, and as a result those Ellingtonians who expect a carbon copy of the Master's laboratory will be disappointed.

Mercer starts the set off with ***Perdido, A Train*** and ***Caravan.*** Things seem ragged (drummer Quinten White is a little unsteady), but it's early yet. ***Sidney's Child*** is a new chart, with brassbound fortissimos over rock rhythms (again the new identity); Barry Leahall's flugelhorn is cold and thus flat but his Hubbard-ish style is attractive. Mercer announces ***Jeep's Blues*** as "from the tradition"; it's a feature for Booty Woods (one of the Duke's original men) and his warm, smeary trombone. ***Vortex***, from the movie "Turning Point", again emphasizes that this is a living band; ***Mood Indigo***, that the old charts still live (Lenny Spivak's clarinet speaks a modern language, Malcolm Taylor's trombone a broad barnyard dialect).

Then the band tackles ***29***, Charles Mingus' enigmatic title for a work commissioned especially for the band and this festival by Eclipse. It's interesting, although more evocative of Mingus' sprawling creative anarchy than of the Duke. There are good solos, separated by four-bar drum breaks, some distorted echoes of ***A Train***, and a screaming finish. ***In A Sentimental Mood*** is a feature for saxophonist Dave Young, but his otherwise admirable technical display seems out-of-place on this delicate ballad. One of Ellington's better extended works, ***Three Black Kings***, is next given a powerful reading by the band, quite exciting and well played.

Warmed up and loose, the band has been building up steam for over an hour, when finally vocalist Anita Moore comes out to join them, beginning with a Liberian Suite excerpt, ***I Like The Sunrise***. She too seems a worthy successor to the Duke's singers; her rich vibrato, her deep, breathy swoops vaguely recall Betty Carter. But it is in ***It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*** that we reach an emotional peak — it's got that swing, she punches through over the band with that feeling, and it's right. Ms. Moore floats ***Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me*** so smooth and fuzzy, and wisely Mercer chooses to end the long set with that. Jazz is a living art; the new band with the old name is not a museum for Ellingtonia but an exhibition of the continuing vitality of Duke Ellington's music.

10:35 PM — Mose Allison's waspish lyrics are borderline inaudible, his piano chunkily eccentric, the general energy level low — after the emotional catharsis of the Ellingtonians Allison's set seems tired and washed out. There's a nice blues feeling, what used to be called funk, but the emotional fervor typical of the blues seems absent. And bassist Rick Kilbourn and drummer Jeff Hirschfield are good players, able to hold tempos when Mose bangs down the sustain pedal and strums the keys. But I can't quite get close to that personal jazz/blues/folk intersection where Mose makes his home. Not to deny his talent, his ability, the validity of the unusual answers arrived at by personal experimentation; only to say that here, at this particular moment, the music doesn't move me.

12:10 AM — Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers have been delivering the message for almost a quarter century now, long enough to become an American institution. The group has always functioned something like a jazz finishing school — an astonishing number of important players have spent a semester or two with the master — and Blakey continues to introduce his sidemen as "the stars of tomorrow". The scholastic impression fades a little after a while — the players (Bobby Watson, alto sax; David Schnitter, tenor sax; Valeri Ponomarev, trumpet; James Williams, piano; Dennis Erwin, bass) are after all skilled musicians who are developing individual voices. Watson seems to be the most self-assured of the front line, and he rates a solo feature, ***When I Fall In Love***. His acapella opening is a rushing whirl of notes, propelled by circular breathing. Schnitter is less extroverted, with a fluent scalar approach which is as much mid-sixties Rollins as Trane. Ponomarev is strange — a big brassy tone, some nice lines, but the notes seem to be pushing up through years of conditioned repression; his only smile is when Blakey introduces him as "all the way from Moscow, Soviet Union".

And Father Art. His drumming is the same old primitive swing, simple, propulsive. The set flows on, the "night owls" (Blakey's phrase) smiling, ***Here Comes Betty***, other originals, and by 1:30 AM the festival is past tense.

EPILOGUE — Musically the festival was excellent, with more than a little continuity created by the Ellington theme. Outside of the usual late starts and slow stage changes, the production reflected credit on Eclipse (as usual, I should add). The festival did lose some money, although not a lot when compared to its budget, and despite some other difficulties facing the group, both Eclipse and the festival seem destined to be around next September. Personally I've learned to approach the festival smorgasbord less ravenously; gluttony leads to a form of critical dyspepsia. As we left Hill early Monday morning the phrase was "never again" — but tune in same time next year and see what happens.

— David Wild

ODDS & SODS

In Toronto, Saturday afternoon jazz is still a popular attraction. This fall Bourbon Street revised its policy to incorporate a matinee as well as an early Sunday night session. Monday is now the off night. Lined up at the Inn On The Park through the end of January were

Steve Lederer, Jim Galloway, Herb Marshall and Don Thompson... the Harbourfront Jazz Club celebrated its second anniversary December 3 with a packed audience for Jim Galloway's Metro Stompers... the Music Gallery is hosting a festival of electronic music... The Banff Centre's summer jazz course takes place from July 30 to August 10 with the Phil Nimmons Quartet and other instructors still to be announced.

Famous photographer Bob Parent exhibited his jazz photographs at Montreal's Cafe Melies through the month of December... Concurrently Barbara Brodnick's exhibit of Polaroid 8X10 portraits "A Song I See - Great Women In Jazz" was on view at The Space in New York's Carnegie Recital Building.

Following on the success of Dexter Gordon a number of expatriate Americans have returned home. Slide Hampton is being kept busy and last fall Johnny Griffin returned for his first visit in 15 years. He played engagements across the country and completed the first recording in his new contract with Galaxy Records... also back is saxophonist/singer Pony Poindexter. His first US recording in a decade is on Inner City 1062 with Neal Kirkwood (piano), Art Washington (bass) and Richie Goldberg (drums). Tenor saxophonist Frank Wright was back in New York and appeared with his new sextet at Ali's Alley.

Jazz fans were offered an alternative to Guy Lombardo this New Year's Eve. National Public Radio broadcast more than eight hours of live jazz. They began in Boston at Sandy's Jazz Revival where Jay McShann, Major Holley and Jo Jones with singer Carrie Smith were performing. Sharing the bandstand with them was the Al Grey - Jimmy Forrest group. From there the network switched to San Francisco's Keystone Korner where Freddie Hubbard and Hubert Laws co-led a sextet and Don Cherry led a quartet with Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden and Ed Blackwell.

Barry Harris was the headliner at a Cami Hall concert on October 14 with Slide Hampton, Tommy Turrentine, Harold Vick and Lonnie Hillyer the featured guest soloists... The Billy Bang Quartet was featured at the Motivation December 22/23... Byard Lancaster's group was featured in concert December 11 at the Third Street Music School Settlement. Also appearing were trumpeter Yousef Yancy and Nikki Coleman... The Human Arts Association presented three nights of piano at the Orpheum. Muhal Richard Abrams (Dec. 1), Anthony Davis (Dec. 2) and Jaki Byard (Dec. 3) were the selected artists... Annie Ross was in New York recently for a short stay. Since the days of L, H & R she has led a busy life in England but hopes to perform in the U.S. again as a solo singer. While in New York she signed with BMI... New Haven's Creative Musicians Improvisors Forum presented Gerry Hemingway, Anthony Davis and George Lewis in concert December 8... The Boston Jazz Society paid tribute to Roy Haynes with a special dinner at which the MC was Billy Taylor... Teddy Wilson and Dave McKenna, along with Frank Tate and Alan Dawson were heard in concert December 3 at Boston's Symphony Hall... the New Jersey Jazz Society presented an all star lineup for its concert under Pee Wee Erwin's leadership at the Watchung View Inn November 19. With Pee Wee were Bob Wilber, Kenny Davern, Ed Hubble, Derek Smith, Major Holley and Cliff Leeman... The Connecticut Traditional Jazz Club's opening concert of the season was held at the Holiday Inn, Meriden on October 21 with the Yankee Rhythm Kings in residence.

Preservation Jazz Co. Inc. is an educationally oriented non-profit jazz organisation in North Carolina which is contributing to the growing awareness of the music in that area. For more information write to Len Talent Productions, P.O. Box 509, Kinston, North Carolina 28501 (phone 919-523-6974)... The tenth annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival takes place from April 20 through May 6. To get on the festival's mailing list write P.O. Box 2530, New Orleans, La. 70176... The ninth annual International Trombone Workshop will be held May 28 - June 1 at George Peabody College, Nashville, Tenn. Faculty includes Phil Wilson, Bill Watrous, Don Lusher and Carl Fontana.... North Dakota's Bismark Junior College invited Clark Terry, Kenny Burrell, Jaki Byard, Alan Dawson, Ernie Wilkins, Larry Ridley and jazz critic Gary Giddins to participate in their fifth annual Jazz Celebration from January 22-26. Clinics, concerts, lectures were all part of the program.... Cab Calloway headlined the first in a series of concerts being presented in Detroit under the banner of "A Night at the Paradise". It's all part of a concerted effort to save Detroit's legendary Orchestra Hall. Jay McShann, Eddie Jefferson and Richie Cole headlined a concert January 7.

The Louisiana State University Press has published an attractive poster advertising their jazz books. Copies of this poster are obtainable by writing to LSU Press Jazz Poster, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, La. 70803. Jean Paul Guiter, architect of the famed French RCA Black & White Series is looking for photographs of Andy Kirk in the 1960s (both colored slides and black and white prints). You can contact Mr. Guiter at RCA SA, 9 Avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris, France.

Markus di Francesco points out that there is an earlier flute player in jazz than Wayman Carver (see James Newton interview, ***Coda*** no. 162). Albert Socarras recorded a few solos with the Clarence Williams band in the 1920s including ***Shooting The Pistol*** from July 9, 1927 and ***Have You Ever Felt That Way*** from February 5, 1929 as well as the Bennett's Swamplanders recording of ***You Can't Be Mine And Someone Else's Too*** from September 5, 1930.

Free Music Production presented their Total Music Meeting '78 at the Quartier Latin in Berlin from November 1-5... London's Jazz Centre Society has announced it has acquired a building in the Covent Garden area as a new permanent location for their activities... Jazz was a prominent part of Sydney's (Australia) 1979 festival. Apart from many local groups there was also a quartet with Chico Freeman, Mike Nock, David Friesen and Al Foster and saxophonist David Liebman... The Cedar Walton Quartet opened the New Year at Ronnie Scott's club in London. England... La Chapelle des Lombards (62 Rue des Lombards) is a Paris club featuring improvised music. December featured Free Improvised Music by Women, Chet Baker, Bernard Lubat, La Velle and Luther Allison... Composer/bassist Graham Collier visited Mexico, the United States and Canada this fall, touching base with many prominent people in the jazz community. As a result of his trip he established distribution of his Mosaic label through Westco (Seattle) and Black Swan (Vancouver).

Arne Astrup's discography of Stan Getz is complete and has been published in the U.S. by Jerry Atkins, 1304 Rio Grande, Texarkana, Texas where copies can be obtained.... John

left to right: Sonny Dallas, Nick Stabulas, Warne Marsh, Lee Konitz, Lennie Tristano. (Robinson Photography)

Chilton has published a bio-discography of McKinney's Cotton Pickers.... Researchers Dean and Nancy Tudor have compiled buying guide reference works on "Jazz", "Black Music" and "Contemporary Popular Music". They are being published by Libraries Unlimited, P.O. Box 263, Littleton, Colorado 80160.... The Art Ensemble of Chicago has formed its own record company and publishing house. They can be reached at P.O. Box 49014, Chicago, Ill. 60649.

Marian McPartland has recently released two new albums on her Halycon label. "Swingin'" (HAL-114) was recorded at New York's Hotel Americana in 1973 and features both Marian and Jimmy McPartland as well as Buddy Tate, Vic Dickenson and Gus Johnson. "Now's The Time" (HAL-115) featured Vi Redd, Mary Osborne, Lynn Milano, Dottie Dodgion and Marian - all recorded at Rochester's Monticello Room.... Sweet Earth Records' second release is "Earthly Delights" by David Wertman and the Sun Ensemble. The label has also joined the ranks of those to recently record Sun Ra and his Solar Arkestra... Marion Brown has recorded a Second lp for Bay State Records (RVC Japan) with Kenny Barron, Cecil McBee and Philly Joe Jones. Brown will tour Japan with a quartet in September of this year.

Smokey Mary continues to release quality recordings of contemporary New Orleans jazz. The most recent is Kid Thomas and Alton Purnell with Willie Humphrey, Frank Demond, Emanuel Sayles, James Prevost and Louis Barbarin. Write 1205 St. Philip Street, New Orleans, La. 70116 for ordering information... Time Life Records has started a new series of records under the banner of "Giants of Jazz". They will all be three record sets featuring the best works of the music's leading historic figures. Appropriately, the first package is devoted to the music of Louis Armstrong. The collection is drawing on material from all the major companies and, as an introductory bonus, they are offering a special edition of John Chilton's "Who's Who of Jazz". The material is being selected by a panel of noted critics and special care is being taken with the transfers from the original material. Write Time Life Records, 541 N. Fairbanks Court, Chicago, Ill. 60611 for more information... Advent Corporation has released two Process CR/70 cassettes of material by Boston's Black Eagle Jazz Band. Sound quality is excellent and the music is a mixture of unreleased material and selections from the band's various lps. More information is available from Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

Spotlite Records has released a unique document by Ben Webster. It is a rehearsal tape of Webster in front of the Danish Radio Big Band. Made in 1970 it was recorded without Webster's knowledge and Ben, astounded when he heard it, readily signed the release. Only now has it been made available through special arrangement with the Ben Webster Foundation. ...Fifteen more Bethlehem reissues have become available as a result of Salsoul (Cayre Industries) and RCA concluding a marketing agreement. This release includes material by Howard McGhee, Ruby Braff, Art Blakey, Jack Teagarden, Stan Levey and Cleanhead Vinson.... Milt Gabler's Christmas card indicates that Commodore material will be manufactured and sold by Columbia Special Products. The first ten records should be available by the end of March. ...Chiaroscuro has released a second Dollar Brand lp recorded in South Africa. "Soweto" is the new title for the Sun lp called "African Herbs".

Monarch International, 301 - 402 W. Pender St., Vancouver, B.C. V7B 1T6, Canada has issued a five-lp boxed set entitled "Jazz Giants". The material comes from transcriptions made in the 1940s and features such artists as Coleman Hawkins, Stan Kenton, Harry James, Nat Cole, Artie Shaw, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Muggsy Spanier etc. A full listing can be obtained from the above address. Postpaid price is $29.95.... The Milestone All Stars concert 2-lp set has been rush released on Milestone. Some great reissues by Benny Golson, Sonny Rollins, Coleman Hawkins and Nat Adderley are among the recent twofers. ..Upcoming Galaxy releases include a Red Garland trio date with Richard Davis and Roy Haynes; a Tommy Flanagan/Hank Jones two-piano album as well as albums by Ira Sullivan, Roy Haynes, Nat Adderley and Dewey Redman. Dexter Gordon, Ron Carter, George Cables, Ira Sullivan and Nat Adderley appear with Philly Joe.... Germany's highly-regarded MPS Records has some interesting recordings in release-though they will remain expensive and hard to find in North America. There are albums by Alphonse Mouzon, Ryo Kawasaki, Fatty George, Clark Terry, Hank Jones, Elvin Jones with Pat LaBarbera and Michael Stuart, George Shearing with Louis Stewart and Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, Stu Goldberg with Larry Coryell, Martial Solal with NHOP and Daniel Humair and Joanne Grauer with Lorraine Feather. Albert Mangelsdorff's new lp with Eddie Gomez, Elvin Jones and Wolfgang Dauner entitled "A Jazz Tune I Hope" was scheduled for release in January. Joanne Brackeen has a solo lp ready for release. George Gruntz has, once again, fronted a big band for a series of concerts. The personnel reads like a who's who of European and American jazzmen. Gruntz wrote and arranged the material for the band and MPS recorded the music. Rob McConnell has contributed all the arrangements for upcoming lps by The Singers Unlimited and a reunited Hi Lo's.... Harry Lim, owner and producer of Famous Door Records was in California to oversee sessions with San Francisco's Bill Perkins (who also plays tenor sax) and Bill Watrous. The San Francisco date also featured pianist Al Plank, Chuck Peterson on second tenor sax, Cal Lewiston (trumpet), Dean Reilly (bass) and John Markham (drums). Markham was leader of an earlier San Francisco session now released on Famous Door 121.... Lars Johansen of Denmark's Jazzcraft Records was in New York in October to record albums by Howard McGhee-Benny Bailey, Benny Bailey, Lisle Atkinson's Bass Quartet and a Richard Wyands Trio.

Blues singer/guitarist Juke Boy Bonner died in Houston last June 28.... Tenor saxophonist, bandleader, club owner Teddy Hill died in Cleveland in August.... Charles Carpenter - songwriter/lyricist and manager - who was associated with Earl Hines for many years died of a heart attack in New York on October 11. ***You Can Depend On Me*** is his most famous tune.... The jazz community was stunned by the suicide of Frank Rosolino on November 26 in Los Angeles.... Trumpeter Jimmy Nottingham died in New York.... Pianist/composer Lennie Tristano, one of the most prominent trend setters of the 1940s, died from a heart attack November 18 in New York. He had been mainly active as a teacher for many years but his music was heard through the talents of his pupils and the devotion of his admirers.

— compiled by John Norris

BOBBY JONES NEEDS HELP

Bobby Jones, the saxophonist-clarinetist who played with Charles Mingus for several years, is seriously ill and desperately needs the support of his many friends in the jazz world. Jones has been suffering from emphysema, bronchitis and asthma and the prognosis for his recovery is not good. For the last two years his doctors have forbid him from playing. His only steady income comes from the small royalty cheques he receives for his two albums as a leader, "The Arrival of Bobby Jones" (Cobblestone) and "Hill Country Suite" (Enja). Jones can still write arrangements and is seeking such work.

Before joining Mingus in the early '70s, Bobby Jones served stints with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Ray McKinley, Woody Herman, Jack Teagarden and Kenny Dorham. He also taught woodwind instruments at Kentucky State College. After leaving Mingus in 1972, Jones settled in Europe and formed the quintet Summit with Dusko Goykovich and Horace Parlan. Since 1972 he has led his own small groups.

Jones' musician friends staged a benefit concert on his behalf in Hamburg. However, such support has not been enough to meet Jones' many expenses. In addition, Jones' doctors have advised him that he must move soon to either Southern Europe or California because of his failing health.

Jones' friends hope that readers might be able to contribute regularly, even small contributions are most welcome, to a special bank account that has been set up for Jones.

Contributions can be sent to: Deutsch Bank Munchen, BLZ 700 700 1, Konto-Nummer 36 20 911; or First National City Bank (CITIBANK), 1275 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028, account number 0270777397 (Bobby Jones). Cards and letters are also welcome and can be sent to Bobby Jones, Landsberg Str. 331, 8000 Munich 21, West Germany.
(reprinted from ***Jazz Forum***)

SMALL ADS

This section is for individuals and organizations to advertise non-display items. Cost is 25 cents per word ($5.00 minimum), *payment to be made when copy submitted.* Boxed ads $1.00

Deleted jazz, pops, folk, soundtracks, country, etc. Mint LPs for sale. Reasonable prices. Free lists. Frank Kelly, 625 West 169 Street, New York, N.Y. 10032 USA.

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COLLECTORS RECORDS - 50,000 LPs sold @ auction — International service since 1971 in: (1) Jazz, Swing Bands, Jazz Vocals; (2) Soundtracks, Original Cast, TV; (3) Country/Western; (4) Personalities, Folk, Instrumentals, Vocals, Comedy; (5) R&B, R&R, Rock, Blues. Specify list from: Ray Macknic (or) Theo's, P.O. Box 7511, Dept. G, Van Nuys, Calif. 91406 USA.

CONTRABASS QUINTET LP: "Bingo" and "Slum Settings". $4.95. John Voigt c/o Baker St. Studio, 1072 Belmont St., Watertown, MA 02172 USA.

JAZZ ALL-STARS CALENDAR for 1979. Photos of Diz, Dex, Mingus, Getz, McRae, etc. $5 plus 75¢ postage each. Tom Copi Photos , 879 Douglass, San Francisco, CA 94114 USA. No Personal Checks.

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DUKE LIVES - Exclusive limited edition of artist-signed and numbered 18X24 prints of Ellington on the stand at Al Hirt Club, 1970. For photo sample of the print, price info and original color photo from which painting was done, send $5.00 to: Bob Castle - 217 N. Miro St. - New Orleans - LA - 70119 USA.

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Private collector wants JAZZ LPs - especially Charlie Parker, Lester Young, Wardell Gray. State price, label, condition. First letter. Sam Backus, Cannons Loan Shop, 1460 Westwood Drive, Reno, NV 89509 USA.

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Lee Konitz - Jimmy Giuffre. Records, tapes and information wanted. Please contact M. Frohne, Bertoldstr. 20, 7800 Freiburg, West Germany.

WANTED: 10" 78 rpm King Perry and His Band, "Things Ain't What They Used To Be" b/w "Christopher Columbus" (Lucky 45-003). Add details to Jepsen discog.: Los Angeles, Spring 1954; Oliver Perry (as, ts, vcl); Bobby Bradford (tpt); Victor Greenwood (b); Bobby Pitman (d); Eddie Arnold (ts); Seaman Galloway (bars) (Mahalia Jackson's husband); Mitch (p). Info per Bradford. Contact Mark Weber, 1559 Shelley Ave., Upland, Calif., 91786 USA.

I invite everybody to correspond with me. Interested in exchanging jazz and blues, oriental and classical Indian records, books, magazines, music ideas. Mariusz Szczepanski, Limanowskiego 19 m 10, 10-342 Olsztyn, Poland.

BOOKS

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Subscriptions to Jazz Forum and Swinging Newsletter, Jazzman's Reference Book, festival calendar, club guide, member's addresses, other publications. Membership fee $20 yearly. EJF, Secretariat General, A-1011, Vienna, Box 671, AUSTRIA.

photograph of Bobby Jones by Bill Smith

THE JAZZ INDEX: a quarterly bibliography of articles and reviews from over 30 jazz magazines. Bilingual (German/English). For further information write: Norbert Ruecker, Kleistr. 39, D-6000 Frankfurt/M 1, West Germany.

LIVING BLUES, America's first blues magazine, published quarterly since 1970. Contemporary and historical coverage, from Robert Johnson to T-Bone Walker. Photos, reviews, news, in-depth interviews, etc. Sample copy $1.25 (U.S. funds only); $7.50 for 6 issues (one year) from Living Blues, 2615 N. Wilton Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60614 USA.

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FEBRUARY 1974 (Dollar Brand, Lee Wiley, Maxine Sullivan)
MARCH 1974 (Gene Krupa)
APRIL 1974 (Anthony Braxton, Blues Poets)
MAY 1974 (Kenny Hollon, Larry Coryell)
JULY 1974 (Mary Lou Williams, Jimmy Rogers, Morris Jennings)
SEPT. 1974 (Rashied Ali/Andrew Cyrille/Milford Graves, Johnny Hartman, Swing)
OCT. 1974 (Karl Berger, Jazz Crossword, Johnny Shines)
NOV. 1974 (Delaunay reminiscences pt. 1, Rex Stewart, Howard King)
DEC. 1974 (Julian Priester, Steve McCall, Muggsy Spanier Big Band).
JAN. 1975 (Strata-East Records, J.R. Monterose, Louis Armstrong Filmography)
APRIL 1975 (Cross Cultures, Mose Allison, Ralph Sutton, Nathan Davis)
MAY 1975 (Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, Art Ensemble on Nessa, Junior Wells, Graeme Bell)
OCT. 1975 (Claude Thornhill, Brew Moore)
FEB. 1976 (Art Farmer, Woody Shaw, Red Rodney, A Space)
MARCH 1976 (Ben Webster disco., Betty Carter, Marc Levin, Pat Martino)
APRIL 1976 (Charles Delaunay pt. 2, Noah Howard, Leroy Cooper)
MAY 1976 (Oliver Lake, Miles Davis)
JUNE 1976 (Harold Vick, Jimmy Heath)
JULY 1976 (Marion Brown, Ray Nance, Studio Rivbea, Gene Rodgers)
SEPT. 1976 (Milford Graves, Will Bradley, Julius Hemphill)
OCT. 1976 (Don Pullen, Benny Waters)
DEC. 1976 (Warne Marsh, Bill Dixon)
FEB. 1977 (Steve Lacy, Marty Grosz, Mal Waldron, Blues News)
APRIL 1977 (Milt Buckner, Christmann/Schonenberg Duo)
JUNE 1977 (George Lewis, Lloyd Glenn)
AUG. 1977 (Stephane Grappelli, Stuart Broomer, Hot Club de France, Moers Festival)
OCT. 1977 (Bobby Bradford, John Carter, Chet Baker, Butch Morris)
DEC. 1977 (Joseph Jarman, Eddie Durham, Bobby Hackett)
FEB. 1978 (Randy Weston Milt Hinton)
APRIL 1978 (Willem Breuker, Joe Pass, Enrico Rava)
JUNE 1978 (20th Anniversary Issue: Julius Hemphill, Doc Cheatham, Jazz Literature, etc.)
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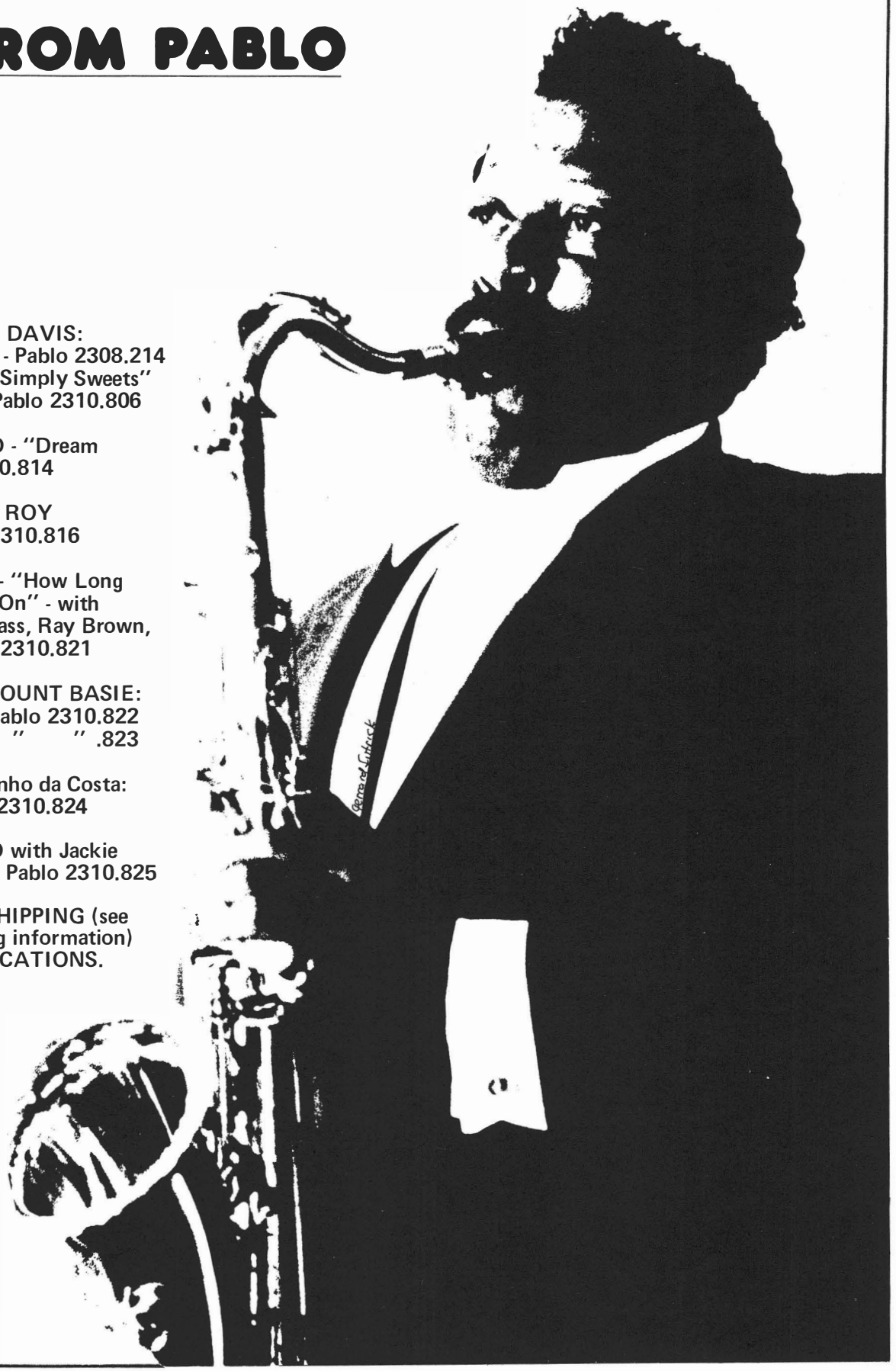

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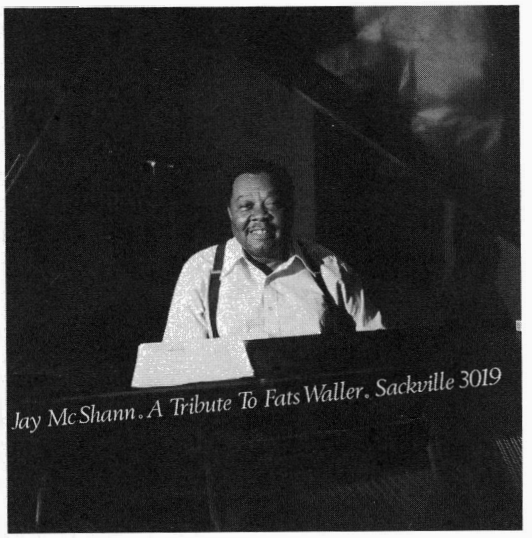

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KEEPIN' OUT OF MISCHIEF NOW
THEN I'LL BE TIRED OF YOU
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'
ALL MY LIFE
I'M GONNA SIT RIGHT DOWN AND WRITE MYSELF A LETTER
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